

Table 1: Comparisons of Characteristics of Gifted Students and Twice Exceptional Students

Indicator	Recurrent Behaviors and Characteristics of Gifted Students	Possible Behaviors and Characteristics of Twice Exceptional
Learning	Possesses ability to learn basic skills quickly and easily and retain information with less repetition	Often struggles to learn basic skills; may demonstrate need for strategies in order to acquire basic skills and information
Verbal skills	Exhibits high verbal ability	May demonstrate high verbal ability but may also show extreme difficulty in written language area; may use language in inappropriate ways and at inappropriate times
Reading skills	Acquires reading skills early	Reading problems can be evident early; may demonstrate need for strategies in phonics, phonemic awareness, and fluency; may mask reading deficits through compensation until they shift from "learning to read" to "reading to learn"
Organizational skills	Organizational skills can vary; some gifted students can be very organized while others struggle	Usually struggle with organization; organization of things, ideas, and time
Observational skills	Has keen powers of observation	Strong observation skills but may demonstrate deficits in memory
Critical thinking/problem solving skills	Adept at critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making skills	May excel in solving "real-world" problems; can demonstrate outstanding critical thinking and decision-making skills; often independently develops compensatory skills
Attention	Has long attention span; may demonstrate persistent, intense concentration	Attention is frequently impacted; may be able to concentrate for long periods of time in areas of interest
Curiosity	Demonstrates questioning attitude	May demonstrate a strong questioning attitude, may appear disrespectful when questioning information, facts, etc. presented by teacher
Creativity	Generates creative thoughts, ideas, actions; may be innovative	Imagination may be unusual; may frequently generate original and at times rather "bizarre" ideas; extremely divergent in thought; may appear to daydream when generating ideas
Risk Taking	Takes risks	Often unwilling to take risks with regard to academics or areas of deficit; takes risks in non-school areas without consideration of consequences

Table 1: Comparisons of Characteristics of Gifted Students and Twice Exceptional Students (cont.)

Indicator	Recurrent Behaviors and Characteristics of Gifted Students	Possible Behaviors and Characteristics of Twice Exceptional
Sense of humor	Possesses unusual, often highly developed sense of humor	Humor may be used to divert attention from school failure; may use humor to make fun of peers or to avoid trouble
Maturity	May mature at different rates than age peers	Sometimes appears immature since they may use anger, crying, withdrawal, etc. to express feelings and to deal with difficulties
Independence	Has a strong sense of independence and self-efficacy	Requires frequent teacher support and feedback in deficit areas; highly independent in other areas; often appears to be extremely stubborn and Inflexible
Social Skills	May not be accepted by other children and may feel isolated	May be perceived as a loner; sometimes has difficulty being accepted by peers due to poor social skills
Leadership	Exhibits leadership ability	May be a leader among the more nontraditional students; can demonstrate strong "street-wise" behavior; the disability may interfere with ability to exercise leadership skills
Broad Interests	Interested in a wide range of topics	Interested in many topics but often learning problems impede their pursuit of them
Focused interests	Shows very focused interest, i.e., a passion about a certain topic to the exclusion of others	Often demonstrates a very focused interest, i.e., a passion about a certain topic to the exclusion of others - often not school related subjects
<p><i>Note:</i> Adapted from: <i>Comparisons of Characteristics of Gifted Students With or Without Disabilities</i>, by E. Nielsen, D. Higgins, L. Baldwin, D. Pereles, 2000, Unpublished manuscript.</p>		

From "Beyond Stereotypes: Understanding, Recognizing, and Working With Twice-Exceptional Learners," by Lois Baldwin, Stuart N. Omdal, and Daphne Pereles, *TEACHING Exceptional Children* 47.4, March/April 2015.