

JOURNEY IN... YEAR THREE

ENDINGS STORY

This lesson's Big Ideas:

- Grief is what follows loss, especially death. Grief is both the hurt and the healing. Grief is never straightforward or simple or the same for two people.
- If we allow ourselves to grieve and to let others grieve, people can continue living meaningful lives.
- In most cultures, people create rituals to help them in the grieving process. One such ritual in our culture is the funeral or memorial service.
- Grief does not mean forgetting; it means remembering. In time, we remember the dead with more feelings than just sorrow. We remember them with love, with gratitude and even laughter.

Lesson Materials

- *Our Dad Died*, by Amy, Allie and David Dennison
- Five to ten storybooks on grieving from the attached bibliography
- Copies of the attached wordsearches

TEACHER REFLECTION AND PREPARATION

🕒 Ahead of time

The deeper that sorrow carves into your being the more joy you can contain. Is not the cup that holds your wine the very cup that was burned in the potter's oven?

-Kalil Gibrhan

Grief can awaken us to new values and new and deeper appreciations. Grief can cause us to reprioritize things in our lives, to recognize what's really important and put it first. Grief can heighten our gratitude as we cease taking the gifts life bestows on us for granted. Grief can give us the wisdom of being with death. Grief can make death the companion on our left who guides us and gives us advice.

- Roger Bertschausen

He who conceals his grief finds no remedy for it. -Turkish Proverb

Sorrow makes us all children again, destroys all differences of intellect. The wisest know nothing.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

I still miss those I loved who are no longer with me but I find I am grateful for having loved them. The gratitude has finally conquered the loss.

- Rita Mae Brown

Blessed are those who mourn: they shall be comforted

- The New Testament – Matthew, 5:4

Take time before teaching this lesson to reflect on your own experiences with the grieving process. Which rituals and resources have been helpful to you? Are you still actively grieving any losses? of death at different developmental stages.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL LESSON

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YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCES: FEEDBACK AND NOTES

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GATHERING AND FOCUSING

🕒 5-8 minutes

As a check-in, have children share any losses they've experienced in their lives by naming the person or pet and saying how long it's been since that person or animal has died.

PRIMARY ACTIVITY ONE

GRIEF STORIES 🕒15-20 minutes

- The class will share in stories of loss and how different people grieve and say goodbye. There are two different content lists, one for younger children and one for older children. The teacher can determine which texts are most appropriate for each particular group.
 - For the early elementary grades, we will use a series of short story books. The titles are attached on a bibliography page. The Leader can read as many or as few titles as time and the word search allow. Each book presents a slightly different take on grief and healing. *Rudi's Pond* is probably the best of the texts to focus on. You can use the word search as a break from the stories if the mood in the class sinks too low.
 - For the upper grades, we'll focus on one book, a diary of three kids who lost their dad and chronicled their family's grief in the book *After You Lose Someone You Love*. The book's chapters follow the passage of time; each milestone includes a diary entry from one of the three children. For each chapter, let the classmates take turns picking whose diary entry we'll read for that time period, Amy's, Allie's or David's. Each child has a different perspective on the same events and their own healing.

PRIMARY ACTIVITY ONE

WORD SEARCH WONDERING 🕒10-15 minutes

Attached you'll find two word search activities. One is for grades 1-2 and the other is for grades 3-6. The words are not listed to make it more interesting. You can set a timer and see how many of the words kids can find in 5 minutes. Children can work alone or in pairs. Have them circle the words they find and then write them below the word search. After 5 minutes has elapsed, ask the kids to report back on what words they found, and *more importantly*, why these words are in a word search about grief. What does "angry" have to do with grieving? What does "acceptance" mean and how do you think it feels?

15 words in the Grade 1-2 Puzzle

- ANGRY
- CARDS
- DEATH
- FAMILY
- FLOWERS
- FUNERAL
- HUGS
- LONELY
- MEMORIES
- PHOTOGRAPH
- SADNESS
- TEARS
- TIME
- VISIT
- WHY

35 words in the Gr 3-6 Puzzle

ACCEPTANCE	
ANGER	LEGACY
ASHES	LONELY
BARGAINING	LOSS
CEMETERY	LOVE
CREMATION	LUNCHEON
DENIAL	MAUSOLEUM
DEPRESSION	MEMENTO
DONATION	MEMORIAL
EPITAPH	MINISTER
EULOGY	MUSIC
FAMILY	OBITUARY
FLOWERS	POETRY
FRIENDSHIP	REMEMBERING
GRATITUDE	TENDERNESS
GRAVESTONE	TOLLINGOFBELLS
HEALING	WAKE
HUGS	WILL

Wondering Together

- I wonder which grieving words you found first? Does that mean
- I wonder which grieving words we didn't find? Are there words you think of when you think of grieving that didn't even get put in the puzzle?
- Did we hear any of these words in the story we read?
- Have you grieved a loss? I wonder if you might share a story of your grief. How long did you feel sad? How did that change? Do you still feel sad?
- I wonder which of these stories felt most right for you, if you imagine what grief is like?

CLOSING AND LEAVE-TAKING

🕒 2 minutes

Gather in a circle, take each other's hands and speak these words:

*Life and death are one and the same,
like the river and the ocean.*

*Grief is the invisible ache in our hearts
and grief is the healing of that ache, too.*

*Grief is like the river, too, never taking the straightest path
but flowing where it needs to flow.*

*Love is like the ocean, too, great and deep,
touching even the shores we cannot see.*

Word Search About Grief

Q W Z H T W S D C H W M W F V
X I U Y F Y Z A P A D Q B U I
B G E M I T H A D F R O T N S
S Y M S H M R W A N F D P E I
E D L N C G V I L U E N S R T
I J Q I O D E A T H P S O A L
Z V C T M E M O R I E S S L F
O W O Q O A J X G P Y Z J L L
W H B T S V F A J R T O O Q K
P A R T Z R S U G I W W S C P
T F D S T H R N Y N E B R H K
Y L E N O L A W Z R I T R C J
J Q X B G I E Z S P Q R X H E
C P P P D W T Y J Y N D R K F
C V F E K R K M R J D H R K J

Words About Grief

T L D Y L L N F G N B S L A S G G Y
C W K C O L O P R O S O G M S N R L
C E Q A V I I R A I S R O U I H U E
G L M G E W T L V S E M E L H N E G
O N W E L D A O E S V N A W C S N S
T K I L T I M N S E A E D H O I F T
N W O R R E E E T R H Y E S N L E M
E A C O E U R L O P I O G I H N F I
M K M A Y B C Y N E N D A O D I F N
E E C S S L M I E D D G E E L A P I
M Y R T E O P E Z G R U R N M U R S
M U E L O S U A M A W N T I I E E T
Y R A U T I B O B E E F L I G A G E
E P I T A P H A G S R Y J N T C L R
M U S I C J L Z S V E K A W Y A W V
S L L E B F O G N I L L O T L V R A
Z H M V P Q J W T Q F X W P M W F G
A C C E P T A N C E D O N A T I O N

Bibliography:

(this collection will be augmented and sorted by age in your classroom)

- Bunting, Eve. *Rudi's Pond*.
- Demas, Corinne. *Saying Goodbye to Lulu*.
- Grimes, Nikki. *What is Goodbye?* (poetry)
- Varley, Susan. *Badgers Parting Gifts*.
- Viorst, Judith. *The Tenth Good Thing About Barney*.
- Wild, Margaret. *The Very Best of Friends*
- Winsch, Jane Loretta, *After the Funeral*