Possible barriers to identity development for 2^E learners

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KU=(K+V)^R

Possible barriers

- Living in two worlds

    - A wide range of literature

    - Most of it is based on assumptions

    - Deduction helps us to come up with predictions

    - Hardly any empirical evidence

    - The risk of potential biases among research groups

    - What we do know is based on clinical experiences

    - Limited number of cases in most studies

    - Results found on sub-groups generalized to the entire population

- Hence: even though we hardly know anything, we think we understand the phenomenon of 2^E

- However: all ravens are black untill the opposite has been proven to be true

Who are they?

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- Learners displaying characteristics of being gifted and a learning disability

  - Interaction between child factors and the ecological system lacks a meaningful response to the learners needs. As a result the learner experiences difficulties in developing themselves

- The learner experiences a lack of identification with other learners

  - 2^E learners experience themselves to be different from other learners

  - This results in social and emotional experiences not experienced by other learners

- Yellow and blue is green; 1+1=3

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Examples of barriers

(Baum et al., 2017; Halstead, 2009; Kreger-Silverman, 2015; Trail, 2020; Webb, 2016)

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- Adaptation to a group of other students takes a lot of energy

- Developing productive interpersonal relationships takes additional efforts

- Limitations in developing academically in the domains affected by the LD

- Running out on compensation strategies and the energy to compensate

- Extended recovery time for charging their batteries.

Developing one's identity

(Erikson, 1968; Maslow, 1943; Kaufman, 2020; **Lee Haase, & Hancock , 2022;** van Gerven & Troxclair, 2023)

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Who are you?

Self-actualization

Who do you want to become?

A healthy self image

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Identity

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- Definition:
  - "A combination of qualities making it possible to distinguish one individual from others"
  - "The distinguishing characteristics or personal traits as a result of psychological identification"

- Developmental task
  - "Becoming who you are or who you can be"

- Requires interaction with the environment
  - "Significant others are necessary for psychological identification"

Four coherent aspects (1)

- Continuity

  - "I am I"

- Acknowledgement and recognition

  - Confirmation is necessary to develop a realistic self-concept

- Freedom goes hand-in-hand with limitations

  - Every human being functions as part of a social context

- (my) Meaningful future

  - Being of meaning to themselves and to others

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Developmental tasks (1)

- Developing basic feelings of being safe in the environment where one functions

- Necessary:

  - Action-interaction with significant others in the environment

  - Positive responses from others

  - It requires the ability to be perceptive and to focus one's attention

  - It requires the ability to interpret social signals in a meaningful way

- Risk for 2^E learners:

  - Focusing their attention on relevant stimuli

  - Interpreting social signals adequately

Developmental tasks (2)

- Discovering the limitations of autonomy

- Necessary:

  - Alowed to do things autonoumsly

  - Being 'naughty' without being rejected

  - The ability to mirror themselves

- Risk for 2E:

  - Extreme need to investigate and experiment may lead to repeated disapproval in the environment

  - Limited options to mirror themselves

Developmental tasks (3)

- Learning to take initiative by setting personal goals

- Necessary:

  - Support and encouragement of others to persevere

  - Support and encouragement of peers

  - Being allowed to develop personal initiatives

  - Looking for limitations regarding autonomy and initiative

- Risk for 2E

  - Goals don't match expectations

  - Personal initiatives don't align with peers' perspective

  - Limitations regarding autonomy and initiative are not experienced timely

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Developmental tasks (4)

- Feelings of developing relevant competencies

- Necessary:

  - Appreciation of adults (pleasing others)

  - Appreciation of peers (the need for belonging)

  - Learning to recognize personal competencies in relation to limitations caused by the LD

- Risk for 2E:

  - Competencies stay hidden

  - Not being able to transfer knowledge into practical, adequate skills

  - The limitations are bigger than the ability to compensate

  - Not meeting other peoples' expectations resulting in a lack of appreciation and acknowledgement

Developmental tasks (5)

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- Finding answers to 'BIG' questions

- Necessary:

  - Opportunites to explore limitations

  - Exploring and discovering personal values

  - Finding your own 'tribe': where do you belong?

- Risk for 2E:

  - Not recognizing yourself the way others perceive you

  - Missing a connection to your own tribe

Four coherent aspects (2)

- Continuity

  - Possible barriers: intra personal discrepancies/asynchronicity

- Acknowledgement and recognition

  - Possible barriers: The environment focuses soleley of the deficits

- Freedom goes hand-in-hand with limitations

  - Possible barriers: A mismatch with the normative concept of what is being reffered to as 'normal'

- (my) Meaningful future

  - Possible barriers: for 2^E learners applies that the perspective of their future is not clear if the first three aspects don't show a positive relationship with the learner's identity

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Basics for the approach

(van Gerven & Troxclair, 2023)

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- Don't wait for a label

- Stop focusing on what causes the problem

- Stop thinking in terms of strengths and weaknesses

- Instead: focus on the development of potential in a context wherein ecological barriers that hinder this development can be overcome, lowered, or even removed

- A disturbed identity of 2^E learners is the result of a mismatch between the manifestation of developmental potential and the interaction with the ecological system that is necessary for psychological identification

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Using Connective Literacy
with Twice-Exceptional Gifted Learners
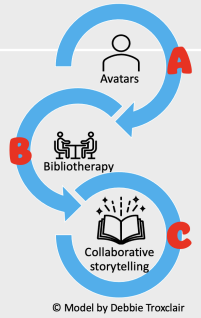
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$KU = (K + V)^R$

The ABC's of Connective Literacy

KU=(K+V)^R

A

Avatars

B

Bibliotherapy

C

Collaborative storytelling
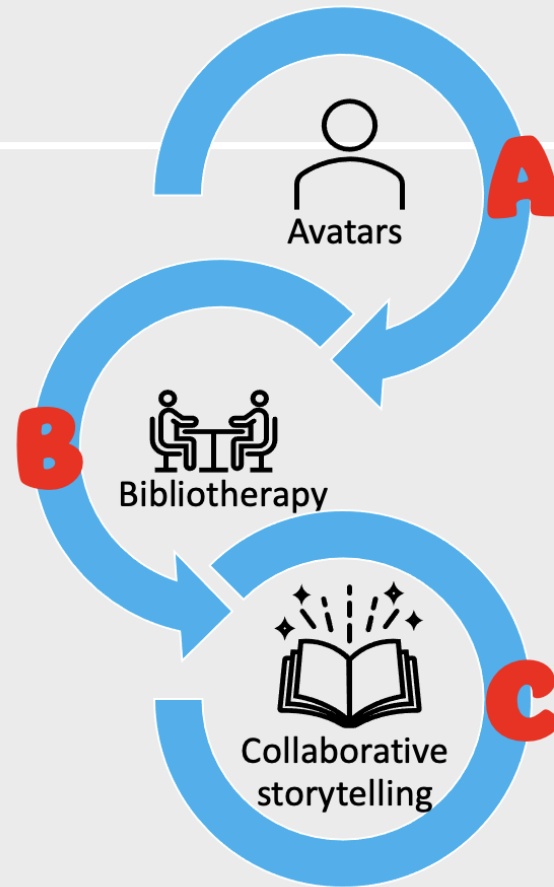
© Model by Debbie Troxclair

Avatars

- Digital image

- The avatar plays a role in a virtual world

- Virtual person

    - Represents the gamer's identity

    - Reflects behavioral patterns from the person behind the avatar

    - The reflection, the extension or a simulation of the gamer's personality

- Avatars form an identity during the process of gaming
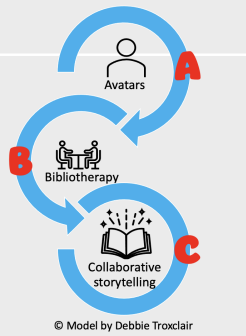
Avatars and exploring your own identity

(Wood & Szymanski, 2020; Stutler, 2011)

- Exploring your identity is an experimental developmental task during adolescence

- Creating an avatar provides children the opportunity to experiment with different identities under different circumstances in a relatively safe context

- 2E students might experience conflicting needs and may feel torn apart by living in two worlds (being gifted and having a learning disability)

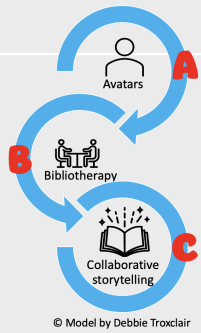- Creating an avatar gives them the opporunity to integrate these two worlds
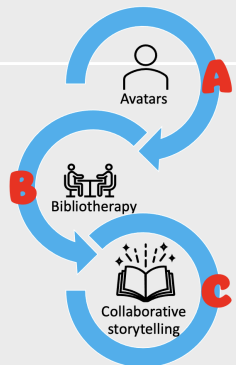
$$KU = (K + V)^R$$

Virtual world

- Complex

- The avatar needs to demonstrate different attributes in this complex world

- The avatar develops throughout the duration of the game

- It's a key to exploring different themes

$$KU = (K + V)^R$$

Avatars

Bibliotherapy

Collaborative storytelling

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Characteristics of avatars

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- The characteristics differ for each game

- The complexity of the avatar differs per game

- Personality is a construction

- Avatars are often constructed carefully
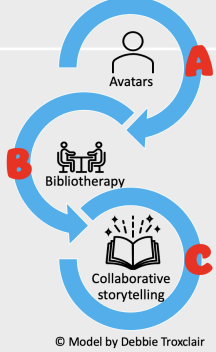
  - Story

  - Skills

  - Archetypes

Avatars
Bibliotherapy
Collaborative storytelling
© Model by Debbie Troxclair
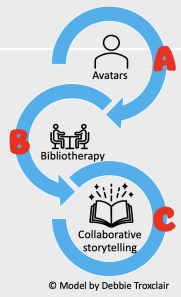
MMOG

- Games are played in teams

- Players in a game form a team, the team members need to be complementary

- Functional characteristics and skills are determined by the team and the game

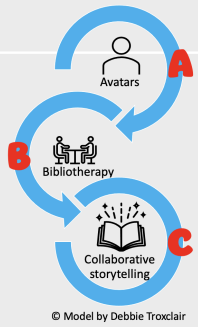- Complexity of a character may change between games

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Avatars can teach you something about your student

- Which character do they choose?

- What are the main characteristics they include?
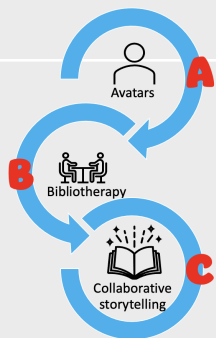
- Why do they consider these characteristics relevant?

Designing your identity

- Identification based on similarities with the real me

- The avatar can become a mirrored identity

- The avatar can represent your future-self

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Use AI to Create Avatars
(Handout QR Code on this slide)

Steps for Creating an Avatar Based on Your Interests and Strengths

Step 1: Self-Reflection
Ask yourself:

- - What are my top interests? (e.g., reading, sports, science, helping others)
- - What are my strengths? (e.g., creativity, problem-solving, kindness, leadership)

Tip: Write down at least 3 interests and 3 strengths.

Step 2: Choose a Format
Decide how you want to create your avatar:

- - Digital tools (e.g., Bitmoji, Pixton, Avatar Maker)
- - Drawing by hand
- - Using art supplies or collage materials

Step 3: Design the Appearance
Include elements that represent your strengths and interests:

- - Clothing or accessories (e.g., lab coat for science lovers, paintbrush for artists)
- - Symbols (e.g., a heart for kindness, a book for readers)
- - Colors that reflect your personality (e.g., calm blues for peacefulness, bold reds for leadership)

Step 4: Add Personal Traits
Think about how your avatar will act or speak:

- - Confident? Funny? Calm? Energetic?

You can include a speech bubble or motto that reflects your strengths (e.g., "Let's solve it!" or "Creativity is my superpower!")

Step 5: Give Your Avatar a Name
Make it meaningful or playful.

It can be your real name, a nickname, or a made-up one that reflects who you are.
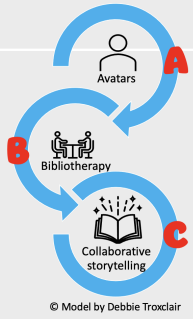
Step 6: Share or Reflect
Share your avatar with classmates, friends, or teachers.

Reflect on what it says about you:

- - What did you learn about yourself?
- - How can your strengths help you achieve your goals?

(Troxclair, 2025)

Avatars Based on Strengths & Interests

Avatars

Bibliotherapy

Collaborative storytelling

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🌟 **Michelle: The Imaginative Thinker**

Michelle is a bright and imaginative student who excels in creative writing and abstract thinking. She often surprises her teachers with her deep questions and unique perspectives. However, Michelle also struggles with sensory sensitivities and social anxiety, which make the school environment feel unpredictable and overwhelming.
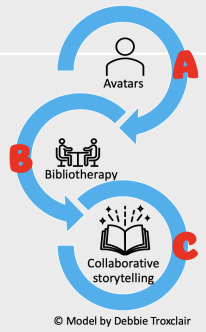
🧠 Strengths: Creative writing, deep thinking, unique ideas

🐆 Challenges: Sensory sensitivities, social anxiety

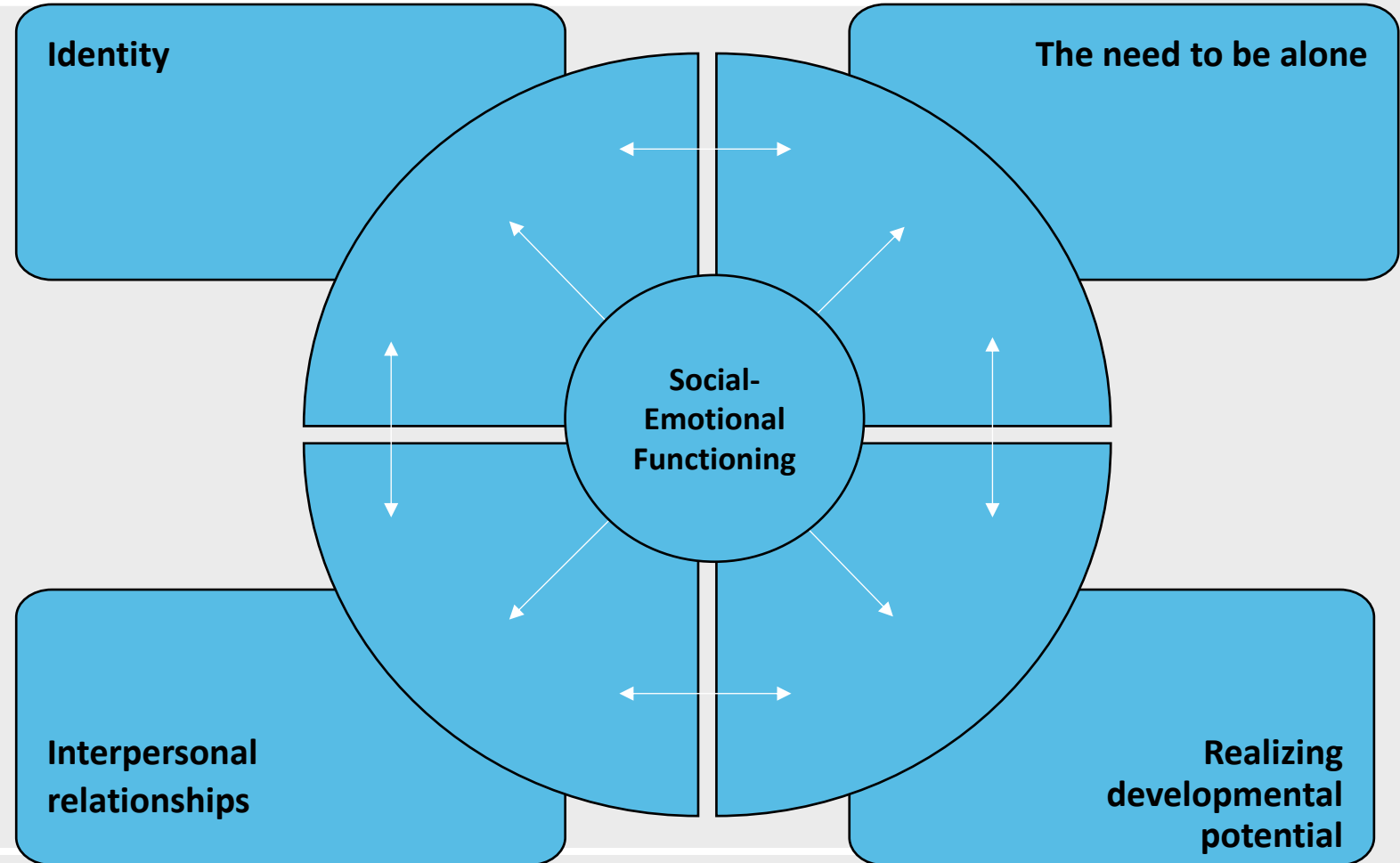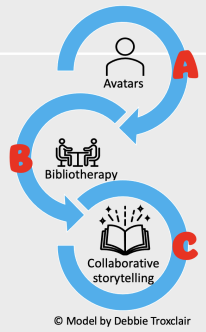✨ Avatar Highlights: Lightbulb (deep thinking), magical book (creativity), peaceful garden (calm space)

What is Bibliotherapy?

(Halsted, 2009; Seney, 2020)

$KU = (K+V)^R$

- Bibliotherapy is a counseling strategy which can be adapted for classroom use as a tool for helping learners develop social and emotional coping skills.

- Social-emotional growth occurs as learners read novels and interact with characters in situations within the novel that are similar to people and events in their own lives.
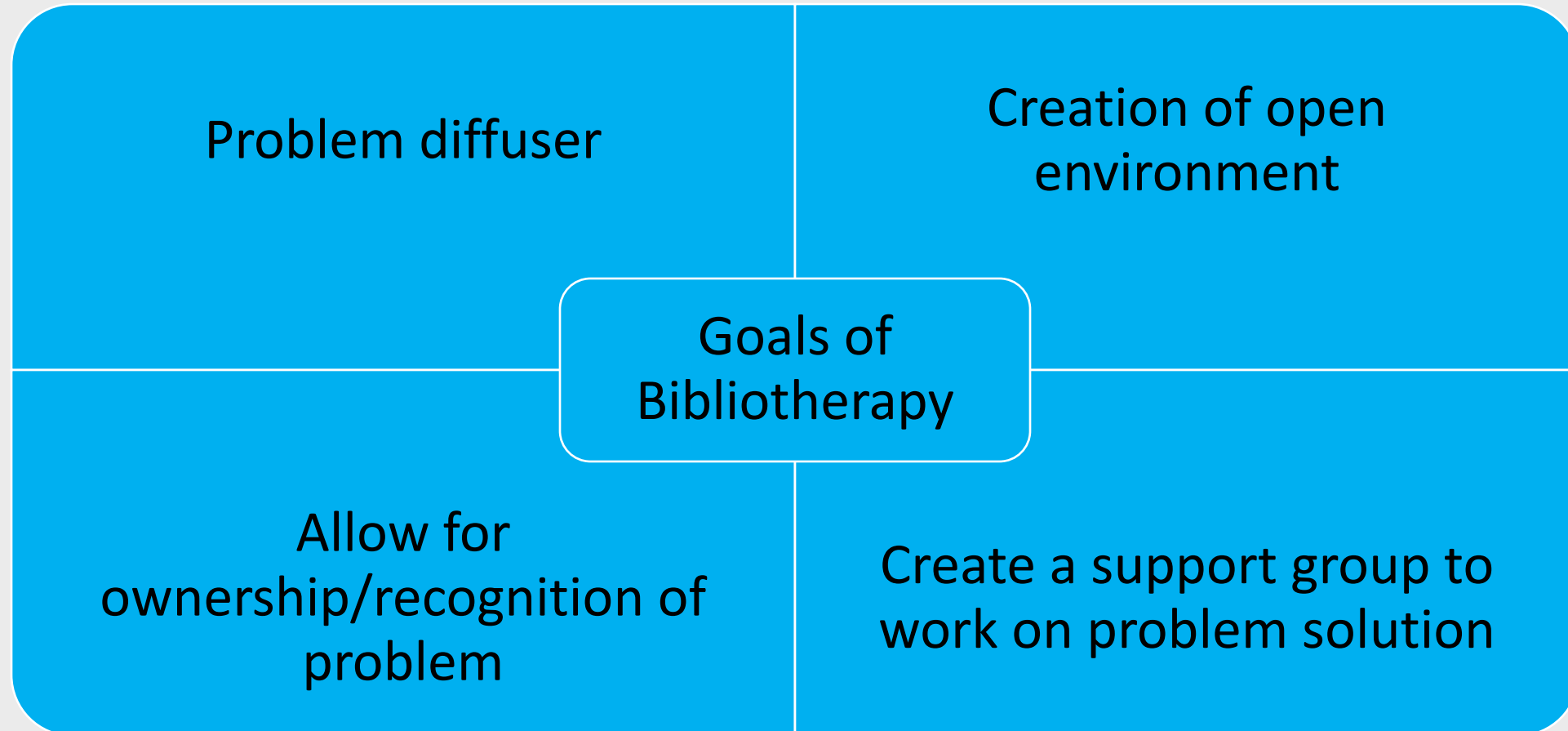

Identity

The need to be alone

Social-Emotional Functioning

Interpersonal relationships

Realizing developmental potential

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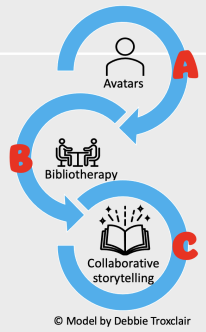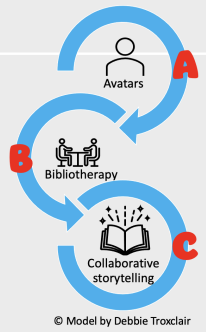
Applying bibliotherapy to your situation

KU=(K+V)R

5 minutes

- Identify situations where bibliotherapy benefits your students.

- Identify the student's issue for which you want to use bibliotherapy as an intervention strategy.

Avatars

B Bibliotherapy

C Collaborative storytelling

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Stages of Bibliotherapy

(Halsted, 2009; Seney, 2020)

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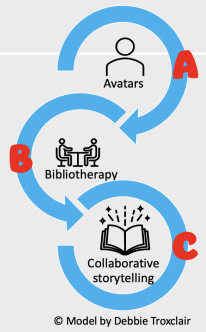Identification: Recognizes novel's conflict is real

Catharsis: The emotional identification with the emotions of the character in the book

Insight: Recognizes they have the same problem

Universalization: Understanding they are not alone in experiencing this problem

Application: Individual applies insights to their life

A — Avatars

B — Bibliotherapy

C — Collaborative storytelling

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The instructional process......
(Halstead, 2009; Seney, 2020)

$KU = (K+V)^R$

1. Select book → 2. Read book → 3. Plan discussion questions → 4. Book talk

4. Book talk → 5. Have students read the book → 6. Set parameters → 7. Begin Discussion → 8. Create product
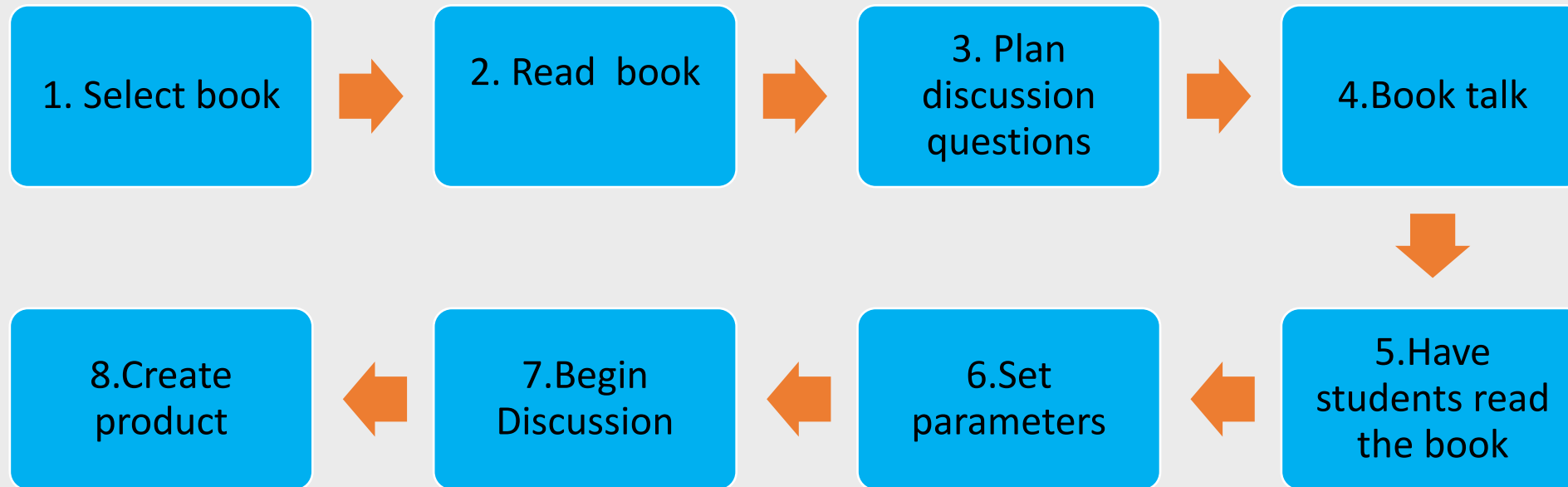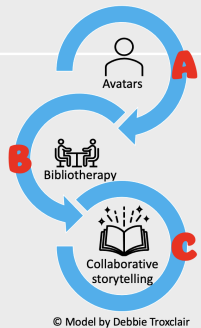
Bridging from insight to application: Collaborative story design

KU=(K+V)ᴿ

People	Places	Problems	Solutions	Surprises
Mickey Mouse	The moon	No money	A new job	A broomstick
Abraham Lincoln	A beach	Car broke down	A vacation	Popcorn
Barack Obama	A museum	Parents	A reunion	Upgrade to first class
Albert Einstein	A cave	A storm	Crowd funding	Winning a golden ticket
Santa Claus	The circus	A burglary	A magic wand	A visitor

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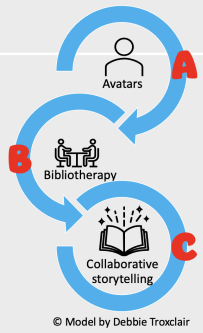
Collaborative story design

KU=(K+V)^R

Main character	Problems	Thoughts	Emotions	Solutions	Outcome
The ugly duckling	The odd one out	What is wrong with me?	Sadness	Taking time to grow up	He became a swan
The ugly duckling	The odd one out	Why do I look so strange?	Sadness	Change the solution	Change the outcome
The ugly duckling	The odd one out	Nobody likes me	Change the emotion	Change the solution	Change the outcome
The ugly duckling	The odd one out	Change the thought	Change the emotion	Change the solution	Change the outcome

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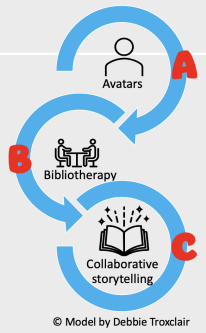
Applying collaborative storytelling with your students (HandoutQR Code)

- Read the case description that is on your table.

- Our task is to develop a collaborative narrative using one of the provided case studies as a foundation.

- Step 1: Using the provided grid, identify at least three distinct problems the student is struggling with.

- Step 2: Create alternative scenarios for each problem.

- Step 3: Create a meaningful intervention plan that is tailored to meet the student's specific needs.

- (Handout with student profiles)

Introducing your students…
(Handou QR Codet)

Ahmed

(Photo from Pixabay)

Jackson

Aailyah

Mateo

Michelle

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Collaborative Storytelling Option 1

Creative Characters

People	Places	Problems	Solutions	Surprises
Mateo	A mountain cabin	Lost his journal	Followed a trail of songs	A glowing compass
Aailyah	A theater attic	State fright	Whispered words from her notebook	A standing ovation
Jackson	A space station	Computer malfunction	Reprogrammed with backup code	Found alien music
Ahmed	A robotics lab	Robot won't start	Rewired it with a paperclip	The robot told a joke
Michelle	An enchanged library	Characters vanished from her story	Used a magic quill	A character stepped out of her book.

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Collaborative Storytelling Option 2
Handout QR Code

KU=(K+V)ᴿ

People	Places	Problems	Thoughts	Emotions	Solutions	Surprises
Mateo	A quiet meadow	Forgot his sketchbook	I can't create without it	Frustrated, lost	Drew with a stick in the dirt	His drawing came to life
Mateo	A music room	Lost his favorite playlist	Nothing will sound the same	Sad, disconnected	Composed a new song from memory	It matched the rhythm of the rain
Mateo	A bilingual bookstore	Couldn't find a Spanish poetry book	Why is my language always missing?	Disappointed, invisible	Wrote his own bilingual poem	It was published in a magazine
Mateo	A mountain trail	Felt overwhelmed by emotions	I need to let this out somehow	Anxious, heavy	Wrote a journal entry under a tree	Found a message from a stranger
Mateo	A dream library	His words disappeared from the page	Even my thoughts are fading	Confused, unsure	Sang the words into the air	The book sang back to him

References

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- Candler, L. (2012*). Bio poems made easy* https://www.pawneeschools.com/vimages/shared/vnews/stories/4e61914de4269/FREEBioPoemsMadeEasy.pdf

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- Misterrobine. (2010, January 4). *The dot*. [YouTube] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5mGeR4AQdM&feature=youtu.be

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