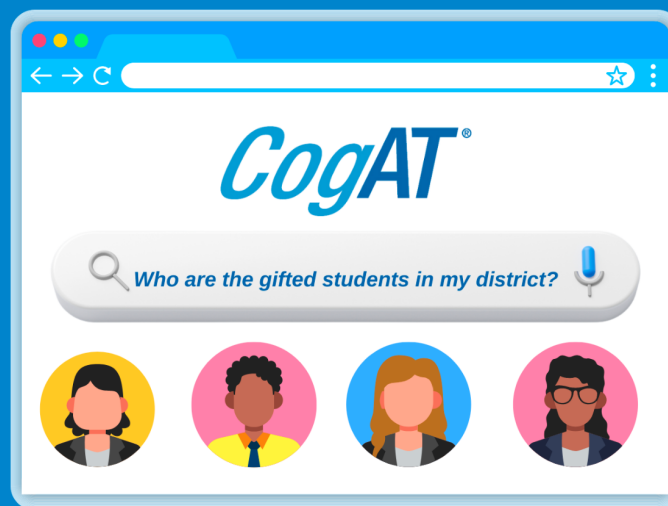




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Voice of a Gifted Coordinator: Why CogAT for Gifted Identification?

Why Should Schools and Districts Choose the Cognitive Abilities Test™ (CogAT®) for Gifted Identification?



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Why Should Schools and Districts Choose the Cognitive Abilities Test™ (CogAT®) for Gifted Identification?

Adam Laningham, previously the Gifted and Talented Coordinator for Deer Valley UDS, reflects on why he chose the CogAT to identify students for gifted and talented programming.

An infographic with a blue background and white text, divided into five vertical panels. Each panel contains an illustration and a key benefit of the CogAT. The top right corner features the CogAT logo.

CogAT™

- It measures three distinct areas of reasoning.** (Illustration: books, mathematical symbols, puzzle pieces)
- The data provided is actionable for placement in services.** (Illustration: laptop with magnifying glass over a chart)
- It provides parents with helpful information about their child's strengths.** (Illustration: family looking at a tablet)
- It's intuitive, flexible, and can easily fit into school testing schedules.** (Illustration: calendar)
- It's easy to administer for teachers and administrators.** (Illustration: hand holding a checklist)



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The *CogAT* measures three distinct areas of reasoning

Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal (figural) reasoning scores are mandated in many states to identify children for gifted services. The [CogAT](#) tests all of these areas in one assessment. The assessment is relatively short and easy to administer which is an advantage if your school system cannot have psychologists administer one-on-one evaluations for your students.

A [multi-measure assessment](#) provides opportunity for identification in numerous areas of reasoning. *This is vital for creating a diverse pool of students in gifted and talented since children think differently and can show their giftedness in individual or multiple areas. Having an assessment that measures aptitude in more than one area provides greater opportunity to identify students with high academic potential.* There are other assessments on the market that may be less expensive, or shorter to administer, but I have found, as a district administrator with a goal of identifying and supporting as many gifted children as possible, having a **reliable, proven assessment that provides multi-measure ability data is invaluable.**



The data provided is actionable for placement in services

When you get the results from the *CogAT*, your school or district can use the [data to help place students](#) into programming that best fits their needs. *CogAT* identifies students with high academic potential in each of the Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal reasoning areas. In my 20 years of education, I have



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found that the students who score high on an ability test like the *CogAT* do well in academically rich and creative learning environments.


Students who score well in the Verbal area, in my experience, are ready to delve deep into the English Language Arts content, think outside of the box, make connections beyond typical age peers, and read at a much higher level. They still might need some support transitioning to a more rigorous program of service, as students all have different backgrounds and motivation levels, but I have seen most students scoring at the 95th percentile or higher on the *CogAT* be successful in academically rigorous programming.

In the Quantitative area, I have seen students who score high in this area perform well in our math classes. So well in fact that they can accelerate beyond their age level peers. I have found that using the *CogAT* helps find students with the potential to reason quickly and creatively through the math content. Using the *CogAT*, as well as other achievement assessments to find a student's academic math level, allows thousands of our students to **move faster and deeper through their content**. Moving faster advances them into high school level math coursework in middle school, or earlier, and this allows students to take higher level math classes in high school. These high-level math courses help to prepare them for college and help save some college tuition expenses. For many, it just allows them to take more interesting elective classes in high school. All in all, it's wonderful to be able to offer this acceleration to students and families.




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The nonverbal measure helps to find students who tend to excel at reasoning visually. In my experience, students who perform well on this battery show above average creativity and excel in arts and sciences.

 **The CogAT assessment provides a multi-measure lens into student aptitude**

I believe that as an identification tool, it is far simpler to have one assessment tool that can identify in multiple areas and identify far more children for services than any other single tool.

 **The CogAT provides parents with helpful information about their child's strengths**

After the CogAT is administered, the parents and teachers can receive an [Ability Profile](#) of the child. The information provided helps parents, as well as teachers, see their child's potential and identify specific instructional tips for that student.

 **The CogAT is intuitive, flexible, and can easily fit into school testing schedules**

The CogAT consists of 9 short subtests that can all be completed within one testing session or can be broken up over two or more days. This flexibility is



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valuable because schools can determine what testing schedules best meets student needs.

For example, testing all the quizzes in one, longer session, allows for whole groups to be done at once, minimizes classroom disruption, and reduces the need for make-up sessions. From my personal experience with testing in one session, I would encourage teachers of younger students to build in time for breaks between subtests for quick stretches. Testing in one session typically takes around two hours or so, depending on the length of breaks, student questions, etc.

Testing in multiple sessions, over multiple days, can also be done. The advantage to this is it shortens testing sessions, and schools can determine how to schedule the subtests.

The *CogAT* provides tremendous flexibility, and my teachers appreciated it. One last tip: whatever you choose, just make sure you allow for breaks in between test sections and schedule a make-up day or two to catch the absent students.



The *CogAT* is easy to administer for teachers and administrators

CogAT is administered online or on paper, and the administration and proctoring are user friendly. Teachers and administrators can administer multiple test levels at the same time, allowing for much more efficient scheduling of the test



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administration. The students also do well with online administration, and are able to go through each section at their own pace.

The directions and sample problems are easy for students to understand, and come in [multiple languages](#). In Grades K-2, students can receive directions in their most comfortable language, which helps remove some of the barriers to identifying children from all backgrounds. Not only can students from multiple grades now test at the same time, but students can test in different languages at the same time too. All of this allows for simpler scheduling for administrators, and comfortable grouping of students. Students can enjoy having less distractions as they are engaged in the tasks while having their headphones on.