

What Does it Mean to be Gifted with a Learning Disability?

Being called Gifted or Talented with a Learning Disability might mean that there are some things you learn very easily without having to put in much effort but other things that you find very difficult and struggle to do. Sometimes, the things you are really good at



can help you in the areas you find challenging. At the same time, you can also find yourself really frustrated because you might know the answer or

have the information but can't find a way to let anyone know!

You might find that you are really hard on yourself when you can't get the perfect product completed and feel like you can't do anything right sometimes. It can be hard to get along with your classmates at times and you might wonder where you fit in because you seem so different from everyone else in your class. Keep reading for more information and ways to get support at home and school.

How Do I Get the Help I Need?

To take responsibility for your learning, both in areas of strength and areas of challenge, you will need to become a self-advocate. This means that you speak up for yourself. It means that you:

- understand your strengths and challenges
- develop personal goals
- stand up for yourself (be assertive!)
- communicate your needs
- make decisions about the supports you need to meet those needs

Why should you learn self-advocacy skills?

You will:

- have an easier time with your classes
- get the support you need
- get the challenge you want
- be able to show what you can do!



(Heath Resource Center, 2014)

For an electronic version of this information please visit:

<http://ajohnstone.edublogs.org/gifted-students-with-learning-disabilities/>



Frequently Asked Questions

I sometimes find it hard to get along with my classmates. What can I do?

There are always going to be people that you may not get along with, even as an adult! Try to be respectful, even if you don't like someone. You may be finding things tricky in the classroom because your interests may be different than the other kids your age. Look for clubs or activities at school or in the community where you can connect with people who like the same things as you—if you can't find one, start one! Remember the adults in your life are there to support you—be a self-advocate!

I know that I am smart but sometimes at school I feel like I can't do anything right. What can I do?

Everyone feels this way sometimes, we all have things we are good at and things we are not—no one is perfect! Understanding both your strengths and challenges is a great place to start. Ask an adult to help you make a strengths and needs profile. Talk to your teacher (self-advocate!) and see if there is a way that you can spend some time each day working in your areas of interest and strength. You will still need to spend some time working on your challenge areas but it is just as important to have time to build on your strengths as well. Getting to work on these areas will help you remember that you are really good at some things!

People Like Me

Many famous individuals have also been identified as being Gifted with a Learning Disability. Here are some of them:

- **Muhammad Ali** – Work Famous Boxer
- **Hans Christian Andersen** – Poet and Fairy Tale Writer
- **Henry Ford** – Created the first affordable automobile
- **Steven Spielberg** – Director of the Indiana Jones and Jurassic Park films
- **Jamie Oliver** – Famous Chef
- **Vince Vaughn** – Actor and Comedian
- **Ann Bancroft** – The First Woman to travel to the North Pole
- **Walt Disney** – Creator of Disney
- **Alexander Graham Bell** – Inventor of the Telephone

Some websites that can connect you with other kids like you:

- **LD Online** – Your Stories (<http://www.ldonline.org/kidzone>)
- **Hoagie's Gifted Education Page** (http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/hoagies_kids.htm)

Your parents and teachers are good people to ask for advice. They may not always understand exactly what you are feeling, but they will want to help and can connect you with the right people.

A counsellor may also be able to help you learn strategies to deal with any challenges you might face. The Kids Help Phone website (www.kidshelpphone.ca) is also a great place to look for information about how to solve problems or to talk to a counsellor if there isn't one at your school.