

# GT/LD Pattern of Strengths/Weaknesses

Purpose: This tool was developed to support schools as they discuss concerns related to bright students. It is designed to assist teams to determine whether or not a student may be suspected to be GT/LD.

Student's Name:  
School:

ID Number:  
School contact person:

Grade:

Directions: As a team, identify strengths and needs.

- 1) First, check for strengths. Place an check mark in any box in the strengths column where the area is a *significant* strength as compared to the student's grade-level peers.
- 2) Second, check for needs. Place an 'N' in any box in the needs column where the student's performance is significantly below expectancy given the student's strengths or if the student performs below grade level in that area.

If there are many areas checked on *both* sides of the chart, the child may have a pattern of strengths and weaknesses consistent with that of identified GT/LD students.

## Cognitive

Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal reasoning <input type="checkbox"/> Visual spatial reasoning <input type="checkbox"/> Problem-solving <input type="checkbox"/> Background knowledge and vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Making connections between events, ideas, and situations <input type="checkbox"/> Concept attainment and retention <input type="checkbox"/> Long-term, abstract memory <input type="checkbox"/> Critical thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity and imagination, generation of new or original ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Curiosity, questioning	<input type="checkbox"/> Processing speed <input type="checkbox"/> Memory (rote or short-term) <input type="checkbox"/> Executive functioning/mental organization <input type="checkbox"/> Working memory <input type="checkbox"/> Auditory processing <input type="checkbox"/> Visual-spatial perception <input type="checkbox"/> Sequential processing <input type="checkbox"/> Visual-motor integration <input type="checkbox"/> Distractible or hyperactive	
Verbal reasoning is a characteristic of a GT/LD student. Generally, the GT/LD student is driven to learn about key areas of interest. While they may have difficulty in organizing their thinking, they tend to be able to make good connections and have strong problem solving capabilities. If weaknesses in rote memory and organization are compensated for, these strengths generally flourish.		

## Written Expression

Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Creative ideas, originality <input type="checkbox"/> May have a strong voice <input type="checkbox"/> Word choice, vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Grasp of concepts, ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Background knowledge, information	<input type="checkbox"/> Translating ideas onto paper <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty "getting started" <input type="checkbox"/> Organization/sequencing of ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Elaboration, providing adequate support/detail (minimal output) <input type="checkbox"/> Conventions/mechanics <input type="checkbox"/> Spelling <input type="checkbox"/> Poor handwriting <input type="checkbox"/> Slow writing speed/fluency <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal production	
Most GT/LD student's strengths in writing are only evident verbally through their oral expression (until they learn compensatory strategies) as most often their weaknesses impact the student's ability to get their thoughts out on paper. When the student reads back or discusses their writing, they may verbally elaborate and add unlimited description and detail. Some students have great difficulty with the mechanics of writing but can put their thoughts onto paper. Others have more difficulty figuring out how to filter through all their ideas and narrowing their focus. Others have difficulty generating/organizing ideas and getting started. Some students have all of these challenges.		

# GT/LD Pattern of Strengths/Weaknesses

## Reading

Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Listening comprehension (deeper meaning, making connections, inferential thinking, insights) <input type="checkbox"/> Using high-level vocabulary and sharing vast background knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Applying shared inquiry (high-level discussion and questioning) <input type="checkbox"/> Grasping themes and getting the main idea	<input type="checkbox"/> Phonemic awareness and decoding (phonics) <input type="checkbox"/> Oral reading fluency (pace and smoothness) <input type="checkbox"/> Memory, recalling accurate/adequate details <input type="checkbox"/> Written responses	
<p>Most GT/LD students have excellent reading comprehension skills. However, if reading is impacted, the most common areas of need are in decoding and fluency. Students with severe decoding skills often have short term memory and sequencing difficulties. These weaknesses can impact the student's comprehension of independently read text. If the written component is removed from the comprehension task, often the GT/LD responses are advanced for his/her age.</p>		

## Math

Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Strong grasp of concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Reasoning, problem-solving <input type="checkbox"/> Thinking logically and symbolically at high levels <input type="checkbox"/> Coming up with new or alternative solutions to problems <input type="checkbox"/> Relating math concepts to novel situations	<input type="checkbox"/> Computation (particularly long-division, multi-digit multiplication, working with fractions) <input type="checkbox"/> Retaining and recalling math facts automatically and quickly <input type="checkbox"/> Processing information sequentially (following algorithms, showing your work, explaining how you got your answer)	
<p>Many GT/LD students are strong mathematical thinkers and grasp taught concepts quickly. Typical areas of weakness include calculations, basic facts, and showing work. In contrast, the GT/LD student may be very strong in verbal skills, but have a clear weakness for number sense and visual spatial skills. This student finds math challenging, while having a stronger set of reading skills.</p>		

## Expressive Language

Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Creative and unique ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Verbally fluent <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Articulate, "adult-like" discussions	<input type="checkbox"/> Word retrieval <input type="checkbox"/> Organization and sequencing of ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Staying on topic <input type="checkbox"/> Pragmatic language	
<p>Most GT/LD students have excellent expressive language skills and are described as highly verbal and articulate. Some students may have difficulties with word retrieval and will talk around an idea. Some students may know what they want to say but start and stop or sequence their ideas inappropriately.</p>		

## Receptive Language

Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning through listening <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding spoken language	<input type="checkbox"/> Following directions <input type="checkbox"/> Identifying salient points	
<p>Most GT/LD students have strong receptive language ability and learn well by listening to the teachers and others. However, they often have difficulty following directions that are presented orally or identifying what is important. Attention difficulties may impact a student's listening comprehension despite strong receptive language ability.</p>		

# GT/LD Pattern of Strengths/Weaknesses

## Social/Emotional

Characteristics	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Low self-esteem related to school competence <input type="checkbox"/> Anxious about school performance <input type="checkbox"/> Task avoidant (limited to areas of difficulty)	
While social/emotional difficulty is not a primary characteristic of a learning disability, many GT/LD students (whose strengths and needs are not recognized or addressed) struggle with poor self-esteem, anxiety about school-related tasks, and frustration. They may avoid tasks that they are incapable of doing well (reading, writing...) but remain engaged during instruction that is strength-based (discussion, hands-on...). Pervasive behavioral or emotional issues are not typical for GT/LD students, and will dissipate when/if the disability and the gifts are recognized and addressed.	

### Findings:

- The child has a pattern of strengths and weaknesses that is **strongly** consistent with that of a GT/LD student.
- The child has a pattern of strengths and weaknesses that is **somewhat** consistent with that of a GT/LD student.
- The child has a pattern of strengths and weaknesses that is **not** consistent with that of a GT/LD student.

### Recommendations:

- Accelerated and enriched instruction:
  - William and Mary
  - Junior Great Books
  - Jacob's Ladder
  - Math acceleration
  - Science/social studies enrichment
  - GT/Honors/AP courses in the following areas: \_\_\_\_\_
- Enrichment:
  - Independent Study Project
  - Wings Mentor
  - After school activity/club
- Interventions in areas of weakness
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Math
  - Organization
  - Self-advocacy
- Informal accommodations
- Referral for IEP screening
- Referral for Wings Mentor Program
- Referral for GT/LD consultation or training for staff
- Referral for GT/LD program

### Resources:

It is strongly recommended that all staff working with GT/LD students read Twice Exceptional Students: A Guidebook for Supporting the Achievement of Gifted Students with Special Needs. It is a comprehensive manual with information regarding identification, characteristics, what works, interventions, programs, and services for twice exceptional students. It is available in schools and can be downloaded from the GT/LD web site at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/enriched/mcpsprograms/gtld/index.shtml>

### Follow-Up:

If consultation is needed, send a copy of this checklist to Marisa Stemple, GT/LD Instructional Specialist, in room 177 CESC along with the GT/LD Consult Request Form. If available, attach a copy of psychological and educational testing. Ms. Stemple will contact you regarding appropriate follow-up regarding this student.