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# Introduction

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Twice exceptional (2e), doubled labelled, gifted with a learning disability (GLD) are all terms used to describe a unique subset of the gifted population. Research indicates that the incidence of these students ranges from 2.5% to 36% of the gifted population (Baum & Owen, 1988; Silverman, 1989; Whitmore, 1981). Rogers (2010), though, found a total of 14% demonstrated some form of twice exceptionality. In addition she noted that 3% of gifted students demonstrated specific learning disabilities, 7% ADHD characteristics, 3% emotional behavioural disorders and 1% Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Baum, Owen and Dixon (1991) identified three subgroups of GLD students. The first group are students identified as gifted who have subtle learning disabilities, which become apparent as the level of work undertaken at school increases in difficulty. This group is often placed in programs for gifted students, but creates frustration for the teacher and the students as they fail to reach expected outcomes the more difficult the work becomes. The second group are those who are not identified as gifted or having a learning disability because they are achieving at a grade level. These students will fail to reach their potential as they will be working very hard to maintain grades. The third group are the students who are identified for their learning disability. These students are often placed in remedial programs. The possibility that they may be gifted is not even considered or identified.

In this book, many of the authors highlighted the importance of appropriate identification strategies for these students. Carol Barnes, a parent of GLD children, provides a list of early warning signs that these children may exhibit. Munro's study indicated the type of tasks that could be used to identify the learning patterns of GLD students. Rogers provided eleven strategies for identification of these students. They are:

1. A tiered system of identification is needed.
2. There is a need for an identification team to identify precisely.
3. The identification team needs to be trained in using an identification protocol.
4. The WISC-4 is valuable in providing "inclusive" data on potential twice exceptional children.
5. Don't look far from the "family tree".
6. Finding twice exceptional children may be easier in gifted self-contained classrooms than in mixed ability classrooms.
7. It is critical to look harder than we have previously for eligible girls.

8. Identification for twice exceptional may have developmental differences to some degree.
9. The school nurse may be one of the best identifiers of twice exceptionality.
10. It is important to help parents understand the importance of early identification.
11. We must look in three places for twice exceptionality.

Wormald suggests that one of the reasons for a lack of identification of this population of students is the difficulty defining it. Currently there are separate definitions for giftedness and learning disabilities. Holmes and Sutherland studied gifted mathematicians with Asperger's Syndrome and found that if teachers were more aware of these students, they would be able to provide appropriate strategies for the students to implement in the classroom. Alamiri acknowledges the puzzle that gifted students may present but notes the even greater challenges that a GLD student with ADHD will provide in a classroom, especially a mainstream one. Yen expresses real concern about GLD students in classrooms in Taipei.

After identifying GLD students, all authors expressed concern about the type of educational programs that these students are presented in schools. Alamari, Spicer, Hill, Munro, Rogers, Yen suggest specific intervention programs for these students. Spicer, in her case study, very clearly outlines the consequences when a student is not identified and appropriate educational programs implemented for a GLD student. Spicer advocates the use of technology to meet these students' educational needs.

Rogers' research produced thirteen strategies that were found to be successful with Year 4 GLD students in the United States. These strategies are:

1. No single strategy that addresses a gap be it cognitive, affective, behavioural, or physical works for long. It is necessary to have a long list of possibles.
2. Strategies must be developed and integrated within the differentiated curriculum to cover several components of the "whole learner".
3. A child "profiling" team must plan the specific strategies that address the child's strengths and weaknesses.
4. It is important to not "water down" the gifted curriculum provided for the 2e child.
5. Use an ORR chart (Observation-Reflect-Respond) to help identify ways to respond to the child's strengths in the classroom.
6. Consider the severity or degree of the disability or disorder in deciding which accommodation tools to use.
7. Use gifted/talented peers or "buddies" to model appropriate skills in the classroom, playground, and during transitions.
8. Provide alternative means for assessing the achievement of curriculum outcomes for the child with twice exceptionality.
9. Divide longer term projects assigned into small pieces with steps the 2e child can check off.
10. Work directly and collaboratively with the child to design rubrics on how the work will be assessed.

11. Reinforce all instructions and expectations directly with the child, asking him or her to sequence the activities after the lesson or event.
12. Consider adjustments in time for project deadlines, test taking, and reading of material.
13. Provide direct memory training, plus associative, mnemonic, and environmental cues and prompts to build working memory.

A greater understanding and awareness of this population of students is suggested by Wormald in order for teachers to be able to meet their unique educational needs. This was also highlighted by Holmes and Sutherland who implemented professional development programs for teachers in their school to increase the teachers' understanding and awareness of mathematically gifted Asperger's students. Alamari also notes in his research that teacher understanding and knowledge is vital in order to meet GLD students' needs in the classroom.

Social and emotional development of these students is discussed by Hill and Spicer. Additionally, the interaction between emotional attachment and GLD was researched by Wellisch, Brown, Taylor, Knight and Berresford. Their work demonstrated that there is some correlation between IQ and emotional attachment.

In conclusion, each of the authors highlight the importance of identification, appropriate educational programming, and strategies to meet their social and emotional needs as imperative, if GLD students are to have any hope of reaching their potential. In order to achieve this several of the researchers noted that training was an essential for teachers so that they have an understanding of these students, their characteristics, differences, strengths and weaknesses. Training and support will mean that GLD students will be identified and provided with an appropriate educational program.

## References

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