

CHAPTER SIX

Results

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the two data gathering activities described in the previous chapter. In Part 1, data gained through the interviews with urban Aboriginal community members and parents are presented. Results from the Aboriginal teacher questionnaire are provided in Part 2. Finally, a comparison of the results from both data gathering activities is presented in Part 3.

Part 1: Interview Results

As explained in Chapter 5, the purpose of the interviews was twofold. Firstly, they were seen as a method by which the conceptions of giftedness held by urban Aboriginal people could be investigated. Secondly, the interviews could provide Aboriginal people's descriptions of behaviours which they believed were indications of giftedness. It was expected that from these data it could be determined whether or not Frasier's ten core attributes of traits, aptitudes and behaviours (TABs) of giftedness were appropriate categories with which to comprehensively organise the conceptions of giftedness and the examples of gifted behaviours described by Aborigines during the interviews. It was also expected that culturally specific examples of giftedness would result from the interview data.

The descriptions seen as indicators of giftedness by the interviewees were organised initially according to the ten core attributes or TABs plus a miscellaneous category, as outlined in chapter 5. After the three pilot interviews were completed, descriptions of gifted behaviour provided by the interviewees were categorised. Table 6.1 shows the frequency of descriptions given by the three individual interviewees for each attribute category.

Table 6.1
Frequencies Of Core Attribute And Miscellaneous Descriptions From Pilot Interviews

Attribute category	Frequency by pilot interview			Total frequency
	1	2	3	
Motivation	4	4	7	15
Communication	7	1	6	14
Interests	6	2	4	12
Memory	2	3	5	10
Reasoning	1	2	2	5
Insight	3	2	-	5
Imagination / Creativity	2	-	2	4
Problem Solving Ability	-	1	1	2
Inquiry	1	-	1	2
Humour	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	7	4	4	15

After descriptions from the three pilot interviews were categorised, statements in the Miscellaneous category were examined to determine if additional categories were needed, in order to more effectively group descriptions of gifted attributes provided thus far by the interviewees. The fifteen miscellaneous descriptions which were considered included the following:

And there was another fellow in the same class as him. He was an Aboriginal person too and they competed all through school with their art.

And apparently Larry would top him every time. And some of his work was entered into the show and always won first prize (Interview 1, p. 2).

He was also probably gifted in the area where he could get anybody to do things for him. I don't know what you call them but I call them con men (Interview 1, p. 2).

And he ended up forming a band. And he continued with his painting and drawings. He's still playing in this band today out there. He gets quite a bit of work. He has been a productive person (Interview 1, p. 2).

The only thing I knew is when he went away for the top 5% of all Aboriginal students in high school and came fifth or sixth out of the whole of Australia down in Adelaide (Interview 2, p. 2).

He's just started up German and he's the top of the whole Grade 11s (Interview 2, p. 3).

Adam is now Vice-Captain at ... High School (Interview 2, p. 6).

Cheryl topped her class in German (Interview 3, p. 4).

I just happened to raise my voice at him one day and this is going back a couple of years now too. No wouldn't be. About eighteen months I suppose. He was annoying me. Of course he usually does that. I said, "Why don't you just shut up and get out of the room and leave me alone." He said, "Why don't you shut up and just relax." I mean what could you do. I suppose I shouldn't have raised my voice in the first place but he's not used to that type of treatment (Interview 1, p. 4).

He [the interviewee's grandson] was about nine months old and I lost my only son. But every time I felt down and depressed that child never left me. He'd come and stand beside me and just put his hand on my leg or arm and say, "You okay Nan?" (pause) I know they are alert. (pause) I suppose very sensitive. (pause) And they know. (pause) Well they can read moods and things. But at that age (Interview 1, p. 4).

And it was like Daniel knew Doug was coming home this night. He never got into town before one o'clock at night or early morning. And this child would be awake waiting for him. He knew (Interview 1, p. 4).

I'm doing psychology and I read some of the books you know. And I think when I read it that none of this applies to my grandchild. You know at this age they're doing that in the book, but he's well beyond it. Like I said he's happy playing with kids about five or six and that's the way it's been for the last two or three years (Interview 1, p. 7).

He's just (pause) friends with everyone. He's just got everything. You know if you ever wanted your son to be like someone, it would be him. He's just well-mannered. He's quiet when you want him to be (Interview 2, p. 2).

And you know Cheryl even in her classes now is very good. People like her. She's a good kid, would never be in trouble, never be in detention or get a red mark (Interview 3, p. 2).

Cheryl's a beautiful looking girl too. Intelligent can converse with anybody. Lots of people have said to me, "What a beautiful daughter you have. She's a lovely girl. Lovely to speak to. So bright and intelligent." Always had good reports when she's been in public or stayed overnight at people's places (Interview 3, p. 3).

She reads Stephen King which I'm not really impressed with. But I said to her, "Doesn't that scare you?" She said, "No, it's not like that." She has that type of maturity, that she can cope with that (Interview 3, p. 5).

The first seven descriptions appeared to describe an aspect of leadership. When the relevant interviewees were asked if descriptions might logically be categorised under the heading of leadership, both agreed that leadership was an appropriate label.

The next three descriptions, all reported by one of the interviewees, seemed to describe exceptional ability associated with demonstrating a sensitivity to and understanding of other people's emotions even though these emotions may not be verbally expressed. With the agreement of the interviewee, these narratives were categorised under a heading labeled Sensitivity.

The last five descriptions did not appear to have an easily identifiable commonality with any of the other narratives. Therefore, these remained coded in the Miscellaneous category. With the two newly created categories of Leadership and Sensitivity, the data were reorganised into a frequency table shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2
Core And Additional Attribute Description Frequencies From Pilot Interviews

Attribute category	Description frequency by interview			Total frequency
	1	2	3	
Motivation	4	4	7	15
Communication	7	1	6	14
Interests	6	2	4	12
Memory	2	3	5	10
Leadership	3	3	1	7
Reasoning	1	2	2	5
Insight	3	2	-	5
Imagination / Creativity	2	-	2	4
Sensitivity	3	-	-	3
Problem Solving Ability	-	1	1	2
Inquiry	1	-	1	2
Humour	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	1	1	3	5

Following the organisation of data from the three pilot interviews seen in Table 6.2, eight more interviews were conducted. On each interview transcript, the description statements were coded according to the ten core attributes, the Miscellaneous category and the two proposed categories of Leadership and Sensitivity.

From the coded transcripts, all statements pertaining to a particular category were placed together in a list (Appendix H). Each description was identified by interview number and transcript page number. In some cases a description was recorded under more than one attribute category, as the categories were not discrete but rather tended to overlap.

Following the completion of the remaining eight interviews simple descriptive statistics were established for each of the ten attribute categories,

the Miscellaneous category, and the proposed new attribute categories of Leadership and Sensitivity. The results are shown in Table 6.3 along with the total frequency of descriptions recorded for each category. Some concern was held by the researcher that with the variation in response frequencies ranging from 10 to 80, it might be the case that one or two interviewees had an undue influence on the outcomes of the data. However, an overall spread of responses across all of the interviews leaves such accusation unsustainable.

Table 6.3
Core And Additional Attribute Frequencies For All Interviews

Attribute category	Frequency for all interviews											Total frequency
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Motivation	4	4	7	5	-	5	3	13	6	5	7	59
Communication	7	1	6	1	1	-	6	16	5	4	3	50
Interests	6	2	4	2	-	2	5	6	8	9	5	49
Leadership	3	3	1	1	2	3	4	8	4	6	1	36
Reasoning	1	2	2	1	1	4	3	6	3	9	2	34
Memory	2	3	5	4	-	3	3	1	2	3	1	27
Problem Solving	-	1	1	1	-	3	2	3	3	8	1	23
Insight	3	2	-	2	1	-	2	5	2	4	1	22
Imag / Creativity	2	-	2	2	2	2	-	4	2	2	3	21
Sensitivity	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	2	6	-	17
Humour	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	2	2	2	10
Inquiry	1	-	1	-	-	2	1	1	-	2	1	9
Miscellaneous	1	1	3	-	-	1	3	11	6	16	1	43

From Table 6.3 it can be seen that descriptions of all twelve attributes were reported during the interviews with each category, except Humour and Sensitivity, being described by over half the interviewees. All interviewees gave at least one description of Reasoning and Leadership, while all but one of the

interviewees provided narratives related to Motivation, Communication, Interests and Memory.

Motivation as an indication of possible giftedness was the most often described attribute with 59 descriptions, followed by the categories of Communication and Interests with 50 and 49 descriptions respectively. Descriptions of exceptional ability related to Motivation were given by interviewees at least twice as often as the three TABs of Memory, Problem Solving Ability and Insight. Moreover, narratives of Motivation were used to describe giftedness over three times more often than descriptions of Imagination / Creativity and the proposed category of Sensitivity; and over five times more often than descriptions of Humour and Inquiry.

Descriptions for all attributes were then examined to identify explicit examples or situations of the attribute which might be useful to include in identification procedures utilising Frasier's TABs. Table 6.4 displays the frequency of specific examples for each interview. In most cases there was no difference between the frequency of descriptions recorded in Table 6.3 and the frequency of specific examples of a particular attribute for the individual interviews shown in Table 6.4. However, there were twelve instances where two or more descriptions given by the interviewee were associated with the same example or situation. These changes are indicated with bold print in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4
Frequencies Of Specific Examples For Core And Additional Attributes From All Interviews

Attribute category	Frequency of specific example for interview											Total frequency
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Motivation	4	4	7	4	-	5	3	13	6	5	7	58
Communication	7	1	6	1	1	-	5	14	5	4	3	47
Interests	5	2	4	2	-	2	5	6	7	9	5	47
Leadership	3	3	1	1	2	3	4	7	4	6	1	35
Reasoning	1	2	2	1	1	4	3	6	3	9	2	34
Memory	2	3	5	3	-	3	3	1	2	3	1	26
Problem Solving	-	1	1	1	-	3	2	3	3	7	1	22
Insight	3	2	-	2	1	-	2	5	2	4	1	22
Imag / Creativity	2	-	2	2	2	2	-	3	2	2	3	20
Sensitivity	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	2	6	-	16
Humour	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	2	2	2	10
Inquiry	1	-	1	-	-	2	1	1	-	2	1	9
Miscellaneous	1	1	3	-	-	1	3	10	6	15	1	41

Within each attribute category, the descriptions were examined in order to determine the types of and frequencies of similar statements reported by the interviewees, and to establish any subcategories which were evident within the attribute category but which had not already been used as an example of the category by Frasier (1992). Some descriptions were assigned to more than one subcategory.

Motivation Subcategories

The interviewees' 59 descriptions categorised as Motivation (Appendix H, pages 24-29) exemplified all three of the subcategories used by Frasier to describe the attribute of Motivation. Her definition (1992) states that motivation is "evidence of a desire to learn" and may be demonstrated through examples of

"persistence in pursuing/ completing self-selected tasks, enthusiasm for learning and having aspirations to be somebody, to achieve". In Table 6.5 it can be seen that seven of the ten interviewees describing motivation gave an example of all three of the Motivation subcategories. The other three interviewees provided descriptions for at least two of the three subcategories. No descriptions of Motivation were provided by one of the interviewees.

Table 6.5
Motivation Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Motivation subcategory	Frequency by Interview											Total for subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Aspires to be someone, to achieve	3	2	2	1	-	1	1	10	3	2	2	27
Persistent in self chosen activities	1	-	2	2	-	1	2	9	2	2	5	26
Enthusiastic, keen learner	-	3	4	2	-	3	2	-	1	1	2	18

The most often reported subcategory of Motivation, with 27 descriptions, involved the characteristics of aspiring to be someone and to achieve. As shown below in the following examples from this subcategory, two descriptions specifically used the terms "achieving" and "achieves".

And then she had to quickly learn the song too on top of it. And so she did that really in about four days, five days. Had to learn how to play it on the guitar too and learn how to sing it (Interview 7, p. 12).

She [Beth's sister] didn't have this drive, this power the thing that Beth's got. Where Beth is really determined that no one is going to (pause) stop her from achieving (Interview 8, p. 4).

It's just like with Liz she really achieves so well all the way through school. (pause) Especially in primary school she achieved so well because like she got the dux at the school she was at which was really good (Interview 11, p. 1).

Also within the Motivation subcategory of "aspire to be someone, to achieve", there were four descriptions which seemed to exemplify the idea of aspiring to be someone through the setting of goals for the future. The following two narratives were typical of this description type.

He's not playing sport. (pause) He's not playing any contact sport when he grows up. He's told us th s. (pause) No football, no soccer. He's playing golf or playing darts (A three year old. Interview 1, p.6).

He's already laid down his plans for the future up to the part where he knows how many children he wants to have. I've said, his partner might have other ideas. He wants two children and he wants (pause) to do University and he's said that he either wants to be a scientific engineer or a mathematician. So (pause) he's fairly well got his life mapped out and he's been on target now since he's gone into high school (Interview 10, p. 2).

Of the 26 Motivation descriptions which were classified as "persistence in self chosen activities", thirteen referred to the child being self-taught or willing to commit extended periods of practice time to a particular interest. The aspect of being self-taught was indicated in the following statements.

She asked me to buy her the music. And she has taught herself how to play parts in that. I mean you're talking really hard stuff (Interview 3, p. 3).

Well she used to pick up books a lot from an early age. She used to try reading them to me. She used to pick out words that she could understand (Interview 4, p. 2).

Other interviewees made comments such as the following which described persistence in terms of practising a skill until it was perfected.

And she's very good with gymnastics. Instead of just giving up on the first go, she'll spend hours at it until she gets it perfect (Interview 4, p. 1).

He's got a lot of trophies at home. Mainly for things like the best trainer, which means he was always first to training and always last to leave and never missed a day sort of thing (Interview 9, p. 1).

He doesn't mind putting in the effort. And that's what I always find pride in the fact that he doesn't mind getting in there and getting his hands dirty and working towards something (Interview 10, p. 3).

The last subcategory of Motivation, with 18 descriptions, related to the learner who was enthusiastic and keen. All of the descriptions were based around school or academic learning. The following were representative of descriptions within this subcategory.

She's going to go for the Girls Grammar Scholarship next year. She's going to see how she goes with that. So I said well if you think you can do it, well you know whatever, do your best and see how you go... I mean if she thinks she can do it, well I'm gonna let her sit for it (Interview 6, p. 1).

That's sort of something the teachers have always commented on is that he was always eager to learn and participated willingly (Interview 9, p. 1).

And he likes school.... [T]he more you challenge Kurt with something the better he'll do. And if something's too easy then he's not interested and he doesn't do it very well at all. One of the things is he's just gone leaps and bounds ahead with Science and Maths and has fallen right on his bum with English simply because there is no challenge there (Interview 10, p. 1).

Communication Subcategories

The attribute of Communication was defined by Frasier (1992) as the "highly expressive use of words, numbers and symbols" which may be demonstrated by "an unusual ability to communicate (verbally, non-verbally, physically, artistically and symbolically)" or with the "use of particularly apt examples." All communication descriptions (Appendix H, pages 1-5) were able to be placed in the first subcategory of "an unusual ability to communicate". Therefore, in order to differentiate the statements beyond a single group, the descriptions were organised according to the type of communication which was described. Table 6.6 presents the various ways in which unusual communication ability was demonstrated.

Table 6.6
Communication Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Communication subcategory	Frequency by Interview											Total for subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Unusual ability to communicate:												
Verbal	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	12	1	2	2	22
Musical	2	-	2	1	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	9
Artistic	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	1	7
Dramatic	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	5
Written	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	4
Second lang.	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Physical (dance)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
Nonverbal	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Uses particularly apt examples	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1

It is obvious from the table that there were over twice as many descriptions of verbal communication as there were for any of the other types of communication. However, it should also be noted that over half of the verbal communication descriptions came from one interviewee. Sample descriptions representative of each type of exceptional communication ability were as follows.

Verbal

Some of his sayings. He's been talking in sentences since he was about (pause) sixteen months old and that's probably when he started sitting at the table and having a conversation (Interview 1, p. 3).

Intelligent. Can converse with anybody. Lots of people have said to me, "What a beautiful daughter you have. She's a lovely girl. Lovely to speak to. So bright and intelligent" (Interview 3, p. 3).

She always talked older than her age (Interview 8, p. 5).

She's very bright. You can tell by the way she speaks and presents herself (Interview 11, p. 1).

Music

He could make up his own music even though he didn't read music. He was terrific. He really was. And that's how he expressed himself (pause) his feelings about anything and everything (Interview 1, p. 1).

Her piano style (pause) her piano teacher said was really (pause) an individual style and was a lovely style. She's got a beautiful touch (Interview 3, p. 4).

And Jodi's got a little thing or two that she's won. Trophies (pause) this is to do with the country music festivals that they have. She won last year. (pause) Took out the juvenile trophy. And this year she did get third with her little friend (Interview 7, p. 2).

Art

If something happens through the day, she'll come home, spread out her art things on the floor, lie on the floor with her paints and just paint something or draw something. And then you go out and you can just about read a story into what she's painted. Like something that might have happened (Interview 8, p. 19).

He can draw. I didn't know myself that he could draw until he was doing some things for art and he (pause) Actually the first time I noticed was in Grade 7 that he did a (pause) They were doing something on Ethiopia and

he drew a man that was actually starving and sitting underneath the shade of a tree and with skeletons and stuff around him. And I thought that was really (pause) well because the feeling came through with that bit of art work (Interview 10, p. 6).

Drama

She went down to Movie World just recently with (pause) her theatre class. (pause) There were about six of her friends. They did a video of them singing a Cindi Lauper song. And for some reason, Beth just stands out. And she seems to be the one who's trying to get the other girls (pause) you can see it in (pause) ever the man who was filming it, you could see him pulling her out. Like as you're watching it, you can see that he focused on her too, even though he mightn't have meant to. All through the film, Beth's there trying to get the other girls going and everything (Interview 8, p. 20).

He's a real actor. He's a real performer. He will walk in and either speak in a tone of voice that's meant to sort of crack everybody up or tell (pause) you a lie. Sort of say something to you. And when you react to it, then he's sort of got you sort of thing (Interview 9, p. 13).

Written

And they have to read out (pause) it's really like the stuff she does is quite heavy. Like the poetry, it's real in depth and you really have to understand it. And she writes some beautiful poetry (Interview 3, p. 3).

The teacher had marked off all these different poems and things that the class had written and she marked the different ones that she thought were really good and a fair few of them were Jodi's. And the teacher told me that Jodi was very good at writing you know like poems or stories. Really good at writing stories (Interview 7, p. 1).

Second language

He loves using that [Aboriginal] language. In fact he talks a lot of it at home (Interview 1, p. 6).

He's just started up German and he's the top of the whole Grade 11s (Interview 2, p. 3).

Physical (dance)

He thinks nothing of standing out in front of us and doing a, you know, a song and dance for you (Interview 9, p. 5).

Nonverbal

They have the ability to express things in the way of sign language. You know they don't speak things. In the way of eye contact (pause) they'll be talking to someone and they signal and you will see that (Interview 5, p. 8).

It also can be seen from Table 6.6 that only one description of verbal communication fell into the subcategory of "uses particularly apt examples." This narrative was as follows:

The lady said (pause) [Beth] was just hitting the nail on the head all the time. She had 'em all (pause) crying and that, listening to her speech (Interview 8, p. 21).

Interests Subcategories

Ten of the eleven interviewees provided 49 descriptions (Appendix H, pages 16-20) of the attribute Interests, which was defined as "intense (sometimes unusual) interests" (Frasier, 1992) The three subcategories of the

Interests attribute were all represented in four of the interviews. Interviewees provided almost twice as many examples of “pursue an activity unceasingly” as they gave for either of the other two subcategories. Furthermore, this subcategory was described by all but one of the eleven interviewees. The frequencies by interview of the Interests subcategories can be seen in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7
Interests Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Interests subcategory	Frequency by Interview											Total for subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Pursue an activity unceasingly	2	1	4	2	-	2	4	3	3	3	4	28
Self starter	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	3	1	12
Unusual or advanced interest	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	2	-	8

Of the 28 narratives describing the unceasing pursuit of an interest, sporting activities were mentioned 10 times with music and reading being described 5 times each. Other interests mentioned less frequently were computers (2), art (2), woodwork (2), writing (1), crossword puzzles (1) and cooking (1). Following are four examples of the Interests attribute which were coded in the subcategory of “pursue an activity unceasingly”.

Reads non stop. ... [A]ll her time at home is spent reading (Interview 3, p. 3).

When I come to school to work, I'll be looking for her to give her, her lunch and I'll find her up in the computer room. Better go and have your dinner.

She says oh yeah, I'll be just there in a minute. I'll just finish this up. Never comes (Interview 6, p. 3).

He loves sport. He's a very active type person. He's played a full range of sports in his fifteen years. He's always played rugby league right up until in the last two years when he's switched to AFL because he felt, he's gone as far as he wanted to in league and AFL was something different and he was learning new skills that way. And he loves to do those sorts of things (Interview 10, p. 1).

He was forever building cubby houses and I don't mean just a couple tin sheets up against the fence or sheets inside pinned to things. He built the craziest cubby houses (Interview 10, p. 7).

There were twelve interview descriptions about the attribute of Interests which provided examples of being a "self-starter". Eight of these examples described the child initiating and following through with an interest long enough to achieve a certain degree of proficiency. Two examples of this type of Interests descriptions were:

But he could pick up a guitar (Pause) He couldn't read music. (Pause) Listen to a song and play it and maybe miss one beat in the song. I thought that was really outstanding (Interview 1, p. 1).

He can draw. I didn't know myself that he could draw until he was doing some things for art... (Interview 10, p. 5).

The other descriptions spoke of the initial exploration of an interest but not necessarily extended participation, such as the following example.

Jodi enjoys... going down there [to the radio station] but she hasn't spoke on the radio herself (Interview 7, p. 5).

Finally all the examples of the subcategory 'unusual or advanced interest in a topic' were concerned with the aspect of an interest which was advanced for the child's age. Two such examples are provided below.

Public speaking on reconciliation. Beth's real aim is to try to get proper reconciliation. You should have brought your speech along. There's a possibility that her speech might get published too (Interview 8, p. 12).

When he was younger, he loved to read. He was always reading, and even read the newspaper at a very early age (Interview 9, p. 1).

Leadership Subcategories

Analysing the types of behaviours which had been coded under the category of Leadership (Appendix H, pages 37-40), revealed four subcategories which are shown in Table 6.8. The subcategories of "leader in performance" and "independent thinker" were slightly different from the other two leadership subcategories in that they did not have an interpersonal aspect which may be more commonly associated with the concept of leadership. Nonetheless, there was seen to be an implicit leadership quality about the examples in those subcategories.

Table 6.8
Leadership Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Leadership subcategory	Frequency by Interview											Total for subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Leader in performance	1	2	1	-	-	2	4	3	1	3	-	17
Persuade & influence people's behaviour	1	1	-	1	2	-	-	1	2	3	-	11
Effectively organise people	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	4
Independent thinker	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	4

The Leadership subcategories of “leader in achievement” and “persuade and influence people’s behaviour” were described by over half of the interviewees and had a frequency of 17 and 11 respectively, as can be seen from Table 6.8.

The examples of “leader in performance” all described the child in terms of being a ‘top performer’ in a particular field of endeavour. Five examples were given of a “leader in performance” or ‘top performer’ in an academic area, four in the area of public speaking, three in music, two in the area of art, and one in sports. Four examples which typified the descriptions in the subcategory of “leader in performance” are as follows.

The only thing I knew is when he went away for the top 5% of all Aboriginal students in high school and came fifth or sixth out of the whole of Australia down in Adelaide (Interview 2, p. 2).

A letter came home and just said that she got picked to go into this maths centre to do problem solving. So I was quite happy that she got picked to go in (Interview 6, p. 5).

[Beth speaking] And I might be going to Canada next year. I've been asked to go over there and represent the Australian Aboriginals for this United Nations conference. And I've got to go over there and give speeches and that (Interview 8, p. 11).

His sporting abilities just amazed me. He was actually asked this year to play reserve grade where he was [a] fourteen year old playing against men. (Pause) And the coach came and told him later that ... he was leading twenty points as best and fairest player for the reserve grade (Interview 10, p. 5).

The subcategory of “persuade and influence people’s behaviour” was exemplified by the following three descriptions.

He was also probably gifted in the area where he could get anybody to do things for him. I don't know what you call them but I call them con men (Interview 1, p. 2).

Yeah, so he's often been voted in as class captain or student councilor. That began sort of in Mackay where the teacher chose him as class captain, and explained to me that it was because, even though there were more popular kids and all this sort of thing, Thomas was the one who was able to influence the others' behaviour by his own behaviour (Interview 9, p. 8).

Yeah, a group of them, ... [at school] ... were given a group. He wanted the poem and he wanted to, whether the group agreed on it that one of them read. He ended up reading the poem while the rest of them acted out the poem (Interview 10, p. 5).

The Leadership subcategories of “effectively organise people” and “independent thinker” were described to a lesser extent, with 4 examples each. The first two following examples indicated the ability to effectively organise people. The latter two examples suggested an independence of thought.

And he ended up forming a band. And he continued with his painting and drawings. He's still playing in this band today out there. He gets quite a bit of work. He has been a productive person (Interview 1, p. 2).

They really go out to the front and do... Yeah both the girls are like that you know, they can take charge and get things done but Liz is domineering. ... Whereas Carmen is more of a leader but she's not boss (Interview 11, p. 7).

[Beth speaking] I don't care what everyone says. I just go and do what I want to do (Interview 8, p. 14).

Thomas's always been a very strong-willed kid. He's not easily led (Interview 9, p. 12).

Reasoning Subcategories

Reasoning, defined by Frasier (1992) as “logical approaches to figuring out solutions”, was indicated in 34 descriptions (Appendix H, pages 33-36) and was described by all interviewees. The frequencies of descriptions for the three subcategories of the attribute Reasoning are shown in Table 6.9. The table shows that most descriptions were related to the subcategories of “logical thinking manner to generate likely answer” (17 examples) and “exceptional

critical thinking skills” (13 examples). A total of six narratives which described the “unusual ability to make generalisations” was provided by five interviewees.

Table 6.9
Reasoning Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Reasoning subcategory	Frequency by Interview											Total for subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Logical thinking manner to generate a likely answer	-	1	-	-	-	4	2	2	1	6	1	17
Exceptional critical thinking skills	-	1	2	-	1	1	1	3	1	3	-	13
Unusual ability to make generalisations	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	6

Following are two examples which typified the descriptions of a “logical thinking manner to generate a likely answer.”

When he picks up a football he really thinks about it. You can see. You can tell he's not just going to run with it or do something. You can see he's just standing back thinking what he's going to do next (Interview 2, p. 1).

I think that he has that ability to be able to mentally go through step by step what he'll need to do to finish up with a certain thing. ... [H]e would of had to do that too and not just visualise the cubby house. But to think well here are all the scrap things that are just laying around the yard anyway (Interview 10, p. 9).

In the subcategory of ‘exceptional critical thinking skills’, examples appeared to be of two types. One type explicitly spoke of thinking skills while the other type only implied the notion that exceptional critical thinking skills were being utilised. The first two descriptions shown below are indicative of the

explicit type while the latter two examples imply the use of exceptional critical thinking skills.

And I think to show you're a critical thinker could be something teachers might look for [to help recognise gifted students]. They probably do that anyway because like in maths, social studies and things, kids are using critical thinking skills (Interview 5, p. 9).

She's still a lot more mature for her age because she thinks. She's thinking all the time. She's a constant thinker (Interview 8, p. 12).

They sort of help each other with their homework and she mainly helps her big sister when her sister doesn't know much (Interview 6, p. 3).

I said you just tell me and I'll come up [to school] and do something about it [kids teasing at school]. He said no you'll only make it worse. Just leave it. ...[H]e sort of turned them around in his own quiet way... and obviously gained their respect in him. Never had any problems afterwards so that's something that sticks in my mind ... (Interview 9, p. 7).

The final subcategory of Reasoning was "have an unusual ability to make generalisations" for which 6 descriptions were given. Two examples of this subcategory are provided here.

She wanted to take him to Sea World and it was... he's three of course... and it's eighteen dollars for three year olds and she told him that he was two. And then she took him to the movies one night... a drive in and the fellow said how old's your little boy. And she said two. And he said no I'm not Mum. I'm three. I'm only two when I go to Sea World (Interview 1, p. 6).

Even as a kid watching football on TV that was sort of one area where it did surprise me how he could follow the game as far as rules and moves in play went as probably a ten years old. And he could follow a football game to the same standard as what I would imagine you know a male adult would sit and sort of be able to do that (Interview 9, p. 4-5).

Memory Subcategories

Memory was defined by Frasier (1992) as a “large storehouse of information on school or non-school topics.” For the attribute of Memory, all four subcategories were illustrated by at least 4 examples. Many (19) of the Memory descriptions could be classified in the subcategory of “remember information easily” and were provided by nine of the eleven interviewees. Seven interviewees each provided one example of the subcategory “already know many things”. The other two subcategories, “pay attention to detail” and “have a wealth of knowledge about a topic(s)”, had four examples each. The description frequencies for the four Memory subcategories are shown by interview in Table 6.10.

Table 6.10
Memory Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Memory subcategory	Frequency by Interview											Total for subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Remember information easily	1	2	4	3	-	2	2	-	1	3	1	19
Already know many things	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	7
Pay attention to detail	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	4
Have a wealth of knowledge about a topic(s)	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	4

The following three descriptions are examples of the subcategory “remember information easily.”

Any ad that comes on TV he knows the words and sings it through (Interview 1, p. 5).

He can just pick up everything straight away. He's just got that natural sort of talent that he can just pick up things very quickly. He seems to know (Interview 2, p. 2).

And the teacher would often say to me “There are some days Cheryl would come into the class and no matter what I do I cannot get her to concentrate on the board.” So I spoke to Cheryl about this. And she said, “It's boring. They tell you the same thing over and over and over and over again ‘til you get it.” So you know I think eventually she switched off (Interview 3, p. 2).

Another subcategory of Memory, “already knows many things” was described seven times. The interviewees expressed surprise that their children had somehow learned particular pieces of information with no conscious effort on the parents’ part to teach the knowledge. Following are two examples of this subcategory.

He always played with his two older brothers. (pause) He could do everything. When they were in school, (pause) he could do what they were doing. (pause) When they were counting he was counting. When they were doing their alphabet he was doing it as well (Interview 2, pp. 4-5).

One of the things that I can remember about Kurt is that he could name some of the animals around the yard at a very young age. That's a bird

he'd say. He would of been not quite one. He knew birds and lizards and he knew them by their names (Interview 10, p. 1).

All four examples coded as "pays attention to detail" were associated with academic situations where an extremely accurate degree of memory was attained. The following descriptions demonstrated this type of example.

At school she could get 100% on papers. No problems at all in primary (Interview 3, p. 1).

She's in Grade 3 and she brought her homework home the other day and it was all correct (Interview 4, p. 1).

Lastly, the four examples in the Memory subcategory of "has a wealth of information about a topic", all implied a storehouse of information about a particular topic which was viewed as unusually extensive with respect to the child's age. Two of these examples are shown below.

Cheryl topped her class in German (Interview 3, p. 4).

He then sat for that [a referee's exam] when he was thirteen. And he had to wait six months to receive his registration card because they can't have that until they are fourteen (Interview 9, p. 4).

Problem Solving Ability Subcategories

The attribute of Problem Solving Ability, defined by Frasier (1992) as "effective, often inventive, strategies for recognising and solving problems", was described by nine interviewees with 23 examples. (See Appendix H, pages 30-32.) In coding Problem Solving Ability descriptions into four subcategories, it

was found that most (15) descriptions, provided by seven interviewees were aptly placed in the "have exceptional ability in devising a systematic strategy for problem solving" subcategory. Relatively few were identified for the subcategories of "change strategy if it is not working" (3), "create new designs" (3), and "be an inventor and innovator" (2). Table 6.11 indicates these frequencies for the Problem Solving Ability subcategories by interview.

Table 6.11
Problem Solving Ability Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Problem Solving Ability subcategory	Frequency by Interview											Total for subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Ability in devising a systematic strategy	-	1	-	-	-	3	2	2	3	3	1	15
Change strategy if it is not working	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	3
Create new designs	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	3
Be an inventor/ innovator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2

Of the fifteen examples in the subcategory of "ability in devising a systematic strategy," seven involved an academic context, while five described the child's ability to resolve a social situation through problem solving. The other three examples in the subcategory dealt with problem solving ability in sports, homework or crossword puzzles.

Of the following two descriptions, the first represented problem solving in an academic context, while the second provided an example of a social context where problem solving ability was seen to be exceptional.

A letter came home and just said that she got picked to go into this maths centre to do problem solving. So I was quite happy that she got picked to go in (Interview 6, p. 5).

I said you just tell me and I'll come up [to school] and do something about it [kids teasing at school]. He said no you'll only make it worse. Just leave it. Anyway I just sort of kept asking him regularly how he was going, if it was okay. And it sort of came home to me then the next year how successful he had been. He was voted in as class captain and student councilor by the very same kids. He sort of turned them around in his own quiet way. And obviously gained their respect in him, never had any problems afterwards so that's something that sticks in my mind as to how he's able to turn the other cheek and solve his own problems (Interview 9, p. 7).

The following are examples of the Problem Solving Ability subcategories of "change strategy if it is not working", "create new designs" and "be an inventor/ and innovator", respectively.

Because she was offered a job and she thought well I'll get out of the school system because all that was doing, Beth thought, was just pulling her down, the way she was at school (Interview 8, p. 2).

The carving was something that he does. It's [a table] about that wide and it's just carved with flowers and swirls. And then there's sayings, like "Never judge a book by its cover.", carved into the thing and all these different sayings with swirls and carvings and it looks really nice (Interview 10, p. 7).

He was forever building cubby houses and I don't mean just a couple tin sheets up against the fence or sheets inside [the house] pinned to things.

The phrase "seems to know" appeared in two (Interview 2, p. 2; Interview 7, p. 3) of the descriptions related to intuitiveness. Additionally other "intuitiveness" descriptions used similar phrases such as "seemed to learn quickly" (Interview 7, p. 3) and "uncanny [ability]... o always know" (Interview 8, p. 4). The following two examples demonstrate this type of statement.

With the singing, she seems to know what notes to hit. And also, with the guitar she picked up how to play the guitar pretty quickly and the notes and how you play and things like that (Interview 7, p. 6).

He seems to... have... you know like an insight into situations sometimes (Interview 9, p. 8).

Four of the descriptions coded as "keenly observant" described this subcategory in terms of learning something quickly. The following two passages indicate this type of ability to keenly observe.

He always played with his two older brothers. (Pause) He could do everything. When they were in school, he could do what they were doing. (Pause) When they were counting he was counting. When they were doing their alphabet, he was doing it as well (Interview 2, p. 4-5).

A friend of mine who's been teaching him the guitar, he's been amazed by the speed with which Kuri can play back anything he shows him (Interview 10, p. 2).

The other two descriptions of "keenly observant" focused on "seeing different sides to a situation" (Interview 5, p. 7) and being aware of implied

meanings of speech in a social situation. An example of the latter type of description is, "If somebody has a sarcastic answer and it's not really blatant he'll pick it up before anybody else will" (Interview 10, p. 11).

Finally six descriptions of the Insight attribute provided by two interviewees were coded in the subcategory of "have exceptional ability to draw conclusions".

One of these examples about an eighteen month old child is presented below.

We went in to have breakfast at a coffee shop and he wouldn't sit still. The owner came over and said I've got a chair for you and put him in this high chair. And he thought that was great because he's never ever sat in a high chair. ... And [the fellow] said, "Gee he's a bright little fellow." And we said, "Yeah he is. He's spent quite a bit of time with adults. There's not too many children around." And he said, "Ah, then he's probably spoilt. And before the fellow got it out Daniel looked around and said, "And nice." So he wasn't going to be naughty spoilt. And for a child to pick up something like that (Interview 1, p. 3).

Sensitivity Subcategories

Four of the eleven interviewees gave descriptions of a child which were placed in the newly created attribute category of Sensitivity. (See Appendix H, pages 41-43.) The terminology used by one of the interviewees provided a general description for the attribute of Sensitivity. She described her daughter as "... always ... concerned, highly sensitive [and] a people person" (Interview 8, p. 16).

For the attribute of Sensitivity, only two subcategories emerged through data analysis of the seventeen Sensitivity descriptions. These were "sensitive to

the needs of others" and "sense others' emotions". Three of these statements were not coded in either subcategory as the interviewee simply stated that their child was a very sensitive person without further elaboration. Of the remaining fourteen descriptions six distinctly referred to a child being "sensitive to the needs of others", five were in the subcategory of "sense others' emotions" and two displayed elements of both subcategories. As can be seen in Table 6.13, this resulted in eight descriptions coded as "sensitive to the needs of others" and seven descriptions placed in the subcategory of "sense others' emotions".

Table 6.13
Sensitivity Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Sensitivity Subcategory	Frequency by Interview											Total for Subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Sensitive to the needs of others	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	5	-	8
Sense other's emotions	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	7

Following are descriptions from the category of Sensitivity. The first two narratives provided examples of being sensitive to the needs of others, the second two described the ability to sense others' emotions and the last description provided an example where both subcategories were characterised.

And my dad passed away a couple of years ago and he was the grandson who sort of took it upon himself to go and stay with mum after dad (pause) you know had gone. Because he knew Nan would be lonely. You know even though he was at high school and there was probably other things that he may have liked to have been doing. He would (pause) you know (pause) night after night he'd go and stay with Nan and that has sort of only tapered off till now he probably only goes (pause) might only go once

every month or so now. But over the two years he sort of kept that up. And even still we'll often just say (pause) go down and see Nan for a while she might be lonely (pause) that sort of thing. He's a pretty (pause) yeah pretty sensitive sort of caring kid that way (Interview 9, p. 8).

But he's gone around and helped around the yard and any other little things he could do for them knowing that they're going through a stressful time going to Brisbane with the IVF program and stuff. So he's gone around and generally tried to do any little thing. So he's sensitive in that way too (Interview 10, p. 3).

He [the interviewee's grandson] was about nine months old and I lost my only son. (pause) But every time I felt down and depressed that child never left me. He'd come and stand beside me and just put his hand on my leg or arm and say, "You okay Nan?" I mean for someone to pick (pause) I know they are alert (pause) I suppose very sensitive (pause) and they know (pause) well they can read moods and things but at that age (pause) (Interview 1, p. 4).

And also she had this uncanny (pause) she used to always know if someone was having a go at her or something like that, even when she was real young (Interview 8, p. 4).

But he said there was one instance where he went to a party and one of the girls got a bit under the weather and actually grabbed the boys. I said oh you know if you're all so embarrassed what are you going to do about it? And he said well our group of friends have got together and we all talked about her behaviour and how best we could help her. What they did, they all picked an incident that she'd done that night and they all went one at a time. There was four of them I think and just gently told her what

she had done and how embarrassing it was not just for her to do that but it embarrassed them too. Because she was their friend and they didn't like her to be doing those things. (pause) So that was really sensitive I thought of them (Interview 10, p. 11).

Imagination / Creativity Subcategories

The attribute of Imagination / Creativity was defined by Frasier (1992) as "produces many ideas; highly original." Table 6.14 indicates that all but one of the subcategories of the attribute Imagination / Creativity were described by at least one of the interviewees. The most often described subcategory was "produce many different ideas" with eight descriptions given by six different interviewees. Three interviewees provided four examples each for the subcategories of "be exceptionally ingenious using everyday materials," "have wild, unusual sometimes silly ideas" and "highly curious." Only one description was recorded for the subcategory of "be keenly observant." (See Appendix H, pages 8-10.)

Table 6.14
Imagination / Creativity Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Imagination / Creativity subcategory	Frequency by Interview											Total for subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Produces many different ideas	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	2	1	2	8
Ingenious use of everyday materials	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	4
Wild, unusual ideas	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	4
Highly curious	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	4
Be keenly observant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1

Three descriptions which indicated an exceptional ability to produce many different ideas which were highly original are as follows.

[Beth speaking] So the teacher said you could use any material you wanted to so I said oh I'll use clay then. And I just made all these real big pots and that. And she just goes, "That's your first time you've ever used clay?" and I said, "Yeah." She goes, "That is really good" cause she reckoned, you know, they looked like the rebirth of just nature 'cause I've got the pots and it looked like a big flower and I've got all Aboriginal art you know like 3-D, 3-dimensional. [Beth's mother speaking] Her imagination keeps going and going and going until she eventually comes up with this thing that she's got (Interview 8, p. 19).

Just another thing he does do in his spare time is sit and design sports clothes continuously. I mean I've got pages and pages of jerseys for the Australian football team and cricket clothes for the Australian cricket team. And then he writes up his team list beside it which always includes himself of course (Interview 9, p. 3).

She's very imaginative. You know she can put pen to paper with no trouble. (Pause) It's just that she can do these sorts of things and come up with it (Interview 11, p. 4).

The following description describes an ingenious use of everyday materials.

We have an old table like this (indicated table where we were sitting) that he's carved patterns into for me. ...[I]t's about that wide and it's just carved with flowers and swirls .. And then there's sayings, like 'Never judge a book by its cover.', carved into the ... [table] and all these different sayings with swirls and carvings. And it looks really nice (Interview 10, p. 7).

In the following two examples describing a three-year-old boy and a seventeen-year-old girl, the interviewees provided examples of the subcategory related to having wild, unusual sometimes silly ideas.

A child that can sit up at the table and have a conversation. He does. He has this every night. He must have a conversation every night at the dinner table. If he can't think of anything that's happened through the day, he'll make up a story. And it's usually about crocodiles or sharks. But he'll tell you a whole story about a crocodile or a shark and it's made up (Interview 1, p. 3).

She's creative and her imagination. ... [S]he's really all into theatre and art and when she was younger she always used to like mucking around with things. You know, using her imagination a lot. And her imagination is really wild (Interview 8, p. 19).

Finally, the only description to be classified as demonstrating the Imagination / Creativity subcategory of "be keenly observant" is shown below.

Her imagination is just really vivid. It's almost like... she's been there before or done it or something (Interview 8, p. 19).

Humour Subcategories

The attribute Humour was described by Frasier (1992) as "conveys and picks up on humour." It can be seen from Table 6.15 that all of the three subcategories for the attribute Humour were described, but only by a small number of the interviewees. Additionally, one other subcategory was created

and designated as "quick wit" in order to capture a particular element of three statements made by two of the interviewees (Appendix H, pages 6-7).

Table 6.15
Humour Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Humour subcategory	Frequency by Interview											Total for subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Keen sense of humour	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	2	5
Quick wit	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
Capacity for seeing unusual relationships	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Unusual emotional depth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2

The subcategory of "have [a] keen sense of humour" had the greatest number of descriptions with five examples. Two of these examples were also coded as "quick wit." Provided below are two examples of the subcategory, "have [a] keen sense of humour."

He still laughs to this day about the [time] some Grade 7 kids yelled out to him, "Hey nigger pull your socks up. Why don't you nigger pull your socks up?" (Pause) And he bent down and pulled his socks up (Interview 9, p. 7).

Carmen is really incredible. Like I'll be having a really horrible day and she'll come along and she'll just come out with something really witty. And you just have to stop and laugh. And with the humour. Carmen just comes up with these really weird things and gets us all going (Interview 11, p. 5).

All three of the interviewees who provided descriptions placed in the subcategory of "quick wit," indicated amazement at how quickly the child could

respond in a humorous manner to a situation or person. The following description demonstrates this aspect of quick wit.

[Interviewer: But she has this exceptional humour?] Interviewee: Yeah. If she was given a situation like ... she's just so quick... so creative. Somebody could say something and she'll just come off the top of her head. She's incredible (Interview 11, p. 6).

Two descriptions were coded in the subcategory of "have a capacity for seeing unusual relationships." (One of those descriptions follows below.

And one of them said hey you fellows swim funny down here 'cause they were doing the free style. He said, "Why?" He said, "Oh, you don't make splashes up there, you'll get hit." He said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Cause you make all that noise the crocodiles will get you." So he's thinking about what if they swam like that in the creek up there (pause) you know. So I tell you really they've got an extremely (pause) a very good creative mind (Interview 5 p. 8).

Finally the Humour subcategory of "show an unusual emotional depth" was indicated by two descriptions both from the same interviewee. One of these was "Kurt's sense of humour is sometimes very dry. And he finds some things funny that I wouldn't and sometimes it's a cynical type humour. A black type humour I suppose you'd say. Not hurtful or anything" (Interview 10, p. 11).

Inquiry Subcategories

Nine descriptions were recorded for the attribute of Inquiry, which Frasier (1992) defined as "questions, experiments, explores" (See Appendix H, pages

11-12). As shown in Table 6.16, eight of the nine descriptions demonstrated the subcategory of "extensively explore devices, materials or situations." No descriptions were recorded for the subcategories of "play or experiment with ideas" or "ask unusual questions for his/ her age." However, it was found that four of the examples described the characteristic of "always questioning." A subcategory by this name was heretofore included under the attribute of Inquiry.

Table 6.16
Inquiry Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Inquiry subcategory	Frequency by Interview											Total for subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Extensively explore devices, materials or situations	1	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	-	2	1	8
Always questioning	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	4
Play or experiment with ideas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unusual questions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The descriptions which follow demonstrated the subcategory of "extensively explores devices, materials or situations" in the context of a situation and in terms of a device.

Recently a friend of ours has joined the IVF program and he [the interviewee's son] wanted to know more about IVF, and the problems that she was having because she couldn't conceive. And it wasn't just sticky-beaking. It was he really wanted to know. He was really interested in what was wrong ... (Interview 10, p. 3).

He's just one of those kids that (pause) well I used to let him fiddle with a lot of stuff when he was little and he (pause) things that didn't work any more like old radios and that (Interview 10, p. 8).

Two of the three descriptions recorded for the newly created subcategory of "always questioning" used the word "inquisitive" while the third one indicated the attribute of Inquiry when the interviewee described her daughter as "inclined to... yell out... [and] ask a question." Following is an example from that subcategory.

Both the girls were inquisitive like that. But it could be annoying because they would just be constantly asking like why does this happen. ... Carmen, ... she's a real Dorrie Evans. She always wants to know everything. (pause) Carmen, it may not interest her in the least but she just wants to know (Interview 11, p. 5).

Miscellaneous Subcategories

The Miscellaneous category contained 43 description segments from eight of the eleven interviews (Appendix H, pages 44-48). Upon analysis of these descriptions, there emerged four groups coded by the researcher as maturity (18 examples), responsible (22 examples), confident (13 examples), and self-awareness (4 examples), with some examples coded in more than one group. Four segments from two interviews were not coded. Table 6.17 shows the description frequencies for the four subcategories by interview.

Table 6.17
Miscellaneous Subcategory Frequencies By Interview

Miscellaneous subcategory	Frequency by interview											Total for subcategory
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Responsible	-	1	2	-	-	1	1	3	5	9	-	22
Maturity	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	4	3	9	-	18
Confident	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	7	2	1	-	13
Self-awareness	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	4

It is recognised that Interviewees 8, 9 and 10 were the major contributors of examples in the Miscellaneous category. However, it should be noted that five other interviewees also gave similar miscellaneous descriptions which were classified in three of the four subcategories.

More descriptions were provided for the subcategory of “responsible” than for any of the other three subcategories. The 22 descriptions were provided by 7 of the eleven interviewees. Three types of descriptions concerned with being responsible were evident. Nine descriptions from six interviewees spoke of a “good kid” quality which they felt was exceptional. The following six narratives are examples of that type of responsibility.

He's just (pause) friends with everyone. He's just got everything. You know if you ever wanted your son to be like someone, it would be him. He's just well-mannered. He's quiet when you want him to be (Interview 2, p. 2).

And you know Cheryl even in her classes now is very good. People like her. She's a good kid. Would never be in trouble, never be in detention or get a red mark (Interview 3, p. 2).

But she's a really good kid. She normally sits and listens and does her work. She hardly gets into trouble. Doesn't talk much (Interview 6, p. 2).

And she listens. Well that's another thing. Very well-behaved. Never really a problem with her behaviour at all. And a pleasure to teach. That's what's nearly on all her report cards. So that's how it's been really with Jodi through her school life. I've always got good reports about her (Interview 7, p. 1).

He's a pretty responsible kid. I don't have to worry much. Like he'll often come up to the school to play basketball after hours. And even though I still warn him before he leaves, I don't really worry that he's the sort of kid that would sort of start snooping around classrooms (Interview 9, p. 2).

He's always, usually through primary school, was fairly well behaved (Interview 10, p. 3).

A second type of characteristic used to describe “responsible” talked of the ability to demonstrate responsible social behaviour in a specific context. There were eight of these types of descriptions given by two interviewees. Two examples of this type are provided here.

Thomas said to me himself he couldn't believe how these kids were back chatting their parents and getting away with it. ... It's sort of heartening to think that he was as astounded by it as I was. Just that's one thing that... he doesn't do. I mean as tempting as it must be as an antisocial little teenager to backchat and to rebel a bit (Interview 9, p. 11).

He's had to carry more of a responsibility around the house and helping around the yard and helping with the family and those sorts of things. And

he's done it really well without turning spiteful or angry. He's just been only too happy to shoulder his share of the load. Whether that's helped make him into the person that he is I don't know. I know that some people would tend to rebel against some of the things that he's done and from the responsibilities that he's had but he's never been like that (Interview 10, p. 10).

A third type of responsibility, which was described by two of the interviewees in three separate narratives, involved knowing right from wrong and acting to support what is fair and just. All three of these descriptions are included below.

She's always been real family oriented (pause) always wanting everything right for her family and (pause) she'd do anything to try to make everything right (Interview 8, p. 14).

Well, since Beth's got older and started to focus. Well her focus is on trying to right what's wrong in Australia as far as the indigenous people (Interview 8, p. 18).

You know he's able to see what (pause) through fairly clear eyes I think what the kids had what's right and what's wrong (Interview 9, p. 12).

Eleven of the 43 Miscellaneous descriptions were coded as "maturity" and "responsible" since elements of both subcategories were present within a single description. Following are three such examples.

And she wanted to ride it to school when she started Grade 1, but I said no. So I ended up walking her to school for the first six months and then she goes "Oh come on Mum. I'm good enough. I can ride." So she takes off

riding to school in Grade 1. You know I thought it was exceptional the way she used to do that. Just ride off to school on this big bike and she'd know exactly where to come home (Interview 8, p. 4).

He's always been able to distance himself from anyone that he thought (pause) you know was up to no good or just generally (pause) just didn't like the look of them. And he's not (pause) he's just is not frightened to say oh no I don't feel like it. Ycus go. I'll stay home (Interview 9, p. 12).

I was talking to a friend of mine recently who said that he's got all the time in the world for Kurt because he's just a nice kid that he's just not like having a kid around. He's helped this bloke. He's a panel beater and he actually does things by contract. And he was running behind on one contract and he was in the shed by himself and he asked if Kurt could come over and keep him company. And Kurt actually stayed up and helped him work and came home about six o'clock the next morning. And he said he couldn't sort of stop Kurt. He was saying I'll make coffee or something. But Kurt would be there sanding down and you know what can I do to help, what can I do to help? And not once did he whinge about getting tired or anything (Interview 10, p. 10).

Of the 19 descriptions placed in the subcategory of "maturity", three of the examples actually used the term "maturity" or "mature" to describe an exceptional ability which indicated that a child was very bright. Other interviewees spoke of a child being "well beyond" his age (Interview 1, p. 7), "older than her age" (Interview 8, p. 4) and "[o]lder in her mind" (Interview 8, p. 16). Following are four examples of the "maturity" subcategory.

I'm doing psychology and I read some of the books you know. And I think (pause) when I read it that none of this applies to my grandchild. You know at this age they're doing that in the book but he's well beyond it (Interview 1, p. 7).

She reads Stephen King which I'm not really impressed with. But I said to her, "Doesn't that scare you?" She said, "No, it's not like that." (pause) She has that type of maturity, that she can cope with that (Interview 3, p. 5).

She always seemed to be older. Older in her mind... (Interview 8, p. 16).

Kurt always seemed to be a bit more mature than other kids his age for some reason or other and it's really showed through in the last couple of years. In his social life he tends to sometimes look down on other kids that drink or smoke and things like that. He thinks that they're being a bit stupid and that and they don't need to do those sorts of things (Interview 10, p. 1).

The Miscellaneous subcategory of "confident" contained 13 descriptions from five interviewees. Two of these interviewees used the terms "confidence" and "self-confidence" in the descriptions. For example, "The older daughter even though she was brainy at school, she hasn't got that same self-confidence in herself as what Beth's got with her Aboriginality" (Interview 8, p. 4) and "That never ceases to amaze me where he gets his confidence from" (Interview 9, p. 5).

Nine of the descriptions gave examples of being confident in a social situation while three descriptions from one interviewee described a confidence

in one's own abilities. An example of this latter type of confidence can be seen in the following description.

And she wanted to ride it to school when she started Grade 1, but I said no. So I ended up walking her to school for the first six months and then she goes "Oh come on Mum I'm good enough. I can ride." So she takes off riding to school in Grade 1. You know I thought it was exceptional the way she used to do that. Just ride off to school on this big bike... (Interview 8, p. 4).

The three descriptions which follow are examples of confidence in a social situation.

All I know is that I've just had no worries with how she went with school. And when she went into Kindy. Well Jodi was the type of child that because she was so quiet I thought that she'd be the child that cried, you know when you dropped her off. But she never. [Interviewer: So she's quiet but confident?] Yeah, that's what I'd call her, because she never cried when I left her at Kindy and when it was preschool time too it was the same. School too, there were no problems (Interview 7, p. 7).

The girls started being smart, just being a little bit niggly to me at morning tea time. And Beth her normal self, wanting to defend all the time her family, she comes and stood in front of me (Interview 8, p. 6).

So he's always impressed me with his calmness around other people, that he's always been able to make friends very easy. Doesn't matter where we've traveled to, he's always been the first to bring home a friend (Interview 10, p. 1).

Finally, four of the miscellaneous statements from one of the interviews, in which the mother and daughter took part, described an exceptional ability which had to do with self-awareness. All four of these descriptions are listed below.

All those misconceptions have to be overcome. (pause) She decided no one's going to put me down, make me feel inferior (Interview 8, p. 1).

Well she said no one's gonna just keep me packing shelves for the rest of my life. And she knew she had the ability (Interview 8, p. 2).

[Beth speaking] If I'm really interested in something I just find any way possible. I just go and find it out myself. I mean like I really like talking to older people and I just listen. (pause) Listen all the time (Interview 8, p. 13).

[Beth speaking] If I've got someone there who will support me, I'm all right. You know I just need somebody out there to talk to about it. I'm just that type of person where I need somebody else to communicate my ideas and then I'm all right to be able to put it on paper (Interview 8, p. 18).

The descriptions grouped in the Miscellaneous subcategories of "mature behaviour and thought", "demonstrate a high degree of social responsibility, conscious moral behaviour" and "be unusually confident in one's own abilities and ideas" were seen to relate to exceptional interpersonal skills. The remaining Miscellaneous subcategory of "self-awareness" suggested another category of outstanding intrapersonal ability. It was decided to place all of these statements in an attribute category named Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability.

Culturally Specific Examples of Attributes from the Interviews

Culturally specific examples of the ten core attributes (TABs) and the three proposed attributes were sought from the interview transcripts, in an attempt to describe more comprehensively the TABs in terms of gifted, urban Aboriginal children's behaviour. Twenty descriptions, from four of the interviews, were considered to be culturally specific. By far the largest number of examples came from Interview 8 which provided 14 (70%) of the total descriptions. One culturally specific example was taken from Interview 1, with two examples found in Interview 9 and three examples in Interview 10.

The culturally specific examples (Appendix I) described a number of different attribute categories including Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability (8 examples), Motivation and Communication (4 examples each), Leadership (3 examples), Sensitivity, Problem Solving and Reasoning (2 examples each), and Humour, Imagination / Creativity, Interests, Insight and Memory (1 example each). No culturally specific examples were identified which described the attribute of Inquiry.

Many of the examples had to do with an aspect of the child's Aboriginality, such as reconciliation, Aboriginal heritage and traditions, speaking an Aboriginal language, appreciating Aboriginal art and coping with prejudice and racism. The 20 examples were examined for content similarity and placed into five subcategories. Table 6.18 shows the number of examples for each of the five culturally specific subcategories.

Table 6.18
Frequency Of Culturally Specific Example And Number Of Interviewees
Providing Examples For Each Subcategory

Culturally specific subcategory	Frequency of example	Number of interviewees
<u>Interest/ concern about cultural issues</u>	9	3
<u>Effectively deal with racism</u>	6	2
<u>Sense of family loyalty</u>	3	2
<u>Confidence in Aboriginality</u>	1	1
<u>Live effectively in bi-cultural situation</u>	1	1

Culturally Specific Examples: “Interest in / concern about cultural issues”.

Nine culturally specific examples were grouped under the heading of having an intense interest in or a concern about cultural issues such as reconciliation (3 examples), a sensitivity about Aboriginality (2 examples), traditions, art, language, and representing Aboriginal people (1 example each).

One of the Sensitivity examples was a general description and simply stated, “And very sensitive to anything to do (pause) mainly only things to do with Aboriginal things” (Interview 8, p. 16). The second example was a bit more specific when it described the child as “very sensitive especially when she talks about anything related to her Aboriginality because she wants so hard to make it all right” (Interview 8, p. 12).

The latter Sensitivity example alluded to an interest in reconciliation as well as general societal concerns. Three other examples from the same interview also described the attributes of Communication, Motivation, Problem Solving and Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability in terms of a concern for reconciliation. These three descriptions spoke of promoting reconciliation

(Interview 8, p. 12) “bringing it [racism and problems of Aboriginal people] out in the open” (Interview 8, p. 15) and “right[ing] what’s wrong in Australia as far as the indigenous people” are concerned (Interview 8, p. 18).

One description of the Communication and Motivation attributes spoke of a desire to “[learn] the Aboriginal traditions,... beliefs, and ... art” (Interview 8, p. 15) while an Interests attribute example described an interest in Aboriginal art. That statement was as follows.

He's got into Aboriginal art now. Actually he has a (pause) quite a collection of some ochre stones. (Pause) And he's showed his younger brothers and sisters how to blow the ochre for the hand prints and he's explained a bit about that (Interview 10, p. 6).

A Communication attribute example discussed an Aboriginal child's interest in and “love [of] using that [Aboriginal] language” (Interview 1, p. 6). Another description from the Leadership category revealed an interest in “represent[ing] the Australian Aboriginals [at a]...United Nations conference” (Interview 8, p.11). Finally, an example of the attribute Imagination / Creativity, described an interest in Aboriginal art which stimulated the girl's imagination. Following is the example.

[Beth speaking] So the teacher said you could use any material you wanted to so I said oh I'll use clay then. And I just made all these real big pots and that. And she just goes, "That's your first time you've ever used clay?" and I said, "Yeah." She goes, "That is really good" cause she reckoned, you know, they looked like the rebirth of just nature 'cause I've got the pots and it looked like a big flower and I've got all Aboriginal art you know like 3-D, 3-dimensional. (pause) (Beth's mother) Her imagination

keeps going and going and going until she eventually comes up with this thing that she's got. And the name that she called it (pause) Alteralteringa. It's an Aboriginal word, (pause) where the old people live (pause) dreamland, it's called (Interview 8, p. 19).

Culturally specific examples: "Effectively deal with racism".

There were six culturally specific examples pertaining to the child's exceptional ability to deal effectively with racism and prejudice; and representing a variety of the attributes including Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability, Motivation, and Reasoning (2 examples each), and Communication, Humour, Leadership, Insight and Problem Solving Ability (1 example each). Of the six statements, three described relationships between the child and peers while a fourth described the ability within the context of a teacher-student situation. The other two statements described the ability within the context of successfully confronting general societal prejudices. All of the culturally specific examples describing the ability to "effectively deal with racism" are presented here.

All those misconceptions have to be overcome. (pause) She decided no one's going to put me down, make me feel inferior (Interview 8, p. 1: Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability).

Well she said no one's gonna just keep me packing shelves for the rest of my life. And she knew she had the ability (Interview 8, p. 2: Motivation, Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability).

They can't think that an Aboriginal person could be doing better. And even teachers ... not all teachers but some teachers (pause) if you're Aboriginal you have to prove again and again (pause) you have to double prove yourself. [Beth speaking] I had to prove myself so much when I went to school to prove to the teachers that I wanted to do something. And like first of all they didn't believe you. They just thought you were there just to muck around (Interview 8, p. 2: Insight, Motivation, Reasoning, Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability).

[Beth speaking] I just stood up to the kids at school once and said that I was Aboriginal and that I was proud. And now they all come up to me and they ask me, oh, like is this right? Like in history you know the kids'll be told different things about Aboriginal people and then they'll immediately come up to me and ask me if it's true (Interview 8, p. 20: Communication, Leadership).

I said you just tell me and I'll come up [to school] and do something about it [kids teasing at school about being Aboriginal]. He said no you'll only make it worse. Just leave it. Anyway I just sort of kept asking him regularly how he was going (pause) if it was okay. And it sort of came home to me then the next year how successful he had been. He was voted in as class captain and student councilor by the very same kids. He sort of turned them around in his own quiet way (pause) and obviously gained their respect in him. Never had any problems afterwards so that's something that sticks in my mind as to how he's able to turn the other cheek and solve his own problems (Interview 9, p. 7: Humour).

How he still laughs to this day about the (pause) some Grade 7 kids yelled out to him, "Hey nigger pull your socks up. Why don't you nigger pull your

socks up?”, he said. And he bent down and pulled his socks up (Interview 9, p. 7: Problem Solving, Reasoning, Leadership).

Culturally specific examples: “Sense of Family Loyalty”.

There were three culturally specific Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability descriptions, given by two interviewees, which referred to a heightened sense of family loyalty. These three statements were as follows.

The girls started being smart just being a little bit niggly to me at morning tea time. And Beth her normal self wanting to defend all the time her family she comes and stood in front of me (Interview 8, p. 6).

She's always been real family oriented (pause) always wanting everything right for her family and (pause) she'd do anything to try to make everything right (Interview 8, p. 14).

I was walking, I think to school, one day when he was in grade seven and he sang out hello mum. And one of the boys said something about is that your mother, but she's black or something. And he turned around and grabbed this poor child by the throat... He's done the same thing for his younger sister where an older boy had hit his younger sister in his company... (Interview 10, p. 6: Not previously coded).

Culturally specific examples: “Confidence in Aboriginality”.

Another Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability description which was judged to be culturally specific, related to racism and concerned the child's "confidence in herself... with her Aboriginality" (Interview 8, p. 4). This comment was made by the interviewee when she compared the older sister's lack of ability to overcome

prejudices with the other daughter's exceptional ability to confront them confidently.

Culturally specific examples "Live effectively in bi-cultural situation".

Finally, one culturally specific Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability example described the ability to effectively cope in a bi-cultural situation. The interviewee described her son's success in the school context but also pointed out "he has carried with him the good Aboriginal traditions, the gentleness and things like that" (Interview 10, p.6).

Part 2: Questionnaire Results

Of the 29 Aboriginal teachers responding to the questionnaire, 17 (59%) were currently teaching at the pre-school and/or primary level. Eight (27%) of the teachers worked in high schools, while the remaining four teachers (14%) had taken up positions such as guidance officer, professional development officer and teacher educator. This information is shown in Table 6.19.

Table 6.19
Current Level Of Schooling Taught By Aboriginal Teacher Respondents
(N = 29)

Current level of schooling taught	Number of teachers	Percentage of teachers
Pre-school - Primary	17	59
High School (Years 8-12)	8	27
Administration (Guidance Officer, Professional Development Officer, Teacher Educator)	4	14
Total	29	100

Table 6.20 indicates that 12 (42%) of the 29 teachers had been teaching five or less years, 7 (24%) of the teachers had 6 - 10 years teaching experience and another 7 (24%) had 11 - 15 years experience. Only two (7%) of the teachers had 16 years or more teaching experience while one respondent did not provide information for this questionnaire item.

Table 6.20
Teaching Experience Of Aboriginal Teacher Respondents (N = 29)

Teaching experience	Number of teachers	% of teachers
1 - 5 years	12	42
6 - 10 years	7	24
11 - 15 years	7	24
16+ years	2	7
Missing data	1	3
Total	29	100

Questionnaire - Part A: Results

In Part A of the questionnaire, forced answer items were used to gain the teachers' perceptions regarding the degree of expected success for each of Frasier's (1992) ten core attributes in identifying gifted Aboriginal children. Responses of "extremely successful", "frequently successful", "occasionally successful", and "rarely successful" were used to rate each TAB.

Percentage tabulations shown in Table 6.21 revealed that the eight attributes of Humour, Memory, Motivation, Imagination / Creativity, Insight, Inquiry, Problem Solving Ability, and Reasoning were considered to be extremely successful in identifying giftedness in Aboriginal children by at least one-fifth of the teachers. It can also be seen from Table 6.21 that no attribute was judged by a majority of the teachers as being rarely successful in its ability to identify Aboriginal children with exceptional ability.

Table 6.21
Aboriginal Teacher Perceptions: Of The Success Rate Of Core Attributes In Identifying Aboriginal Children With Exceptional Ability (N=29)

Attribute category	Extremely successful %	Frequently successful %	Occasionally successful %	Rarely successful %	Missing data
Humour	34.5	34.5	21	7	3
Memory	28	34	28	10	-
Motivation	28	21	48	3	-
Imag / Creativity	24	59	7	7	3
Insight	24	45	28	3	-
Inquiry	21	48	21	10	-
Problem solving	21	28	38	13	-
Reasoning	21	38	28	10	3
Communication	14	62	14	7	3
Interests	7	52	31	7	3

When the "frequently successful" ratings and "occasionally successful" ratings in Table 6.21 were considered, it became evident that the two extremes of the rating scale should not be analysed in isolation. The percentage of Aboriginal teachers who chose to describe an attribute as "frequently successful" or "occasionally successful" tempered, and in some cases altered, the overall results. For example, it can be noted from Table 6.21 that even the attributes of Communication and Interests which were viewed by only 14% and 7% respectively of the respondents as being extremely successful indicators, were perceived by over half of the group as being frequently successful.

Therefore, it was decided that, for ease of viewing and for greater accuracy in analysing the data, extremely successful ratings would be combined with the frequently successful ratings and occasionally successful ratings combined with the rarely successful ratings. The data organised in this manner are shown in Table 6.22.

Table 6.22
 Aboriginal Teacher Perceptions Of The Success Rate Of Core Attributes In
 Identifying Aboriginal Children With Exceptional Ability - Combined Ratings
 (N=29)

Attribute category	Frequently/ extremely successful %	Rarely/ occasionally successful %	Missing data %
Imagination / Creativity	83	14	3
Communication	76	21	3
Humour	69	28	3
Insight	69	31	-
Inquiry	69	31	-
Memory	62	38	-
Interests	59	38	3
Reasoning	59	38	3
Motivation	49	51	-
Problem Solving Ability	49	51	-

Viewed this way, a more obvious pattern became apparent. Eight of the ten core attributes were seen by a majority of the respondents as being extremely or frequently successful for assisting in the identification of gifted Aboriginal children. Even the attributes of Motivation and Problem Solving ability, rated lowest in the “frequently/ extremely successful” category, were viewed by almost half (49%) of the respondents as being frequently or extremely successful.

In Part A, respondents also were asked to give examples of behaviours (Appendix J) which might be exhibited by gifted Aboriginal children for the ten core attributes additional to those provided. For the attribute Communication, four entries were made by four different respondents. However, only one of the four entries was actually an example of the attribute. The comment referred to

the "ability to switch language codes" and the "knowledge of the appropriate style/ code of language" when the Aboriginal student lives in one culture but is educated in another (Questionnaire 026).

Of the four comments given by three separate respondents for the attribute Motivation, three contained examples of behaviours which might indicate exceptional Motivation. These examples mentioned setting "unrealistic goals", the lack of a need to seek "adult reinforcement" (Questionnaire 022) and "enthusiasm for activities(cultural) that they are familiar with" (Questionnaire 024).

Two respondents gave an additional example of the Interests attribute. One teacher's description involved the Aboriginal student's enjoyment of "pursuing [an] interest in isolation from peers" (Questionnaire 022). The other example referred to "freely communicating facts or ideas related to [the student's] interest" (Questionnaire 008).

Two examples for the Problem Solving Ability attribute were recorded. The example, "invents new designs" (Questionnaire 024), was already described in the questionnaire as "creates new designs". The other example described Aboriginal children who had "imaginative ideas to solve problems" (Questionnaire 031).

Five comments were made for the attribute Memory. However, only four were actually considered to be examples of the attribute. The first example, "excellent retention and recall of facts" (Questionnaire 008) tended to be a general definition of the term memory, rather than a specific example. The

second example, "excellent memory of non-school topics" (Questionnaire 024) was essentially the same as the questionnaire example, "has a wealth of information about school or non-school topics."

The other two examples for Memory related to the ability of Aboriginal children with the exceptional ability to precisely recall spoken information. One teacher described it as "recalls past conversations word for word between peers and adults" (Questionnaire 022), while the other teacher characterised it as the exceptional ability for "story-telling and yarning" (Questionnaire 026).

Two comments were made about descriptions for the attribute of Humour. However, only one was an example of the attribute. This example emphasised a maturity of humour when the teacher wrote "pre-school Aboriginal children are very perceptive towards adult humour and wit and can share humour with [the] teacher" (Questionnaire 022).

Two teachers contributed an example of the attribute Inquiry. One commented that Aboriginal children may demonstrate the attribute by showing an "interest in testing out ideas" (Questionnaire 022). The other teacher observed that Aboriginal children "may show inquisitiveness in culturally appropriate way[s] rather than [through] probing questioning" (Questionnaire 026). However she did not elaborate on what might constitute culturally appropriate ways.

One example for each of the attributes of Insight and Reasoning was provided by the same respondent. The teacher commented that Aboriginal children who "observe situation[s] for [an] extended period of time before

becoming a risk taker in front of peers" (Questionnaire 022) may be indicating exceptional insight. For Reasoning, the example was given of "talks through to self own ideas and answers" (Questionnaire 022).

Three examples were given for the attribute of Imagination / Creativity. One teacher commented that the Aboriginal child with exceptional creative ability may display "a short attention span when focus is on theory" and be "more motivated by practical work" (Questionnaire 022). Another example concerned demonstrating imagination and creativity through "story-telling and yarning" (Questionnaire 026). The final example linked imaginative ideas to solving problems (Questionnaire 031).

Questionnaire - Part B: Results

Part B of the questionnaire was an open-ended section where the researcher attempted to elicit the Aboriginal teachers' personal ideas and beliefs concerning exceptional ability in Aboriginal children. In Part B, the teachers were asked to add any descriptors to Frasier's ten traits, aptitudes and behaviours which they felt were relevant for recognising exceptional ability in Aboriginal children. A total of 33 descriptors were recorded in Part B (Appendix K, pp. 1-2).

These descriptors were examined to see which ones, if any, might be classified under one of the existing ten core attributes. Those not able to be classified in this manner were either placed in a Miscellaneous category or not classified at all (Appendix K, p. 4). Descriptors were given which related to

Motivation (6), Communication (4), Problem Solving Ability (3), Insight (3), Memory (1) and Reasoning (1). No descriptors were recorded which related to the attributes of Imagination / Creativity, Interests, Humour or Inquiry.

As the purpose of Part B was to try to discover any attributes additional to the ten core attributes which would be relevant for identifying Aboriginal children with exceptional ability, the Miscellaneous category was examined to determine if new categories were indicated from the Miscellaneous descriptors. The eleven descriptors placed in this category were: "Constancy" (Questionnaire 001), "Exhibits leadership qualities" (Questionnaire 005), "Display leadership qualities" (Questionnaire 010), "Personality of the child" (Questionnaire 011), "Confidence in school work" (Questionnaire 011), "Social skills with other peers, teachers" (Questionnaire 011), "Judge of character" (Questionnaire 020), "Very close family link" (Questionnaire 027), "A need not to be seen as better than any family member/ friends" (Questionnaire 027), "Shy/ withdrawn" (Questionnaire 027) and "Prefer to work in a group" (Questionnaire 027).

It was obvious that "exhibits leadership qualities" (Questionnaire 005) and "display leadership qualities" (Questionnaire 010) were concerned with leadership. The descriptors 'personality of the child', (Questionnaire 011), "social skills with other peers, teachers" (Questionnaire 011) and "prefer to work in a group" (Questionnaire 027) were viewed as a general aspect associated with exceptional interpersonal skills. Two other descriptions which were placed in the category of interpersonal skills were "Constancy" (Questionnaire 001)

interpreted as dependable and coded in the subcategory of "responsible"; and "confidence in school work" (Questionnaire 011) coded in the subcategory of "confident". "Judge of character" (Questionnaire 020), "very close family link" (Questionnaire 027), and "a need not to be seen as better than any family member/ friends" appeared to imply an heightened awareness of other people's emotions and needs and were therefore coded as examples of the Sensitivity attribute. The remaining descriptor, "Shy/ withdrawn" from Questionnaire 027, in the Miscellaneous category was not coded into any of the new categories.

Questionnaire - Part C: Results

In Part C of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to rank order the attributes from the most successful indicator of exceptional ability in Aboriginal children to the least successful indicator. From this activity the researcher hoped to gain information concerned with any attributes which should be emphasised more than others when the ten core attributes were utilised by teachers observing Aboriginal children for exceptional ability. Organised in descending order, Table 6.23 provides the percentage of respondents who ranked an attribute as one of the top five most successful indicators of giftedness and the percentage of respondents who ranked an attribute in the lower five, which suggested a less successful indicator.

Table 6.23
Rank Ordering Of Aboriginal Teachers' Perceptions Of The Success Rate Of
Core Attributes In Identifying Aboriginal Children With Exceptional Ability
(N=29)

Attribute category	In top 5 %	In lower 5 %
Memory	65.5	34.5
Communication	59	41
Motivation	55	45
Inquiry	52	48
Reasoning	52	48
Imagination / Creativity	48	52
Problem solving ability	45	55
Insight	41	59
Interests	34.5	65.5
Humour	31	69

Memory and Communication were ranked by more teachers in the top five than any of the other attributes. In addition to these two attributes, Motivation, Inquiry, and Reasoning were ranked in the top five by a majority of respondents. Less than 35% of the respondents rated Interests and Humour as one of the top five successful attributes describing exceptional ability in Aboriginal children.

In an initial analysis, the data in Table 6.22 may appear to conflict in certain instances with the responses recorded in Table 6.23. For instance the most obvious difference can be seen with regard to Humour which was rated as extremely or frequently successful in identifying Aboriginal children with exceptional ability by 69% of respondents in Part A. In contrast only 31% of the teachers ranked Humour as one of the top five successful attributes in Part C of

the questionnaire. Similarly, data for Imagination / Creativity, Insight and Interests from Part C may seem to contradict data for those attributes in Part A.

However, it must be remembered that Part A and Part C required the teachers to respond in two different ways. In Part A each attribute was rated individually with no reference to the other attributes. It was possible in this section of the questionnaire for all of the attributes to be rated in the Frequently / Extremely Successful category. But in Part C, because of the question structure, only half of the ten core attributes could be ranked in the top five. Therefore, it was not appropriate to compare the percentage results in each table and expect that they verify the other by having comparable results.

Questionnaire - Part D: Results

Part D of the questionnaire, like Part B, was an open-ended section in which the researcher sought to elicit the Aboriginal teachers' ideas and beliefs about what constitutes exceptional ability in Aboriginal children and how that exceptional ability might be recognised. In Part D, Aboriginal teachers were asked to "describe the ways in which ... [Aboriginal] children act that lead you to believe that they have exceptional ability." Twenty-two of the twenty-nine teachers provided responses which were categorised according to Frasier's ten core attributes. Those descriptions and comments which did not fall into any of the ten categories were placed in a Miscellaneous category. (See Appendix L for all descriptions listed by attribute category and questionnaire number.)

The miscellaneous statements were then examined to determine if they might be organised effectively using the newly created categories of Leadership, Sensitivity and Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability which had been suggested through the analysis of the interview data. Additionally, the miscellaneous statements were examined for similarities between descriptions from which further new categories might be indicated. Some descriptions were recorded under more than one attribute when there was an overlap of attribute examples in the statement. Table 6.24 shows the total number of descriptions from Part D, recorded for each of the ten core attribute categories and the Miscellaneous category. The number of the respondents providing descriptions of each category also is shown.

Table 6.24
Core And Miscellaneous Attribute Description Frequencies And Number Of Respondents Reporting Description From Aboriginal Teacher Questionnaire - Part D N=(22)

Attribute category	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Motivation	22	13
Prob. Solving Ability	8	8
Reasoning	7	7
Communication	6	6
Memory	5	5
Inquiry	3	3
Imagination / Creativity	2	2
Insight	2	1
Interests	2	2
Humour	-	-
Miscellaneous	21	12

Almost three times as many descriptions were given for the attribute of Motivation than for any of the other nine attributes. All other attributes with the exception of Humour received at least two descriptions. The attribute of Humour received no descriptions.

Questionnaire - Part D: Motivation Subcategories.

The 22 Motivation descriptions provided by 13 respondents were representative of all three Motivation subcategories. Table 6.25 shows the frequency of description for each Motivation subcategory and the number of respondents who contributed each type of description.

Table 6.25
Motivation Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal Teacher Questionnaire Part D (N=22)

Motivation subcategory	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
<u>Enthusiastic learner</u>	10	7
Aspires to be someone, to achieve	8	6
Persistent in self chosen activities	5	5

The subcategory of “be an enthusiastic learner” had ten descriptions provided by seven respondents. The teachers described Aboriginal children with exceptional ability as those who “enjoy learning” (Questionnaire 022), “are usually eager and willing to do work” (Questionnaire 012), “find work challenging and enjoy a challenge” (Questionnaire 008), “volunteer to do artwork for class projects” (Questionnaire 005) and “usually attend homework

program" (Questionnaire 012); all of which indicate an enthusiastic learner. Another respondent gave two specific behaviours of being an enthusiastic learner which might be demonstrated by the Aboriginal child with exceptional ability in the school setting. The examples were "takes the initiative to work beyond set tasks and beyond teachers' expectations" and "works extremely well and independently without much instruction/ direction" (Questionnaire 025).

Five of the eight descriptions for the Motivation subcategory of "have aspirations to be somebody, to achieve" actually used the word "achieve" in their descriptions, example of which can be seen in the following three quotes.

In the classroom, students who request help and STUDY to achieve higher marks thereby proving their will to succeed stand out. (Questionnaire 006)

Children who achieve well, feel successful in themselves and strive to better themselves. (Questionnaire 008)

[Children who have] clearly defined goals - know how to set goals and achieve these. (Questionnaire 009)

Other respondents described this Motivation subcategory with phrases such as "give full attention... [and] have the interest in completing and performing such tasks [solve problems or research topics]" (Questionnaire 002), and have a "desire to succeed ... and become prominent members of society" (Questionnaire 013).

The last Motivation subcategory, "be persistent in pursuing/ finishing self-chosen activities," was described by 5 respondents. The examples explained

persistence in terms of completing tasks (Questionnaire 002), requesting help when necessary (Questionnaire 006) and persevering until the child succeeded (Questionnaire 001 and Questionnaire 022). Another respondent (Questionnaire 025) gave the example of the child who “organises extra curricular activities for the school without any help from staff” which indicated a persistence in finishing a self-chosen activity even without assistance.

Questionnaire - Part D: Problem Solving Ability Subcategories.

As shown in Table 6.26, three of the four subcategories of the Problem Solving Ability attribute were described by at least one respondent. The only subcategory not described was “create new designs.”

Table 6.26
Problem Solving Ability Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal Teacher
Questionnaire Part D (N=22)

Problem Solving Ability subcategory	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Change strategy if it is not working	5	5
Ability in devising a systematic strategy	3	3
Be an inventor/ innovator	1	1
Create new designs	-	-

The subcategory of “change strategy if it is not working” was characterised by five descriptions, of which three described the ability to “change” and “adapt” in a social situation. Two of these descriptions follow.

Personality - strong self-identity and ability to adapt to variety of settings/
Relationships e.g. student-student, student-teacher, student-adult etc.
(Questionnaire 009)

The Aboriginal children I teach and whom I consider to have or be capable of exceptional ability have displayed these by the following ways: - offer alternatives to the way in which they learn if there are concerns for other students. (Questionnaire 025)

The other two descriptions depicted this subcategory in more general terms implying the ability of the exceptional ability child to change strategies when reasoning “with the problem constantly until they work it out” (Questionnaire 001) and using “their observation skills and their inquiry mode to patiently problem solve” (Questionnaire 027).

The final Problem Solving Ability subcategory of “Be an inventor/innovator” was depicted by the following statement: “May show creativity/ imagination in play, dealing with situations, problems.”

Questionnaire - Part D: Reasoning Subcategories.

All three subcategories of Reasoning were illustrated by at least one of the seven descriptions placed in this attribute category. Table 6.27 presents the

frequency of descriptions for each Reasoning subcategory and the number of respondents who provided a description.

Table 6.27
Reasoning Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal Teacher Questionnaire
Part D
(N=22)

Reasoning subcategory	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Logical thinking manner to generate a likely answer	4	4
Unusual ability to make generalisations	2	2
Exceptional critical thinking skills	1	1

Most often described, with four statements, was the subcategory “think things through in a logical manner and come up with a likely answer”. Two of the four were more general in nature such as “have ability to reason both logically/ morally on different issues” (Questionnaire 009).

The other two, however, were more specific. One description closely paralleled the definition for the subcategory stating, “Certainly [a] highly motivated learner [is one] who is able to think problems through” (Questionnaire 024). The other example emphasised that the ability to approach a problem step by step seems to come naturally and needs only slight clarification (Questionnaire 015).

Two illustrations of the subcategory “have an unusual ability to make generalisations” were given. The first, “able to apply a learnt body of knowledge

and skills to a variety of contexts" (Questionnaire 005), appeared to refer to school subjects. However, the second description implied generalising about acceptable behaviour in different cultural contexts. This example read:

The most exceptional ability I have observed from Aboriginal children, is the ability to change themselves. What I mean by this is they are able to fit into the learning situation found in school. Then to go back to their behaviour and slang language they may use in their home. These children are a perfect example of being multi-cultural. (Questionnaire 004)

Finally, the Reasoning subcategory of "demonstrate exceptional critical thinking skills" was suggested in one response which stated that "these children often display high level understanding of quite complex concepts" (Questionnaire 020).

Questionnaire - Part D: Communication Subcategories.

All six Communication attribute descriptions were placed in the subcategory of "have an unusual ability to communicate." For this subcategory, Table 6.28 presents the frequency of description according to what type(s) of communication was being described by the respondent. No examples were recorded for the subcategory of "use particularly apt examples."

Table 6.28
 Communication Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal Teacher
 Questionnaire
 Part D (N=22)

Communication subcategory	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Unusual ability to communicate:		
Verbal	3	3
Physical (sport & dance)	2	2
Artistic	1	1
Dramatic	1	1
Written	1	1
Nonverbal	1	1
Use particularly apt examples	-	-

In describing unusual verbal ability to communicate, one description was quite general and only stated “appropriate use of language” (Questionnaire 026). The other two, however, depicted a particular situation. These two examples were “Those students who are able to motivate others also possess ability. That impresses me” (Questionnaire 006) and “Carry on adult conversations at very early age and contribute their own ideas and opinions to further stimulate the conversation” (Questionnaire 022).

One description, “May have high degrees of natural ability in activities not previously experienced e.g. dance, drama/ acting, sport, art” (Questionnaire 020), accounted for the only description of Dramatic and Artistic communication types. This description along with the statement “... we should be looking a lot closer at their natural abilities in sport...” were the two descriptions classified in the “physical” subcategory of communication.

Because the statement “appropriate use of language” (Questionnaire 026) was non specific in terms of the usage, it was categorised under the subcategory of Written as well as Verbal. The one example of exceptional non-verbal communication was ‘very definite and expressive in non-verbal behaviour, particularly in oral storytelling” (Questionnaire 005).

Questionnaire - Part D: Memory Subcategories.

Part D responses coded under Memory described three of the four subcategories for this attribute. Table 6.29 shows that “remember information easily” was described in three narratives, while “already know many things” and “have a wealth of knowledge about a topic” were each portrayed once.

Table 6.29
Memory Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal Teacher Questionnaire Part D (N=22)

Memory subcategory	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Remember information easily	3	3
Have a wealth of knowledge about a topic(s)	1	1
Already know many things	1	1
Pay attention to detail	-	-

Two teachers described “remember information easily” in the context of “oral storytelling” (Questionnaire 005) and losing “concentration easily on mundane tasks” (Questionnaire 026). The other illustration was much more

detailed, describing an exceptional memory as being “tattooed” in the child (Questionnaire 013). The respondent providing this description wrote:

Through my years of teaching experiences with Aboriginal children, I consider that the child is exceptional by how their memory is quite outstanding. Most children can forget things easily but the exceptional child is inclined to have that memory 'tattooed' in them. (Questionnaire 013)

The Part D response “may have extensive knowledge of specific subject areas/ topics” (Questionnaire 020), almost paraphrased the subcategory name of “have a wealth of knowledge about a topic(s).” and was therefore coded in that subcategory. The one description of “already know many things” was “very knowledgeable of wider world beyond own community environment...” (Questionnaire 025).

Questionnaire - Part D: Inquiry Subcategories.

Of the three responses organised under the Inquiry attribute category, one was a general statement which noted that “these students can be quiet, but are inquisitive and bright” (Questionnaire 015). Of the two remaining responses, the description “asks highly cognitive questions about observations they have made or read” (Questionnaire 022) was coded as “ask unusual questions for his/ her age.” The other response was “the way in which these individual children have used their observation skills and their inquiry mode to patiently problem solve” (Questionnaire 027) and was coded as “extensively explore materials, devices, situations to gain information”. There were no descriptions given for the

subcategory “play or experiment with ideas.” Table 6.30 shows the description frequencies and the number of respondents providing descriptions for the Inquiry subcategories.

Table 6.30
Inquiry Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal Teacher Questionnaire Part D (N=22)

Inquiry subcategory	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Unusual questions	1	1
Extensively explore devices, materials or situations	1	1
Play or experiment with ideas	-	-

Questionnaire - Part D: Imagination / Creativity Subcategories.

Only two responses in Part D were placed in the Imagination / Creativity attribute category. The two descriptions were “May show creativity / imagination in play, dealing with situations, problems” (Questionnaire 020) and “They have great imagination, and are very creative” (Questionnaire 024). Both respondents used the term “imagination” and “creativity” or “creative”. However, neither was specific enough to be placed in any of the five subcategories of the attribute.

Questionnaire - Part D: Insight Subcategories.

There were two descriptions from the same respondent recorded for the attribute of Insight. As can be seen in Table 6.31, no descriptions were given for the subcategories “be keenly observant” and “appear to be a good guesser.” The response, “These children often display high level understanding of quite

complex concepts” (Questionnaire 020), was coded as “have exceptional ability to draw conclusions.” The other response “may be able to accurately gauge character of people recently met” (Questionnaire 020) was coded as “intuitiveness.”

Table 6.31

Insight Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal Teacher Questionnaire Part D (N=22)

Insight subcategory	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Intuitiveness	1	1
Have exceptional ability to draw conclusions	1	1
Be keenly observant	-	-
Appear to be a good guesser	-	-

Questionnaire - Part D: Interests Subcategories.

The attribute category of interests also was described twice in Part D. No descriptions were recorded for the subcategory “pursue an activity unceasingly.” However, “volunteers to do artwork for class projects” (Questionnaire 005) was considered to be an example of the subcategory “be a self-starter.” Additionally the description “displayed an interest in reading and writing at early age and has learnt to do so comprehensively” (Questionnaire 022) was placed in the subcategory of “have unusual or advanced interest in a topic or activity.” Table 6.32 displays the description frequency and the number of respondents for each subcategory of the attribute Interests.

Table 6.32
Interests Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal Teacher Questionnaire Part D (N=22)

Interests subcategory	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Self starter	1	1
Unusual or advanced interest	1	1
Pursue an activity unceasingly	-	-

Questionnaire - Part D: Organisation of Miscellaneous Responses.

There were 20 responses given in Part D of the questionnaire which were not able to be classified under any of the ten core attributes established by Frasier (1992) and were therefore placed in the Miscellaneous category. The miscellaneous descriptions were organised using the new categories of Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Skills, Sensitivity, Leadership, and their respective subcategories created during the analysis of the interviews. All descriptions were related to at least one of the new categories. The attribute category of Interpersonal / Intrapersonal skills was most frequently described in Part D with 12 descriptions from 8 respondents. There were six responses related to Leadership recorded and three for the new category of Sensitivity. Table 6.33 shows the frequency of miscellaneous descriptions and the number of respondents for the three new attribute categories.

Table 6.33
Miscellaneous Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal Teacher Questionnaire
Part D
(N=22)

New attribute category	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Interpersonal / Intrapersonal skills	12	8
Leadership	6	5
Sensitivity	3	2

Questionnaire - Part D: Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Skills Subcategories.

Only one of the 12 descriptions relating to the Interpersonal / Intrapersonal skills attribute, described an aspect of intrapersonal skills. This response indicated that a "strong self-identity" (Questionnaire 009) is often evident in an Aboriginal child with exceptional ability. All other descriptions pertained to the subcategories associated with interpersonal skills.

Table 6.34
Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Skills Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal
Teacher Questionnaire Part D (N=22)

Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Skills subcategory	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Confident	7	5
Maturity	3	3
Responsible	2	2
Social adaptation	2	2
Self-awareness	1	1

Table 6.34 shows that there were seven responses in Part D which were related to the child's confidence. Four of these actually used the word

"confidence." The respondents described "confidence" as "forward and open instead of remaining shy" (Questionnaire 003), a "strong self-identity" (Questionnaire 009), "able to speak [one's] mind" (Questionnaire 009), "strong self-esteem" (Questionnaire 014) and being "assertive" (Questionnaire 025). One respondent provided an example for the subcategory of "unusually confident in one's own abilities and ideas" which was considered to be culturally specific. The example was as follows.

An exceptional Aboriginal child usually stands out from the rest of the class, by calling out to the teacher. To me, as an Aboriginal teacher, I see that this shows confidence, but to non-Aboriginal teachers the child is classified as disruptive. (Questionnaire 011)

Additionally, it can be seen from Table 6.34 that three comments which were provided in Part D of the questionnaire, related to the interpersonal skills of "mature behaviour and thought." One comment defined maturity as "independence both in thought and action" (Questionnaire 009). The second response asserted that "gifted students show their maturity in Aboriginal upbringing in responsibility to younger and elder family members" (Questionnaire 027). The other respondent simply wrote the word "maturity" (Questionnaire 026) and did not elaborate further.

Two of the comments classified as descriptions of maturity were also related to the subcategory of "demonstrate a high degree of social responsibility, conscious moral behaviour", coded as "responsible" in Table 6.34. One of the two responses was simply the word "responsibility"

(Questionnaire 026). However, the other example described "gifted students" as demonstrating the subcategory in terms of their responsibility to family members. (Questionnaire 027).

One miscellaneous response and part of another description which were placed in the Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Skills category did not appear to describe any of the existing subcategories. It was decided that both were describing a similar situation and a new subcategory of "ability to successfully function within various social and cultural settings", and coded "social adaptation" in Table 6.34 was designated. The two responses placed in this subcategory were:

The most exceptional ability I have observed from Aboriginal children, is the ability to change themselves. What I mean by this is they are able to fit into the learning situation found in school. Then to go back to their behaviour and slang language they may use in their home. These children are a perfect example of being multi-cultural (Questionnaire 004); and

... adapt to variety of settings/ relationships e.g. student-student, student-teacher, student- adult etc (Questionnaire 009).

Questionnaire - Part D: Leadership Subcategories.

Six references to some aspect of leadership were made in Part D of the questionnaire. Five of these, as shown in Table 6.35, were related to one of the four subcategories of leadership. The sixth was a general comment which stated, "Not all of them are leaders." The statement was seen to imply that the opposite statement, some are leaders, is therefore true. Table 6.35 also

indicates that two examples, both from the same respondent, were provided for the subcategory of "effectively organise people and events." This respondent noted that exceptional ability Aboriginal children might display their ability by offering "alternatives to the way in which they learn if there are concerns for other students" and by "organis[ing] extra curricular activities for the school without any help from staff" (Questionnaire 025).

Table 6.35
Leadership Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal Teacher Questionnaire
Part D
(N=22)

Leadership subcategory	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Effectively organise people	2	1
Leader in performance	1	1
Persuade & influence people's behaviour	1	1
Independent thinker	1	1

There was one description concerned with each of the other three Leadership subcategories. One respondent wrote, "Those students who are able to motivate others also possess ability" (Questionnaire 006) which indicated the subcategory of "persuade and influence people's behaviour." Another response, "children who achieve high academic results" (Questionnaire 008), related to the Leadership subcategory of "be a leader in performance." Finally the subcategory "independent thinker" was described in the response "independence both in thought and action" (Questionnaire 009).

Questionnaire - Part D: Sensitivity subcategories.

Three descriptions provided by two respondents in Part D of the questionnaire related to the new attribute category of Sensitivity. The three examples were "may be able to accurately gauge character of people recently met" (Questionnaire 020), "can accurately interpret vibes of people encountered" (Questionnaire 020), and "offer alternatives to the way in which they learn if there are concerns for other students" (Questionnaire 025). All three described the Sensitivity subcategory of "able to sense others' emotions" while the last response also provided a description of "sensitive to others' needs." Shown in Table 6.36 are the frequency of description and number of respondents for the Sensitivity subcategories.

Table 6.36

Sensitivity Subcategory Frequencies For Aboriginal Teacher Questionnaire Part D (N=22)

Sensitivity subcategory	Frequency of description	Number of respondents
Sense other's emotions	3	2
Sensitive to the needs of others	1	1

Questionnaire - Part A, Part B and Part D: Combined Description Frequencies

It was decided that an analysis of the combined description frequencies from Parts A, B and D of the questionnaire for each of the core and new attributes would be of benefit in the interpretation of the questionnaire data. Therefore, the

frequencies from the three parts; were added together for each core and newly created attribute. The resulting frequencies are shown in Table 6.37.

Table 6.37
Core And New Attribute Description Frequencies With Number Of Respondents Reporting Description From Questionnaire - Parts A, B And D (N=29)

Attribute category	Frequency of description in			Total frequency	Number of respondents for questionnaire
	Part A	Part B	Part D		
Motivation	3	6	22	29	13
Inter / Intrapersonal Ability	*	5	12	17	9
Problem Solving Ability	2	3	8	13	11
Communication	1	4	7	12	7
Memory	4	1	5	10	8
Reasoning	1	1	7	9	8
Leadership	*	2	6	8	7
Insight	1	3	2	6	3
Sensitivity	*	3	3	6	3
Inquiry	2	-	3	5	4
Imagination / Creativity	3	-	2	5	5
Interests	2	-	2	4	3
Humour	1	-	-	1	1

* Not listed as an attribute in Part A of the questionnaire. Thus, no examples could be given.

From Table 6.37, it can be seen that Aboriginal teachers' descriptions relating to the core attribute Motivation occurred almost twice as often as any of the other core attributes, with 29 descriptions from 13 teachers being recorded in the category. The proposed attribute of Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability was the second most often described category with 17 descriptions provided by nine teachers. The attributes of Problem Solving Ability and Communication were represented with 13 and 12 descriptions respectively. The core attributes of Memory and Reasoning were each described by eight respondents with 10

and 9 examples respectively, while the newly proposed attribute of Leadership was described a total of 8 times by seven respondents. The lesser described categories were Insight and Sensitivity with 6 descriptions each, Inquiry and Imagination / Creativity with 5 each, and Interests with 2 descriptions. The core attribute of Humour was only described once in Part A of the questionnaire.

Questionnaire - Part A, Part B and Part D: Combined Culturally Specific

Examples

Culturally specific examples of the ten core and new attribute TABs were sought from the open-ended sections in Parts A, B and D of the questionnaire in an effort to describe the TABs more comprehensively in terms of gifted urban Aboriginal children's behaviour. Twelve respondents provided a total of 17 examples considered to indicate cultural specificity to some degree (Appendix M, pp. 1-2). These 17 examples included descriptions of the attributes of Communication, Imagination/ Creativity, Memory, Motivation, Problem Solving, Reasoning, Sensitivity and Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability (Appendix M, pp. 3-6). No culturally specific examples were identified which described the attributes of Humour, Inquiry, Insight, Interests or Leadership.

The content similarity of the 17 examples was examined, firstly, in terms of the 5 culturally specific subcategories previously established during the organisation of the culturally specific examples from the interviews described earlier in this chapter (pp. 195-200). It was found that 7 of the 17 examples were

related to 3 of the subcategories. Two examples from the same respondent could be categorised within the subcategory of “effectively deal with racism”.

Three examples from three different respondents described the “live effectively in bi-cultural situation” subcategory and two examples provided by one respondent were categorised in the “sense of family loyalty” subcategory. These descriptions were as follows:

“Effectively deal with racism” subcategory

Questionnaire 014

Perseverance (which is included in your motivation descriptor), is in my opinion, a critical factor in locating Aboriginal children with exceptional abilities. Self-motivation has to be so strong - hang in against what, at times, appear to be insurmountable odds (Part B).

Keep coming back regardless of level of discouragement (from teacher or peers) - need to be able to maintain own high level of motivation in terms of achieving own goals and often have to deal with poor attitudes of others e.g. racist behaviour of others within learning environment is often the accepted behaviour within that community and therefore never questioned (Part D).

“Live effectively in bi-cultural situation” subcategory

Questionnaire 003

The more successful Aboriginal students are individuals as part of a whole class, rather than part of an Aboriginal exclusive peer group. They seem to identify easier with the white culture and become more forward and open instead of remaining shy (Part D).

Questionnaire 004

The most exceptional ability I have observed from Aboriginal children, is the ability to change themselves. What I mean by this is they are able to fit into the learning situation found in school. Then to go back to their behaviour and slang language they may use in their home. These children are a perfect example of being multi-cultural (Part D).

Questionnaire 009

-Personality - strong self-identity and ability to adapt to variety of settings/relationships e.g. student-student, student-teacher, student-adult etc (Part D).

“Sense of family loyalty” subcategory

Questionnaire 027

A need not to be seen as better than any family member / friends (Part B).

Gifted students show their maturity in Aboriginal upbringing in responsibility to younger and elder family members. This assists in later life as long as they break the “non-Aboriginal barriers” and continue (Part D).

The remaining 10 examples did not seem to be well-placed in any of the previously organised 5 subcategories used with the interview examples. Consequently, these examples were further considered for any content similarities which might be revealed amongst the examples. Table 6.38 shows the resulting four subcategories with the frequency of subcategory description. Also included are the three previously created subcategories of “effectively deal with racism”, “live effectively in bi-cultural situation” and “sense of family loyalty”.

Table 6.38
 Frequency Of Culturally Specific Example And Number Of Questionnaire Respondents Providing Examples For Each Subcategory

Culturally specific subcategory	Frequency of example	Number of respondents
Switch language codes	4	2
Storytelling	3	3
Live effectively in bi-cultural situation	3	3
Effectively deal with racism	2	1
Natural ability	2	2
Sense of family loyalty	2	1
Classroom confidence	1	1

It should be noted that only 1 of the 17 examples was classified in two subcategories, both “switch language codes” and “live effectively in a bi-cultural situation.” The 4 new subcategories with the specific examples are recorded below:

“Switch language codes” subcategory

Questionnaire 004

The most exceptional ability I have observed from Aboriginal children, is the ability to change themselves. What I mean by this is they are able to fit into the learning situation found in school. Then to go back to their behaviour and slang language they may use in their home. These children are a perfect example of being multi-cultural (Part D).

Questionnaire 026

Ability to switch language codes and knowledge of the appropriate style/code of language (Part A).

Ability to communicate in a variety of language codes (Part B).

Recognition of appropriate use of language for different social contexts (Part B).

“Storytelling” subcategory

Questionnaire 005

-very definite and expressive in non-verbal behaviour, particularly in oral storytelling (Part D).

Questionnaire 022

Recalls past conversations word for word between peers and adults (Part A).

Questionnaire 026

Story-telling and ‘yarning’ (Part A).

“Natural Ability” subcategory.

Questionnaire 001

In my opinion we should be looking a lot closer at their natural abilities in sport where I think they are highly motivated and could obtain very good careers (Part D).

Questionnaire 017

Musical talent - natural feel for beat and rhythm (Part B).

“Classroom confidence” subcategory

Questionnaire 011

An exceptional Aboriginal child usually stands out from the rest of the class, by calling out to the teacher. To me, as an Aboriginal teacher, I see

that this shows confidence, but to non-Aboriginal teachers the child is classified as disruptive (Part D).

Finally, one statement, classified under the attribute of Motivation and subcategory of “aspires to be someone”, was not classified under any of the culturally specific subcategories. It emphasised the importance of the desire to succeed for Aboriginal people. That description is as follows:

Questionnaire 013

The motivation and desire to succeed plays an important role as they strive to outdo their peers and become prominent members of society. Aboriginal children who have this 'drive' will always be exceptional especially to our race.

Part 3: Comparison Of Data From The Interviews And The Questionnaire

Reorganisation of the Three New Attribute Categories into One

As previously described in Part 1 of this chapter (p. 186), the Miscellaneous category descriptions were grouped into the four subcategories of responsible, maturity, confident and self-awareness; and the category given the name of Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability. This category, along with the four subcategories, was subsequently used to code miscellaneous statements from the questionnaire of Aboriginal teachers described in Part 2.

Upon completion of the coding of descriptions from the interviews and the questionnaire, the results were again examined to determine if there were commonalities among the three newly proposed categories, which now might

be more obvious than before; and to determine if the categories of Leadership, Sensitivity and Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability were appropriately named.

In re-examining the Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability examples, it was realised that the subcategories of responsible, maturity, confident and self-awareness were almost identical to various aspects of what Gardner (1983) termed the personal intelligence in his theory of multiple intelligences. In his discussion of personal intelligence, Gardner made a case for the inclusion of intrapersonal abilities, designated as "awareness of self" in this research, with interpersonal abilities. Although he acknowledged the possibility of describing these two types of abilities separately, he pointed out that in any culture the development of one ability is dependent on the development of the other (1983, p. 241).

Additionally, a review of Gardner's personal intelligence concept revealed that examples of behaviour which had been classified as Leadership and Sensitivity were also contained within his definition of the personal intelligence. Consequently, it was decided that the proposed categories of Leadership and Sensitivity would be included within the Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability attribute category.

It might be argued by some that behaviours associated with the attribute of Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Abilities could possibly be classifiable within some of Frasier's core attributes. For example, the attribute of Insight might be used to categorise the examples originally designated as Sensitivity while some of the Leadership examples might be classified under such attributes as

Communication, Problem Solving Ability, Motivation and Reasoning. Yet, such classification of the behaviours using the attributes as defined by Frasier (1992) fails to recognise the affective aspect of such examples.

Nevertheless, there is a need to stress these emotional or affective characteristics of giftedness (Clark, 1992; Davis & Rimm, 1994; Mendaglio, 1995; Roeper, 1982). This emphasis is lacking in the elaboration of Frasier's ten core attributes. The separate designation of an Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability attribute attempts to address this lack of emphasis.

Frequency of the Attributes' Descriptions

Analysis of Tables 6.4 and 6.37 showed that the ranking of attributes by frequency of descriptions in both data-gathering activities yielded a similar arrangement pattern for most of the attributes. Table 6.39 displays the attributes in descending order according to frequency of description recorded in the interviews .

Note that the questionnaire frequencies are also in descending order except for the attributes of Communication, Interests, Problem Solving Ability and Inquiry. In these cases, if the attributes had been organised in descending order, according to the questionnaire description frequencies, the attribute of Interests would have been placed in the "rarely described" group. However, the attributes of Communication, Problem Solving Ability and Inquiry would have remained in their respective groups.

It can be noted also, that the combined number of examples from the interviews and questionnaire follow the order of the interviews, apart from Memory and Problem Solving. This cannot be construed as verification that the order of attributes for the interviews is in some way the 'correct' order. The reflection of the interview order of attributes by the total number of examples is due simply to the large interview frequency numbers whose order is not affected by the addition of the much smaller questionnaire frequencies.

However, it can be seen that the questionnaire results generally do triangulate with the interview results. That is, when the attributes are clustered into the three general groups of "frequently described", "sometimes described" and "rarely described", only the frequency grouping for the attribute Interests is not the same in both the interviews and the questionnaire.

Table 6.39
Comparison Of Attribute Example Frequencies In Interviews And Questionnaire

Attribute	Frequency of examples from		Total of examples N=487examples
	interviews & N=382 examples	questionnaire N=105 examples	
<u>FREQUENTLY DESCRIBED</u>			
Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability (Includes examples formerly classified as Leadership and Sensitivity.)	91# (23.8%)	29* (27.6%)	120
Motivation	58 (15.2%)	28 (26.7%)	86
<u>SOMETIMES DESCRIBED</u>			
Communication	47 (12.3%)	10 (9.5%)	57
Interests	47 (12.3%)	2 (1.9%)	49
Reasoning	34 (8.9%)	8 (7.6%)	42
Memory	26 (6.8%)	6 (5.7%)	32
Problem Solving Ability	22 (5.7%)	11 (10.5%)	33
Insight	22 (5.7%)	5 (4.8%)	27
<u>RARELY DESCRIBED</u>			
Imagination / Creativity	16 (4.2%)	2 (1.9%)	18
Humour	10 (2.6%)	1 (1.0%)	11
Inquiry	9 (2.4%)	3 (2.9%)	12

Adjusted figure, as one description from Interview 8 page 20 was coded for both Leadership and Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability

* Adjusted figure, as two descriptions (from Questionnaire 009 and Questionnaire 025) were coded for Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability and Leadership; and Sensitivity and Leadership respectively.

Numbers Providing Examples of Attributes

Analysis of the interview data presented in Table 6.3, revealed that all of Frasier's core attributes were described by seven (64%) or more of the eleven interviewees with the exception of Humour which was described by five (45%) of the Aboriginal parents. Also it was noted from the table that all eleven (100%) of the interviewees provided examples for the attributes of Reasoning and Leadership, while ten (91%) of the eleven gave descriptions of Motivation, Communication, Interests and Memory. These results indicated that the Aboriginal interviewees' conceptions of giftedness included all of the ten core attributes plus additional descriptions for attributes which at that time were designated as Leadership, Sensitivity and Miscellaneous (now collectively categorised as Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability).

Table 6.37 provided similar information concerning the questionnaire respondents, showing that all core attributes and the three proposed attributes of Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability, Leadership and Sensitivity were described by at least one respondent. The five core attributes of Motivation, Problem Solving Ability, Communication, Memory and Reasoning along with the two proposed attributes of Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability and Leadership were described by seven (24%) or more of the questionnaire respondents. Three (10%) to five (17%) of the respondents described the attributes of Imagination / Creativity (5), Inquiry (4), Insight (3), Sensitivity (3) and Interests (3). However, Humour was only described by one (3%) of the respondents.

The information regarding the number and percent of interviewees or respondents providing an example of core or additional attributes from Tables 6.3 and 6.37 is summarised in Table 6.40. Note that the results for the three proposed attributes of Leadership, Sensitivity and Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability have been combined into the one attribute category of Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability.

Table 6.40
Number And Percent Of Interviewees And Questionnaire Respondents
Providing Examples For Core And Additional Attributes

Attribute category	Number of interviewees providing examples (N=11)	Number of questionnaire respondents providing examples in Parts A, B & D (N=29)	Total providing examples (N=40)
Inter / Intrapersonal Ability	11 (100%)	15# (52%)	26 (65%)
Motivation	10 (91%)	13 (45%)	23 (58%)
Problem Solving Ability	9 (82%)	11 (38%)	20 (50%)
Reasoning	11 (100%)	8 (28%)	19 (48%)
Memory	10 (91%)	8 (28%)	18 (45%)
Communication	10 (91%)	7 (24%)	17 (43%)
Interests	10 (91%)	3 (10%)	13 (33%)
Imagination / Creativity	8 (73%)	5 (17%)	13 (33%)
Insight	9 (82%)	3 (10%)	12 (30%)
Inquiry	7 (64%)	4 (14%)	11 (28%)
Humour	5 (45%)	1 (3%)	6 (15%)

#Adjusted figure, as four respondents provided an example for the attributes of Sensitivity or Leadership as well as for the Interpersonal/ Intrapersonal Ability attribute.

Table 6.40 also provides the total number and percent of interviewees and respondents who gave an example of the core and additional attributes. From the table, it can be seen that over half of the interviewees and respondents

described the attributes of Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability (65%) and Motivation (58%). Additionally half provided an example of Problem Solving Ability with over 40 percent giving examples of Reasoning (48%), Memory (45%) and Communication (43%). The attributes of Interests and Imagination / Creativity were described by one third of the interviewees and respondents, while at least a quarter of them described the attributes of Insight (30%) and Inquiry (28%). Humour was the least described attribute with a total of only six interviewees and respondents providing an example.

Culturally Specific Examples

Another purpose of the research was to note culturally specific examples which would help to describe more comprehensively the core and additional attributes for urban Aboriginal children. From an analysis of the 20 interview examples and the 17 questionnaire examples which were classified as culturally specific, it was found that all core attributes and the additional attribute of Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability had been described with at least one culturally specific example, with the exception of Inquiry. Table 6.41 shows the frequency of culturally specific examples for each attribute and the number of interviewees and questionnaire respondents providing the example(s). In the table, some of the examples were recorded for more than one attribute.

Table 6.41
Frequency Of Culturally Specific Examples By Attribute And Number Of Interviewees And Questionnaire Respondents Providing Example(s)

Attribute	Number of culturally specific examples	Number providing example(s)
Inter / Intrapersonal Ability*	20	8
Communication	12	8
Motivation	7	3
Problem Solving Ability	4	4
Memory	3	3
Reasoning	3	3
Imagination / Creativity	2	2
Humour	1	1
Insight	1	1
Interests	1	1
Inquiry	-	-

*Includes examples previously classified as Leadership and Sensitivity.

As can be seen from the table, at least twice as many culturally specific examples were provided for the attribute of Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability as for any of the other attributes with the exception of Communication. The next highest numbers of culturally specific examples were provided for the attributes of Communication and Motivation with 12 and 7 examples respectively. All other attributes had 4 or less culturally specific examples given for them.

The 37 culturally specific examples comprised nine subcategories, tentatively established during the analysis of the interview and questionnaire data, which included the following, with the number of examples in brackets: interest in and concern about cultural issues (9), effectively deal with racism (8), sense of family loyalty (5), ability to switch language codes (4), ability to live

effectively in a bi-cultural situation (4), storytelling (3), natural ability of members of culture (2), confidence in cultural identity (1), and confidence in classroom (1).

After combining the culturally specific examples from the interviews and the questionnaire, it was noted that some initial subcategories of only one example had also been described in the other data gathering activity, thus increasing the number of examples for the subcategory. In the two instances where a subcategory example had only one example, the subcategory name was removed and the example was not placed in any subcategory because one example was not enough to warrant establishment of a subcategory. This was the case for the suggested subcategories of “confidence in Aboriginality” and “confidence in the classroom.” Both were simply noted as culturally specific examples of confidence under the Interpersonal / Intrapersonal Ability attribute. Table 6.42 shows the final culturally specific subcategories with the frequency of examples and the number of interviewees and questionnaire respondents who provided an example.

Table 6.42
Frequency Of Examples By Culturally Specific Subcategories And Number Of Interviewees And Questionnaire Respondents Providing Example(s)

Subcategory	Number of examples	Number providing example(s)
Interest in & concern with cultural issues	9	3
Effectively deal with racism	8	3
Sense of family loyalty	5	3
Switch language codes	4	2
Live effectively in bi-cultural situation	4	4
Storytelling	3	3
Natural ability of members of culture	2	2