

HARRISON OBSERVATION STUDENT FORM

The page features several decorative stars and shapes. There are two large, dark, jagged star-like shapes on the left side. In the center, there are two smaller, white, five-pointed stars with black outlines. To the right, there is a small, dark, jagged star-like shape. The text 'U-STARS ~ PLUS' is positioned between the two large dark shapes on the left and the two white stars in the center.

U-STARS ~ PLUS

*An observational reporting
procedure to recognize gifted
behaviors in children.*

Do You Teach Someone Who...

Directions: The Harrison Observation Form was developed to help you recognize students with outstanding potential who may be gifted. Specific behaviors have been listed for each of the nine scale areas. These behaviors capture both “teacher pleasing” and “non-teacher pleasing” behaviors because gifted children are not always “teacher-pleasers.” As you use this tool, please remember to observe all your students including those from underserved populations.

How should you use this form?

Whole Class Observation: Select a given time period (3-6 weeks) to observe the entire class in a variety of activities across the content areas. Use one Harrison folder to observe your whole class. The first time a student exhibits one of the scale behaviors, write that student’s name in the box by that behavior. Each additional time you observe a student repeating a behavior in that area, add a tally mark beside his/her name. After the observation period, use the Observation Record Tally Sheet on the back of this folder to compile your data and to decide which students need further study. Consider observing a child individually if his/her name appears next to several behaviors or has multiple tally marks for any one behavior.

Individual Student Observation: Based on your whole class observation, establish individual folders for each child you will further observe. Place each child’s name on a folder tab. Use the space beside each scale item to “jot down” notes based on your observations (e.g. Shows Advanced Reasoning: math (number lines) 10/15; asked “but, what if I want to take 8 away from 5 - how can we do that?”). You can also use the folder itself to collect examples of the student’s work where he/she is demonstrating outstanding potential. This information may indicate the need for differentiated instruction and will help you decide if you should refer this student for gifted education services. *Remember, the Harrison Observation Student Form should never be used as the sole identification tool for gifted education services.*

LEARNS EASILY

Is eager to learn.
Has lots of information.
Retains and retrieves information easily.
Carries out complex instructions with ease.
Completes assignments ahead of others (gets A's without effort).
Shows strong memory, quick recall.
Uses complex language & math symbol systems.
Prefers work with more complexity.
Refuses and becomes impatient with tedious and repetitious work.
Appears bored with or rushes through "easy" work.
Corrects the teacher and students in class.
Does not show work, only answers.

SHOWS ADVANCED SKILLS

Reads and comprehends on an advanced level
(this may be seen in listening comprehension).
Tells or reproduces stories and events with detail.
Has a large vocabulary. Uses descriptive language, similies, puns.
Makes up songs, stories, and rhymes.
Spends free time absorbed in books (may read when supposed to do other things).
Seeks non-fiction as well as fiction.
Generates many writing ideas and products.
Understands advanced number concepts.
Understands the meaning and use of maps, diagrams, and graphs.
Uses numbers and math skills in meaningful real-world ways.
Communicates well with symbols (art, design, music, or dance).
Carries on conversations related to academic topics.
Masters and shows high level thinking in a specific content area.
Manipulates situations for specific purposes.
Challenges teacher to go further in depth and complexity.

DISPLAYS CURIOSITY & CREATIVITY

Questions, explores, experiments.
Asks unusual, provocative questions.
Is curious (asks how, why, what if?)
Tries to discover the how and why of things.
Enjoys doing things in new ways.
Puts unrelated ideas and materials together in new and different ways.
Offers unique responses.
Has an active imagination (likes to pretend).
Assumes another persona during activities or conversations.
Has trouble distinguishing fact from fiction.
Does not follow or wait for directions (makes own rules).
Refuses to follow rules unless they see "why".
Is seen as "deviant" or non-conformist.
Develops and tells elaborate "stories".

HAS STRONG INTERESTS

Is able to lose self in something of interest.
Demonstrates unusual or advanced interests.
Keeps extensive collections.
Is considered an "expert" in a particular topic (may seem domineering).
Checks out books on particular topics.
Chooses to become involved when area of interest is addressed.
Has interest in areas outside typical school curriculum.
Leads disçussion back to one topic of interest.
Resists transitions moving onto a new topic of study.

SHOWS ADVANCED REASONING & PROBLEM SOLVING

Is a keen observer (spots details others miss).
Recognizes patterns.
Draws accurate and advanced conclusions based on information.
Designs experiments to test hypotheses (develops logical ways to collect and analyze data).
Makes mental connections (transfers learning into other subjects or real life situations).
Sees causes and effect relationships. Asks "why?".
Expresses relationships between past and present.
Is aware of problems others do not see.
Devises or adapts strategies to solve problems.
Questions and reasons on a more mature level than peers.
Questions "rote" approaches to problem solving.
Has "out of the box" ways of solving problems and seeing situations.
Doesn't do well on tests with limited answer choices.
Is argumentative.

DISPLAYS SPATIAL ABILITIES

Has good sense of direction.
Figures out why and how things work.
Takes objects apart and reassembles with speed and accuracy.
Creates interesting shapes and patterns.
Shows unusual talent in various art forms.
Invents games.
Creates three-dimensional structures.
Has excellent motor planning and coordination.
Needs movement to connect learning to memory.
Prefers hands-on experiences to learn (uses manipulatives/artifacts).
Brings gadgets, toys, etc. to tinker with at school.
Moves around often (keeps hands and body always busy).

IS MOTIVATED

Is a self-starter (requires little direction).
Is persistent in pursuing and completing self-selected tasks.
Is dependent (requires little feedback).
Prefers to do things on own ("the quiet child").
Enjoys challenge of new and different.
Prefers interacting with older people.
Converses about mature topics.
Does not follow typical path (moves to the beat of a different drummer).
Questions authority (is considered a "trouble maker" or instigator).

SHOWS SOCIAL PERCEPTIVENESS

Displays sense of humor (may be "class clown").
Responds to needs of others (is able to see another's point of view).
Enjoys working in groups.
Identifies with individuals in books, history, movies, etc.
Uses skills to resolve conflict.
Reads social situations well and can gain acceptance in most groups.
Displays strong sense of justice (may over-react emotionally).
Is easily distracted by others' needs.
Is over-talkative and social.
Uses humor and sarcasm inappropriately.

DISPLAYS LEADERSHIP

Organizes materials and activities.
Accepts and carries out responsibilities.
Is sought by others (influences others, positively or negatively).
Adapts readily to new situations and changes.
Is a positive and compassionate guide to others.
Prefers adult company.
Is seen as manipulative and strong-willed.
Is seen as "bossy" (wants to be the center of attention).
Dominates others (may not be a good follower).

