



# PROGRAMME 6: DEATH

## AIM

The aim of this unit is for students to become more comfortable with their feelings and to help them find understanding in the event of a death in their lives.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- identify what death is and know that it affects all living things
  - gain more of an understanding of how a death may affect them
  - develop a sensitivity and empathy with those who have had a loved one/pet die.
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## SKILLS

- Communication
  - Co-operation
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## MATERIALS

- Episode Death, DVD1, Bryan & Bobby Series 3
  - Large pieces of paper
  - Coloured felts, crayons, paints and markers
  - A photo of an actual dead plant or flower
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## VIRTUES

- Courage
- Understanding
- Empathy
- Sensitivity
- Love
- Responsibility

## LESSON *(Please use content sensitively and adapt and change to suit your class)*

Be aware that this is a sensitive subject and it may be upsetting or uncomfortable for some students.

Please check with your school administration or Board of Trustees first before completing this Unit as they may require that you source permission from each student's caregiver before discussing this topic in class.

1. Show the students an example/photo of a flower or plant that has died and ask the students why and how they believe it died. Guide the students in thinking about it not being watered, or it dying of a natural death due to the cycle of life and death (ie, it grows up and blooms and eventually dies).

Explain that things never stay the same, they are always changing just like the seasons of the year. The cycle of life also changes and leads to death in the end. All living things will eventually die.

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2. Brainstorm on a large piece of paper all living things on earth (eg, trees, grass, plants, animals, people, fish, whales, dolphins, crustaceans, bugs, bacteria etc). Discuss the cycle of life and how different species come to their natural demise.
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3. Ask students what happens to living things when they die. Discuss with the class how different religions can believe in different processes surrounding death and dying, and that there is no right or wrong answer.
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4. Write the title word 'Death' on large paper for the class to view. Ask students what they feel when they see the word 'Death'. Brainstorm all the various emotions people might have (sadness, loneliness, anger, scared, relief, emptiness etc) and explain that these are all valid, normal emotions, and different people feel different things at different times.
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5. Invite students to share the experience of the death of a pet or family member. If a child chooses to share, allow it to happen freely and let the child finish the story where they feel it is appropriate.
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6. Explain to your class that together they are going to write a large class storybook that features the death of a pet. Guide your class to plan out a story using an appropriate title, beginning, middle, climax and ending on large draft paper for all the students to see.

Have your students choose the type of pet together and the pet's name, and the names of four key characters in the book. Perhaps those characters are from the same family (eg, Mum, Dad, Sila and Monte). Give each character a page in the story to express the emotion they are feeling at the time.

Write the story in large text on each page and leave enough space for the students to illustrate.

In groups of 3 or 4 have the students illustrate one of the pages. Once all the children have completed their pages, staple them together and read the story to the class.

Discuss how the different characters can have different emotions and that this can depend on things such as their relationship with the deceased, what other things are happening in their life at that time and their beliefs. Everyone is different, we don't all grieve the same way.


Play the episode Death from DVD1 Bryan & Bobby Series 3 to summarise the learning.

Visit [www.bryanandbobby.co.nz](http://www.bryanandbobby.co.nz) for more information.

Name: .....

Date: .....

Draw the life cycle of a flower or plant, and write a short caption underneath to explain each stage.



# SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

## Topic

Draw the life cycle of a butterfly (from birth to death) and write captions to explain the life cycle.

Take an excursion around the school grounds and notice any dead leaves or plants. Write a report about your findings.

Show a collage of photos of famous inventors/actors/singers who have died and talk about their achievements during their lifetimes.

Talk to your family about people that they knew and loved who have died.

## Oral Language

Discuss the differences, expectations and protocols in funeral services that the students may have attended from different cultures and religious backgrounds.

## Drama

Mime a scenario where there has been a death of a pet. Talk about what happened in the mime and how it made the students feel. Students can discuss what they would do in a similar situation.

## Writing

Write a letter of condolence to a person who has had a loved one die.

## Music

Compose a song that reflects the life of a famous New Zealander who has passed away.

### Recommended Reading:

Lifetimes by Bryan Mellonie

Haere - Farewell, Jack, Farewell by Tim Tipene

Old Hu Hu, by Kyle Mewburn

These are just some of the many titles available at Skylight Trust

[www.skylight.org.nz](http://www.skylight.org.nz)

0800 299 100 or 04 939 6767