# Video Transcript: Teachers TALK about high-ability students

*School leaders and teachers from primary and secondary schools talk about the rewards and challenges of working with high-ability students.*

*What are the most rewarding aspects working with high-ability students?*

TEACHER 1: One of the most rewarding aspects of working with high-ability students is you always, as a teacher, are a facilitator of learning, but I find that with high ability students, you move from facilitator to collaborator, where they really challenge you and your thinking, and you can build on ideas together.

TEACHER 2: In terms of being able to develop a really challenging curriculum and their curiosity, and often just the type of questioning that they may ask you is very different and will make you think about it later on as you leave the lesson that you need to review or refine, or you need to add something in for the next part, just to make sure that they keep getting challenged in your lessons.

TEACHER 3: Seeing their confidence grow in all subject areas. As they start to be extended in one subject area, they tend to use those skills in a range of different areas.

TEACHER 4: They continually stretch you as the teacher, and they remind you that you're there to learn as much as they are.

TEACHER 5: Actually seeing that level of engagement, and also seeing the parents happy that their child's coming home telling of the work they're doing, which they know is probably beyond what is required for that year level.

TEACHER 6: They bring in great potential in a classroom, and they help broaden the capacity of a classroom.

 What are some of the challenges working with these students?

TEACHER 1: Getting them to feel confident to take risks. If they don't feel like they're going to get an easy ... They're not going to score really high on a particular rubric or on a learning task, then sometimes getting them to engage with it can be really challenging, because they don't often want to fail or not achieve to the best of their abilities.

TEACHER 2: One of our students we've got, who would be working somewhere between five to seven years ahead of his age, he just wants to be liking his peers. He wants to be doing similar work to his peers. He doesn't want to stand out. He wants to look just the same. So that is one of the big challenges for us, both as a classroom teacher, but as a school and as a system, of how we are able to support them both socially and emotionally, and challenging them academically at the same time.

TEACHER 3: Often, but not always, high ability students can be competitive, or they can find achievement quite stressful.

TEACHER 4: They do challenge your own knowledge, and it's okay to not have all the answers.

*How do high-ability students differ from each other?*

TEACHER 1: All the students are different, and our high ability students are different in that in the primary school, you've heard those children speak about, I like to be in a group. I like to work on my own." They all have those differences. The biggest challenge for us is to help teachers understand that that is the case. Because they're high ability children doesn't mean that they fall into one category.

TEACHER 2: So these students bring in their own beliefs and values from home, they come with their own cultures and their own approaches to their learning.

TEACHER 3: They all have their own preferred learning styles and interests and needs, like any other student does.

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