



TABLE 6.4 Representative Learning and Behavioral Characteristics of Individuals With Intellectual Disability

Dimension	Associated Attributes and Features
Attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inability to attend to critical or relevant features of a task• Diminished attention span• Difficulty ignoring distracting stimuli
Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deficits in memory correlated with severity of intellectual disability• Limitations in ability to selectively process and store information• Inefficient rehearsal strategies• Difficulty with short-term memory is common—recalling directions in sequence presented seconds earlier• Long-term retrieval (recalling a telephone number) is similar to that of peers without intellectual disability
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• History of and a generalized expectancy for failure—learned helplessness—effort is unrewarded; failure is inevitable• Exhibit external locus of control—belief that outcomes of behavior are the result of circumstances (fate, chance) beyond personal control rather than own efforts• Evidence outer-directedness, a loss of confidence and a distrust of own abilities, reliance on others for cues and guidance
Generalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty applying knowledge or skill to new tasks, situations, or settings• Problem in using previous experience in novel situations• Teachers must explicitly plan for generalization; typically it does not automatically occur
Language Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow same sequence of language acquisition as typical individuals, albeit at a slower pace• Strong correlation between intellectual ability and language development—the higher the IQ, the less pervasive the language difficulty• Speech disorders (articulation errors, stuttering) more common than in peers without intellectual disability• Vocabulary is often limited• Grammatical structure and sentence complexity are often impaired
Academic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally exhibit difficulties in all academic areas with reading being the weakest• Problem-solving difficulties in arithmetic
Social Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Typically lacking in social competence• Rejection by peers and classmates is common—poor interpersonal skills• Frequently exhibit socially inappropriate or immature behavior—difficulty establishing and maintaining friendships• Diminished self-esteem coupled with low self-concept