



Twice Exceptional (2e): Can Students with Disabilities be Gifted and Talented? Yes, They Can!

Directors of Special Education Institute

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Presentation Objectives

- ▶ What is Twice Exceptional (2e)?
- ▶ How do educators identify 2e students?
- ▶ How do educators support 2e students?





What is 2e?



Activity – Gallery Walk



- ▶ Using the poster paper placed around the room, list characteristics of students with disabilities and gifted.
- ▶ When the timer sounds, move to the next poster and add any characteristics that you think should be added.

Big Ideas

- ▶ What surprised you?
- ▶ What are similar traits across categories?
- ▶ What did you notice about differences?



What is Twice Exceptional?

- ▶ The *National Association of Gifted Children* describes twice exceptional children as those who have 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.



Ramifications of Overlooking 2e students

- ▶ Less likely to be identified later
- ▶ Future educational plans may be compromised
- ▶ Less likely to receive testing accommodations
- ▶ Many colleges require assessment within 3 year of entrance
- ▶ Unidentified 2e students have no access to supports
- ▶ Unidentified students may choose to drop out of school





Gifted Regulations and Special Considerations/Exceptions

704 KAR 3:285, Section 4



Gifted Regulations 704 KAR 3:285 Section 4

- ▶ School staff should take into consideration **environmental, cultural and disabling conditions** which may mask a child's true abilities.
- ▶ Students to consider are:
 - ***Students with disabilities (with an IEP)***
 - ***Disadvantaged***
 - ***Underachieving***



Gifted Categories

- ▶ **General Intellectual Ability**
- ▶ **Specific Academic Aptitude**
- ▶ **Creativity**
- ▶ **Leadership**
- ▶ **Visual and Performing Arts**



Road Blocks to Identification



Myth #1



- ▶ Gifted students must be good at everything.



Myth #2



- ▶ Gifted students are always mature, self-directed and well-behaved.



Myth #3

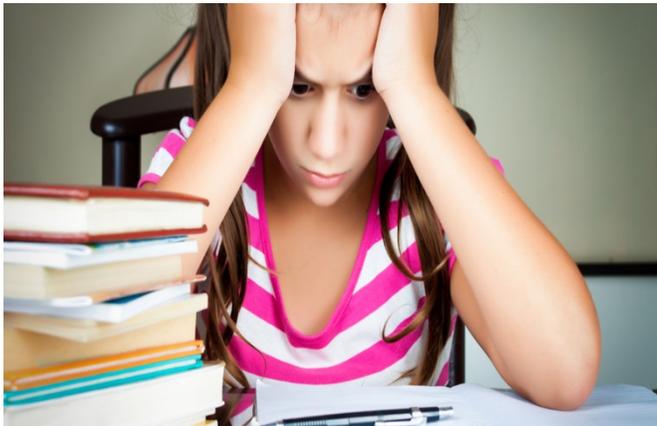


- ▶ Gifted students don't need extra help. They are smart enough to figure it out for themselves.





Three Profiles of Twice Exceptional Students

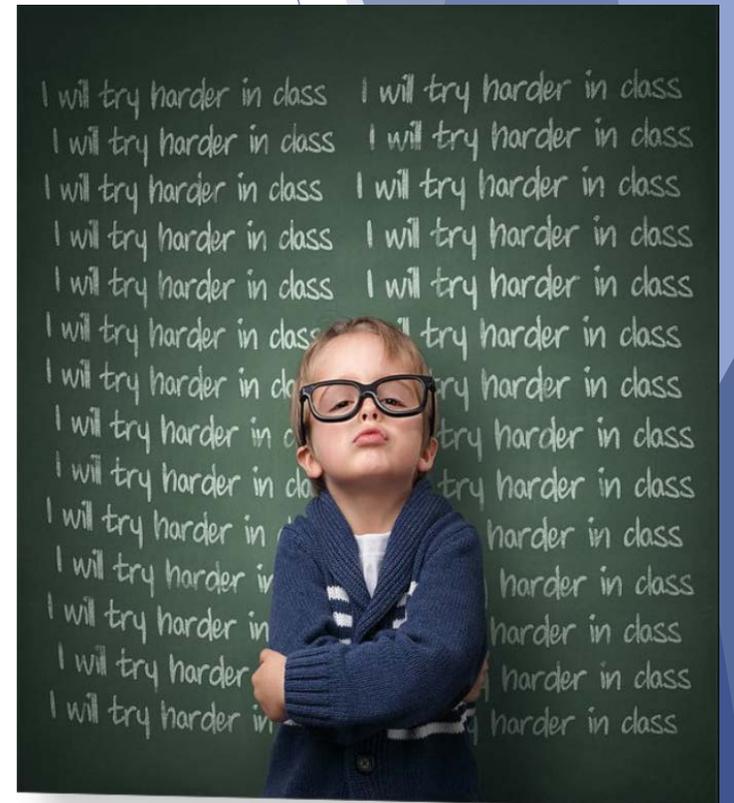




Profile #1 - The “Just Try Harder” Profile

Students who are identified as gifted and have an undetected learning disability:

- ▶ Students may have a large vocabulary and excellent verbal abilities.
- ▶ Handwriting and spelling abilities often contradict verbal ability.
- ▶ Students in this category also achieve on grade level, thus causing their learning disability to be overlooked.
- ▶ Identification of their disabilities could offer these students an understanding of their academic difficulties and ease their frustration with school.



Profile #2 – The “Just Average” Profile

Students who could be twice-exceptional, however, are not identified gifted or with a disability:

- ▶ These students’ superior intelligence seems to compensate for their undiagnosed learning disability.
- ▶ They usually receive instruction in the general classroom and often perform at grade level, so no “red flags” are raised.
- ▶ These students are often functioning below their potential.
- ▶ Their abilities and disabilities “mask” each other.
- ▶ The talents of students in this group often emerge in specific content areas, becoming noticed later in life.





Profile #3 – The “Can’t be Gifted” Profile

Identified with a disability but their exceptional abilities are unrecognized or unidentified:

- ▶ They are identified more often than those in the previous two groups because they stand out in the classroom.
- ▶ These bright students often fail in school and are noticed because of their disability, not because of their talents.
- ▶ Because little attention is given to their strengths, these students become more aware of their difficulties in learning, feeling academic failure more often than success.
- ▶ Over time, this negative outlook on school can lead to disruptive classroom behavior and feelings of low self-concept.





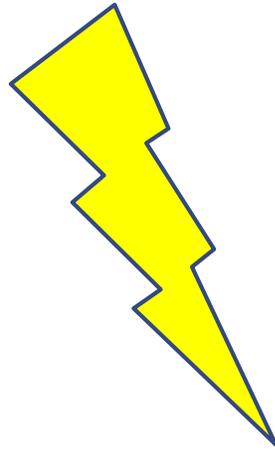
How do We Identify Twice Exceptional Students?



Strengths and Challenges



- ▶ Superior vocabulary
- ▶ Highly creative
- ▶ Resourceful
- ▶ Curious
- ▶ Imaginative
- ▶ Questioning
- ▶ Problem solving ability
- ▶ Sophisticated sense of humor
- ▶ Wide range of interest
- ▶ Special talent or consuming interest



- ▶ Easily frustrated
- ▶ Stubborn
- ▶ Manipulative
- ▶ Opinionated
- ▶ Argumentative
- ▶ Written expression
- ▶ Highly sensitive to criticism
- ▶ Inconsistent academic performance
- ▶ Lack of organization and study skills
- ▶ Difficulty with social interactions

Formal Assessment



▶ Formal Assessments

- Individually administered intelligence test
- Diagnostic achievement tests
- Tests of aptitude
- Test of creativity



Look for discrepancies

Informal Assessment



- ▶ **Informal assessments**
 - Evaluation by experts or teachers
 - Classroom observations
 - Peer evaluations
 - Auditions (performing)



Case Studies

- ▶ **Brandon**
- ▶ **Alicia**
- ▶ **George**
- ▶ **Doug**



Directions

- ▶ Read through the scenario.
- ▶ Highlight with one color the strengths and with a different color the challenges of the student.
- ▶ Discuss how the strengths can be used to improve the challenges.



Jot Downs

- ▶ Staff can use these forms to help them find students with gifted and talented characteristics.



CREATIVE THINKING JOT DOWN

Brief description of observed activity: _____

Date _____ / _____ / _____
Mo. Day Yr.

Teacher _____

Grade _____ School _____

1. As students show evidence of the following creative thinking characteristics in comparison with age peers, jot their names down in the appropriate box/es.

2. When recommending students for gifted services, use this identification jot down as a reminder of student performances as creative thinkers.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| Offers many ideas. (fluency) | Displays ability to switch categories or change ideas. (flexibility) | Develops ideas with details. (elaboration) | Offers ideas no one else may have thought of. (originality) |
| Asks questions about everything and anything. (alert and curious) | Appears bored with routine tasks and may refuse to complete them. | Uses imaginative and a strong sense of fantasy. | Appears to be day dreaming at times. |
| May be uninhibited with ideas or opinions; is sometimes radical or tenacious in expressing ideas. | Is a high risk taker with an adventurous and speculative spirit. | Has high energy level which may cause student to get in trouble. | Sees humor in situations others do not see (keen sense of humor). |
| Offers ideas others may view as wild and crazy. | May not read rules or may question the rules. | Enjoys spontaneous activities; sometimes without considering the consequences. | Appears reflective or idealistic. |

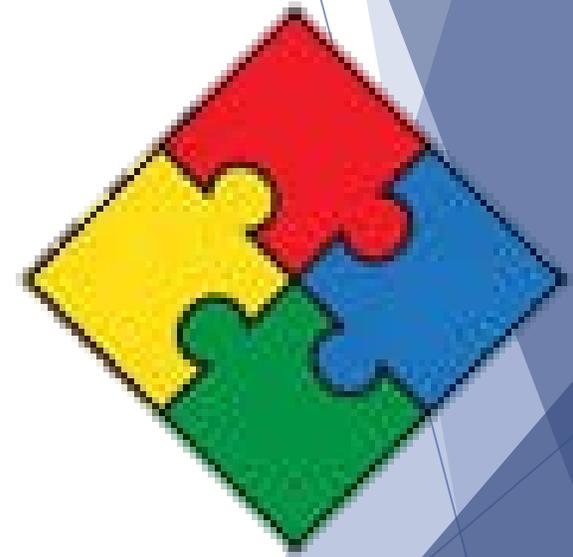
Developed by L. Whaley and M. Evans, The Center for Gifted Studies, Western Kentucky University.



How Do We Support 2e Students?

Four Key Elements for 2e Students

- ▶ **Nurturing environment** - to encourage the development of their potential
- ▶ **Learning Strategies** - to meet their needs including curriculum that challenges their thinking and promotes high-level problem solving
- ▶ **Social and Emotional Support** - to help them develop an awareness of self and understanding of their own needs
- ▶ **Strength-based/ Interest-based Programming and Interventions** - to provide challenging learning opportunities in the child's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)



Affective Needs Must Be Addressed

One of the most common characteristics of the twice-exceptional child is low self-esteem. They often disguise this low self-esteem through the use of one or more of the following behaviors:

- ▶ Anger
- ▶ Self-criticism
- ▶ Crying
- ▶ Disruption or Clowning
- ▶ Denial of problems
- ▶ Withdrawal
- ▶ Daydreaming and fantasy
- ▶ Apathy

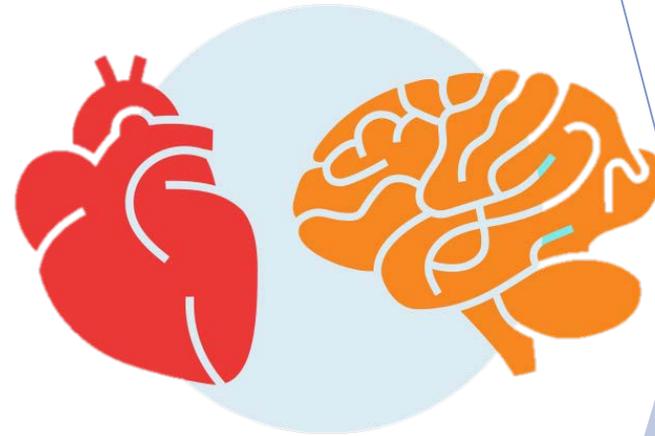


It is important to remember that often **EFFORT ≠ SUCCESS** for the 2e Student.



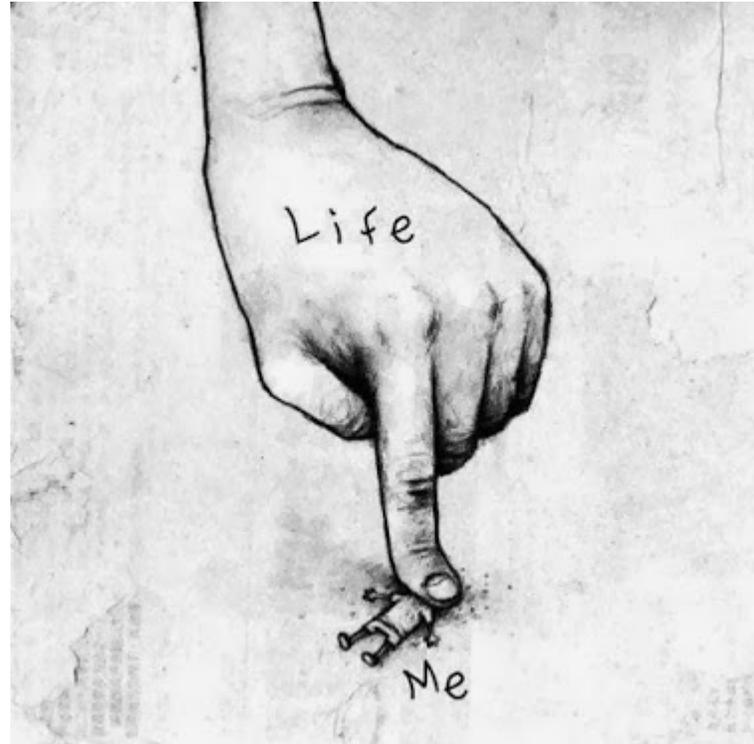
Our Brain Feels....

- ▶ Did you know that the brain feels before it thinks?
- ▶ The amygdala (think 'fight or flight' part of the brain) receives stimuli 40 milliseconds before the cortex (the thinking part of the brain.) (LeDoux, 1996).
 - What this means is that stress impedes learning. It is imperative that we as educators connect with our students and work to create a learning environment for them that positively impacts their learning.
- ▶ **Our 2e students need a connection with a caring adult who will advocate for them to be successful.**



Signs to Watch Out For:

- ▶ Underachievement
- ▶ Perfectionism
- ▶ Procrastination
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Stress
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Interpersonal connections



Focus on Strengths

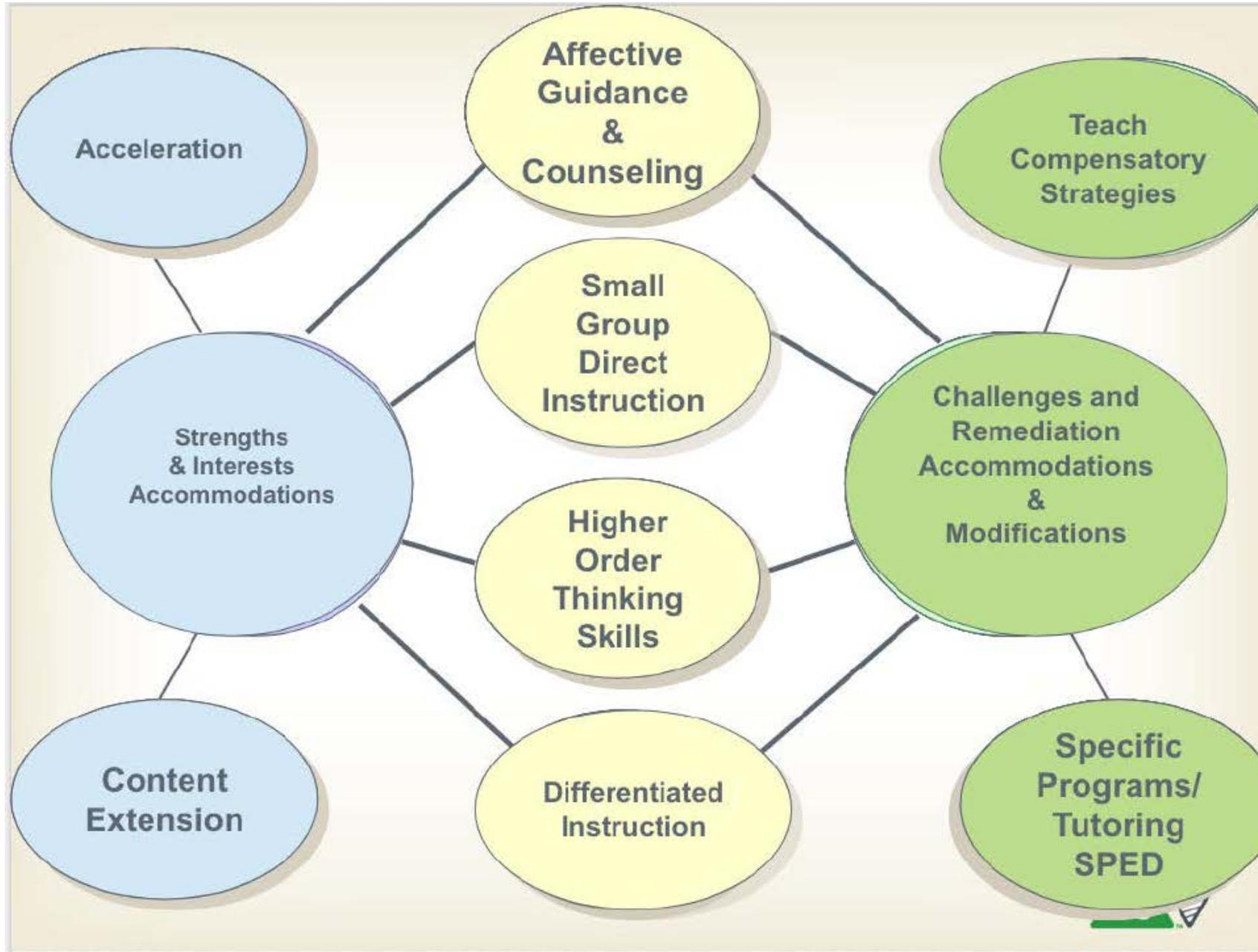
The essential element in meeting the educational needs of students who are 2e is providing instruction that emphasizes these students' strengths and interests while remediating their learning deficits - **but focus on strengths first.**

- ▶ The self-concept scores of LD students who were also receiving gifted services were significantly higher than those receiving services for their learning disability only
- ▶ Adjust your programming to meet their strengths
- ▶ When students' services included gifted programming that focused on their strengths, the self-concepts of students who are gifted/LD matched those of their nondisabled peers

<https://www.world-gifted.org/WCGTC17-Presentations/3-4-5.pdf>



Fundamental of Dual Differentiated Curriculum



Bridging the Gap

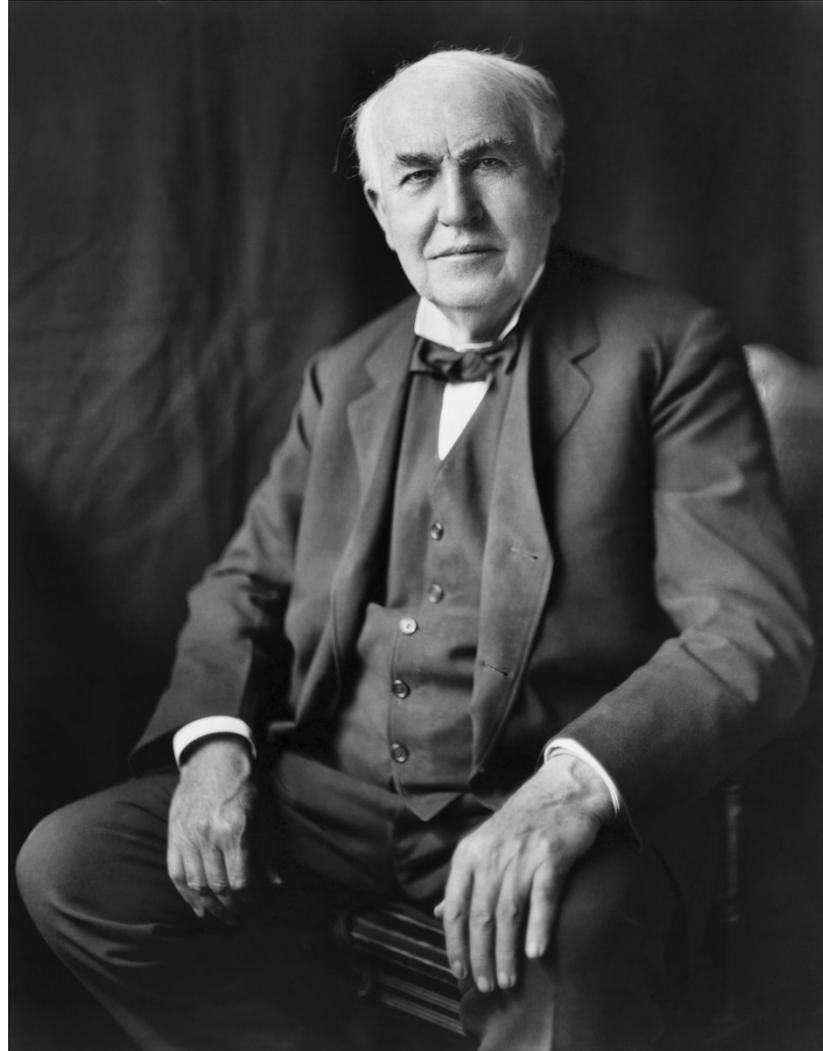
- ▶ Special education and gifted teachers need to work together.
- ▶ GT teacher/coordinator should be invited to ARC meetings.
 - The GT teacher may have known the student for many years and if so will have prior knowledge about the student.



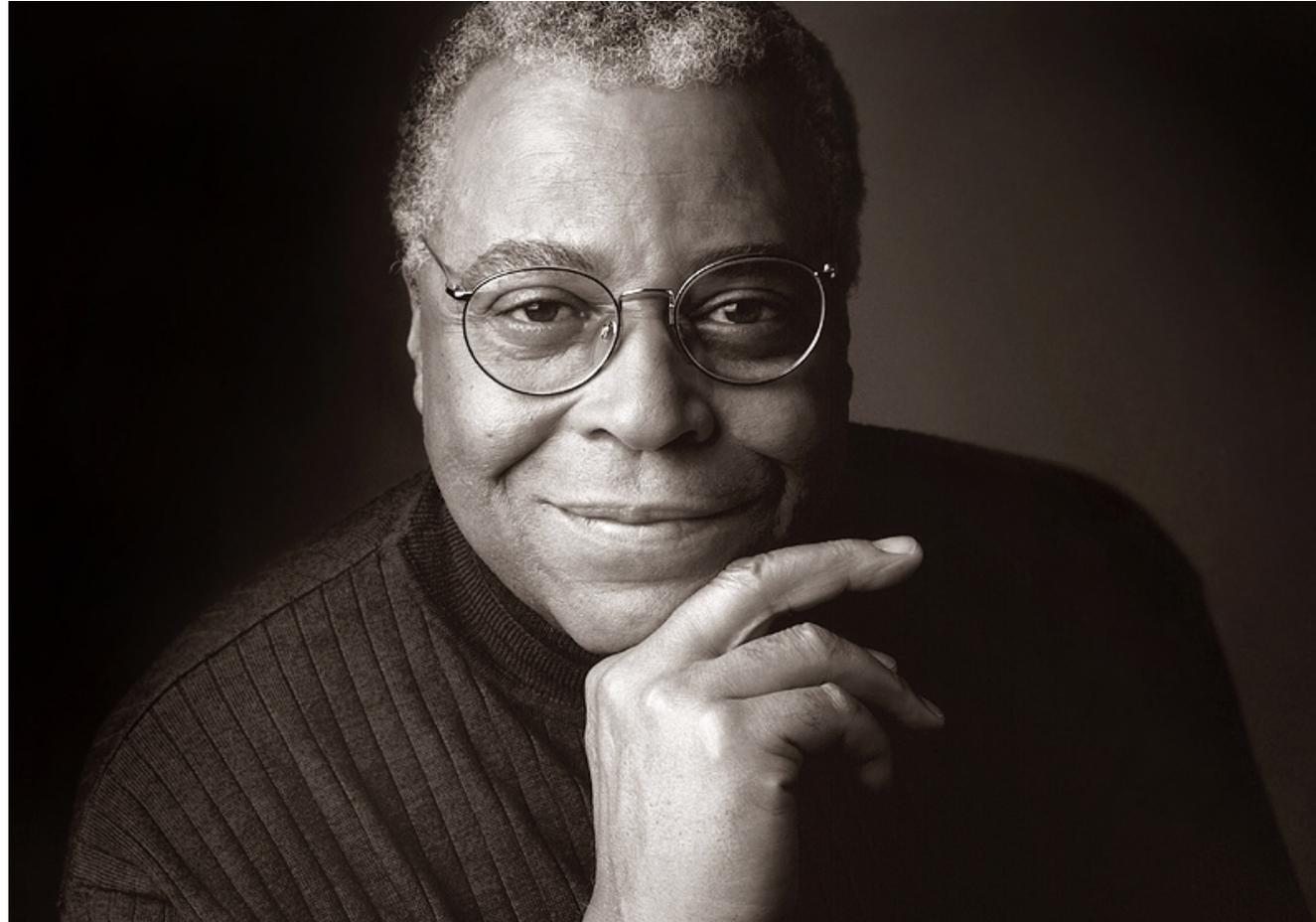
Famous People Who Were or Are Twice Exceptional



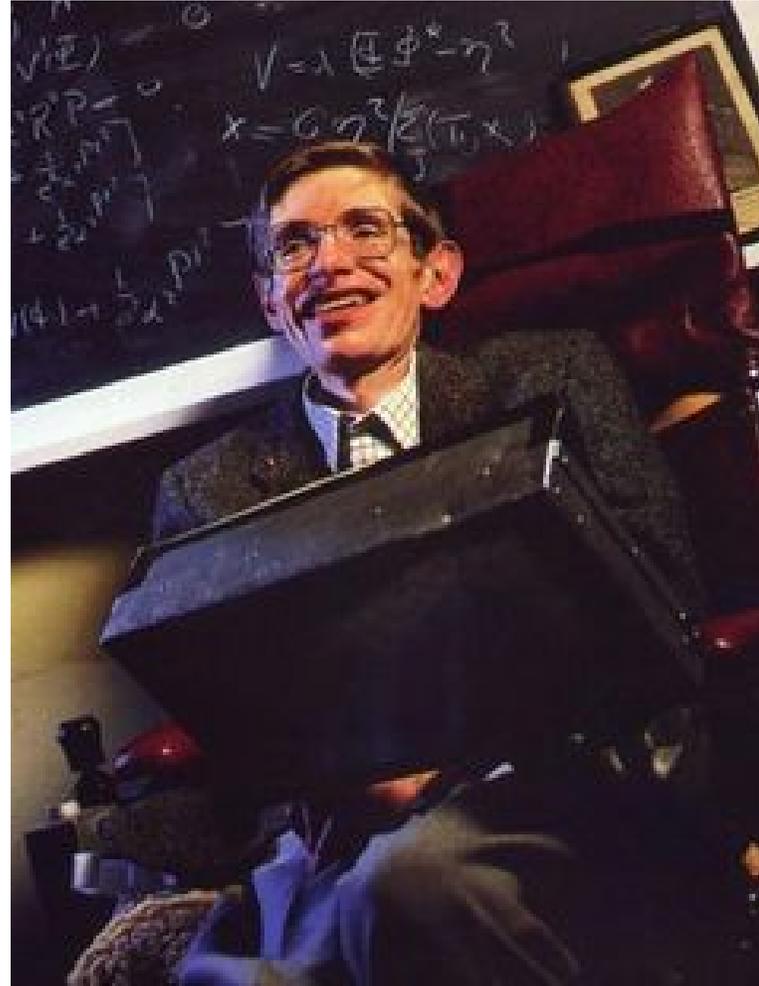
Thomas Edison



James Earl Jones



Stephen Hawking





Robin Williams



Where would we be without the achievements and contributions of these twice-exceptional individuals?



Resources

- ▶ [National Association for Gifted Children](#)
- ▶ [Colorado Department for Gifted Education](#)
- ▶ [Gifted Guru](#)
- ▶ [Byrdseed](#)
- ▶ [Hoagies Gifted Education Page](#)
- ▶ [Council for Exceptional Children - TAG](#)



Books

- ▶ ***Twice Exceptional Gifted Children: Understanding, Teaching, and Counseling Gifted Students*** by Beverly Trail Ed.D.
- ▶ ***Smart but Scattered: The Revolutionary “Executive Skills” Approach to Helping Kids Reach Their Potential*** by Peg Dawson, Richard Guare
- ▶ ***Different Minds: Gifted Children with Ad/HD, Asperger Syndrome and Other Learning Deficits*** by Deirdre V. Lovecky
- ▶ **Kingore Observation Inventory**
by Bertie W. Kingore Ph.D.



Questions?



2e Quote

"Too often the strengths and interests of Gifted-Learning Disabled students are either unrecognized, seen but ignored, put on hold, or are irksome because they are the wrong talents for conventional school achievement."

- Susan Baum & Steven Owen,
authors of "To Be Gifted
and Learning Disabled"



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