

What Your Kids Want You To Know



Perspectives for Parents and Teachers

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Who IS This Person?

- Parent
- SENG Parent Group Facilitator
- SENG Director
- Teacher
- Double Agent

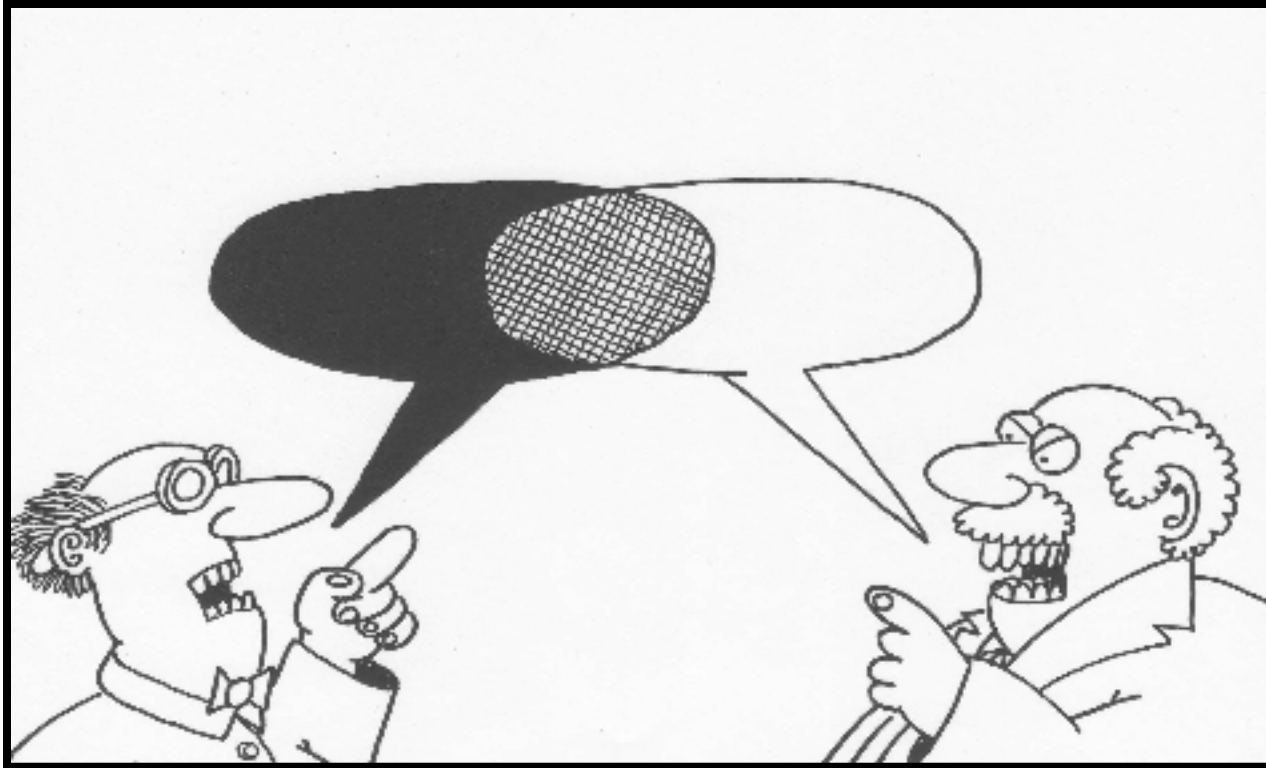


Why Did She Do This--and in June?

(Wasn't There Enough Going On?)

- Communicating with your gifted child
- Sharing perspectives
- Timing counts

Finding Common Ground





1. When I get home from school, I need a break from “school thinking.”

Maybe try not to bombard your kid with questions about school during the car ride home. They may be tired or need time to think about the school day before explaining it. Try asking questions later, at the dinner table, perhaps.

When I get home from school, just let me relax because my brain has been working hard all day.



1. When I get home from school, I need a break from “school thinking.”

When I get home, I need to go outside and run around before I do my homework, because if I don't, I get restless and grumpy.

When I get home, don't tell me to jump into my homework. I either need a snack, to just relax, or to get outside and play.



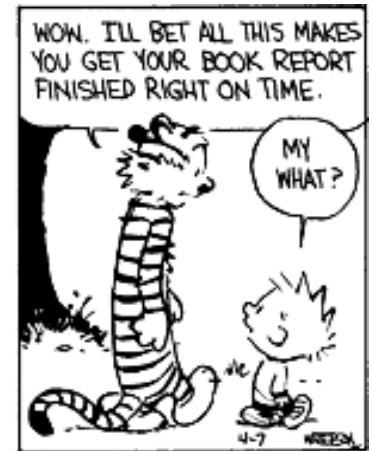
Ideas for after school

- Don't ask questions right away
- Change brain channels
- Provide a break in routine--run around, have a snack, relax

2. I need to do my own work



THEN I GOT IN TROUBLE WHEN I TOLD MOM, AND *THEN* I GOT IN TROUBLE *AGAIN* WHEN *SHE* TOLD *DAD*! I'VE BEEN IN HOT WATER EVER SINCE I GOT UP!





2. I need to do my own work

Let me do my own projects, and don't impose your ideas forcefully.

... Things at school don't always make sense at first, so don't be worried if they don't.

If I don't want your help, it doesn't mean I'm against you.



2. I need to do my own work

I get overwhelmed when I get a big project, but only at the beginning. If you just give me a little boost or tell me something that inspires me, then I'll be done with being overwhelmed.

Most of us have some traits of a perfectionist, so if we need help on our homework, we might be acting like a ticking time-bomb. Personally, I get entirely frustrated if I can't solve a problem, because, well, this is the homework that our teacher assigned us, so I should know this!



2. I need to do my own work

If I have homework that you don't know how to do, don't guess on how to do it, because you will probably get it wrong.

If I tell you to stop "helping" me, I would work better if you actually did.



I do my best work when

- I am alone
- There are no distractions; I am focused
- I am relaxed and not rushed
- I have all the resources I need
- I like the work
- I am not hungry or tired
- I “get it”
- There are creative possibilities
- It is quiet



Ideas for Academic Independence

- Decide on a few options for work times and environments
- Expect initial fuzz in new areas
- Make sure help is supportive
- Allow for natural consequences
- Teach self-advocacy



3. Respect me...

...for my ideas

When I say something, don't shoot it out of the water right away.

If something I do or like seems stupid, let me be. If you say it's dumb then I feel bad.



3. Respect me...

...for my abilities and methods

If I don't do what you asked me to do, it's not because I didn't listen, but that I envisioned the task differently.

When I remember something, it's usually right.

How am I going to prove I'm ready when you never let me try?



3. Respect me...

...for who I am

I am different from you.



4. I am learning to manage my feelings

When I overreact to something, leave me alone for a while and I will be fine.

Don't talk to me when I am stressed.

When children are angry and/or sleepy, sometimes they are just food-deprived.



4. I am learning to manage my feelings

If I am upset about something and I don't want to talk about it, leave me alone. If you are persistent, it just makes me more upset.

Do not automatically think that I am apologizing to get sympathy. I might actually feel bad.



4. I am learning to manage my feelings

If I'm angry about something, it won't help me if you get fed up with me. But it will probably make me angrier.

A "leave me alone" usually has a good reason. If I tell you to go away, it's for your own good. I'm probably trying to get my temper under control.



Ideas for Managing Feelings

- Develop a feeling vocabulary
- Expect intensity of emotion
- Learn calming techniques



5. I need to move

Everyone needs play time.

I need sports. They calm me down and keep me happy.

I can't sit still for so long, so don't force me to sit for hours. I need to stretch my legs.

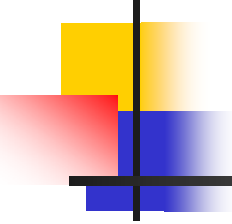
I need to be active and moving or else my mind becomes clogged and confused.

I cannot sit somewhere without moving. I always need something in my hands to tinker with.



Ideas for kids who need to move

- Small needs
 - Stress balls, hacky sacks, smooth pebble in a pocket
- Bigger needs
 - Resources that invite movement
- Even bigger needs
 - The Walk, exercise balls for seating, stand-up desks



6. I am aware of my overexcitabilities and you need to know them, too.

- Psychomotor
 - Need for movement: small to large movements
- Sensual
 - Wired twice for input: textures, flavors, visual, aromas, sounds
- Emotional
 - Intense feelings: both perception and response
- Intellectual
 - NEED to KNOW: insatiable curiosity, driven to learn
- Imaginational
 - Anything is possible: forget the laws of nature



I am aware of my overexcitabilities and you need to know them, too

- Psychomotor:
 - *I don't mean to be rude by interrupting, but I do love to talk.*
- Sensual:
 - *There might be a child plugging their ears when someone is talking to them, seemingly rude...but in reality the voice or music is too loud. Even though they are plugging their ears, they are still listening.*
- Emotional:
 - *I try not to, but when you go away I have to cry because I am very emotional.*



I am aware of my overexcitabilities and you need to know them, too

- Intellectual
 - *I'm not prying into your business, I'm just curious.*
- Imaginational:
 - *When we remember elaborate dreams, do not think that you have to interpret them. I just remember my dreams.*
 - *Just because I'm not physically doing something doesn't mean I'm not having mental explosions. (Don't talk to me during this time.)*

If your kid has special intensities, try supporting those intensities.



I am distracted by...

- Sounds
 - Children crying, clocks, small sounds, complete silence, false coughing
- Conversations
 - People whispering and trying not to be heard
- Visual stimulus
 - Pens, books, half-open drawers, random junk, windows, anything that flies



I am distracted by

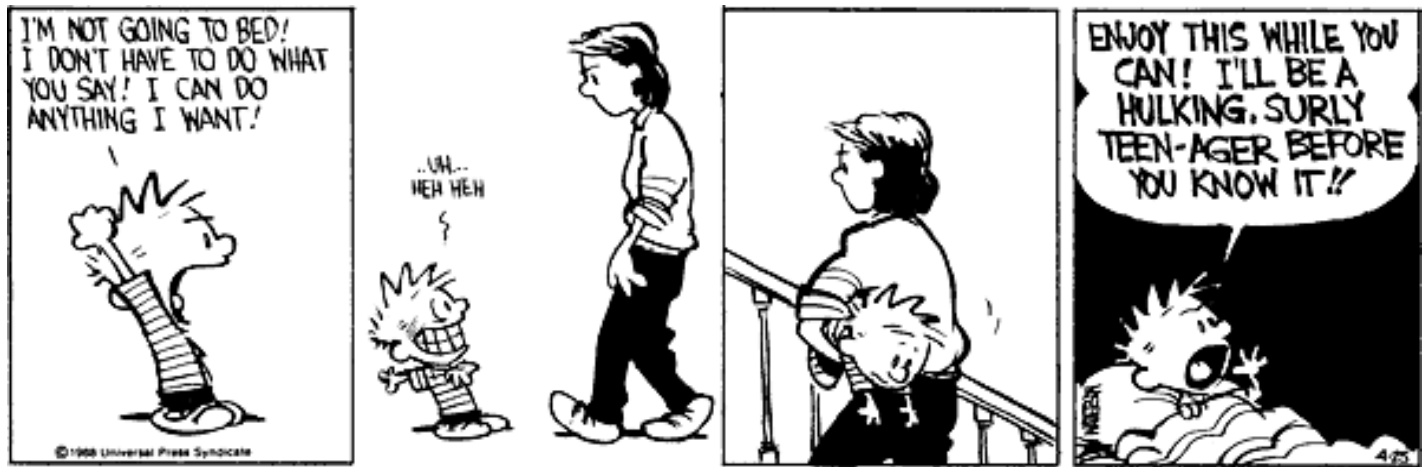
- Movement
 - Other people's nervous tics, four or more kids out of their seats
- Something physical
 - Drastic temperature changes, anything I can play with, smells
- Ideas
 - My thoughts when it is silent



What helps me concentrate

- Quiet
- Soft music
- Isolation
- Soft voices
- Incentives
- Breaks
- Water
- A breeze
- Nutella

7. I need a bedtime routine that suits me





I need a bedtime routine that suits me

- *Before I go to bed I need some time to calm down.*
- *When I go to sleep I have to have an hour of cool-off time, where I can not be wild, for my brain to stop processing.*
- *At night, if we can't go to sleep, just keep in mind that we are probably contemplating the day tomorrow.*



Bedtime Routine Ideas

- Bath
- Book
- Music
- Relaxation techniques



8. I can't always tell you what I'm thinking

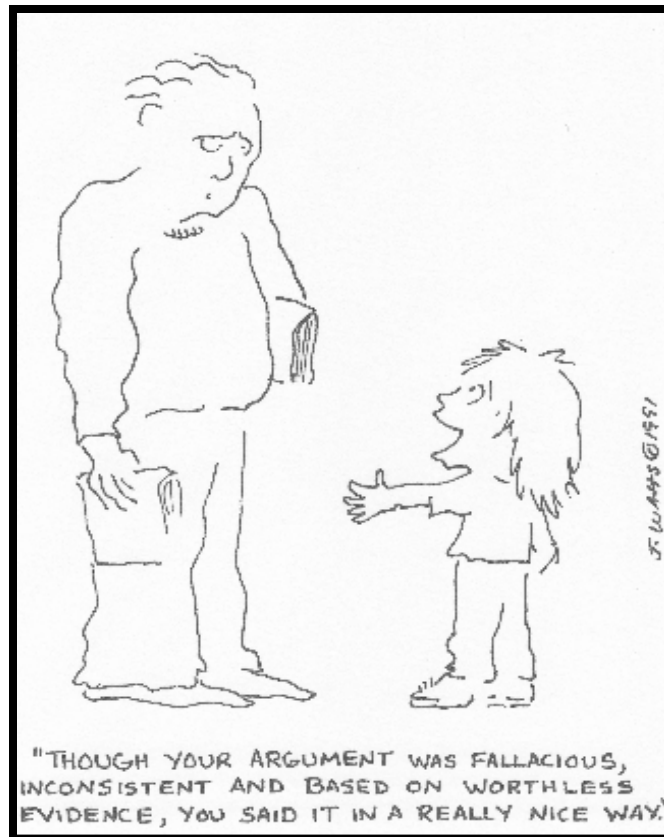
- *Sometimes when kids say they don't want to talk about it, it can mean they just don't want to talk right there, (but) maybe somewhere more private.*
- *Your kid might have an overly busy schedule but can't find a good way to tell you about it. Try bringing up the subject for them by asking them if their schedule is too busy. They will probably be glad of the chance to tell you.*



Sometimes I'll tell you **exactly** what I'm thinking

- *If you want answers, please ask intelligent questions.*
- *Don't take it personally when I insult you.*
- *How am I going to prove I'm ready if you never let me try?*
- *Why should I trust you when you never trust me?*
- *Please tell me how to deal with my sister instead of telling me to ignore her.*

Sometimes I'll tell you **exactly** what I'm thinking

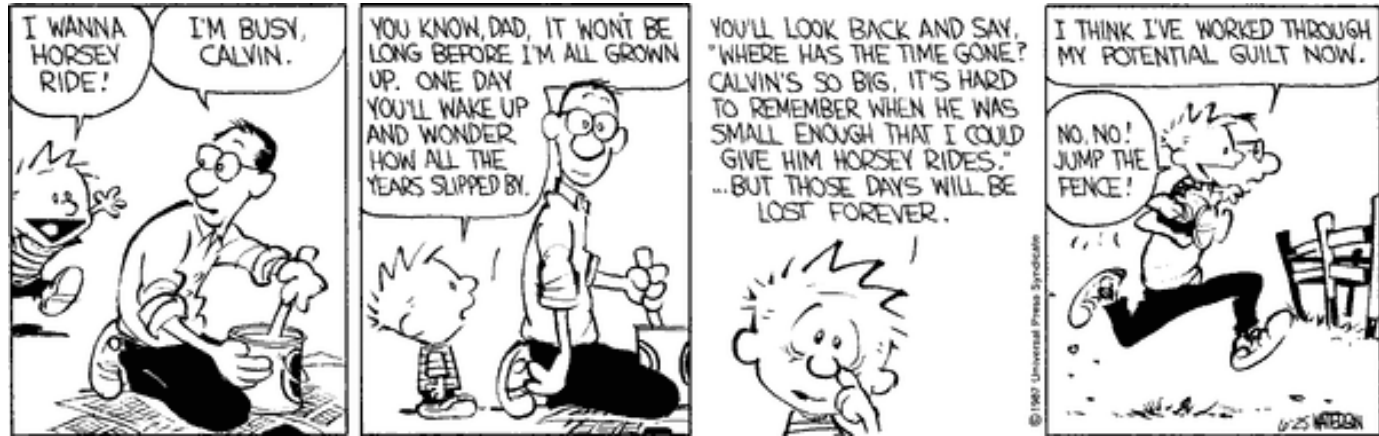




Sometimes I'll tell you **exactly** what I'm thinking

Use the carrot with the stick. Taking privileges away may seem like the perfect solution, but it only escalates the problem. Offering a reward makes us come to expect it. The best solution is to offer both in relation to the problem. For example, if somebody complains about a proposed dinner, offer them two choices--helping to make a different dinner, or not complaining.

Keeping your perspective





Articles

Golon, Allie. Organization Skills for Visual-Spatial Learners

<http://www.visualspatial.org/Articles/orgskills.htm>

Hesslein, Jane. What Your Kids Want You To Know

http://sengifted.org/articles_parenting/hesslein_what_your_kids_want_you_to_know.shtml

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http://sengifted.org/articles_social/Lind_DevelopingAFeelingVocabulary.shtml

Lind, Sharon. Overexcitability and the Gifted

http://sengifted.org/articles_social/Lind_OverexcitabilityAndTheGifted.shtml

Maxwell, Betty. The Visual-Spatial Learner in School

<http://www.visualspatial.org/Articles/appenda.pdf>

Rief, Sandra. What Parents Can Do To Help Their Children Get Organized

http://www.davidsongifted.org/db/Articles_id_10443.aspx



Books

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