

Helping Gifted Students Learn Online During COVID 19

(A) For **gifted students online learning** must offer:

- Project-based learning that is more learning activities-oriented, not content-oriented.
- Opportunities to interact with their instructor/teacher in a meaningful way as well as other gifted classmates.
- Activities should be designed to cultivate higher-level thinking and creative problem-solving skills.
- Allow students to move faster through the curriculum and at their own pace. Otherwise, gifted students might find online distractions more engaging and their interest in new and challenging materials might draw them away from slow paced coursework and into the vast amount of information at their fingertips on the Internet.
- Gifted students need to participate in a variety of activities including online discussions, collaborative projects and/or real-time interactive sessions with like-minded peers.
- Gifted students maybe unwilling to ask for help and teachers do not have the advantage of non-verbal clues to pick up on student confusion.
- Confident that they "know what to do," some gifted students may dive in and start working on an assignment before fully reading the directions. Students in classrooms aren't likely to get far down the wrong path before a teacher steps in to redirect. Teachers will need to check students' progress early on during an assignment to ensure this doesn't happen.
- A fully online learning environment can be challenging for all students including gifted students. Students need to be self-disciplined and experienced with working independently to be successful. Students need to be aware of what the differences and expectations are in their new learning environment.

(B) We are concerned about **accommodations and modifications provided to 2e students** (gifted student who also has another exceptionality, such as: a specific learning disability, ADHD, ADD, emotional and behavioral disability, or ASD, etc.).

How will the student's needs be sufficiently supported? Parents/guardians will need to know how and what accommodations are provided in the classroom so they might try to provide them at home. 2e students may need an area free of distracts for test taking. This may not be possible at home.

Some Accommodations/Modifications for 2e students:

- Minimize repetitive work.
- Frequent reminders of due dates.
- May need a private signal from the teacher to regain his/her attention.
- Provide notes to keep the student from getting distracted by taking notes.
- May need to be tested orally rather than written in some or all subjects.
- Allow extra time to complete tests.
- Give the student a checklist of tasks to be completed.
- Provide clear and concise directions, verbally as well as in writing.

(C) Existing successful **online learning opportunities** for gifted elementary and secondary students

1. The Center for Talented Youth (CTY) at Johns Hopkins University (pre-K – 12)
- <https://cty.jhu.edu/online/>
2. Talent Identification Program (TIP) at Duke University (grades 8 – 12)
- <https://tip.duke.edu/>
3. Center for Talent Development (CTD) at Northwestern University (grades 4 – 12)
- <https://www.ctd.northwestern.edu/program/online-enrichment?sort=alpha>
4. Stanford Online High School (OHS) (grades 7-university level)
- <https://onlinehighschool.stanford.edu/>

(D) Additional questions:

- Will "Reach Ahead", a program offering Grade 7 & 8 students the opportunity to earn credits early at a high school in their community, be available? And will Grade 8 students accessing Grade 9 courses receive a credit?

(E) Accommodations to Provide at Home for Online Learning and Gifted students

For gifted students the curriculum is modified by increasing depth and complexity in some or all subjects and it is important that this continues, even during these challenging times. 2e students will also have accommodations.

While all students will need an uncluttered work area free of distractions, this is especially true for 2e students. Parents will need to review their child's IEP. Know what accommodations are provided in the classroom, so you can try to provide them at home. Your child may also know what they are.

Here are a few **Accommodations that parents/guardians** can provide or help with at home:

- Using headphones will help create a quieter workspace.
- Make time to organize materials and store them in a designated location. Provide a specific location for completed work.
- Record assignments or ask the teacher to provide notes so your child doesn't get distracted by taking notes.
- Use visual organizers, post a calendar on the wall to record the daily schedule and assignment due dates. Create a checklist of tasks to be completed and use check points for long-term assignments and monitoring progress.
- Gifted students might find online distractions more engaging than the lesson, especially if they're unable to move at their own pace. Students may need a signal from the parent to regain his/her attention.
- Gifted students maybe unwilling to ask for help and teachers do not have the advantage of non-verbal clues to pick up on a student's confusion. Encourage your child to ask questions regarding unclear directions and assignments.
- Confident that they "know what to do," some gifted students may dive in and start working on an assignment before fully reading the directions. In a classroom, students aren't likely to get far down the wrong path before a teacher steps in to redirect. At home parents may need to check their child's progress early on during an assignment to ensure this doesn't happen.
- Gifted students need to participate in a variety of activities including online discussions, collaborative projects and/or real-time interactive sessions with like-minded peers.

A fully online learning environment will be challenging for teachers and students, including gifted students. To be successful students need to be aware of what the differences and expectations are in their new learning environment. Gifted children who are not self-disciplined and able to work independently are more likely to experience stress or perhaps even depression. This is especially true in unfamiliar situations such as these. Parents will need to help them to accept and understand these new circumstances and be resilient in the face of adversity. Encourage them to advocate for themselves, reach out to others for help and have compassion for and acceptance of themselves and others. Remind them this is only a temporary situation.

(F) More resources to help while schools are closed

Ontario Ministry of Education portal to educational resources, for all students from Kindergarten through to Grade 12. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/learn-at-home>

Nelson is supporting the education community during COVID-19 <https://www.nelson.com/learningonline/parents.html>

MathPickle free online resource of mathematical puzzles, games and more. <https://mathpickle.com>

Problem of the Week offered by University of Waterloo, provides students with an opportunity to solve mathematical problems. <https://www.cemc.uwaterloo.ca/resources/potw.php>

Would You Rather - Students make choices based on mathematical reasoning. <https://www.wouldyourathermath.com>

NRICH offered by University of Cambridge is a free online mathematics resources for ages 3 to 18. <https://nrich.maths.org/frontpage>

Education Place - Grade 1–6 resources for teachers, students, and families to support instruction in the classroom and at home. <http://www.eduplace.com>
Edutopia **Inquiry-Based Learning** <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/what-heck-inquiry-based-learning-heather-wolpert-gawron>

NAGC - Resources for Educators & Parents During COVID-19 <https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/resources-educators-parents-during-covid-19>

It's a good idea to check the TCDSB website for resources.

Kahn Academy - Self-teach a variety of subjects <https://www.khanacademy.org>

Mathletics - <https://www.mathletics.com/ca/resources/lessonplans/ontario>

<https://ca.ixl.com>

Math Games Inspire Young Minds

<https://www.edc.org/5-math-games-inspire-young-minds>

(G) Books on Parenting gifted Children

Parenting Gifted Kids, Dr. James Delisle

Homeschooling Gifted and Advanced Learners by Cindy West