

THE COVE BREAKERS

LESSON 6:

Good Grief

Understanding and Coping with Grief and Loss



GOOD GRIEF

Understanding and Coping with Grief and Loss

Time Needed: Approximately 30-40 minutes

Note: Discussing grief and loss with children is a sensitive matter. If you plan to deliver this as a core curriculum lesson in a classroom setting, you may want to send home a parent notification letter first. Be sure you know your students. If someone in the classroom has recently experienced the death of a loved one or if the classroom dynamics are not conducive to discussing sensitive issues, you may want to select a different topic.

Materials Needed:

- ▶ Smart Guidance 3 DVD
- ▶ Computer or Laptop
- ▶ Interactive Whiteboard (optional)
- ▶ Speakers (strongly recommended)
- ▶ Printable extension activities for each student (optional)

Procedures:

▶ FRAME 1 →

As the opening animation plays, snowflakes labeled with unpleasant feeling words will fall. Prompt your students to read the words or you can read them aloud. Acknowledge that the words all describe feelings that are difficult to experience. Next, four flowers will bloom in the snowy landscape. The four flowers are labeled with the words COPE, MINDSET, COURAGE, and FUTURE. Then, the title and subtitle of the lesson will appear. Explain that in today's lesson, students will learn about the feelings associated with grief – a collection of emotions we may feel when someone (or a pet) close to us dies. Explain that when we feel grief, it is important to have courage, a positive mindset, coping strategies, and a focus on moving forward into the future.

▶ FRAME 2 →

Read the text at the top of the frame and follow the instructions to click the ends of the ribbon to open the envelope. Read the text that is revealed on the letter or have a student read it aloud. Explain that there are some topics that are difficult for us to discuss because of how we may feel as we discuss them. Grief and loss are two topics that are often hard to talk about because we may feel sad, scared, worried, or even confused as we talk about them.

Follow the instructions to click the letter to reveal more information.

Explain that we may even remember or think about things that made us sad at one time. All of these thoughts and feelings are normal. It's important for us to learn how to handle difficult feelings so we can continue to grow into happy, healthy individuals.

▶ FRAME 3 →

Read the text that appears at the top of the frame or have a student read it aloud. Explain that we are surrounded by people, pets, places, and other things that we love and care for on a daily basis. When we care for someone or something, we usually want to have that person or thing around us forever. Stop and discuss this. Ask your students to

share examples of people, pets, or things they would want to have around them for a long time. Then, follow the on-screen instructions to click each colorless petal of the flower below to see more.

As each colorless petal is clicked, read and discuss the information that is revealed:

Family Members and Relatives

Pets

Things

Places

Ask your students to share some examples for each category that is revealed. After all four colorless petals are clicked, read the new text that appears at the top of the frame or have a student read it aloud. Explain that it's very hard to think about this or talk about it, but people and pets don't live forever. When people and animals become very, very sick or very, very hurt in ways that doctors and nurses cannot help them, they die. And when people are very, very old and have lived a long life, they die. When people and animals die, we have a feeling of loss and then we experience a collection of difficult feelings that we call grief. Stop and discuss this. If you're teaching this lesson to younger students, it's important to explain that a common cold, a stomachache, or a headache are not things to be overly concerned about. Explain that when you say "very, very sick," you're talking about illnesses that doctors cannot cure or fix.

Follow the on-screen instructions and click each colorless leaf to learn more.

Grief Deep sadness, caused by someone's death.

Loss The fact or process of losing someone or something.

Stop and discuss both words and their meanings.



Read the text that appears at the top of the frame or have a student read it aloud. Explain that experiencing loss is never easy because nobody wants to lose someone or something that matters to them. Once we've lost someone or something we care about, we may feel very sad, angry, confused, or worried – and when all of those feelings get tangled up together, we call it grief. Grief is not pleasant and we must learn to cope with it. Stop and discuss this, then follow the instructions that say "Click here to continue."

Read the text that appears or have a student read it aloud. Explain that grief can make us feel like we're lost in a maze of difficult thoughts and feelings. Use the arrow keys to help Julie make her way through the maze to the flower garden. Make sure you stay within the snow banks. Watch out for feelings of grief and help her handle them in appropriate, healthy ways. *Hint:* As your students navigate Julie through the maze, she will be stopped periodically and a multiple-choice question will appear. Read each question that appears and allow your students to discuss it, then select the answer choice they think is best. Be sure to discuss the answer choices.



Read the text that appears at the top of the frame or have a student read it aloud. Remind your students that the word COPE appeared on the previous frame. Ask your students if they are familiar with the word COPE. Discuss their responses. Then, allow your students to click each letter in the word COPE to reveal more information. Be sure to stop and discuss the information that is revealed.

- C Cope means to deal with difficult feelings in safe, appropriate, healthy ways.
- O There are many strategies we can use to cope with difficult feelings.
- P We call these strategies coping strategies.
- E Talking about our feelings, writing in a journal, getting physical activity, thinking positive thoughts, and drawing pictures of our memories are all examples of coping strategies.

FRAME 6

Read the text that appears at the top of the frame or have a student read it aloud. Explain that feelings of grief and loss can make us feel like we're lost in a maze like we saw earlier, but those feelings can also make us feel like we're lost in the dark. We may not be sure which way to go or how to find our way out of the difficult feelings. That's when we need COURAGE. COURAGE is like a light in the darkness. Stop and discuss what this means. Then, follow the instructions on the screen. Click the flashlight to turn it on. Drag the flashlight around the scene to see what's there. Help Julie find the way out by clicking the correct door. Hint: When the flashlight is turned on, your students should move it around to reveal the doors surrounding Julie. Look for the door that is labeled "Courage: The Way Out" and then click the door.

FRAME 7

Read the text that appears at the top of the frame or have a student read it aloud. Explain that courage means to be brave. When we're experiencing feelings of grief and loss, we must remember that we're strong. We can do hard things, like handle sad, scared, worried, or confused feelings. We have to believe in ourselves! Ask your students what courage looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Discuss their responses and write their thoughts in the spaces provided.

FRAME 8

Watch the animated demonstration and then read the text that appears at the top of the frame. Explain that coping strategies and courage are both part of something we call a positive, can-do mindset. When we have a positive, can-do mindset, we believe we can accomplish difficult tasks and challenging goals through effort and practice. We believe we can get better and improve over time, if we work hard. With a positive, can-do mindset, we believe that we can handle our difficult feelings of grief and look forward to a happy, healthy future surrounded by friends and loved ones. Stop and discuss this. Then, follow the instructions to click the conveyor belt.

Six boxes will appear on the conveyor belt. Prompt your students to read the statements on each box. If the box represents a positive, can-do mindset, your students should drag it to the container labeled "Positive, Can-Do Mindset." If the box represents a negative, can't-do mindset, your students should drag it the yellow Repair Zone. When the negative boxes are placed in the Repair Zone, ask your students how the negative statement could be changed into a positive statement that represents a positive, can-do mindset. Discuss their ideas. The program will automatically "repair" the negative boxes and they will reappear as positive statements. Then, they can be dragged to the Positive, Can-Do Mindset container. Be sure to stop and discuss each box.

FRAME 9

Read the text that appears at the top of the frame or have a student read it aloud. Remind your students that they've learned about coping strategies, having courage, and the importance of having a positive, can-do mindset. The fourth and final thing to remember is this – even though we may feel sad, scared, worried, or confused after the death of a loved one (or a pet), our future will be bright! Following a loss of someone we love, we will experience grief. But then, we will start to feel better each and every day after that. Discuss this with your students. Then, click each door to see what the future could hold for us! Discuss the pictures and information revealed behind each door. When the fourth door is opened, ask your students what they envision in their own future.

FRAME 10

The words Loss and Grief will appear on this frame, but vines will quickly cover them and they will change to reveal the words COPING, COURAGE, MINDSET, and FUTURE. Then, read the text that appears. Remind your students to develop and practice coping strategies; to have courage; to focus on a positive, can-do mindset, and to believe in a bright, happy future.

PRINTABLE EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Directions: Create your own Book of Memories by filling out the boxes. Draw pictures to accompany your writing if you want. Then, cut along the dotted lines and staple the pages together to create your book.

This book is all about _____

This page shows something that
_____ and I liked
to do together.

My Book of Memories

By: _____

This page shows a special memory
I have about _____

This page shows how I feel about

This page shows how I felt when I
learned _____
had died.

This page shows something I learned
from _____.

This page shows some ways I
have coped with my feelings
of grief and loss.