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Teaching perfectionism through cartoons compared to bibliotherapy for primary grade students

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Teaching perfectionism through cartoons compared to bibliotherapy for primary grade students

Abstract

Many students, especially high achievers, develop perfectionist tendencies during early childhood. It is important to teach students early to manage their perfectionism to avoid many negative consequences of neurotic perfectionism such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, procrastination, or underachievement, and to avoid entrenchment of behaviors. Traditionally, bibliotherapy and role-play have been used to help students recognize perfectionistic traits and learn strategies for ameliorating negative effects. But cartoon analysis is another potentially useful approach.

This pretest-posttest control group - experimental group design study of first, second and third graders (n = 46) compared concept acquisition and enjoyment of learning about perfectionism under two conditions: bibliotherapy and role-play (control) compared to analysis and construction of cartoons (experimental). Posttest results showed students learned significantly more content in the experimental condition with a medium effect size. Teacher observations showed that students were more engaged in the cartoon condition, appreciating the humor of the cartoons and the opportunity to apply their learning in making their own cartoons. In contrast, although most students reported liking the bibliotherapy, some complained of boredom or apathy. The researchers recommend that both bibliotherapy and cartoon analysis be used in lessons about perfectionism to maintain student interest and comprehension of the comments.

Teaching Perfectionism through Cartoons Compared to Bibliotherapy
For Primary Grade Students

A Graduate Project

Submitted to the

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education of the Gifted

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Miranda L. Zousel

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For Primary Grade Students

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Abstract

Many students, especially high achievers, develop perfectionist tendencies during early childhood. It is important to teach students early to manage their perfectionism to avoid many negative consequences of neurotic perfectionism such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, procrastination, or underachievement and to avoid entrenchment of behaviors. Traditionally, bibliotherapy and role-play have been used to help students recognize perfectionistic traits and learn strategies for ameliorating negative effects, but cartoon analysis is another potentially useful approach. This pretest-posttest control group – experimental group design study of first, second and third graders ($n = 46$) compared concept acquisition and enjoyment of learning about perfectionism under two conditions: bibliotherapy and role-play (control) compared to analysis and construction of cartoons (experimental). Posttest results showed students learned significantly more content in the experimental condition with a medium effect size. Teacher observations showed that students were more engaged in the cartoon condition, appreciating the humor of the cartoons and the opportunity to apply their learning in making their own cartoons. In contrast, although most students reported liking the bibliotherapy, some complained of boredom or apathy. The researchers recommend that both bibliotherapy and cartoon analysis be used in lessons about perfectionism to maintain student interest and comprehension of the comments.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Perfectionism, a trait that has been identified as early as the 1920's, affects people of all ages, particularly gifted students (Schuler, 2000). Without an intervention, perfectionism can have devastating effects on students. To minimize the neurotic effects of perfectionism, students should be educated on recognizing and coping with perfectionism beginning at a young age.

Importance of Teaching Primary Grade Students about Perfectionism

A lack of recognition of perfectionism in young children can have life-changing effects of a negative nature. If negative behaviors are allowed to continue and expand in children, the results may be depression, anxiety, and self-destructive behaviors among other undesirable consequences. Hewitt and colleagues (2002) state, "Thus, a child's perception of falling short of the perfectionistic expectations of others affects the child's self-perceptions, resulting in depression"(p. 1057). With social-emotional lessons and interventions, students can be taught skills to cope with perfectionism and use their perfectionist traits in a healthy manner. On the positive side, perfectionism can be used as a tool toward reaching one's goals and becoming successful, and may serve as a motivator for many students (Stoeber & Rambow, 2006). It is imperative that primary grade students are taught to use perfectionism to their advantage.

Personal Interest in the Topic

As a teacher of the talented and gifted, I have taught and continue to teach many students that demonstrate perfectionist behaviors. I have taught social-emotional lessons to students ranging from kindergarten through sixth grade in both gifted and general education classrooms to address their needs regarding perfectionism, but wanted to find a

more effective way to meet students' needs. Prior to this study, I had solely used traditional methods such as bibliotherapy to deliver social-emotional lessons to students. In a graduate level college course, I was taught that the use of cartoons as an instructional tool could have positive results in the classroom. I decided to compare and contrast my traditional method of reading and applying ideas from books versus instruction using cartoons to determine what is most effective in social-emotional instruction, particularly regarding perfectionism.

Traditional Methods of Teaching about Perfectionism

Perfectionism lessons can be taught in small or large settings at all age and ability levels, but is generally taught in a small group setting to students who exhibit behaviors of perfectionism, particularly gifted students. At all age levels, bibliotherapy is a widely used option. Using books as a teaching tool creates a connection between the student and a character that may have the same emotional experiences as the students. Having this connection can help the student find solutions and insights into his/her own feelings (Halsted, 2009). Guidance counselors often play a large role in working with students who seem to evidence perfectionism. This may take the form of role-playing, individual counseling, or small group sessions and activities.

Statement of the Problem

Addressing social-emotional issues with elementary children can be done in various ways, but little is known about which teaching method lends the most effective results.

The following are the research questions addressed by this research study:

1. Which of the two methods, cartoon analysis and production, or bibliotherapy

using books featuring perfectionism, results in greater student learning of perfectionist concepts?

2. What aspects of both methods are particularly effective or engaging for students as determined by teacher observation?

3. Which method of teaching do students perceive as most enjoyable and why?

Terms Related to the Study

Perfectionism. This psychological trait involves behaviors and thoughts of sensational (unreachable) goals and flawless outcomes for oneself (Schuler, 2000).

Bibliotherapy. This psychological intervention uses books to solve a problem, particularly a social-emotional issue (Gregory & Vessey, 2004).

Neurotic Perfectionism. This negative psychological trait is characterized by a lack of pleasure in activities and accomplishments arising from feelings of not being good enough (Parker, 2000).

Healthy Perfectionism. This form of perfectionism is considered positive because high self-standards that lead to positive rewards, and success without psychological affliction (Bieling, et al., 2003).

Control Group. This cluster of participants does not receive the intervention or manipulation of the independent variable (McMillan, 2008), serving as a comparison group for those who do.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Preview

The following literature review outlines research regarding perfectionism and methods of instructing students in this area. Perfectionism and its various forms will be defined, as will the problems surrounding neurotic perfectionism. Methods of teaching students about perfectionism and how to turn neurotic perfectionism into healthy perfectionism are also explored, including the use of cartoons and bibliotherapy as teaching tools.

Definition, Types of Perfectionism, and Problems Associated with It

Perfectionism is a psychological trait, which involves behaviors and thoughts of sensational (unreachable) goals and flawless outcomes for oneself (Schuler, 2000). Perfectionism is a behavior exhibited by both children and adults, however little research has been conducted regarding its manifestations in children (Hewitt, 2000). This behavior has many facades, and can manifest itself internally or may rely on behaviors and interactions among others (Hewitt, 2000). Perfectionism can take on two forms: healthy and neurotic.

“Healthy perfectionism is demonstrated when an individual has high self-standards that lead to positive rewards, and success without psychological affliction” (Bieling, et al., 2003, p. 1374). A healthy perfectionist has the ability to adapt to situations and use perfectionism to his/her advantage in a positive way, such as completing projects or working thoroughly on tasks (Nugent, 2000). Healthy or adaptive perfectionism is tolerated and culturally acceptable, as successes are naturally associated with it (Bieling, et al., 2003). In school settings, healthy perfectionism is beneficial as,

“In their push to make sure to get everything right, they do a thorough job of gathering information and ferreting out facts” (Adderholdt-Elliot, 1987, p. 62).

Neurotic perfectionism has the opposite effect compared to healthy perfectionism and can be recognized as a lack of pleasure in activities and accomplishments arising from feelings of not being good enough (Parker, 2000). Neurotic perfectionism, also known as “maladaptive perfectionism” (Bieling, et al., 2003, p. 1382) and “disabling perfectionism” (Nugent, 2000, p. 215) may affect inner feelings toward oneself, home-life, and academics. In a 2003 study on adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism, results showed that “maladaptive perfectionism was associated with baseline levels of distress and symptoms of depression and hopelessness regarding academic performance over time” (Bieling, et al., 2003, p. 1382). The ultimate outcome of academics takes a backseat to one’s feelings of self-worth, thus leading to a less productive environment. Beyond academics, unaddressed neurotic perfectionism can lead to depression, under-achievement, substance abuse, obsessive-compulsive disorders, psychosomatic disorders, and suicide (Nugent, 2000).

Importance of Teaching about Perfectionism in Primary Grades

Primary age students may experience perfectionism for reasons different than adults. Neurotic perfectionism in adolescents roots itself in the simple fear of failure. Students may demonstrate negative feelings such as anger, stress, or frustration when perfection is unachievable rather than express feelings of hope and success toward school. Examples of negativity relating to school are, “I feel depressed if I have not been perfect,” or, “I feel extremely stressed if everything doesn’t go perfectly” (Stoerber & Rambow, 2007, p. 1386-87). Late childhood and early teen years are the most

susceptible times for children to develop perfectionistic behaviors. Knowing that perfectionism can affect children at such a young age can be beneficial in the identification process. If the behaviors are recognized, students should be counseled as soon as possible to avoid negative behaviors from manifesting themselves (Nugent, 2000).

Methods of Addressing Perfectionism in the Classroom

General classroom instruction is common in addressing perfectionism; however these ideas are often not taught through perfection-specific lessons. Healthy perfectionism may be taught daily through student involvement in class activities and reflection on one's thought process. It has been suggested that teachers share their own perfectionist struggles with students and share personal strategies in overcoming neurotic perfectionism (Nugent, 2000). Effective teachers encourage students to set reasonable goals for themselves and to monitor and adjust the goals as necessary. They also teach students that they can achieve success through a combination of failure and flexibility (Adderholdt-Elliott, 1987). They also create a safe and collaborative environment that teaches students it is ok to fail and make mistakes, as it is an essential part of being a life-long learner (Nugent, 2000).

Bibliotherapy, another method of addressing perfectionism in the classroom, is a psychological intervention that uses circumstances experienced by characters in books to help readers solve similar problems, particularly social-emotional issues (Gregory & Vessey, 2004). This method is widely used because it can be adapted to meet the needs of numerous behaviors and issues. In the 1930's, libraries began categorizing their books for consumers to use them in a therapeutic fashion (Abdullah, n.d.). The idea evolved

and is used among counselors, specialists, parents, and classroom teachers. Bibliotherapy is an ongoing dialogue between the book, the reader, and the facilitator. The literature and deliberate dialogue assist the reader in understanding and sorting through his/her own behaviors, and develop connections with characters in the story (Schlichter & Burke, 1994).

Previous Literature on Using Cartoons in Teaching

Literature regarding the use of cartoons as a teaching tool is limited, which is another reason research in this area is important. Cartoon creation is a motivational tool for all students, not just gifted students. It incorporates humor and creativity, which increases interest and motivates students (Garner, 2006). A study conducted with sixth grade science students showed that, “This technique was successful in motivating under-achieving students to read science books and practice communicating the information by drawing humorous cartoons” (Sallis, et al., 2009, p. 27). Other positive outcomes of using cartoon creation humor in teaching are reduced anxiety, less stress and higher self-esteem (Garner, 2006). These essentially counteract neurotic perfectionistic behaviors.

Summary

It is clear that perfectionism needs to be addressed in primary grades for the benefit of the student and to mitigate negative effects of neurotic perfectionism before it becomes a life-pattern. Stoeber and Rambow (2006) state that, “Striving for perfection in adolescent school students is associated with positive characteristics and adaptive outcomes and thus may form part of a healthy pursuit of excellence” (p. 1379). To promote this “pursuit of excellence” an effective teaching method should be used. General classroom instruction of perfectionism should be an ongoing and daily lesson

with regular modeling (Nugent, 2000). However, options for direct instruction of perfectionism are limited, and most research has been conducted in the area of bibliotherapy. Little is known about using cartoons and humor as a teaching method when addressing social-emotional behaviors, however what has been conducted has been extremely positive (Sallis, et al., 2009). Therefore, a study was designed to compare these two methods of teaching about perfectionism. The design and methods of the study are addressed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Participants and Research Setting

Forty-six elementary students of mixed abilities (21 male, 25 female; 32 Caucasian, 4 Hispanic, 8 African-American, 1 Native American, 1 Asian American) in three grades (first, second, and third) at a suburban public school in Iowa participated in the study. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the University of Northern Iowa's human subjects review committee and the school principal. All students and their parents agreed in writing to participate.

Research Design

The research design was a pretest-posttest experimental group-control group design as shown in Table 1. The school at which the study took place had two classrooms at each of the primary grade levels. One classroom at each grade level was randomly assigned to the experimental condition and the other to the control condition. The pretest and posttest were identical instruments and are shown in Table 2. These were orally administered to all students after they had spent some time attempting to answer the questions in writing independently.

Table 1. Set-up of the Research Study

Events in Order	Experimental Cartoon Condition – Cartoon Concepts Numbers in parentheses show the cartoon numbers that will be discussed. Class 1A (Mrs. G.), 2A (Mrs. R.), 3A (Mrs. C.)	Bibliotherapy Control Condition - Books Class 1B (Mrs. S), 2B (Mrs. K.), 3B (Mrs. Y)
Pretest	Same for all participants	
Lesson 1 30 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some perfectionism is good, but it can be “bad” or unhealthy also. Order, neatness, organization are good aspects of perfectionism. (2,9,11) • Nobody can really be or do everything perfectly. (10) • Pressure from parents or others may cause perfectionism. (7, 17, 18) 	Viorst, J. (1987). <i>Alexander and the terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day</i> . New York: Atheneum.
Lesson 2 30 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some perfectionists are obsessive. (6, 24) • Perfectionism can result in depression because those who aren’t perfect think they are worthless. (23) • Perfectionist sometimes procrastinate because they are afraid they would not do something perfectly. Avoiding situations where success is not guaranteed. Need risk-taking in a non-threatening environment. (14, 20) 	Bulla, C. R. (1982). <i>Daniel’s duck</i> . New York: Harper Trophy.
Lesson 3 30 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perfectionists tend to set unreachable goals. (16) • Some perfectionists cheat to maintain a perfect record. (19) • Perfectionism kills creativity. (4) • Accepting advice and constructive criticism is good. Unhealthy perfectionists have trouble with criticism because then they feel worthless. (13) • It’s okay to be different. (3, 5) 	Martin Jr., B., & Archambault, J. (1997). <i>Knots on a counting rope</i> . New York: Henry Holt and Company.
Lesson 4 30 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to enjoy process and the journey rather than focusing on the result. (8, 21) • Even if something is not perfect, it can still be good and fun. Accepting some imperfections indicates healthy perfectionism. All or none thinking indicates unhealthy perfectionism. Stress that errors are common. (1, 12, 15, 22) 	Moss, M. (1995). <i>Regina’s big mistake</i> . Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
Posttest after one week time lapse	Same for all participants	

Table 2. Pretest-Posttest questions with Possible Correct Answers

Question	Possible Correct Answer											
1. Tell what the word "perfectionism" means.	Someone who thinks he or she has to be perfect all the time or can't make any mistakes.											
2. Tell at least four ways that perfectionism can be good – tell the characteristics or actions of a healthy perfectionist.	a) Someone who is a healthy perfectionist can be very orderly; b) dedicated to work and give attention to detail. c) They are open to advice or constructive criticism. d) People can depend on them. e) happy, not depressed.											
3. Tell at least four ways perfectionism can be bad – tell the characteristics or actions of an unhealthy perfectionist.	Sets unreasonable goals. Doesn't enjoy or have fun unless he/she thinks he/she is perfect. They may procrastinate. May be grumpy, or depressed or feel worthless. They may cheat to get good grades. May be obsessive. Be afraid to be different and creative.											
4. Tell at least two causes of perfectionism.	a) Living for the approval of others such as teachers and parents who praise too much. b) Constant success early in life- not experiencing failure or struggle. c) Parents who are too pushy.											
5. Tell four ways to stop or overcome unhealthy perfectionism.	Possible correct answers. a) Enjoy the process. b) Talk with others about your feelings. c) Get reasonable goals. d) Learn to accept imperfection. e) Be willing to try new things, take risks, be different.											
6. (Posttest only) Tell what you liked the most about the way you learned about perfectionism from Mrs. Zousel.	Individual answers will vary.											
7. (Posttest only) Circle a number below to tell how much you liked learning about this topic of perfectionism compared to other lessons from Mrs. Zousel.	Individual answers will vary.											
Didn't like it at all	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Loved learning about this topic
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
8. (Posttest only) Tell three reasons why you rated the perfectionism lessons this way.	Individual answers will vary.											

Data Analysis

The first research question, “Which of the two methods, cartoon analysis and production, or bibliotherapy using books featuring perfectionism, results in greater student learning of perfectionist concepts?” was answered with data from the pretest-posttests. Students’ scores from learning under the two conditions were compared. Areas of strength for each condition were identified.

The second research question, “What aspects of both methods are particularly effective or engaging for students as determined by teacher observation?” was answered by examining the notes that the teacher kept after each lesson. These notes recorded student comments and body language concerning the effective aspects, motivation of students and engagement during the activities.

Finally, the third research question, “Which method of teaching do students perceive as most enjoyable and why?” was evaluated with data from questions 6, 7, and 8 from the posttest as shown in Table 2. The aspects students liked about the lessons (question 6) were sorted and tabulated. The numerical ratings from question 7 were tabulated and an average was determined for each condition. The reasons (question 8) were sorted and tabulated also.

The next section, Chapter 4, presents the results of this research study.

Chapter 4: Results

Student Data

Student data from the pretests and posttests of the experimental suggests that using cartoons and humor is an enjoyable and effective learning tool for students. Not only did students in the experimental group respond correctly on more questions, but they also found the lessons more enjoyable.

Table 3 demonstrates that little to no information was known about perfectionism by both the control and experimental groups prior to the pretest. The number of correct responses on the experimental group posttest clearly outnumbers the amount of correct responses on the experimental group for every question. Students in the experimental group gained the most knowledge about characteristics of healthy perfectionism and ways to overcome unhealthy perfectionism.

Students in both groups found different aspects of their lessons enjoyable. While the experimental group enjoyed using cartoons as a learning tool, the control group enjoyed books read by the teacher. Between the two groups, the control group had more students omit a response to the question regarding what they liked or respond that they found nothing enjoyable about the lessons.

Students in the control group had more negative responses toward bibliotherapy than students being taught using cartoons in the experimental group. The most common responses were, "I liked some parts but didn't like others," and, "The work was hard or difficult." Even though students in both groups were learning the same content, the experimental group found that cartoons made the content seem less challenging.

Table 3. Student Responses to Pretest/Posttest Questions

Correct Response to Pretest/ Posttest Questions	Number of Correct Responses			
	Control Group		Experimental Group	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
1. Definition of Perfectionism				
Perfectionism means thinking you have to be perfect at everything.	0	10	0	11
2. Ways perfectionism can be good or characteristics of a healthy perfectionist				
Being organized and orderly	0	1	0	9
Dedicated, hard-working, attention to detail	0	7	0	5
Open to advice and criticism	0	2	0	1
People depend on them	0	0	0	3
Happy and not depressed	0	1	0	6
Total Score for Question 2	0	11	0	24
3. Ways perfectionism can be bad – characteristics or actions of an unhealthy perfectionist				
Sets unreasonable goals.	0	1	0	2
Doesn't enjoy or have fun unless he/she thinks he/she is perfect.	0	1	0	5
May procrastinate or not try at all.	0	2	1	0
May be grumpy, depressed, or feel worthless.	0	12	1	8
They may cheat to get good grades.	0	0	0	2
May be obsessive.	0	0	0	3
Be afraid to be different and creative.	0	1	0	2
Total Score for Question 3	0	17	2	22
4. Causes of perfectionism				
Living for approval from people who praise too much	0	0	0	3
Constant success early in life without experience of struggle or failure	0	2	0	1
Parents who are too pushy	0	1	0	0
Total Score for Question 4	0	3	0	4
5. Ways to stop or overcome unhealthy perfectionism				
Enjoy the process, rather than focusing on the final product.	0	0	0	1
Talk with others about your feelings.	0	1	0	4
Set more reasonable goals.	0	2	0	1
Learn to accept imperfection.	0	2	1	8
Be willing to try new things, take risks, and be different.	0	2	0	3
Total Score for Question 5	0	7	1	17
Cumulative Score for All Questions	0	48	3	78

Table 4. What Students Liked Most About the Lessons

Aspect about Lessons Students Liked Most	Number of Students Indicating this Aspect	
	Control Group n=23	Experimental Group n=23
The cartoons and cartoon work	0	9
The books the teacher presented	7	1
The teacher	4	1
Acting things out	0	4
Learning to like myself the way I am	3	1
The newspaper comics and movies	0	2
Nothing/no idea/ no response	8	4
Everything	1	1

Table 5. Reasons Given by Students for Rating the Way They Learned about Perfectionism

Reasons Given	Number of Students Giving this Reason	
	Control Group n= 23	Experimental Group n= 23
Positive Reasons		
The lessons were awesome, fun, or interesting.	8	5
The game-like activities were engaging	0	6
The stories or books were interesting.	6	0
The lessons helped me learn about my own perfectionism.	6	4
The cartoons were engaging.	0	5
I like the teacher.	2	4
The lessons were relaxing.	1	0
I like group work.	0	1
Total Positive Reasons	23	25
Neutral or Negative Reasons		
I liked some parts but didn't like others.	4	0
I don't know.	1	0
The lessons were boring.	4	0
The work was hard or difficult.	3	2
I dislike criticizing myself or others.	0	1
Total Neutral or Negative Reasons	12	3

Teacher Observations

The control group was initially receptive to bibliotherapy. Students were excited to listen to a new book and participate in a whole-class discussion. However, during the second, third, and fourth lessons the excitement diminished markedly. Students' remarks included, "This is boring," and, "We are reading *another* book?" When relating perfectionism to the books being read, student's responses were limited. They made personal connections to the text, but not as many connections to perfectionism as the teacher had hoped. Discussion prompts seemed ineffective at times, as student attention and excitement had been lost.

Students taught about perfectionism through the use of cartoons were engaged in the lessons from beginning to end. There was an aura of excitement in the classrooms when the teacher said, "Time to pass out the cartoons we will be discussing." Students smiled, laughed, and said, "Awesome!" During elbow partner time students shared their learning and personal examples of ways they had experienced perfectionism related to the cartoons. It was truly an interactive and engaging experience. During a second grade lesson, the regular classroom teacher from the control group walked into the experimental class to borrow materials. She later pulled the gifted education teacher aside and said, "Wow, they really looked like they were having fun. Can you do the cartoon lessons with my students next year?"

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendation

Summary of Results

The results show that using cartoons as an educational tool for teaching elementary students about social-emotional issues, particularly perfectionism can be a very positive experience for both students and the teacher. Students were engaged and excited about the lessons using cartoons, and were eager to learn more about perfectionism using cartoons. The humor involved in the lessons helped students to develop connections that made their learning more concrete.

Using the same pretest and posttest for both the experimental and control groups, students in the experimental group responded correctly more frequently than students in the control group. The experimental group's posttest results showed more correct responses, particularly regarding characteristics of healthy perfectionism and ways to overcome unhealthy perfectionism. Attitudes toward the lessons were also more positive on the experimental posttest and had less negative responses toward the teaching method.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Both teaching through humor and cartoons and using bibliotherapy can be great tools to provide students with counseling on social-emotional issues, although depending on the situation, one may be more appropriate than the other. Bibliotherapy is general, in the sense that books are not created to address very specific areas, but rather uses personalized questions and prompts to help students arrive at an understanding. Children's literature addressing perfectionism is somewhat limited. The books read to students were related to perfectionism, but did not directly address the specific content as the perfectionism lessons did. Only through guided discussion was the content

addressed.

Using bibliotherapy as a tool to address social-emotional issues should not be removed from classrooms. Depending on the issue being addressed, there are some fitting books and resources to guide students and teachers. It is a great tool to use for students of all ages, but at times, requires more than simply reading and discussing. Creating a unit that uses both cartoons and bibliotherapy would most likely provide successful results in both comprehension and enjoyment.

The use of cartoons versus bibliotherapy gave the lessons more direction, as the cartoons could be created specifically to meet a specific understanding, such as characteristics of perfectionism. This, in combination with humor, class discussions, and individual and small group cartoon creation made the unit very successful. In the future I plan to use cartoon analysis and creation for various units, not limited to units regarding social-emotional issues.

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