



Lesson 1 – What is Alive?

(30 minutes)

Learning Outcomes

- Understand how some things are alive, some are dead and some have never been alive.
- Categorise objects based on whether they are inanimate, dead or alive.

Resources and Materials

Picture cards of alive, dead and inanimate objects. Real objects could be used if available.

Curriculum Links

Science, PHSE

Global Skills

This lesson involves collaborating, communicating and critical thinking.





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Lesson 1 – What is Alive?

Introduction

What does the word 'alive' mean? Discuss with the class what the word means and how we might be able to define it. How can we tell if something is alive or dead?

Activity

Look at the different picture cards. Work in groups to sort the pictures into 'alive', 'dead' or 'never been alive'. Encourage children to discuss why they think an object is one or the other.

Plenary

Share how the pictures have been sorted. Write class definitions for each category.

Extension

Are fallen leaves alive or dead? What happens to cut flowers and fallen leaves over time? Why is this?



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Lesson 2 – Death is Inevitable (60 minutes)

Learning Outcomes

- Understand the concept of death – its inevitability and irreversibility
- Know that death is a natural process which is impossible to control
- Appreciate how difficult it is for us ALL to understand the concept of death

Resources and Materials

Water Bugs and Dragonflies story, art materials to produce pond and dragonflies.

Curriculum Links

Art, English, Science, PHSE

Global Skills

This lesson involves collaborating, communicating, critical thinking and emotional development.





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Lesson 2 – Death is Inevitable

Introduction

Read 'Water Bugs and Dragonflies' to the class and use the questions below to prompt discussion about the story.

- What was life like for the water bugs in the pond?
- Can you understand how they felt when their fellow water bugs kept disappearing one by one without a trace?
- Can you imagine what it felt like when the water bug just had to climb the lily stalk?
- Do you think the dragonfly was happy flying around in the air above the pond?
- How do you think he felt about his promise?
- Do you think sometimes we want to do things very much but it is just not possible?

Activity

Children can work in groups or individually to create artwork around the story – a pond with layers of tissue paper, lilies, wire or paper dragon flies, etc. Ask children to think about how we can make a connection between the story and our own lives whilst they are creating their pond project.

Plenary

How does the story connect to our own lives and how we think about death?

Extension

Encourage higher level discussions around the following areas:

- How do we talk about death in our culture?
- How do you think people feel about discussing death?
- Do you feel comfortable talking about death and dying?

Use story to inspire a class poem – each child or group writing one line about how it feels to be the water bug.



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Lesson 3 – Emotions and Grief (60 minutes or 2 x 30 minute sessions)

Learning Outcomes

- Understand that people can feel a variety of emotions when someone dies and that all of them are normal
- Understand the importance of talking things through or having an outlet for grief to help us process what has happened

Resources and Materials

Whiteboards and pens, 5 stages of grief image (see online resources at www.sobellhouse.org/dyingmatters) internet access for video clip, art materials

Curriculum Links

Art, PHSE, English

Global Skills

This lesson involves collaborating, communicating, developing empathy and self-awareness.





Lesson 3 – Emotions and Grief

Introduction

What does it feel like to lose something? Start by asking children how they might feel if they lost something with little sentimental value, then move on to things we may have more of an emotional attachment to e.g. pencil, favourite toy, pet, people. What sorts of emotions might we experience and why are they different?

Activity 1

Have 'SAD' written on a white board and place at one end of the classroom. Have 'HAPPY' written on another white board and place at the other end of the classroom. What emotions might we find sitting between these two? Children write words on their white board that they think feature on this 'line' and stand where they think it would sit in relation to the others. Words may include: anger, misery, frustration, joy annoyance, delighted, pleasure, etc.

Plenary

Was it difficult to know whereabouts our words would fit on the 'line' of emotions? If so, why do we think that was?

Activity 2

How do we feel when someone dies then? Can we experience a range of emotions on our 'line'? Look at the 5 stages of grief image and discuss each stage – they may happen to different levels for different people.

Watch the Sesame Street Clip -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8M_5_JxY7k

Why is talking important? What if we don't feel like talking sometimes? What else could we do to help us through the emotions we are feeling? Other outlets might include art, music, exercise, etc.

Children create different artwork to represent the different emotions we feel when we are grieving. Split class into groups and give each group an emotion to represent using art. You could use the 5 stages of grief or some of the words generated earlier in the session. Give children the opportunity to be creative with different colours, textures, natural items and weathers that might represent an emotion e.g. a cool, smooth and still blue lake may be acceptance or a fiery, red, sharp, volcano or lightning storm may be anger.



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Lesson 4 – Funerals and Ceremonies (60 minutes)

Learning Outcomes

- Know that different cultures throughout the world and across time have had different ways of saying goodbye to a loved one
- Understand why we hold funerals or other ceremonies

Resources and Materials

Internet access for video clip and website, pencils and paper

Curriculum Links

Art, English, Science, PHSE

Global Skills

This lesson involves communicating, emotional development, developing self-awareness and empathy, as well as a sense of identity and belonging.





Lesson 4 – Funerals and Ceremonies

Introduction

Watch the Dying Matters video, 'A Party for Kath' -

<http://www.dyingmatters.org/page/party-kath>

What happens in the video clip? What did we think it was going to be about at the beginning? How did it change? Do you think Kath would have been pleased with the arrangements being made for her?

Activity

What is a funeral and why do we do it? Discuss the need to dispose of a body after someone dies and different ways we've found out that this might be done.

Use the following website to give children a selection of different ceremony types from around the world. <https://www.everplans.com/articles/funeral-burial-rituals-from-around-the-world> Groups presented their ritual to the class.

Often there is a ceremony or ritual that allows us to say goodbye. Why might this be important? What sorts of things might we want to say to someone or something that has already died? Children write their own letters to someone or something that has died – expressing things they would want to say but maybe didn't get the chance.

Plenary

Share the types of funerals they might like or have been to? Would they have music? Would they like everyone to wear black or be bright and colourful?

Extension

If you wanted someone to remember you, what sorts of things might you put in a memory box for them to keep?



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Lesson 5 – What to say/not to say (60 minutes)

Learning Outcomes

- Understand the reason why we use euphemisms for the word death and consider why they might be helpful or unhelpful in given situations
- Understand the impact our words can have on someone who is grieving

Resources and Materials

List of euphemisms for death, (see online resources at www.sobellhouse.org/dyingmatters) a selection of condolence cards, materials to make own cards

Curriculum Links

Art, English, PHSE

Global Skills

This lesson involves collaborating, communicating, developing empathy and self-awareness.





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Lesson 5 – What to say/not to say

Introduction

Look at the list of euphemisms that we use for 'death' e.g. passed away, loss, etc. Why might these be helpful or unhelpful? Why do we think we use them? Look at a selection of different condolence cards and the wording inside the cards. Do we think they are appropriate/helpful? What images are used and why?

Activity

Children create their own condolence card using appropriate wording and images.

Plenary

Sometimes, when someone dies, people say nothing at all to those who are grieving. Why might this be? Why do people find it hard? Refer back to earlier lesson about how cultures sometimes find it hard to talk about death. It can be a 'taboo' subject. What do we think the impact of saying nothing is on the people who are grieving?

Extension

How would we support a grieving class mate? What types of things could we do or say to help them during such a difficult time?



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