

# Coping With Loss

## Summary

This lesson provides a way to help the students demonstrate coping behaviors related to grief and loss through using concepts and conventions of print to create text.

## Main Core Tie

Health Education - 5th Grade

[Strand 2: MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH \(MEH\) Standard 5.MEH.2:](#)

## Additional Core Ties

Health Education - 5th Grade

[Strand 2: MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH \(MEH\) Standard 5.MEH.3:](#)

## Time Frame

4 class periods of 30 minutes each

## Group Size

Individual

## Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication, Social & Civic Responsibility, Employability

## Materials

Obituary sections from several newspapers - preferably from out of town  
scissors  
paper  
pencil

## Background for Teachers

Due to the sensitive nature of Health Education, it is important to remember that there are professionals who can be called on to help a student who may be experiencing the grieving process. This activity is to help the students identify with coping behaviors related to grief and loss through creating text.

## Student Prior Knowledge

The students should be familiar with the 6+1 Traits of Writing.

## Instructional Procedures

### **DAY ONE:**

#### **OBITUARY CLIP:**

**IDENTIFYING COPING BEHAVIORS** Ask the students if they have known someone that has died. Ask them to explain some of the feelings associated with the loss or death of a loved one. (Talking about September 11th, 2001 may be appropriate as you can talk about the loss of lives in the tragedy and how that affected others.) There are tasks associated with grieving and loss that can be outlined, such as: acknowledgement of loss or death; feeling the associated feelings, and; going on with living and loving. There are also emotions involved. List the

students' responses on the board of what the associated emotions may be. Ask the students to identify ways people may cope with loss. Ask the students to identify ways to help others through the grieving process.

**NEWSPAPER OBITUARY** Introduce the obituary section of a newspaper. Read one of the obituaries. Ask the students to verbally respond to the details they heard.

**OBITUARY SELECTION** Hand out the papers with the obituaries. Ask the students to each choose an obituary and cut it out for an activity. (Note: You may want to cut out and laminate obituaries yourself, so they can be used for other lessons as well, and to save time.)

**WRITING ACTIVITY IDEAS** Tell the students that they are to pretend to be a spouse, parent, or child of the deceased in the obituary. They are to engage in a writing activity, writing about several things, which may include: the relationship with the deceased; how the person died; how acknowledgement of the loss or death is made; what feelings are being experienced; how life will change; how life will continue; etc. Most of this will be made up based on the student's response to the obituary.

**WRITING ACTIVITY** Remind students to keep in mind the good writing process involving the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing as they write their papers. Allow the students quiet time as they write the rough draft.

## **DAY TWO:**

### **WRITING PROCESS**

Continue the writing process, using the steps of a good writing including editing and writing a final draft.

## **DAY THREE:**

### **WRITING PROCESS**

Continue with the writing process, preparing to share the writing on day four.

## **DAY FOUR:**

### **SHARING/PUBLISHING THE STORY**

Have the students share their stories, one at a time, in front of the class. The class is allowed three response questions for each author.

## Strategies for Diverse Learners

Instead of writing a story, the student can draw pictures to express different ideas of the tasks involved with the grief and loss process concerning the obituary they chose.

## Extensions

Create a web of the person's life in the obituary.

Have the students write an eulogy.

Invite a guest speaker trained in the field of the grieving process to speak to the class.

Have the students draw a picture of someone grieving and why. Then they are to draw a picture of this same person finding a way to go on living and loving.

## Assessment Plan

Use the attached rubric as an assessment.

## Rubrics

[Coping With Loss](#)

## Bibliography

- [www.aarp.org/griefandloss/articles/14\\_a.html](http://www.aarp.org/griefandloss/articles/14_a.html)

- <http://depression.about.com/cs/grief/>
- [www.childrensgrief.net](http://www.childrensgrief.net)
- [www.finalthoughts.com](http://www.finalthoughts.com)

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