

Responding to the Roller-Coaster Ride of Social/Emotional Growth

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Goals of This Presentation

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1. To present/review Dabrowski's *Overexcitabilities*;

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2. To present an overview of picture books and their relationship to the *Overexcitabilities*;
3. To review the importance of meeting the social and emotional needs of the gifted;

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4. To describe a process of relating picture books to the *Overexcitabilities* by adapting the strategy of bibliotherapy;

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5. To share books that match specific *Overexcitabilities*.

Before we begin:

IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW THAT DABROWSKI'S THEORY OF POSITIVE DISINTEGRATION IS MUCH MORE THAN JUST THE CONCEPT OF OVEREXCITABILITIES.

Dabrowski's Theory

Two basic concepts form the foundation for this theory:

Dabrowski's Theory

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- Developmental Potential

Dabrowski's Theory

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- Developmental Potential
- Multilevelness or Levels of Development

Dabrowski's Theory

Developmental Potential – Three Factors:

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- The Concept of Overexcitabilities

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Developmental Potential – Three Factors:

- Personal Characteristics (Talent, specific abilities and high general intelligences)
- The Concept of Overexcitabilities
- The *Third Factor*: Capacity for self-directed emotional growth, self-determination, and autonomy.

Dabrowski's Theory

Multilevelness or Levels of Development

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Multilevelness or Levels of Development

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- ▶ Five levels have been identified;
- ▶ I recommend *Living With Intensity* by Susan Daniels and Michael Piechowski for further study.

Dabrowski's Theory

But quickly they are:

1. **Unilevel Process:** Levels I and II

- ▶ **Level I:** Primary Integration – No Inner Growth
- ▶ **Level II:** Unilevel Disintegration – Unilevel Development: The individual's problems are recycled with no upward direction of development.

Dabrowski's Theory

2. **Multilevel Process:** Levels III, IV, and V

- ▶ **Level III:** Spontaneous Multilevel Disintegration – Multilevel Development: Tension between “what ought to be” and “what is” triggers multilevel development.
- ▶ **Level IV:** Organized Multilevel Disintegration – Advanced Multilevel Development: One acts on “what ought to be.” Self-actualization takes place.

Dabrowski's Theory

3. **Level V:** Secondary Integration – Highly Advanced Multilevel Development:

- Marked by a great inner knowing and depth of consciousness;
- Sense of connection to something larger;
- Works for the benefit of humanity on a large or small scale;
- One who may have achieved true inner peace.

Goal One

TO PRESENT/REVIEW DABROWSKI'S CONCEPT OF
OVEREXCITABILITIES.

Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities

For the purpose of this presentation, I have chosen
to use the list created by:

Stephanie S. Tolan

*Dabrowski's Over-excitabilities:
A Layman's Explanation*

Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities

1. Psychomotor: *Physical energy and movement*

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Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities

1. Psychomotor: *Physical energy and movement*
2. Sensual: *Love for sensory things*
3. Imaginational: *Dreamers and Visual Thinkers*
4. Intellectual: *Love of things academic*
5. Emotional: *Connections*

Goal Two

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OVEREXCITABILITIES IN
MEETING THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF THE
GIFTED

Social and Emotional Needs

Why is sharing the OEs important?

It is unfortunate that the stronger these overexcitabilities are, the less peers and teachers welcome them, unless they, too, are gifted. Children exhibiting strong overexcitabilities are often made to feel embarrassed and guilty for being 'different.' Criticized and teased for what they cannot help, they begin to believe something is wrong with them.

Michael Piechowski

Sharing the OEs

To support my point that sharing the OEs is important, I submit the following quotes or paraphrases from various authorities in our field:

Sharing the OEs

It would be hard to find a person of talent who shows little evidence of any of the five overexcitabilities. They are the underlying dimensions of thinking outside the box, the urge to create beauty; the push for stark realism, the unrelenting striving for truth and justice.

Michael Piechowski

Sharing the OEs

*Intelligence is about the ability to **solve** problems, but overexcitability is about the **passion** for solving them.*

Susan Daniels

Sharing the OEs

Gifted children take in information from the world around them; they react and reason more quickly and intensely than other children. They are stimulated by what's going on around them and by what moves them from within.

Susan Daniels

Sharing the OEs

The greatest gift that we can give gifted learners is an awareness and appreciation of their sensitivities, intensities, and passions.

Linda Silverman

Sharing the OEs

When we are willing to explore the social and emotional needs of the gifted from their viewpoint, we are most effective in leading them to thrive and survive the challenges that accompany high potential.

Judy Galbraith

Sharing the OEs

Recall Judy Galbraith's Eight Great Grips of Gifted Kids?

Number One (1): No one explains what being gifted is all about – it's kept a big secret.

Sharing the OEs

Gifted learners capacity for intense experience is an asset that deserves to be understood and affirmed instead of squashed.

Susan Daniels

Sharing the OEs

Little has been done to aid teachers in this task and thus the focus of this presentation: To use the literary genre of picture books with gifted learners of all ages to help bring about an awareness and appreciation of their uniqueness in terms of the Overexcitabilities.

Social and Emotional Needs

The *Handout* has more notes on the question: Do gifted students have qualitatively different needs from their peers?

I summarize here:

Social and Emotional Needs

Giftedness as defined by Annemarie Roeper:

Giftedness is a greater awareness, a greater sensitivity, and a greater ability to understand and transform perception into intellectual and emotional experiences.

Social and Emotional Needs

*Giftedness has an emotional as well as a cognitive substructure: cognitive complexity gives rise to emotional depth. Thus gifted children not only **think** differently from their peers they also **feel** differently.*

Linda Silverman

Social and Emotional Needs

Thus it is our task to deal with the unique set of emotional needs of gifted learners.

I believe that Dabrowski's work provides the best guidance for us in this task and that the genre of picture books is a rich and viable resource for teaching the Oes.

Goal Three

TO PRESENT AN OVERVIEW OF PICTURE BOOKS AND THEIR
RELATIONSHIP TO THE *OVEREXCITABILITIES*;

A Note on Picture Books

THIS GENRE OF LITERATURE HAS GROWN AMAZINGLY IN SOPHISTICATED IN THE LAST FEW YEARS. IT IS A RICH BUT OFTEN OVER-LOOKED RESOURCE FOR ALL AGES.

Picture Books

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- ❑ To amplify the text
- ❑ To provide information important to plot, theme, etc in a non-textual way

Picture Books

Why do picture books matter? Of course part of the reason is because they're books, but the heart of the matter is right there in the name; it's the pictures. Before they read words, children are reading pictures. In picture books, the illustrations work in concert with the text in a way that is unique among art forms.

David Wiesner

Picture Books

What do we look for in
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- *Artists' Tools Used*

A series of observations

Observations

These “techniques” of illustration speak directly to both *Sensual OE* and *Imaginational OE*;

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And perhaps when taken as a whole to *Emotional OE* as well!

Observations

In the *Sensual OE*, we have the response to color; to line; to shape; to texture and to composition – in short a response to graphic art.

Observations

In the *Imaginational OE*, our students often respond with visual images in both their “heads” and via an artistic media.

Observations

The *Emotional OE* is brought into play with the overall response to the illustrations as individuals interpret the interaction of the elements within the illustrations.

Observations

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Goal Four

TO DESCRIBE A PROCESS OF RELATING PICTURE BOOKS TO THE
OVEREXCITABILITIES BY ADAPTING THE STRATEGY OF *BIBLIOTHERAPY*;

Bibliotherapy

Bibliotherapy is a tool for helping people deal with their problems through reading novels or stories about characters that possess similar problems. Because reading appeals to the imagination, bibliotherapy provides an interaction between the readers and the story of novel, which can be less threatening than direct confrontation.

Adderholdt-Elliot and Eller

Bibliotherapy

Steps in Bibliotherapy

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Steps in Bibliotherapy

1. **Identification:** The individual recognizes the novel's conflict as a real situation.
2. **Catharsis:** The individual recognizes that s/he has the same problem.
3. **Insight:** The individual identifies possible solutions
4. **Application:** The individual applies the insights to his/her own life.

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Adapting Bibliotherapy

THE PROCESS

Bibliotherapy: The Process

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Bibliotherapy: The Process

- ▶ Establish a climate of trust, respect, and caring.
- ▶ Provide instruction in the OEs.
- ▶ Select picture books that demonstrate the OE on which you wish to focus.
- ▶ Introduce the selected picture book and through class discussion analyze the book.
- ▶ Encourage students to identify how the OE is demonstrated in the book.

Bibliotherapy: The Process

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 - ▶ Identify and discuss the OEs.

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 - ▶ In a written essay or discussion have students identify how the OEs related to them personally.

Bibliotherapy: The Process

- ▶ Guiding Students in a Response:
 - ▶ Identify and discuss the OEs.
 - ▶ In a written essay or discussion have students identify how the OEs related to them personally.
 - ▶ Allow students to select other ways to interpret their response:
 - ▶ Art
 - ▶ Poetry
 - ▶ Music
 - ▶ Dance

Goal Five

TO PROVIDE A LIST OF BOOKS THAT MATCH SPECIFIC BOOKS TO SPECIFIC *OVEREXCITABILITIES*.

The Books

Imaginational: *Dreamers and Visual Thinkers*

- ❖ *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963) by Maurice Sendak

1964 Caldecott Medal Winner

- ❖ *Imagine A Day* (2005) by Sarah L. Thomson; illustrated by Rob Gonsalves
- ❖ *Sector 7* (1999) by David Wiesner

The Books

Intellectual: *Love of things academic*

- ❖ *Mosque* (2003) by David Macaulay
- ❖ *Song of the Water Boatman & Other Pond Poems* (2005) by Joyce Sidman; illustrated by Beckie Prange.
- ❖ *You Can't Take a Balloon Into the Metropolitan Museum* (1998) by Jacqueline Pries Weitzmann and Robin Preiss Glasser.

The Books

Emotional: Connections

- ❖ *Bink & Gollie: Two for One* (2012) by Kate DiCamillo and Alison McGhee; illustrated by Tony Fucile.
- ❖ *Outside Over There* by Maurice Sendak (1981) by Maurice Sendak.
- ❖ *Dreams: A Tale of Wonder, Wisdom & Wishes* (2004) by Susan V. Bosak.
- ❖ *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale* (2004) by Mo Willems. **2005 Caldecott Honor Book.**
- ❖ *Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identify* (2007) by Mo Willems.

The Books

Don't forget Calvin & Hobbes!

A gifted kid and friend if I ever saw one!

The Books

Sensual: *Love for sensory things*

- ❖ *I See A Song* (1973) by Eric Carle.
- ❖ *Many Luscious Lollipops: A Book about Adjectives* (1989) by Ruth Heller.
- ❖ *The Boy Who Spoke Colors* (1993) by David Gifaldi; illustrated by C. Shana Greger.

The Books

Psychomotor: *Physical energy and movement*

- ❖ *Giraffes Can't Dance* (1999) by Giles Andreae; illustrated by Guy Parker-Rees
- ❖ *"Slowly, slowly, slowly, slowly," said the Sloth* (2002) by Eric Carle
- ❖ *Kites Sail High: A Book about Verbs* (1988) by Ruther Heller

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