



# Bibliotherapy for All

## Enhancing Reading Comprehension, Self-Concept, and Behavior

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Nikita is an 8-year-old student in Mrs. Brown's third-grade classroom. She is very quiet, doesn't have any friends, hardly ever participates in class, and has low self-esteem. Her parents and teachers worry about her performance in school. Although her parents say she works hard, her grades are usually below average. But one day, during reading class, Mrs. Brown was surprised by Nikita's participation. When Mrs. Brown asked the class why the main character in the story behaved in the way she did, Nikita surprised everyone by raising her hand and interpreting the main character's intentions. The class talked about what Nikita said and her classmates seemed to understand Nikita's interpretation. They even offered some

other ideas of things the main character could do to make herself feel better.

John's class lined up to go outside for a recess break. After they arrived on the playground, the class divided into groups. John had few friends and was usually left out. He followed one group, annoying them. As usual, the students in class did not want to be around him. They respond that he doesn't listen to them and often gets his group in trouble. John tells his parents he doesn't know why he can't remember simple things and why he can't seem to make friends. John knows that no one in class likes to be with him, and though he feels bad about it, he doesn't know what to do. One day the class read a book about a boy a lot like John. John got more and more interested in seeing what happened to the boy in the story. When the teacher asked students to predict what will happen next, John knew from personal experience what would happen. He could even see why the others avoided the main character in the book. John told the class why he thought the main character in the book behaved the way he did, and students com-

mented on why the main character was treated differently. Together they arrived at specific behaviors that the main character could do to make situations better.

In both of these cases, students were engaged in bibliotherapy. This article describes the use of bibliotherapy to improve reading comprehension and enhance self-esteem or improve behavior for students with learning and behavior problems. Follow a step-by-step procedure to ensure success with all your students.

### How Can We Use Bibliotherapy?

The most important step when using bibliotherapy with students is to match appropriate books with the student and his or her various problems. The student must be able to see similarities between him or herself and a book character. An important role of the teacher is to assist the student in seeing these similarities. Once the student identifies with the main character, he or she experiences catharsis that is expressed verbally in discussions or through nonverbal means such as art. Once catharsis has occurred, the teacher guides the student in gaining insight into the problem (Afolayan, 1992;

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Pardeck, 1995; Pardeck & Markward, 1994). This program is implemented in four steps.

### Step 1. Getting Ready

John's teacher, Mrs. Fernandez, wants to use bibliotherapy in her class to help John. So she thinks about John, his behaviors, and the kinds of trouble he gets into in school and at home. She decides to use the book *Shelley, the Hyperactive Turtle* (Moss, 1989), since Shelley displays behaviors similar to John's and has similar problems with sitting still in his seat, listening to instructions, and making friends. Shelley also gets into trouble in school for the same reasons that John does. Mrs. Fernandez thinks, "This turtle is so much like John, I am sure the book will help him think and understand himself better."

Mrs. Fernandez chooses the book based on the following criteria:

- The main character in the book should resemble the student in aspects of behavior.
- The book should be at a reading and developmental level that is appropriate for the student (Pardeck, 1995).



**Groups that engage in bibliotherapy form a friendship that facilitate peer interaction within the group.**

The situations and the main character of the book often determine how appropriate it is for use with particular groups of students. If the group is not homogeneous, then a variety of books can be used that alternate among the challenges faced by the range of students in the group.

### Step 2. What Do I Teach Before Reading?

Before reading, Mrs. Fernandez talks to the class about the general theme of the book and about Shelley. She tells the students some of the things that Shelley does, such as getting out of his seat during class and talking without raising his hand. The students talk about how they would feel in some of those situations, such as going to the principal's office and not having friends. Then Mrs. Fernandez asks the class questions to help them talk about how a person like Shelley may feel in those various situations. The students talk about what might happen to Shelley and how things may change in the book. They also discuss what other students might do to help Shelley.

Mrs. Fernandez is implementing an important step in bibliotherapy by providing the students with some prior

### What Is Bibliotherapy?

Bibliotherapy is the process of reading books with a therapeutic intent (Cornett, 1980) as an intervention for dealing with stressful or temporary problems such as a visit to the doctor, the death of a pet, or entering a new school. Also, bibliotherapy can be used more extensively for students with significant learning and behavior problems to enhance self-understanding, and as a tool for enhancing reading comprehension. According to Afolayan (1992) and Shrodes (1949), for the intervention to have a therapeutic effect, the reader should experience the following:

**Identification.** The student should be able to identify with the main character and the events in the story. The main character should be of a similar age as the students, display similar behaviors, and face events with which the students can identify.

**Catharsis.** Following identification with the main character, students relate to the situation and feel emotional ties with the main character. When readers become emotionally involved, literature can have the effect of mitigating their emotional status.

**Insight.** This is a realization that occurs when readers become aware that the problem they are experiencing, like that of the characters in the story, need not remain static. Insight allows readers the opportunity to analyze the main character and situation and subsequently develop opinions regarding behaviors or actions adopted by the main character in his or her attempts to deal with the problem. Readers also develop problem-solving skills by exploring effective alternative behaviors to replace old inappropriate behaviors.

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knowledge of the reading material. She does this in three steps:

- She provides the students with an introduction to the theme of the book and the major events in it.
- She encourages the students to compare their experiences with situations in the book.
- She helps the students to make predictions about the content of the book based on text information and on their prior knowledge regarding people such as the main character.

### Step 3. During Reading

While reading or immediately after, Mrs. Fernandez asks questions, such as:

- Why do you think Shelley got out of his seat?
- How do you think Shelley felt?
- Does that mean he is bad?
- What do you think Shelley can do now?
- What has happened so far?
- What did Shelley do before he got out of his seat?

By asking such questions, Mrs. Fernandez is helping the students summarize paragraphs by deleting trivial information. At this stage, she also asks questions to facilitate students' identification with the main character, such as:

- Has that ever happened to you?
- What would you do if you were Shelley?

Students also learn to problem-solve and to collaborate while solving the problem.

### Step 4. After Reading

After reading, Mrs. Fernandez initiates a discussion to help students process the story and determine alternate behaviors for Shelley to adopt in specific situations described in the book. This discussion takes place in two phases. During Phase 1, she divides the class into groups of four students, and each

group discusses the story and comes up with ideas that might help Shelley. The groups then take turns retelling the story to the whole class, along with their ideas of how Shelley may feel, how the others in class may feel, and what Shelley and the others could do to improve the situation. The different members of the group present their ideas. John says, "I think Shelley feels very sad that he does not have any friends. His classmates should include him in their games." Another student says, "I think Shelley's classmates do not play with him because he does not wait for his turns." Mrs. Fernandez says, "Maybe the class should play different

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**TEACHERS CAN USE CREATIVE ACTIVITIES LIKE ROLE-PLAYING, ARTISTIC EXPRESSION, AND LETTER WRITING TO HELP STUDENTS EXPLORE THE THEME OF THE BOOK AND RELATE IT TO THEIR OWN LIVES.**

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kinds of games instead of playing only games that need turn taking."

During the implementing of Phase 1, the students are encouraged to retell what they have read. This involves students in verbal reconstruction of the reading and helps students focus attention on the holistic nature of the story, thus providing a framework for comprehension and elaboration. It also provides a way for students to process information verbally, with organization and understanding. These strategies have been found to be effective in increasing reading comprehension in elementary students with neurological impairments, attention deficit disorders, and perceptual impairments (Kuldaneck, 1998). During this phase, problem-solving strategies mentioned by students during reading should be incorporated. The teacher can invite students to initiate discussion and to react to other stu-

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**BIBLIOTHERAPY ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO USE PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGIES.**

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dents' statements. Students' participation can include:

- Elaborating or commenting on another student's summary.
- Suggesting other questions.
- Commenting on another's interpretation.
- Helping to resolve misunderstanding.

In such a discussion, the teacher can support the students by rephrasing or elaborating on their answers, statements, and questions (Rosenshine & Meister, 1994).

In Phase 2, follow-up activities such as group discussions can be used to reinforce what has been read and allow students to express themselves. Depending on the age and interests of the students, students can express themselves through activities ranging from art and dramatization, to discussing the events and characters at a deeper level (McCarty & Chalmers, 1997; Pardeck, 1990). Through all the stages, the teacher should include the personal anecdotes and problem-solving strategies shared by the students. This will validate the students' contributions and will increase student self-esteem and participation.

Bibliotherapy requires the teacher to function as a facilitator and to ask a variety of questions pertaining to the material (which helps in reading comprehension) and questions directed to elicit the student's self-observation and contemplation (to improve self-esteem). The planned follow-up activities must guide students through the fundamental process of identification, catharsis, and insight (Ouzts, 1991). These follow-up strategies can be used with most students, and the teacher can make use of one or several ideas. Teachers can use follow-up activities after a book has been read and can include creative writ-

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ing, art activities, discussion, and role-playing (Pardeck & Pardeck, 1993).

**Creative Writing.** After reading the book, the teacher can implement one or more of the following activities with the students:

- Develop a summary of the book, using the point of view of a character other than that who is the focal point of the story.
- Create a diary for a character in the story.
- Write a letter from one character in the book to another, or from the student to one of the characters.
- Compose a different ending to the story.
- Compose a “Dear Abby” letter that a book character could have written about a problem situation (Pardeck, 1995).

**Art Activities.** Art strategies are best suited to children who enjoy artistic activities or for those who prefer to express themselves through art. The teacher may wish to follow-up the reading by having the students:

- Make a map illustrating story events, with the student illustrating details not given in the book.
- Construct puppets of story characters and reenact a scene from the book.
- Glue pictures and words cut from a magazine on a piece of cardboard to create a collage illustrating the events in the story.
- Draw pictures in sequence of important incidents in the book.
- Make a mobile that represents key events, using the student’s own drawings or pictures cut from a magazine (Pardeck, 1995).

**Discussion and Role-Playing.** Discussion can be used to facilitate students in processing the interactions between characters in the story, and to increase reading comprehension. The teacher may have the students

- Participate in a roundtable discussion concerning a decision a character in the book is faced with.
- Role-play events in the story.
- Hold a mock trial concerning an incident in the story, with the students playing the parts of defendant, lawyers, judge, jury, and witnesses.

### What Does the Literature Say About Using Bibliotherapy with Students with Learning Disabilities (LD) and Behavior Disorders (BD)?

Most learning disabilities manifest initially as reading problems or comprehension problems. A majority of low-achieving students, however, also demonstrate significant difficulties with social relationships, such as when making friends and behaving appropriately in different social contexts (Haager & Vaughn, 1995). As a result of repeated failure, students such as Nikita and John often demonstrate low self-esteem that manifests in a variety of behaviors ranging from acting out in class to withdrawal behavior.

Teachers know, and research confirms, that students with LD are less accepted and less well liked by their peers (La Greca & Stone, 1990; Vaughn, Hogan, Kouzekanani, & Shapiro, 1990). These students perceive their self-worth and social acceptance to be low (La Greca & Stone). Research indicates that, regardless of the reason, low-achievement often results in poor peer acceptance (Vaughn, Zaragoza, Hogan, & Walker, 1993). Studies indicate frequent behavioral problems among students with LD (Thompson, Lampron, Johnson, & Eckstein, 1990). In addition, disruptive problems of behavior are the most common complaints of teachers (Goldstein, 1995). Students with BD experience social difficulties similar to those experienced by students with LD.

Students with LD and BD experience low academic achievement, often including poor reading comprehension. Students also experience the social consequences of low academic achievement, such as peer rejection, poor social skills, and low self-esteem. Bibliotherapy can be a powerful tool in enhancing reading comprehension and self-esteem. It can also be used in a resource room or general education setting, with a single student or a group of students. Studies indicate bibliotherapy to be an overall effective tool for developing assertiveness, attitude change, self-development, and therapeutic gain. Bibliotherapy has also been shown to produce a positive change in self-concept, reading readiness, and achievement (Afolayan, 1992; Bauer & Balius, 1995; Borders & Paisley, 1992; Lauren, 1995).

- Discuss the strong and weak points of a character in the book that the student identifies with.
- Discuss how the outcome of the story could be changed, and how alternative behaviors of the characters could effect these changes.

The students’ maturity level and preferences should be kept in mind when selecting follow-up activities. The teacher can adapt the activities to suit each student; for example, a child who dislikes writing can use a tape recorder for the creative activities. Depending on the student’s problem and the type of book used, the teacher can suggest several follow-up activities from which the student can select one or more (Pardeck & Pardeck, 1993). We have selected children’s books on various topics and for students in first through fifth grades,

and we have reviewed them to help teachers select appropriate books.

**Selected Children’s Books.** Tables 1 and 2 present a number of books on various subjects such as emotional expression, prosocial behavior, life transitions, self-concept, fears, and so forth. The books are classified according to grade level, and we have provided brief summaries of the books by Pearl (1990) to facilitate the teacher in selecting books. See Vaughn and Rothlein (1994) for an extended list of books on helping kindergarten through third-grade students deal with various disabilities, such as attention disorders and mental retardation. Orr et al. (1997) presented an annotated bibliography of books for pre-kindergarten through eighth-grade students on dealing with developmental disabilities. McCarty and Chalmers (1997) presented an annotated bibliog-

**Table 1. Books for Preschool Through Second Grade**

Topic and Interest level	Book Citation and Cost	Summary
Self-acceptance; retention Interest Level: Grades Preschool (Ps)-1	Aseltine, L. (1988). <i>First Grade Can Wait</i> . Virginia Wright-Frierson. Niles, Ill: Whitman. Cost: \$10.50	Luke is a 6-year-old who is behind his classmates in many skills. Although he enjoys kindergarten, the prospect of first grade frightens him. His parents and teacher decide Luke should be retained. The book focuses on reassuring Luke that he is growing and developing well, and will be ready to go to first grade next year.
Breaking a habit Interest Level: Grades Ps-1	Hughes, S. (1983). <i>Alfie Gives A Hand</i> . New York: Lothrop. Cost: \$10.50	Alfie clings to his security blanket all during Bernard's birthday party. When the overexcited Bernard makes a little girl cry, Alfie comforts her. While comforting the little girl, Alfie finds his blanket is in the way and puts it down. The book focuses on painlessly breaking a habit.
Breaking a habit Interest Level: Grades Ps-1	Cooney, N. E. (1987). <i>Donald Says Thumbs Down</i> . New York: Putnam. Cost: \$11.95	Donald still sucks his thumb when he is tired or unhappy and his friends at school make fun of his thumb sucking. His mother helps him break the habit by diverting him. Eventually he learns to divert himself. The book focuses on Donald's process of breaking a habit.
Accepting difference in people Interest Level: Grades Ps-1	Spier, P. (1980). <i>People</i> . New York: Doubleday. Cost: \$7.95	Celebrating the variety of human beings. The book encourages acceptance and appreciation of all kinds of people with all kinds of eyes, noses, hair colors, languages, etc.
Self-acceptance; tolerance of others. Interest Level: Grades Ps-2	Cohen, M. (1985). <i>Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire</i> . New York: Greenwillow. Cost: \$2.50	Alex, a new boy in first grade, brags about his pony and rocket car. The other children consider him a liar and reject him. Their teacher gently explains that Alex really wants to be noticed and needs friends. So Alex is given another chance at making friends. The book focuses on being yourself and tolerating others.
Handling criticism; dealing with emotional hurt. Interest Level: Grades Ps-2	Doleski, T. (1983). <i>The Hurt</i> . New York: Paulist. Cost: \$1.95	Justin finds dealing with criticisms particularly painful. Each criticism is shown as a hurt that grows larger and larger until it begins to crowd him out of his bedroom. His father suggests the hurt will go away if he stops thinking about it, and it never becomes big again. The book focuses on effectively dealing with criticism.
Making and keeping friends; expressing emotions. Interest Level: Grades Ps-2	Rogers, F. (1972). <i>Making Friends</i> . New York: Macmillan.	The process of making and keeping friends is discussed, which includes angry quarrels as well as happy playtimes. The book focuses on the emotional growth involved in maintaining friendships.
Reassuring late bloomers. Interest Level: Grades Ps-2	Kraus, R. (1987). <i>Leo the Late Bloomer</i> . New York: Harper. Cost: \$12.70	Leo, the tiger cub, is behind other animals in reading, writing, drawing, and eating neatly. Although his father is worried, his mother assures Leo that he will bloom with time, and he does. The book focuses on assuring late bloomers that children develop at different rates.
Self-acceptance; making friends. Interest Level: Grades Ps-2	Wells, R. (1981). <i>Timothy Goes To School</i> . New York: Dial. Cost: \$3.95	Timothy starts school with feelings of inadequacy that are made worse by Claude, who is condescending, critical, and annoyingly good at everything. Luckily, Violet, another animal child, is having similar problems and the two left-out animal children become happy friends. The book focuses on making friends and accepting different kinds of people.

**Table 1. Books for Preschool Through Second Grade (continued)**

Topic and Interest level	Book Citation and Cost	Summary
Self-acceptance. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3	Waber, B. (1972). <i>Ira Sleeps Over</i> . Boston: Houghton. Cost: \$4.95	Ira is invited to spend the night with Reggie. Ira wonders if taking his teddy bear would be babyish and decides to leave his behind. The boys do several things together, including reading a ghost story. The scary story helps them discover that they both have teddies that comfort. They are greatly relieved that they can be themselves. The book deals with accepting yourself and growing up at your pace.
Acceptance and usefulness of wearing glasses. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3	Brown, M. (1979). <i>Arthur's Eyes</i> . Boston: Little. Cost: \$3.95	Arthur is embarrassed about wearing glasses and often tries to lose them. One day a teacher he admires shows Arthur the usefulness of his glasses. Arthur's arithmetic and basketball improve, and his classmates also begin to want glasses. The book emphasizes the value of wearing glasses.
Acceptance of physical appearance. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3	Brown, M. (1981). <i>Arthur's Nose</i> . New York: Avon. Cost: \$3.95	Arthur is unhappy with his long nose and consults a rhino rhinologist about changing it. He tries out several other noses, such as an elephant's and a toucan's. Finally, he decides to keep his own, much to the relief of his friends. The book effectively deals with accepting physical appearance.
Acceptance and assurance that rate of development can vary for individual children. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3	Brown, M. (1986). <i>Arthur's Tooth</i> . Boston: Atlantic Monthly. Cost: \$3.95	Arthur is the only one in his class who hasn't lost a baby tooth. His friends make fun of him, and the problem is solved when the main teaser accidentally swats him in the mouth, and the tooth pops out. The issue of different rates of development is effectively dealt with.
We are all special; treating classmates kindly. Interest Level: Grades K-3	Yashima, T. (1955). <i>Crow Boy</i> . New York: Viking. Cost: \$13.95	Chibi has attended the village school for 6 years, but has been too fearful to learn or make friends. Finally the beauty of his drawings and pictographs and the depth of his knowledge of nature, particularly crows, is recognized by a kind teacher. The book emphasizes individual uniqueness.
We are all special. Interest Level: Grades K-5	Leaf, M. (1977). <i>The Story of Ferdinand</i> . New York: Puffin. Cost: \$3.95	A bull calf enjoys sitting quietly smelling the flowers instead of goring the matador in the bullring. He will not lose his temper even when tormented by banderilleros and picadors. The book focuses on the value of individuality.
Accepting people of various origins; accepting various disabilities; all children enjoy similar things. Interest Level: Grades Ps-1	Brown, T. (1984). <i>Someone Special Just Like You</i> . New York: Holt. Cost: \$12.95	Children of different origins with different disabilities all enjoy similar activities that children without disabilities enjoy. The idea that children are more alike than different regardless of origin and disability is emphasized.
Inclusion of a blind child; accepting and understanding visual impairment. Interest Level: Grades Ps-1	Cohen, M. (1983). <i>See You Tomorrow Charles</i> . New York: Greenwillow. Cost: \$11.88	The inclusion of a blind student into a general education first-grade classroom is described. The class accepts the boy with friendliness, protectiveness, and interest.

**Table 1. Books for Preschool Through Second Grade (continued)**

Topic and Interest level	Book Citation and Cost	Summary
Children with certain disabilities sometimes go to special schools; children with disabilities also have loving, caring families. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3	Fassler, J. (1975). <i>Howie Helps Himself</i> . Chicago: Whitman. Cost: \$10.75	A boy must go to a special school because his legs are weak. However, he learns the same things that all children learn such as reading and counting. Although he learns many things, his greatest achievement is to wheel his wheelchair across the classroom to his father, who demonstrates love and caring.
People with disabilities may use different things, but they are more similar than different from us. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3	Hamm, D. (1987). <i>Grandmom Drives A Motor Bed</i> . Virginia Wright-Frierson. Niles, III: Whitman. Cost: \$10.50	A cheerful grandmother with paralyzed legs has to spend almost all her time in a motorized hospital bed. But she enjoys telephoning, visits from friends, watching television, and most of all seeing her grandson. The idea that she is like most grandmothers regardless of her paralyzed legs is emphasized.
Children with learning disabilities also enjoy doing the same things that other children do; children with learning disabilities have similar home lives as other children. Interest Level: Grades 1-3	Lasker, J. (1974). <i>He's My Brother</i> . Chicago: Albert Whitman. Cost: \$14.95	Although Jamie has a learning disability, he enjoys activities that most children his age enjoy. His brother describes Jamie's problems, abilities, and likes at home and school.
Recognizing and appreciating individual differences. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3	Bradman, T. <i>Michael</i> . New York: Macmillan. Cost: \$11.88	Michael is not like the other students in class. He is usually late and frequently in trouble. However, Michael has special abilities that have not yet been recognized. His special abilities are indicated through the illustrations.
Having a sibling who is mentally retarded; managing conflicting emotions caused by individual differences. Interest Level: Grades K-4	Wright, B. R. (1981). <i>My Sister Is Different</i> . Milwaukee: Raintree. Cost: \$19.97	Carlo finds it difficult to accept his older sister, Terry, who is mentally retarded. He finally realizes how special Terry is when he almost loses her.
Accepting spectacles; the value of wearing spectacles. Interest Level: Grade 1	Raskin, E. (1968). <i>Spectacles</i> . Atheneum. Cost: \$9.50	Iris, a little girl, sees strange things such as a fire-breathing dragon and a fat kangaroo because she cannot see clearly. She is taken to an eye doctor who decides she needs glasses. Iris initially does not want to wear glasses, but later realizes that they really help her see better.
Teasing can hurt. Interest Level: Grades Ps - 3	Hines, A. G. (1989). <i>They Really Like Me!</i> New York: Greenwillow. Cost: \$11.95	Two mischievous older sisters tease their little brother who is left in their care. The little boy teaches them a lesson by hiding under the staircase after they pretend to abandon him in the woods. He finally reappears, and they promise to stop teasing him.
Adjusting to a new baby. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3	Brown, M. (1987). <i>Arthur's Baby</i> . Boston: Little. Cost: \$13.95	Arthur is apprehensive about the new baby since his friends tell him it will be noisy, smelly, and need him to baby-sit, but he discovers with great satisfaction that he can cope with the new baby better than his bossy sister.
The positive and negative aspects of having a baby sister. Interest Level: Grades Ps-1	Edelman, E. (1984). <i>I Love My Baby Sister (Most of the Time)</i> . New York: Lothrop. Cost: \$11.00	The difficult things about having a baby sister such as hair pulling, crying, and demanding mother's attention are balanced by her cute antics and the happy expectation that when she gets bigger, she will be a friend and a playmate.
Teasing among siblings. Interest Level: Grades Ps-2	Chorao, K. (1987). <i>George Told Kate</i> . New York: Dutton. Cost: \$10.95	In an elephant family, a big brother teases and frightens his little sister about going to school. The book focuses on effectively dealing with teasing.

**Table 2. Books for Second Through Fourth Grade**

Topic and Interest level	Book Citation and Cost	Summary
What it is like to live with siblings with diabetes, asthma, and spina bifida. Interest Level: Grades 3-4	Rosenburg, M. B. (1988). <i>Finding a Way: Living with Exceptional Brothers and Sisters</i> . New York: Lothrop. Cost: \$11.90	Children talk about how it is to live with siblings who have diabetes, asthma, and spina bifida. They talk about ways in which they help and about the mixed feelings they have about the siblings with medical conditions.
Children with disabilities also enjoy activities that other children enjoy. Interest Level: Grades K-3	Rosenburg, M. B. (1983). <i>My Friend Leslie</i> . New York: Lothrop. Cost: \$13.00	A bubbly, happy kindergartner with multiple disabilities is mainstreamed in a public school. She enjoys activities such as music, painting, exercise, and friendships, which most children enjoy. The book focuses on the normalcy of children with disabilities.
Sibling rivalry. Interest Level: Grades Ps-2	Viorst, J. (1969). <i>I'll fix Anthony</i> . New York: Macmillan. Cost: \$3.95	The book is about a little boy fantasizing about all the ways in which he will become better than his older brother when he reaches the powerful age of 6. His fantasies include becoming stronger, taller, and healthier.
Experiences of having a new infant from the perspectives of children from different ethnicities. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3	Cole, J. (1985). <i>The New Baby at Your House</i> . New York: Morrow. Cost: \$10.25	Describes the experiences of young children of various ethnicities with new infants in their families.
The experience of having a new baby in the house from the perspectives of a young boy and girl. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3	Stein, S. B. (1974). <i>That New Baby</i> . New York: Walker. Cost: \$10.95	The experiences of a young boy and girl dealing with the entry of a new baby into their family is described with all the usual upsets, but eventually things become better. The text for children is accompanied by explanatory passages interpreting their feelings to adults.
The value of a sibling. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3	Zolotow, C. (1987). <i>If it Weren't for You</i> . Cost: \$12.70	A little boy dreams about how much better life would be without his younger brother/sister to share things such as cake, the bedroom, and Christmas presents. While dreaming, he suddenly realizes that he would then be alone with all the grownups and begins to see the value of having a little brother/sister.
We are all unique and universal. Interest Level: Grades 4-6	Shan, E. L. (1972). <i>What Makes Me Feel This Way?</i> New York: Macmillan. Cost: \$3.95	Feelings common to all children such as anger, fear, and shyness are treated as natural, and suggestions are made about understanding and expressing them acceptably.
Overcoming disabilities. Interest Level: Grades 4-6	White, E. B. (1970). <i>The Trumpet of the Swan</i> . New York: Harper. Cost: \$10.95	Louis, a trumpeter swan, is born mute. However, he overcomes his disability by learning to read, write, and play the trumpet. The book deals with the idea of overcoming disabilities.
Normality of children with disabilities. Interest Level: Grades 4-6	Wolf, B. (1988). <i>Don't Feel Sorry for Paul</i> . Philadelphia: Lippincott. Cost: \$13.89	Paul is a young boy born with unfinished hands and feet and wears prostheses to substitute for his missing body parts. However, he rides in horse shows, wrestles with his sisters, and leads an active life. The normality of Paul's life is emphasized without ignoring his problems.

raphy of several children's and young adult books on topics such as abuse, neglect, anger, and dealing with individual differences.

### Cautions and Other Advice

The teacher should use discretion in selecting topics for bibliotherapy. The teacher should also make the parents and school counselor or other relevant administrator aware of the topics being approached through bibliotherapy.

- Teachers should avoid topics that the parents and other concerned parties are uncomfortable with.
- In selecting a book, it is critical for teachers to be thoroughly familiar with the books being used. The content and discussion of the book at every stage is vital in improving self-esteem, changing behavior, or alleviating stress.
- Teachers who have used bibliotherapy have remarked that the process of bibliotherapy emotionally affects some students more than others and that comments from other students often appear to help the affected student.
- Other comments from teachers include: "The group that engages in bibliotherapy formed a friendship that facilitates peer interaction within the group," "Bibliotherapy helps draw some students from their shells," and "Though students enjoy bibliotherapy, many of them find it difficult to retell the story. But, practice and prompting facilitates retelling."

When used appropriately, bibliotherapy can be a creative approach for helping troubled students understand and solve various problems while also enhancing reading comprehension.

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[row 27]  
Teasing among siblings.

Table 2  
Books for Second Through Fourth Grade  
[9 rows]  
[3 cols—set up like Table 1]  
[col heads]  
Topic and Interest level    B o o k  
Citation and Cost Summary

[row 1]  
What it is like to live to live with siblings with diabetes, asthma, and spina bifida. Interest Level: Grade 3-4  
Rosenburg, M. B. (1988). *Finding a Way: Living with Exceptional Brothers and Sisters*. New York: Lothrop.  
Cost: \$11.90    Children talk about how it is to live with siblings who have diabetes, asthma, and spina bifida. They talk about ways in which they help and about the mixed feelings they have about the siblings with medical conditions.

[row 2]  
Children with disabilities also enjoy activities that other children enjoy. Interest Level: Grade K-3    Rosenburg, M. B. (1983). *My Friend Leslie*. New York: Lothrop.  
Cost: \$13.00

A bubbly, happy kindergartner with multiple disabilities is mainstreamed in a public school. She enjoys activities such as music, painting, exercise, and friendships, which most children enjoy. The book focuses on the normalcy of children with handicaps.

[row 3]  
Sibling rivalry. Interest Level: Grades Ps-2    Viorst, J. (1969). *I'll fix Anthony*. New York: Macmillan.  
Cost: \$3.95    The book is about a little boy fantasizing about all the ways in which he will become better than his older brother when he reaches the powerful age of six. His fantasies include becoming stronger, taller, and healthier.

[row 4]  
Experiences of having a new infant from the perspectives of children from different ethnicities. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3    Cole, J. (1985). *The New Baby at Your House*. New York: Morrow.  
Cost: 10.25  
Describes the experiences of young children of various ethnicities with new infants in their families.

[row 5]  
The experience of having a new baby in the house from the perspectives of a young boy and girl. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3    Stein, S. B. (1974). *That New Baby*. New York: Walker.  
Cost: \$10.95

The experiences of a young boy and girl dealing with the entry of a new baby into their family is described with all the usual upsets, but eventually things become better. The text for children is accompanied by explanatory passages interpreting their feelings to adults.

[row 6]  
The value of a sibling. Interest Level: Grades Ps-3    Zolotow, C. (1987). *If it Weren't for You*.  
Cost: \$12.70

A little boy dreams about how much better life would be without his younger to share things such as cake, the bedroom, and Christmas presents. While dreaming, he suddenly realizes that he would then be alone with all the grownups and begins to see the value of having a little brother.

[row 7]  
We are all unique and universal. Interest Level: Grades 4-6    Shan, E. L. (1972). *What Makes Me Feel This Way?* New York: Macmillan.  
Cost: \$3.95

Feelings common to all children such as anger, fear and shyness are treated as natural, and suggestions are made about understanding and expressing them acceptably.

[row 8]  
Overcoming disabilities. Interest Level: Grades 4-6    White, E. B. (1970). *The Trumpet of the Swan*. New York: Harper.  
Cost: \$10.95    Louis, a trumpeter swan, is born mute. However, he overcomes his handicap by learning to read, write, and play the trumpet. The book deals with the idea of overcoming disabilities.

[row 9]  
Normality of children with handicaps. Interest Level: Grades 4-6    Wolf, B. (1988). *Don't Feel Sorry for Paul*. Philadelphia: Lippincott.  
Cost: \$13.89    Paul is a young boy born with unfinished hands and feet and wears prostheses to substitute for his missing body parts. However, he rides in horse-shows, wrestles with his

sisters, and leads an active life. The normality of Paul's life is emphasized without ignoring his problems. Vaughn, tables, p.