



Twice- Exceptionality (2e)

Pennsylvania Association for Gifted
Education (PAGE)

Gifted Definition

The term "gifted and talented" when used in respect to students, children, or youth means students, children, or youth who give evidence of high-performance capability in areas such as

- intellectual (usually an IQ at or above 130)
- creative, artistic, or leadership capacity
- or in specific academic fields (scores at or above the 98th percentile)

These individuals require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities.

Susan Johnsen



Giftedness Traits

Precociousness

Love of Learning

Rich Internal World

Emotional Intensity

Cognitive Rigidity

Social Differences

Unusual
Behaviors/Interests

Areas of Deep
Interest

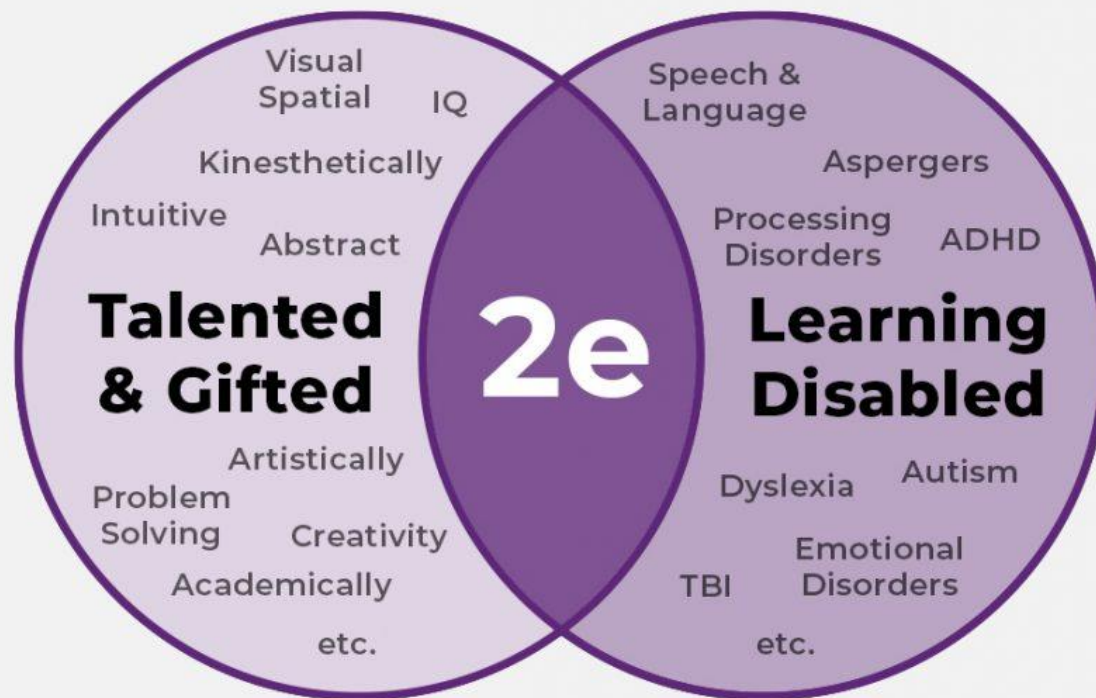
Areas of sensory
sensitivity

Pragmatic
Language
Differences

What is twice-exceptionality?

- The term “twice-exceptional,” (2e) is used to describe gifted children who have the characteristics of gifted students with the potential for high achievement **and** give evidence of one or more disabilities as defined by federal or state eligibility criteria.
- These disabilities may include:
 - specific learning disabilities (SLD): see next slide
 - speech and language disorders
 - emotional/behavioral disorders
 - physical disabilities
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder, Asperger’s Syndrome, and Social Pragmatic Communication Disorder
 - attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

What is a 2e / Twice-Exceptional Student?



Seth's Definition: 2e or Twice Exceptional refers to a neurodiverse learner who has two or more "exceptionalities" that must be properly addressed in order to meet their atypical needs. Usually a gifted person with learning challenges.

Specific Learning Disabilities

- Specific Learning Disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations
- Specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of: visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; intellectual disability; serious emotional disability; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited English proficiency.

Domains of SLD

- Oral Expression
- Listening Comprehension
- Written Expression
- Basic Reading Skill
- Reading Fluency Skills
- Reading Comprehension
- Mathematical Calculation
- Mathematical Problem Solving

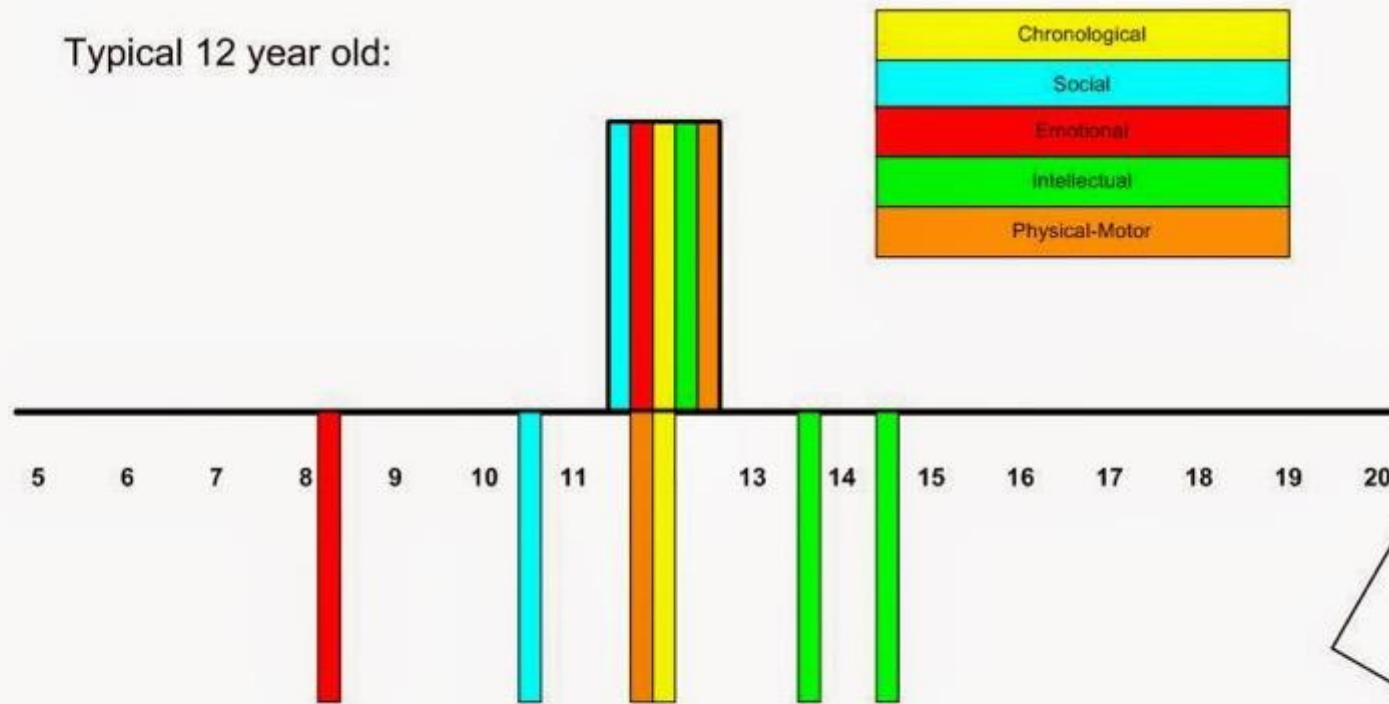
Traits

- 2e students are highly knowledgeable and talented in at least one domain.
- A 2e student's giftedness is often overshadowed by their disabilities, or these students may be able to mask or hide their learning deficits by using their talents to compensate
- They can be highly creative, verbal, imaginative, curious, with strong problem-solving ability, and a wide range of interests or a single, all-consuming expertise
- 2e students can present with a very wide range of developmental ranges in areas such as social, emotional, intellectual, and physical

Asynchronous Development

Is a discrepancy between cognitive, emotional, social and physical development.

Typical 12 year old:



If Gifted = Asynchronous Development, then $2e = \text{Asynchrony Squared}$

Atypical 12 year old = Asynchronous Gifted Child

Example: Researching Greek Mythology and fighting over the front seat.

Disorder	Statistics	Misunderstood characteristics
Sensory Processing Disorder	More than three times as often (18% of gifted kids vs. 5% of the general population)	Often, gifted kids have sensual overexcitabilities , meaning heightened experiences – and responses – when it comes to one or more of the five senses (touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing).
ADHD	Nearly three times as many gifted kids were considered or treated for ADHD (18.2% considered & 12.8% treated). That's 31% total vs. 11% of children in general.	Two characteristics that, on the surface, mimic ADHD traits are: an inability to ignore other stimuli (a common challenge due to more diverse connections in the brain), and having a hard time sitting still – or even sleeping – than most kids (due to a psychomotor overexcitability).
Asperger's or high-functioning autism	More than eight times as many gifted kids were considered or treated for a spectrum disorder (17% of gifted kids vs. 2% of the general population)	Many gifted children are very analytical , have poor eye contact , and struggle to successfully interpret and respond to social cues . The higher the child's I.Q., the more likely these traits are present.
OCD	Almost four times as many gifted kids were considered or treated for OCD. (13% were gifted kids vs. 2.7% of children in general)	Intelligence and OCD do seem to be linked. Here's the thing, though: some gifted children are simply idealists or perfectionists . In addition, many place high value on rules and order , and when these needs aren't met, they can become very anxious . Sounds like what people refer to as "OCD" or "OCD tendencies," doesn't it?

Autism Spectrum Disorder



Autism spectrum disorder (ASD), refers to a broad range of neurodevelopmental conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication.



The ways in which people with autism learn, think and problem-solve can range from highly skilled to severely challenged



According to the Centers for Disease Control, Autism affects an estimated 1 in 59 children in the United States today.

Autism Traits

Repetitive
Behaviors (i.e.,
stimming)

Restricted Interests

Social Differences

Emotional
Regulation
Challenges

Rich Internal World

Speech Challenges

Differences in
Socialization and
Pragmatic
Language Use

Parallel Play

Areas of
Heightened
Sensory Sensitivity

Wait... what about Asperger's?

Asperger's Syndrome (sometimes known as High Functioning Autism) was eliminated by the changes to the DSM in its 5th edition

- Difficult to diagnose with any consistency
- Autism is a spectrum
- Fewer criteria means more access to services

Students who were once described as Asperger's now receive the following diagnoses:

- F84.0 – Autism Spectrum Disorder
- F80.82 – Social Pragmatic Communication Disorder
- Note: If you were diagnosed with Asperger's before 2013, you are grandfathered in and can keep the diagnosis (F84.5)

Trait	Gifted	Autism
Routines	Fights against routine	Dependent on Routine
Social Awareness	Aware that they are different; can articulate why	May not be aware that they are different; less understanding of why
Humor	Understands and seeks humor; may be age-inappropriate (too old)	Less understanding of humor; likely to be age-inappropriate (too young)
Insight	Capable of high levels of insight	Insight (especially social) is limited
Empathy	Strong sense of empathy and justice for both “all people” and individuals	Empathy for “the abstract whole” but difficult individual empathy
Social Interactions	Seeks out relationships and can maintain conversations	Ambivalent about relationships and is less reciprocal (monologues)
Knowledge Base	Extensive knowledge base; can be deep, varied, and complex	High range of knowledge levels; can be restricted if deep

Identification

A student's behaviors are the reason they are evaluated

- If one, look for the other (better to know up front) – a good evaluation should be looking anyway
- Giftedness
 - Psychologist (School or Private)
 - Intelligence Tests (WISC/WAIS, WJ, Raven's, S-B, CogAt, etc.)
- Autism
 - Mental/medical health professional (Pediatrician, Psychiatrist, Psychologist, LCSW)
 - Diagnostic Tools: ADOS, MCHAT, ASQ, CARS, GARS
 - Screeners: BASC, CDQ
- 2e: The Gifted-Asperger's Disorder Checklist
<http://mcgt.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/%CB%86x-Giftedness-Asp.Dis .Checklist.pdf>

At home



Structure! (Schedules, reminders, phone apps, etc.)



Emotional regulation practice



Perspective Taking



Meeting them where they are (following the asynchrony "ages")



Sleep



Pick your battles



Set expectations and communicate (repeatedly)

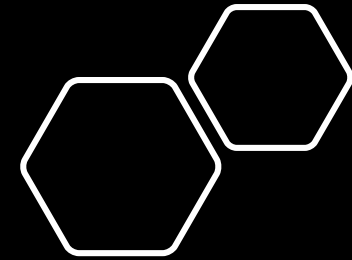
At school

- Nurture the strengths and interests
- Foster social and emotional learning (SEL)
- Identify weaknesses early and develop strategies
- Strengths-based instruction – be creative!
 - Example: a math tutor that will use the child's interest in Pokemon
- The use of technology (i.e., scribes in class or dictation software)
- 504 Plans
- Gifted/Individualized Education Plans (G/IEPs)

Supports

- Therapy – focus on skill-building and emotional processing
- Coaching – in specific lagging academic skills (i.e., reading)
- Occupational Theory – kinesthetic skills, organization,
- Speech-Language Pathology – as needed
- Educational Advocate – to help with asking for/receiving appropriate accommodations in the G/IEP world

A recent review of 20 years of research on gifted children with specific learning disabilities (SLDs), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) strongly suggests that gifted students can have co-existing disabilities, but identifying such students remains a challenge.



Further Reading

- <https://www.additudemag.com/twice-exceptional-adhd-signs/>
- <https://childmind.org/article/twice-exceptional-kids-both-gifted-and-challenged/>
- <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/building-on-strengths/7-myths-about-twice-exceptional-2e-students>
- https://www.2enewsletter.com/article_lazy_trap.html
- https://www.salon.com/2013/09/21/thats_not_autism_its_simply_a_brainy_introverted_boy/
- http://www.investigacion-psicopedagogica.org/revista/articulos/32/english/Art_32_894.pdf
- <https://www.autismparentingmagazine.com/line-between-giftedness-and-autism/>

Questions? Comments?

Please email PAGE at
helpline@giftedpage.org

