

## Is Your Child Introverted? A Quiz

Taken from *The Hidden Gifts of the Introverted Child: Helping your Child Thrive in an Extroverted World* by Marti Olsen Laney, Psy.D. pp16-18.

**Researchers estimate that between 50 and 70% of all gifted children are Introverts! Only 25-30% of the general population is introverted.**

Answer TRUE if this generally applies. FALSE if it doesn't.

1. Is energized by time alone in her room or favorite place.
2. Concentrates deeply if a book or project interests him.
3. Dislikes being interrupted when speaking or involved in a project; rarely interrupts others.
4. Prefers to observe for a while before joining in games.
5. Becomes irritable in crowded places or if she shares space with others for a long period of time, especially if she is tired.
6. Listens attentively with good eye contact, but his glance tends to drift away when speaking.
7. Keeps her face and body still or shows little expression, especially if tired or in a large group of children.
8. Sometimes has delayed, hesitant, or low-key responses.
9. Needs time to think before answering a question; may need to rehearse before speaking out.
10. Listens more than he talks, unless the topic is of personal interest. In this case, he may talk up a storm, especially if he's in a comfortable setting.
11. Doesn't boast about her knowledge or achievements; she may understand more than she lets on.
12. Feels overwhelmed, rather than energized by an activity-filled schedule.
13. Sometimes has word-retrieval problems and may speak in a quiet voice often marked by pauses.
14. Is highly tuned into her own perceptions, ideas, thoughts, feelings, and reactions.
15. Doesn't like to be the center of attention.
16. Can seem unpredictable; chatty at home or in other comfortable settings and subdued elsewhere, energized one day, low energy the next.
17. May be regarded by classmates as quiet, calm, withdrawn, reserved, or aloof.
18. Is observant and picks up on details others—even adults—don't see.
19. Likes consistency and does best when given ample transition time.
20. Feels anxious when presented with deadlines for a project or a test.
21. May "zone out" if too much is going on or when watching TV or a video.
22. Has one or two close friends, but may know lots of kids.
23. Has an affinity for creative expression and quiet, imaginative play.
24. Feels drained after parties or group activities even though she enjoyed them.

## Scoring:

**17-24 TRUES:** Your child is introverted. It is extremely important to understand how to help keep her energy flowing. She will need to conserve energy and spend it wisely in the outside world and will likely need your help in learning to do this. It's also important to show that you understand and accept her temperament.

**9-16 TRUES:** Your child falls in the middle range. Like being able to use his right and left hand, your child is both introverted and extroverted. He may feel torn between needing to be alone and wanting to be out and about. Try to assess when he feels energized by outside activities and when he needs quiet time by himself to recharge, so that you can develop a schedule that is best for him.

**1-8 TRUES:** Your child is an extrovert. She is energized by people, activities, and things. Try to keep her busy, but also teach her to value downtime and reflection.

*Parenting becomes easier when you understand your own temperament and that of your child's.*

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## Comparing Introverts with Extroverts:

An **INTROVERT** thinks *before* talking.

An **EXTROVERT** thinks *by* talking.

- *The primary difference between introverts and extroverts is in where they get their energy. Introverts get energy from within themselves, while Extroverts get energy from others.*
- *Another main difference is how they recharge their batteries. Introverts are energized by the internal world inside their head—ideas, impressions, emotions. Extroverts spend energy freely and often have trouble slowing down.*
- *Extroverts enjoy a lot of external stimulation while introverts want to go deeply into what they experience. They may attempt to regulate overstimulation by restricting external input. Introverts enjoy complexity when they can focus on one or two areas. Their energy is drained in crowds, classes, or noisy environments.*
- *Extroverts like **breadth**: knowing a little about a lot of things. What they take in from the outside is not always processed internally. Introverts like **depth** and may limit experiences. They absorb the outside environment then reflect and expand upon it. Because they delve deeply, it is wise to limit the number of issues/topics they address. They can imagine the vastness of a new subject and pursue its details.*
- *“Quiet people are often found to have profound insights. The shallow water in a brook or river runs fast: the deep water seems calmer.”----- James Rogers*

## **Your Introverted Child is not Shy.**

- *Shy people want to be noticed, liked, and accepted but lack the skills and the thoughts, feelings and attitudes that could help them manage social interaction. Shy kids anticipate anxiety and negative responses in social situations. Shyness is a **behavior**.*
- *Introversion is not a behavior. It is actually an inborn **temperament** based on a person's genetic makeup. It reflects a person's source of energy and orientation to the outside world. It's how one is hardwired: different neurotransmitter preference (long, slow release) and nervous system activation (rest and digest).*

## **What are Concerns at School?**

- *Extroversion is valued. Group experiences and high energy classrooms are becoming more the desired norm.*
- *Introverts may be overlooked in the classroom by a teacher responding to the "squeaky wheels."*
- *Introverts can be measured by their ability to work fast (timed tests) or assume tasks before they feel ready.*
- *If the teacher is an extrovert, they may perceive the introvert to lack motivation and enthusiasm at best, or not very smart at worst.*
- *Classroom teachers have had very little training in gifted education. There is even less training on instructing Introverts/Extroverts in the classroom.*

## **Instructional Strategies at School**

*Most introverts need wait time, warning about what they are expected to do, activities with minimal noise and stimulation, down time built into the schedule, and moderate amounts of small group work. They should work alone thoughtfully first, then collaborate. Time to reflect on activity and productivity is helpful.*

*Discuss personalities/temperament regularly (ie. characters in stories)  
Be aware of your temperament. Model. Talk about your needs. If you are an introvert, talk about how you deal with it. If you are an extrovert, talk about your needs.*

*Give a personality test (Myers-Briggs) Teachers are usually ENFP: Extroverted iNtuitive Feeling Perceptive.*

*Be aware that highly intuitive students often conflict with many teachers' personalities. Understand where they are coming from and adapt to take advantage of their unique skills!*

*The child who is reluctant to answer questions aloud or stares off into space when noise in the classroom gets a little louder should no longer be seen as a student who is disinterested in learning, unmotivated, or even learning disabled. Using a more tolerant lens, one can understand that the student may be hardwired in a way that contradicts your classroom environment or teaching strategies.*

This is a wonderful Ted Talk by Susan Cain, author of *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking* (2013).

[http://www.ted.com/talks/susan\\_cain\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_introverts](http://www.ted.com/talks/susan_cain_the_power_of_introverts)



From JELP presentation

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11/15/2021