## Identification of gifted Māori students

| **Identification approach**  | **Advantages** |  **Points to consider** | **Suggestions to enhance implementation** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Culturally responsive environment approach | * Māori students’ culture is valued, affirmed, and developed
* Responsive, challenging environment allows giftedness to ‘surface’
 | * Reliant on teacher knowledge of Māori culture, opportunities to incorporate cultural input and school/centre-wide support
 | * Use te reo Māori in the classroom
* Include culturally appropriate materials whenever possible
* Overtly show that Māori students’ cultural heritage is valued and appreciated in the classroom
 |
| Classroom observations | * Allows observation of ability over time
* Provides multiple opportunities for assessment of ability
* Rate of progress as well as achievement can be assessed
 | * Teachers require sound knowledge of Māori culture and Māori perspectives of giftedness
* Teachers need to “look beyond” any misbehaviour
* Students will have experienced varying opportunities and encouragement to display gifts and talents so need to be alert to **potential** giftedness
 | * Ensure culturally responsive classroom environment where Māori culture is understood and valued
* Focus on qualities, e.g. manaakitanga, mana, courage, perseverance, as well as abilities, e.g. academic, musical, physical.
* Provide suitably challenging, culturally relevant tasks
 |
| Checklists and rating scales | * Students identified using common characteristics of giftedness
 | * Checklists can encourage cultural stereotyping
* Generic lists tend to focus on a narrow range of characteristics
* May not be culturally appropriate
* Expertise in some checklist items needed to accurately gauge student’s ability level, e.g. in te reo
* Be aware of your own cultural lens when assessing attributes, e.g. humour will be expressed differently in different cultures.
 | * Check scales cover all areas of giftedness recognised by Māori - add any that are missing
* Ensure items include Māori perspectives of each characteristic e.g. does leadership characteristic include different styles of Māori leadership?
* Include people with cultural expertise when a Māori perspective is required to help make an accurate judgment
 |
| Products, processes, performances | * Can provide measure of both potential and performance
* Portfolio approach may allow measure of rate of progress
* Provides tangible evidence of ability
 | * Students may not share cultural knowledge if they feel it is not valued
* Cultural perspective needed to appreciate Māori-specific attributes and abilities
 | * Evaluate holistically – pay attention to vision, understanding, motivation, purpose and process
* Include people with cultural expertise when a Māori perspective is required to help make an accurate judgment
 |
| Teacher nomination | * Utilises teachers’ knowledge of student
 | * Potential for low &/or inaccurate identification because many teachers are white, middle class, monocultural with limited knowledge of Māori culture and Māori concepts of giftedness
* Many teachers have low expectations of Māori students.
 | * Have high expectations for students and understand and appreciate Māori culture.
* Improved by use of specifically developed lists of culturally appropriate characteristics and behaviours and consultation with cultural experts if/when needed
 |
| Parent nomination | * Utilises parents’ in depth knowledge of their child.
 | * Parents may see nomination as whakahihi (boasting) so not suggest their child.
* Poor/minimal relationship with teacher will negatively affect parents’ responses.
 | * Ask parents about their child’s strengths, interests and out-of-school involvements.
* Establish positive relationship with parents before asking for nominations
 |
| Whanau and Māori community/group nomination | * Whanau will have valuable information about children’s strengths, talents and precocious development.
* Community members may identify child’s cultural abilities and qualities.
* Particularly helpful where teachers have limited cultural and reo knowledge.
 | * Effectiveness dependent on positive existing relationship between whanau or community and teacher.
 | * Best sought within context of culturally appropriate and welcoming activities, such as a school powhiri or kapa haka concert.
 |
| Peer nomination | * Māori students recognise their peers’ strengths and talents and are willing to share this information to trusted teachers.
* Particularly useful for gifts exhibited outside the school environment
 | * Effectiveness dependent on a culturally responsive environment where there is a trusting relationship between students and teacher
 | * Use range of ways to collect information, including formal/informal, written/oral. Take note of who students go to for assistance and support, and who appears to have mana amongst their peers – they may be gifted
 |
| Self nomination | * Provides opportunities for students to share their strengths, some of which may not be evident within the normal school environment.
 | * Students may feel as if they are being boastful, and so not want to nominate themselves. Effectiveness dependent on trusting pupil-teacher relationship
 | * Effective if handled sensitively in culturally responsive, nurturing environment.
* Students are more likely to share their interests and aspirations with someone who is genuinely interested in them and the outcome of this nomination is known and acceptable to them
 |
| Tests | * Culturally appropriate, relevant written tests give students an opportunity to exhibit their cultural expertise
* Non-verbal tests have potential as they are not reliant on language and their content is less prone to cultural bias
 | * Potential for cultural bias of test norms and content in standardised tests. Recognise high scores but interpret average or low scores with caution
* Pen and paper tests may disadvantage children uncomfortable or unfamiliar with this format. In these circumstances oral tests may be more useful
 | * Teacher made tests that incorporate cultural perspectives and include open ended and divergent thinking items may be more effective than standardised tests
 |

Practical strategies and ideas that complement this checklist can be found in [this article](http://www.giftedchildren.org.nz/apex/pdfs15/Bevan-Brown%20J.pdf) on which it is based and other Māori-relevant readings on this website.