

Second Edition

101

SUCCESS SECRETS

for Gifted Kids

Advice, Quizzes, and Activities for Dealing With
Stress, Expectations, Friendships, and More

- Complete kid-friendly quizzes, checklists, and activities
- Read advice from other kids
- Learn about what it means to be gifted, finding passions, bullying, and more

A **Prufrock Press** Book

Christine Fonseca

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**SUCCESS
SECRETS
for Gifted Kids**



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Dedication

For my mom, whose life was the example
of embracing one's giftedness.



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Acknowledgements

Every new book or edition is a unique journey. Writing this edition during the heart of a global pandemic was an interesting experience, and I'm so thankful for those who assisted me on this particular project:

To my partner, my husband, my soulmate—I am confident that I couldn't have written this without your continuing love and support. The original book was completed as my mother took her last breaths. This edition was completed as the world wrestled with a global pandemic. In both experiences, you were my strength when my emotions overwhelmed me. You helped with the household chores, provided space when I needed it, and enabled me, once again, to follow my passions. Thank you for all you are for the family and me.

To my amazing children, Fabiana and Erika—you were my original inspiration for this book. Your meanderings as gifted children provided so much of the content of this book. Thank you for living true to yourself and thriving as unicorns. You are inspirations to the world.

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Finally, to the thousands of gifted and talented children, parents, and educators that have contributed to both editions of this book—your ideas and insights are highlighted throughout the pages of this book in the quotes and words. I am sincerely humbled by each and every one of you. Your stories and advice are a source of inspiration that extends far beyond the pages of this book.

Introduction

Why This Book

Being identified as gifted means a lot more than being smart. For most kids, it means being good in school, even though you get bored quickly. It may also mean that you can figure things out really fast—maybe even quicker than your parents or teachers. But, being bright also means feeling stressed out. A lot. Peers, the pressures of school, the expectations of parents, and the feeling that no one understands you are enough to make most kids wish that the label of giftedness never existed.

That's where this book comes in. *101 Success Secrets for Gifted Kids* is full of the tips kids need to understand and make the most out of the gifted label. Advice and ideas from thousands of kids just like you fill the pages, giving you everything you need to be a success—in school, at home, and in life.

The second edition of *101 Success Secrets for Gifted Kids* begins with an overview of giftedness that covers what it means to have the gifted label, the characteristics of giftedness, and the emotional aspects of being a high-potential human.

The next three sections discuss specific problems that arise in your unique world, separated into the areas where you spend most of your time—school, home, and in the world. The book ends with a few additional resources, just in case you want more information.

How to Use This Book

This book was designed to be used as you need it. Read the section that relates to whatever it is you are going through at the time. Got a problem with school and perfectionism? Turn to that section. Want to know how to deal with your parents or siblings? Check out what others did. Friendship dilemmas? No problem—just refer to that section. Curious about multipotentiality and what it means for your future? Go to that part of the book. The point is to use the book as you need it and use it often. What makes sense today may change as you get older.

101 Success Secrets for Gifted Kids was also designed with your parents in mind. Even though they probably understand what you're going through, parents sometimes forget what it is to be young. This book can help them remember all of the issues that creep up in your world. Don't be afraid to share parts of this book with them or any other adult who needs a little help understanding what it is to be you.

And finally, if you find the book helpful and want to offer advice to kids like you, please email me at christine@christinefonseca.com. I'm always looking for great tips and more ways to help kids. Sharing your own experiences is an excellent way for you to give back to others. Your advice may even end up in the next edition of this book!

A Word to Parents and Educators

Growing up with a gifted label can be hard work. Typically blessed with highly intelligent and intuitive minds, gifted kids are confronted with

intense emotions that change rapidly, leaving them feeling confused, frustrated, and alone. That's where this book comes in. Packed with advice and success secrets from other children, *101 Success Secrets for Gifted Kids* sheds light on the world of giftedness. By offering practical advice for kids from the ones they listen to the most—other kids—it is my hope that this book can be a resource for children, parents, and educators as they navigate through the sometimes treacherous waters of giftedness.

Use this book to address various concerns as they come up. Or, read it first and then share it with your children. Either way, be sure to talk about the information and advice with your kids. Use the ideas as a springboard to open the lines of communication. If you find something particularly helpful, shoot me a note at christine@christinefonseca.com and let me know.

I wish you much success in being the coach your children need as they progress through their years and embrace everything it means to be gifted.



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WHAT IT MEANS TO BE GIFTED

Understanding how to live life as a gifted person begins with understanding what it means to be gifted in the first place. The next three chapters will cover everything you need to know about being gifted, from the attributes of giftedness and the problems that sometimes arise, to the crazy mixed-up feelings most gifted kids share, to cultivating your intensities as a source of strength for you throughout your life.

To get started, I've got a little quiz to test your knowledge of giftedness. Answer all five true/false questions before you read this section. Once you're done reading all three chapters, try the quiz again. Did anything change?

Quiz: What Do I Know About Being Gifted?

Directions: Circle your answer for each question.

1. Being gifted means I should always earn good grades.
true false
2. If I make a lot of mistakes on my work at school, it means I can't possibly be gifted.
true false
3. Being super sensitive to things is not part of being gifted.
true false
4. Learning is always easy for gifted people.
true false
5. Giftedness only has to do with learning, not with how I feel about things.
true false



1 Chapter

THINK DIFFERENT

So, you took a special test at school, your parents and teachers filled out a few forms, and now everyone says you're gifted. What on Earth does that mean? Will you get extra work now? Are people going to expect great things from you all of the time?

Will you get to go on special field trips or participate in special activities? The questions are endless, and they come back to the same issue . . .

What does it mean to be gifted?

The truth is that there is not one agreed-upon answer as to what it means to be gifted. Organizations like the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) have tried to shed light on this by coming up with definitions for giftedness. NAGC (2019) said that a gifted person performs at higher levels

“Being gifted means I look at the world differently than some of my friends. It also means that some people are going to assume that I never have to work hard. The truth is I work really, really hard at things. And, I hate it when, after working so hard, I don't do well.”—*Olivia, age 11*

“

Being in GATE doesn't mean you're different from everyone else; it just means you think in different ways.”—*Hiro, age 13*

than peers of the same age and experience. Yeah, I know. That doesn't really clear anything up, does it?

Researchers agree that there is a specific set of characteristics

that define giftedness—smart, strong reasoning skills, and intellectually curious (Clark, 2013). Perfectionism, strong emotions, and high sensitivity to everything are also aspects of giftedness (Fonseca, 2016).

These characteristics still don't say what it *means* to be gifted or how giftedness impacts your world.

SUCCESS SECRET #1

Giftedness isn't something you can change. It's how your brain works.

Giftedness, like eye color or height, isn't something you can choose. It's how you're hardwired. Success at school—or in life—really has nothing to do with it.

Giftedness means that you are biologically wired to view the world in a certain way. That's what all of those characteristics listed above refer to—how you actually think about things. You can try to think in a different way, try not to be gifted. You can fail in school and try to blend in with your friends. Regardless, you will still be gifted. It isn't something you can change.

Table 1: My Gifted Brain lists some of the unique features of a gifted brain. All of these unique features impact how you think about the world. It's what makes you gifted and what makes you, you.

SUCCESS SECRET #2

Being gifted does not mean you are perfect at everything.

Yeah, I know. You think you should know everything if you're really gifted, right? Wrong. Being gifted has nothing to do with what you know. Not