

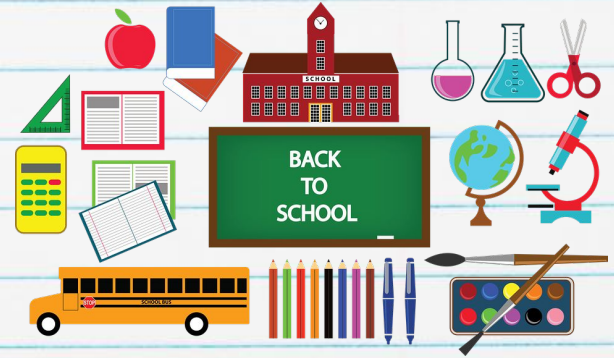


"BIBLIOTHERAPY: WHERE TEACHERS,  
LITERATURE, AND THERAPY COME  
TOGETHER TO IMPACT STUDENTS"

SAMANTHA WILKIE

## QUESTION

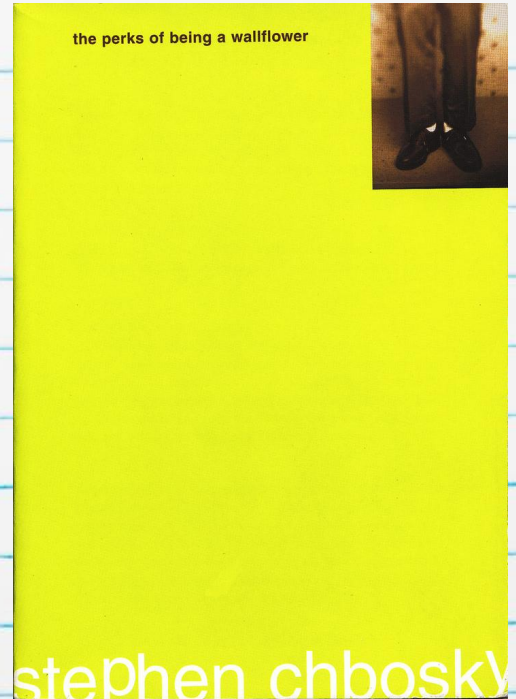
Think back to a time in school...



Are there any novels you read that you remember making a great impact on your life? Or being therapeutic?

# OVERVIEW

- Thesis
- Definition
- Synopsis of *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (*Perks*)
- Analysis
- Significance
- Conclusion



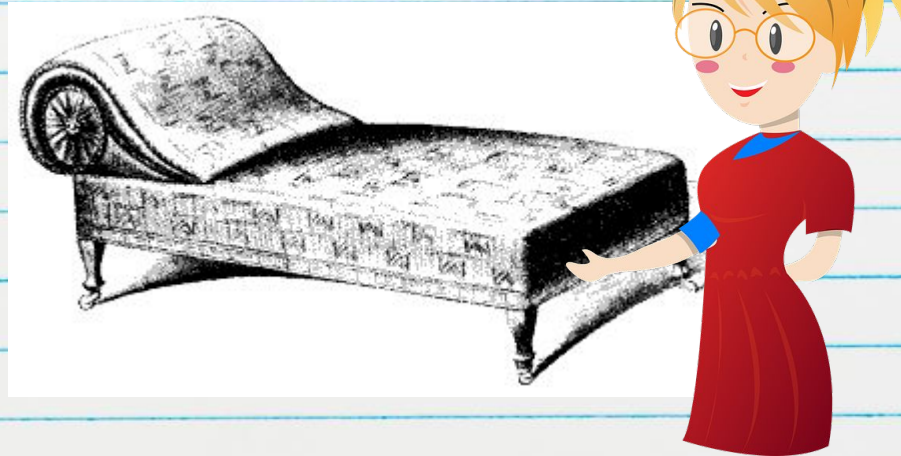
**Bibliotherapy**, or pedagogy that involves the use of literature as therapy, has **significant, long-lasting effects** in the secondary classroom, as seen in Stephen Chbosky's *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* in the interactions of Charlie Kelmeckis with his 9th grade Honors English Teacher, Bill Anderson.



# BIBLIOTHERAPY

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- Teachers are able to reach students at a **deeper** level through the means of literature
- Teachers are often placed in the **role** of a bibliotherapist without necessarily realizing it (Yasin)



# BIBLIOTHERAPY

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“Russell (2012) recommended teachers use bibliotherapy as a **proactive intervention** to better prepare students for inevitable troubles and problems and not as a reactive antidote when a problem occurs” (35).

# BIBLIOTHERAPY VS. TEACHING

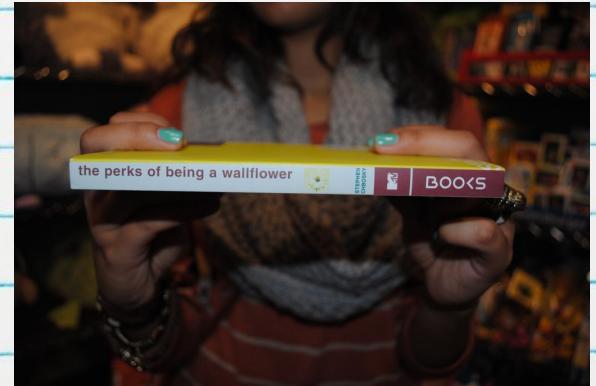
- Teaching involves many practices, beliefs, and goals.
- Including Active-awareness
  - Engage
    - Students' knowledge of literature and literary elements
    - Students' empathy/emotional development



# OVERVIEW OF *PERKS*

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- An **assemblage of letters** written to an anonymous audience
  - Begins the day before his first day of high school and ends before he begins his sophomore year
  - Experiences a difficult year (mentally and physically)
- Charlie forms a strong tie to his honors English teacher, Mr. Bill Anderson





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"So, this is my life. And I want you to know that I am both happy and sad and I'm still trying to figure out how that could be."

-Charlie, (Chbosky 2)

# ANALYSIS

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- Mr. Anderson uses the tactics of bibliotherapy by...
  - Giving Charlie advice about difficult subjects
  - Giving Charlie out-of-class reading assignments and essays
  - Grading Charlie's essays critically to show his improvements as a person rather than a grade



# ANALYSIS

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- Mr. Anderson asked Charlie to call him “Bill” when not in class
  - Charlie is able to trust him more
  - Charlie is able to talk about difficult subjects
  - Charlie is able to understand what he is going through is not abnormal and provides him with some needed self-assurance (Yanders 49).



# ANALYSIS

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- Bill gave Charlie copies of a variety of books throughout the year.
  - Each one was accompanied by an essay
  - Each one had characters Bill knew Charlie would be able to connect with
- Bill encouraged Charlie to “participate” more





"Charlie, we accept the love we  
think we deserve."

-Bill, (Chbosky 24)

# ANALYSIS

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- Catharsis: an impulsive and exhaustive release of emotion
  - The reader feels secure since he is not the person involved, which produces this raw emotional release (Yasin 15-16).
  - “However, the **similarities** between the character’s and the reader’s lives, perhaps without ever realizing it, enable the reader to gain **insight** into his own problem” (Yasin 16).

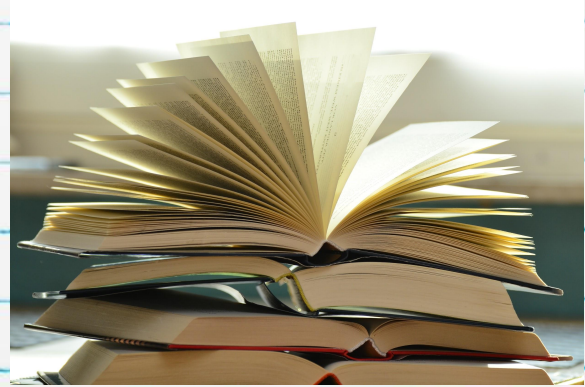


# ANALYSIS

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Through these examples of literature...

- Charlie was able to see things in himself that he could not before.
- Bill was able to use his position as a teacher and his knowledge of literature to assist Charlie.
- Charlie was able to cope with situations from his past with the help of these books.



"So, I guess we are who we are for a lot of reasons. And maybe we'll never know most of them. But even if we don't have the power to choose where we come from, we can still choose where we go from there. We can still do things. And we can try to feel okay about them."

-Charlie, (Chbosky 211)



# SIGNIFICANCE FOR EDUCATORS

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Practice useful in...

- Choosing literature outside canonical norms
- Instructing students in controversial topics with honesty and open-mindedness (non-judgmental)
- “Participating” in texts as educators
- Practicing patience and facilitating, rather than determining, a youth’s feelings or emotional responses

# SIGNIFICANCE FOR STUDENTS

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- Assisting students in exploring such emotions as fear, rejection, or love, common subjects of literature
- Helping students cope with problems before they occur
  - Coping mechanism
- Identifying with characters



# CONCLUSION

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- *Perks* shows the power literature has in the classroom and is an example of literature.
  - The clarity that Charlie begins to possess allows him to confess to the reader that, because of his new-found self-esteem, he is going to slowly abandon his letter writing.



# QUESTION

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Finally, think again about your time in school...

Any books you would like to acknowledge that have had a great impact in your life?





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