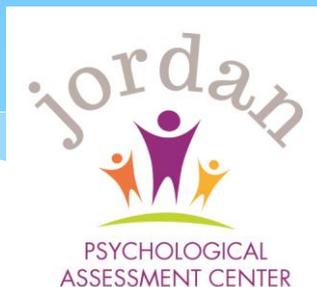


# Asynchronous Development

Gifted Children's Highs, Lows, and Middle of the Roads

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# Asynchrony

- \* “Giftedness is ***asynchronous development*** in which advanced cognitive abilities and heightened intensity combine to create inner experiences and awareness that are qualitatively different from the norm. This asynchrony increases with higher intellectual capacity. The uniqueness of the gifted renders them particularly vulnerable and requires modifications in parenting, teaching, and counseling in order for them to develop optimally.” (Columbus Group definition)

# Asynchrony

- \* Being out of sync
  - \* with oneself
  - \* with peers
  - \* with expectations
- \* Developing more quickly in one area, while other areas are age-appropriate or behind

# Asynchrony

- \* Emotional and physical development often not as advanced as cognitive development
  - \* Emotional maturity often assumed in gifted child
  - \* Adults surprised when they “act their age”
  - \* May have sense of humor and understand sarcasm, but in social situation may not realize joke is offensive

# Asynchrony

- \* Gaps can be bigger as IQ increases
  - \* Greater discrepancy between chronological age and “mental age”
- \* Not static
  - \* Skills can jump ahead or lag behind

# Internal Asynchrony

## Mental Age Predicts:

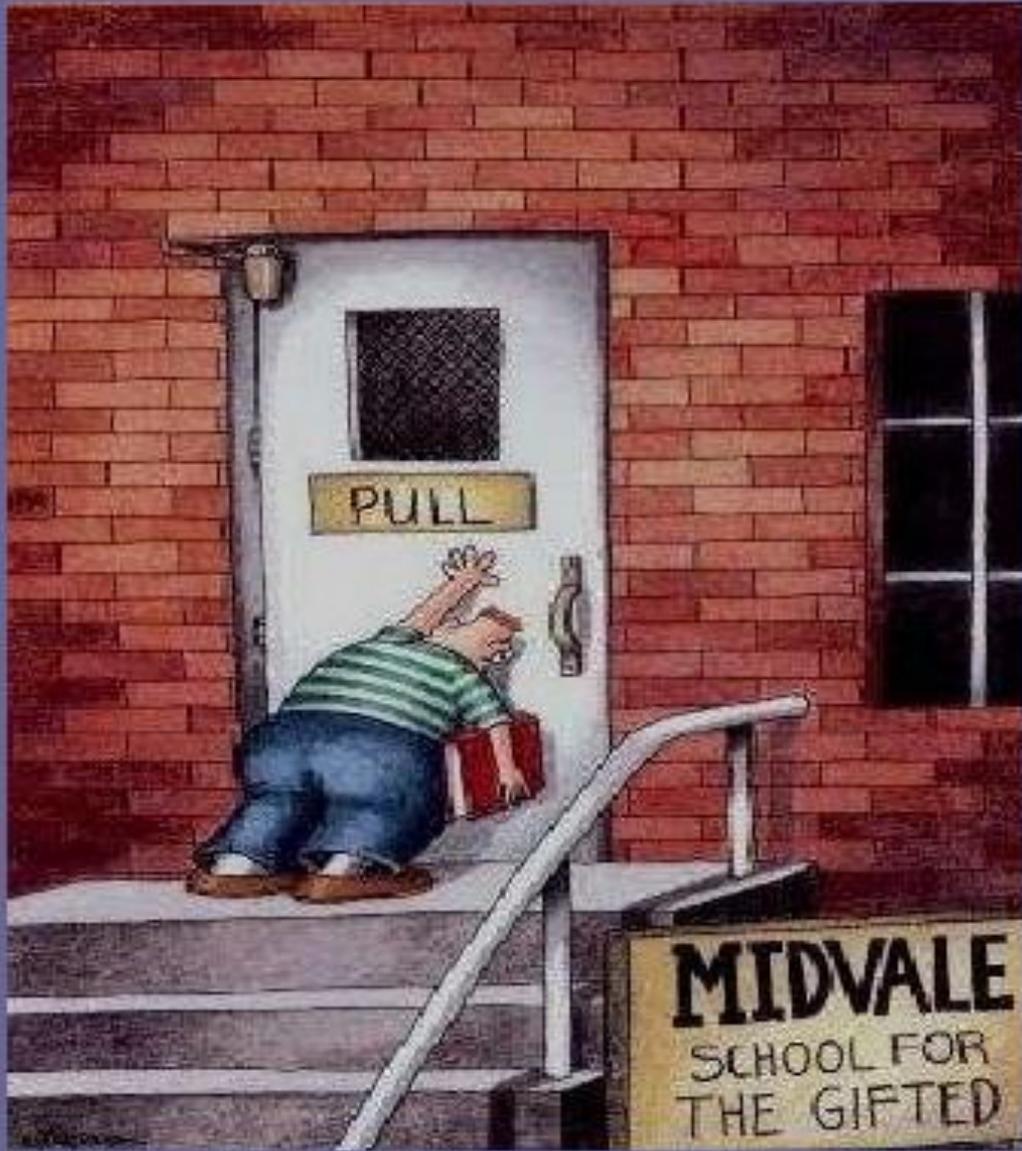
- \* Knowledge
- \* Rate of learning
- \* Sophistication of play
- \* Sense of humor
- \* Ethical sense
- \* Awareness of the world

## Chronological Age Predicts:

- \* Height
- \* Physical coordination
- \* Handwriting speed
- \* Emotional needs
- \* Social skills

# Interpersonal Asynchrony

- \* Out of step with the world
- \* Feel different from family and peers
  - \* “I don’t fit in anywhere.”
- \* More prominent in profoundly gifted



# Example

- \*7-year-old child, but like a
  - \*15-year-old when doing algebra
  - \*12-year-old when playing chess
  - \*7-year-old when writing

# Myth of the “Superchild”

- \* Athletic
- \* Smart
- \* Straight A student
- \* Attractive
- \* Leader
- \* Socially adept
- \* Motivated
- \* Attentive
- \* Well-behaved

# Self-Esteem

- \* Frustration with things that do not come easily
  - \* “I’m great at math but I stink at spelling.”
- \* Tasks that come easily can be seen as trivial
- \* Self-worth can be associated with tasks that are more difficult
  - \* “I’m stupid because I can’t spell.”
- \* Judge self by what she cannot do rather than what she can do
- \* Perfectionism, intensity
- \* May predispose to depression, anxiety

# Case Example – 6-year-old girl

## WECHSLER INTELLIGENCE SCALE FOR CHILDREN - FIFTH EDITION

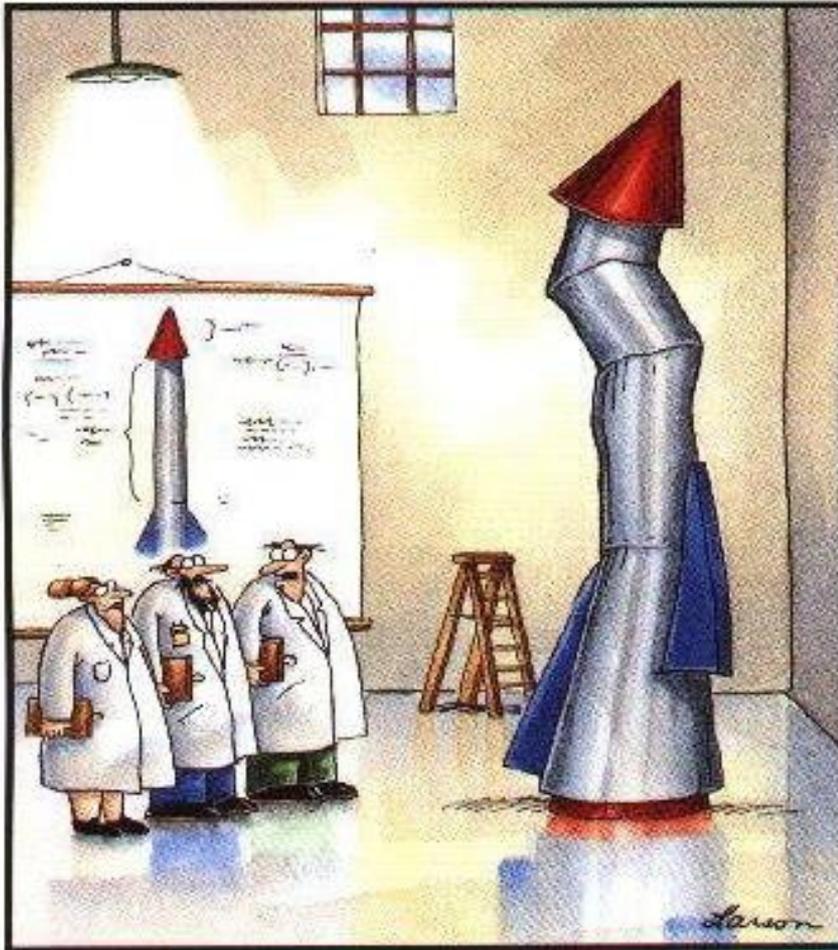
Scale	Composite Score	Percentile Rank	95% Confidence Interval	Description
Verbal Comprehension	155	>99.9	143-158	Extremely High
Visual Spatial	144	99.8	133-148	Extremely High
Fluid Reasoning	147	99.9	136-151	Extremely High
Working Memory	146	99.9	135-150	Extremely High
Processing Speed	105	63	95-113	Average
Full Scale IQ	152	>99.9	144-156	Extremely High

# Case Example – 9-year-old boy

## WECHSLER INTELLIGENCE SCALE FOR CHILDREN - FIFTH EDITION

Scale	Composite Score	Percentile Rank	95% Conf. Interval	Description
Verbal Comprehension	133	99	123-138	Extremely High
Visual Spatial	122	93	113-128	Very High
Fluid Reasoning	131	98	122-136	Extremely High
Working Memory	110	75	102-117	High Average
Processing Speed	89	23	81-99	Low Average
Full Scale IQ	127	96	120-132	Very High
General Ability Index	133	99	126-137	Extremely High

# Multiple Intelligences



"It's time we face reality, my friends. ...  
We're not exactly rocket scientists."

- Linguistic – Highly developed verbal skills
- Logical Mathematical -
- Spatial – Good at pattern recognition
- Naturalist – Sensitive to natural phenomena
- Bodily kinesthetic – Excellent body (physical) control
- Musical –
- Interpersonal – High ability to understand other individuals
- Intrapersonal – High ability to understand one's self

# Issues Related to Asynchronous Development

- \* Affect regulation
- \* Overexcitabilities
- \* Perfectionism
- \* Multi-potentiality
- \* Underachievement

# Perfectionism

- \* Perfectionism + Asynchronous Development =
  - \* Unfulfilled expectations
  - \* Frustration, depression
  - \* Wish to be perfect at everything they try, disappointment when they are not

# Underachievers

- \* Can be highly asynchronous
- \* Can be lagging behind in:
  - \* Organizational skills
  - \* Motivation

# Twice Exceptional

- \* Most asynchronous, biggest gaps in development
- \* Gifted +
  - \* ADHD
  - \* Dyslexia
  - \* Dysgraphia
  - \* Autism Spectrum Disorder

# Twice Exceptional

- \* Gifted kids may compensate for disability, making it harder to detect
  - \* When disability is recognized, some may question the gifted identification
  - \* Adults may not recognize disability and tell child to “work harder” or “focus”
- \* Some children’s disability is severe enough that high ability is overlooked

# Siblings

- \* Unequal abilities among siblings
  - \* Differences in competencies, gifts
- \* Types of abilities valued in the family or culture
  - \* What does family value and support?
  - \* Math, music, art
- \* Can be critical of siblings who aren't as good at something as they are

# Children's Feelings

## \* Frustration

- \* Often frustrating that some things do not come as easily as others
- \* Help child understand strengths and weaknesses
- \* Frustration management and coping skills
- \* OK to ask for help

# Parental Strategies

- \* Become acquainted with the child's many ages
  - \* Unique asynchronous development
- \* Adjust your expectations
  - \* Meet your child where he or she is, based on current development
- \* Help build executive functioning skills
  - \* Attention, organization, self-regulation skills

# Parental Strategies

- \* Offer support for all endeavors, even those that are less developed
- \* Encourage children to try new things, even those that don't come easily or take effort
- \* Celebrate less-than-perfect results
- \* Remember that kids are kids – have fun and enjoy!

# Resources

- \* Off the Charts: Asynchrony and the Gifted Child
- \* SENG
- \* Duke TIP