

Twice Exceptional (2e)

Some gifted children have learning difficulties. "Twice exceptional" is the term used to describe students who demonstrate high performance ability or academic potential in addition to clear evidence of learning differences such as emotional/learning disabilities, dyslexia, Attention Deficit Disorder, or Asperger's Syndrome/Autism. "In order for these children to reach their potential, it is imperative that their intellectual strengths be recognized and nurtured, at the same time as their disability is accommodated appropriately." (Willard-Holt, 1999)

2e students consistently demonstrate many of the following characteristics:

- Visual-spatial skills (interests in the arts)
- Verbal abilities
- Imaginative, creative and musically talented
- Intuitive abilities
- Sensitive, curious and a tendency towards perfectionism
- Early reading/strong interest in books/high level of reading comprehension
- Superior level of vocabulary and abstract reasoning/thinking
- Large number and intensity of interests
- Highly developed sense of humor
- Advanced memory skills

2e students often have unique learning differences that can result in a difficulty in some or all of these areas:

- Self-concept
- Language arts (phonics, spelling, written expression)
- Computation
- Memory
- Focus and organization (i.e., keeping track of assignments and completing them)
- Motor skills

Effective strategies are those based on an awareness and appreciation of the student's strengths and a respect for his/her learning differences.

- Opportunity to express their knowledge in a variety of ways
- Structure and routines to help maintain organization and manage behaviors
- Options that enable students to use strengths and preferred ways of learning
- Use of intellectual strengths to develop coping strategies
- Emphasis on high-level abstract thinking, creativity, and a problem-solving approach
- Study and note-taking strategies based on individual needs

"'Fairness' is not equal, identical treatment; rather 'fairness' means that every student receives what he/she needs." Richard Lavoie

Twice Exceptional Resources

Websites

www.2enewsletter.com

For parents, teachers and professionals. Helping twice-exceptional children reach their potential. Journal, published 6 times a year.

www.allkindsofminds.org

Mel Lavine's informative site for all parents and educators

www.hoagiesgifted.org

Comprehensive site for gifted and twice exceptional

www.uniquelygifted.org

Articles

"Dual Exceptionalities" by Colleen Willard-Holt (ERIC Digest #574)

"Enabling or Empowering? Adaptations and Accommodations for Twice-Exceptional Students" by Rich Weinfeld, Linda Barnes-Robinson, Sue Jeweler, and Betty Roffman Shevitz

"Gifted But Learning Disabled: A Puzzling Paradox" by Susan Baum (ERIC Digest #479)

"The 2E Dilemma: Understanding and Educating the Twice Exceptional Child" by Areva D. Martin, in LA Family Magazine

"The Mislabeled Child: How Understanding Your Child's Unique Learning Style Can Open the Door to Success" by Brock Eide and Fernette Eide

Books

A Mind at a Time by Mel Levine

Homework Without Tears: A Parent's Guide For Motivating Children to Do Homework and to Succeed in School by Lee Canter and Lee Hausner

Raising Your Spirited Child: A Guide for Parents Whose Child Is More Intense, Sensitive, Perceptive, Persistent, and Energetic by Mary Sheedy Kurcinka

Smart Kids with Learning Difficulties: Overcoming Obstacles and Realizing Potential by Rich Weinfeld, Linda Barnes-Robinson, Sue Jeweler, and Betty Roffman Shevitz

The Explosive Child by Ross W. Greene

Wrightslaw: From Emotions to Advocacy: The Special Education Survival Guide by Peter W. D. Wright and Pamela Darr Wright