

Activities for Processing Grief and Loss

ACTIVITIES TO USE OR ADAPT

The activities are for use in the classroom or the Support Room directly after a death or tragedy.

Key Considerations

- Do students need to process their grief or are they at a place where they need the comfort of regular classroom activities?
- How directly are students connected to the loss that occurred?

1. Prompts for Drawing or Writing

- When someone dies...
- Here is how it feels to lose someone you care about...
- What I most appreciated about _____ was...
- My favourite memory of _____...
- Here is a list/picture of feelings I have...

2. Letters of Appreciation or Regret

Give older students the opportunity to process the things they will miss or any feelings of guilt they may have about past interactions with the person who died.

3. Cards and Letters to the Family

Discuss what messages might help the grieving family members and give students the opportunity to process their loss by showing care for the family.

4. Prayers

Talk with students about the way God encourages us to share all our feelings with Him. Invite students to write prayers that express their feelings about the loss they've experienced. Encourage them to write prayers for grieving family members. Use written prayers as a guide to pray together as a class.

5. Stories About Working Through Death and Loss (see below for a list of titles)

Read a story about characters processing grief and loss. Give students opportunity to respond in open-ended ways to the story.

6. Responding Visually

Provide students with art supplies, including paper, paint, markers, and clay. Provide suggestions while allowing students freedom to express themselves as they choose.

7. Memory Collection (Booklet, Poster, Box)

Invite students to create or bring in memories in the form of words, drawings and objects. These can be shared or displayed as students feel comfortable.

8. Use an Image or Metaphor

Use an image or metaphor appropriate to the age of your students that can help them understand and process grief and loss. Example: Bucket of Tears, Invisible String

9. Question Wall

Invite older students to write big questions about life and death on paper and place them on a specially designated wall space. Provide opportunities for the class to discuss some of the questions in a way that creates openness to each other's thoughts.

10. Haiku

Review the poetry style of haiku and have students compose their own or collaborate on them.

11. Feelings List

As a class or in a group, generate a list of feelings and record them. Make a corresponding list of what we can do to express those feelings.

12. Go Outdoors

When students are first processing a loss, it can help for them to be outside and active. Go for a class walk to the nearest park or nature area.



Activities for Processing Grief and Loss, continued

STORIES FOR PROCESSING GRIEF AND LOSS

* Title can be borrowed through the SCSBC office.

Karst, Patrice. *The Invisible String*. 2023.

Lewis, Beverly. *What is Heaven Like?* 2006.*

Mundy, Linus. *Being Sad When Someone Dies: A Book About Grief*. 2012.*

Nystrom, Carolyn. *What Happens When We Die?* 1992.*

Roberts, Dr. Jillian. *What Happens When a Loved One Dies?* 2016.*

Rowland, Joanna. *The Memory Box: A Book About Grief*. 2017.*

Schwiebert, Pat and Chuck DeKlyen. *Tear Soup: A Recipe for Healing After Loss*. 2017.*

Tangvald, Christine Harder. *Someone I Love Died*. 2012.*

