

## Attachment 2: Case studies

### Case Study 1

*Teddy may or may not be a cute little child. He may or may not be well coordinated and early to walk and turn somersaults. Likewise, he may or may not always have his hand up when the teacher asks something in pre-school or kindergarten, but one thing teachers have noticed about Teddy is that his answers, when he gives them, are usually well developed and thought out. When his teacher or parent suggests a new point of view or something new to be learned, everything about Teddy perks up. He gets intensely interested in people who have unusual ideas or have done extraordinary things and especially wants to know about their lives and motivations. Even in these early years, Teddy seems willing to think things through, to work hard to learn, and does not obviously see himself as “smarter” than others around him. Teddy has both endearing and aggravating behaviours in school. He may appear very slow and deliberate at times, especially when quick answers are being sought to low level questions. He sometimes seems **to make too much of what was a simple question, coming up with very unusual connections that may seem weird or strange to other children.** He runs on his own timelines, which means there are times when he is irritated because he has to stop working on something he is engrossed in and start something new. He is often very systematic and logical, which can make him very uncomfortable with a parent’s attempts at creativity. He is not a willing risk-taker and wants structure so that he can almost guarantee how things will turn out. Teddy often feels quite comfortable working on his own and seeks opportunities to create a personal space for himself whenever he begins to feel “crowded” by others around him. Not only does he answer deep questions fully, but he poses his own deep questions, about God, nature, life, justice, and always with a “why”. He understands complicated answers to his questions and appears to absorb and remember information as quickly as it can be given to him. Teddy scores very highly on almost every aptitude and achievement test, and will usually be rated positively in his school performance. Yet, he may be a serious underachiever because he is not being offered enough content nor enough complexity to that content, nor has compacting of his curriculum taken place. Anywhere from 3 to 6 years of Teddy’s school life will be spent without being exposed to a single new idea or concept that he does not know already. The only characteristic that may keep Teddy from pure disillusionment with school may be his own perseverance and patience, waiting for the day when school will be “hard and fun”.*

## Case Study 2

*Kate, aged 4, was very lonely in pre-school. She was very bright and socially mature and she had little interest in the games the other girls liked playing. She was fascinated by number and loved counting and finding numerical relationships between things. She noticed one morning that her teacher's coat had buttons in pairs and she spent the next two hours finding other "pairs" of things in the pre-school. She announced to Ms Foufounis, her teacher, that some pairs were alike, like drumsticks, while other pairs were different - shoes weren't exactly the same because they were curved on different sides, and knives and forks went in pairs but looked, and were used, differently. Ms Foufounis was intrigued by Kate's unusual enthusiasms and surprisingly long attention span. She suggested to Kate's mum that the little girl be IQ tested. The test showed that Kate was in the moderately gifted range with a full scale IQ of 138. Ms Foufounis arranged for Kate to spend a morning as a visitor in the Kindergarten/Reception class of the local primary school. Kate loved the experience – particularly the games the girls played at morning recess - and clamoured to be allowed to visit the class again. After two more visits, the primary school Principal suggested to Kate's parents that she leave pre-school and enrol in primary school, even though the year was already half way through. They agreed happily and Kate entered the Kindergarten/ Reception class at the start of Term 3 of the four-term year. She loved the class and her new friends and at the end of the year Kate moved with them into Year 1, a smooth and happy grade advancement.*

### **Case Study 3**

*Jordan is one of the brightest children your school has had in many years. He is six years old and in Year 1. He is a quiet, reflective little boy who is often seen standing apart in the playground, watching the other boys play but rarely being invited to join the game. Indeed, he doesn't seem interested in joining in. Ms Peters, the Year 2 teacher, once commented, 'He's so detached. He's just watching. He's like an anthropologist studying a strange, different race of people.' When he does feel like playing, Jordan gravitates towards the girls, who generally accept him but even then he doesn't seem to engage emotionally.*

#### **Case Study 4**

*Ceridwen started to read just before her fourth birthday and her talent developed at a remarkable pace. She entered school at 4 years 10 months with the reading abilities of someone two years older. She is fascinated by fairy tales and legends and has a lively creative imagination. Ceridwen's teacher, Ms Anderson, placed her on an individualised reading program and gave her tasks which involved creating new situations in the stories she read. What might have happened if Cinderella had kept track of the time and left the ball before midnight? What might have happened if one of the ugly sisters had taken the same shoe size as Cinderella? After a few months Ceridwen started writing entirely new versions of some classic fairy stories. She dictated them into a tape-recorder and a friendly mum who helped in the class each week typed them up. Renata, Ceridwen's special friend in the class, who is a talented artist, drew illustrations for the books and Mr Cornwall, the school librarian, bound them and put them in the library. Ceridwen's task commitment developed as a result of the curriculum differentiation offered by Ms Anderson. If she had been asked to work through reading readiness exercises with the other children - or just sit and read by herself while the teacher was working with the other children - she might not have retained her interest in reading at school.*