



Minnesota State University Moorhead
RED: a Repository of Digital Collections

OER Materials


Open Educational Resources

2026

Ish Bibliotherapy Guide

David Wolff

Follow this and additional works at: <https://red.mnstate.edu/oer-materials>

 Part of the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Early Childhood Education Commons](#), [Educational Methods Commons](#), [Elementary Education Commons](#), [Elementary Education and Teaching Commons](#), and the [Pre-Elementary, Early Childhood, Kindergarten Teacher Education Commons](#)

Researchers wishing to request an accessible version of this PDF may [complete this form](#).

Ish Bibliotherapy Guide

David Wolff, ED.D. Minnesota State University Moorhead

Dr. David Wolff is an Assistant Professor in Elementary Inclusive Education in the School of Teaching and Learning in the College of Education and Human Services at Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) in Moorhead, Minnesota. Prior to MSUM, David was an Elementary Teacher, Gifted & Talented Interventionist, District Coordinator of Gifted & Talented Services, Instructional Coach, Principal. Go Dragons!

Email Dr. David Wolff at David.wolff@mnstate.edu to share how you used this resource in your classroom or connect to initiate further discussion on the development of future resources!

The co-authors of this bibliotherapy include preservice teachers enrolled in the Children's Literature course in the Spring semester of 2026.

Co-authors include:

- Thea Kunka, Elementary Inclusive Education Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead
- Clara Paleen, Elementary Inclusive Education Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead
- Regan Braun, Elementary Inclusive Education Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead
- Kelly Muckala, Early Childhood Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead
- Leah Kent, Early Childhood Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead
- Isaac Martin, Early Childhood Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead
- Katie Sikorski, Elementary Inclusive Education Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead
- MaKaden Anderson, Early Childhood Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead
- Averil Benson, Elementary Inclusive Education Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead
- Rhett Zima, Elementary Inclusive Education Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead
- Brooke Kraft, Elementary Inclusive Education Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead
- Kiley Lindow, Early Childhood Major, Minnesota State University Moorhead

This work is licensed under Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

Comments

This bibliotherapy reader's guide was created by Early Childhood and Elementary Education majors for a Children's Literature methods course. The course introduced preservice teachers to reading and studying children's literature including the nature of children's literature, criteria for selection, and strategies for reading and teaching literature in early childhood and elementary classrooms.

Keywords

Literary fiction, bibliotherapy, children's literature, science of reading, social-emotional learning, frustration tolerance, creativity, mindset.

Abstract

The goal of this assignment was for preservice teachers to practice writing a chain of questions that focused on the social and/or emotional needs of young learners. Bibliotherapy is therapeutic in nature to help individuals understand themselves and the world around them through guided reading experiences (American Library Association, 2025; Delisle & Galbraith, 2002). Further, bibliotherapy allow individuals to identify a personal problem mirrored by a character in a book. As the reader connects with the character, the reader experiences the emotions expressed by the character. Finally, the reader applies the character's experience to their own personal problem (American Library Association, 2025; Delisle & Galbraith, 2002). It is our goal that students will see themselves in Ramon and consider time when they have been frustrated with their work. This bibliotherapy reader's guide focuses on frustration tolerance, mindset, and creativity with the picture book, *Ish* by Peter H. Reynolds.

Ish

by Peter H. Reynolds

Reference: Reynolds, P. H. (2004). *Ish*. Candlewick.

Intended Audience: Grades PreK – 4

Themes: Frustration Tolerance, Mindset, Creativity

Rationale of use in Teacher Education: *Ish* is a story about Ramon who loved to draw. He loved to draw all the time until his brother teased him. After that, Ramon was frustrated with his drawings because they never looked ‘right.’ This continued until a special encounter with his sister changed how he saw his drawings. Maybe his vase did not look perfect, but it looked vase-*ish*. This book is a sequel to *The Dot* which introduces Ramon and is part of creativity trilogy by Reynolds titled, *Creatrilogy* which also includes, *The Dot* and *Skycolor*.



Reading Guide:

Below are numerous questions for you to choose from. As you preview the book, pick and choose from the questions below to help you reach your instructional goal. *Note.* Page number may be off due to human error.

Questions:

- p. 1 Do you like to draw? What do you like to draw? [Identification]
- p. 6 Have you ever been teased before? [Identification]
- p. 6 How did you feel when you were teased? [Catharsis]
- p. 7 Have you ever been frustrated before? [Identification]
- p. 7 How did you react or respond when you were frustrated? [Catharsis]
- p. 8 How does Ramon feel if he was “haunted” by his brother’s laugh? [Catharsis]
- p. 9 Have you ever felt so frustrated with your work that you wanted to crumple it up? [Identification]
- p. 9 If you saw Ramon crumpling up his drawings, how could you help him? [Insight]

- p. 11 How does Ramon feel right now? Why did he yell at Marisol when she did nothing wrong? [Catharsis]
- p. 11 If you were Marisol, what would you do to help Ramon? [Insight]
- p. 14 When have you felt proud? [Identification]
- p. 18 How do you think Ramon feels when he sees his drawings in Marisol's room? Why? [Catharsis]
- p. 18 When have you felt inspired to do something? [Identification]
- p. 19 When you do something creative, do you feel free to do whatever you want, or do you feel the need to be perfect? [Identification]
- p. 19 Have you ever been passionate about thing before? [Identification]
- p. 19 Why did Ramon's mindset about his drawings change? [Catharsis]
- p. 19 How can you inspire others like Marisol inspired Ramon? [Insight]