Q. Some of my students have been through a lot in their short lives (destroyed homes, split families, frequent moves, dead or dying parent) and I’d like to have some books in my room that might comfort them or help them cope. Which books would you suggest?

– Brittany

Loss and Grief Reading List

Loss of Grandparents, Parents, or Other Adults

Ages 4–8

*Granpa*, John Burningham (preschool)
*After the Funeral*, Jane Loretta Winsch and Pamela T. Keating
*An Angel in the Sky*, Coryn Gizcki-Lipson and Carlie Gizcki
*Do Not Be Sad—A Chronicle of Healing*, Chris Jarrin
*John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat*, Jenny Wagner
*My Grandma Died: A Child’s Story about Grief and Loss*, Lory Britain and Carol Deach
*Sophie*, Mem Fox
*The Fall of Freddie the Leaf*, Leo Buscaglia
*The Goodbye Boat*, Mary Joslin and Claire S. Little
*The Light of Star*, Phyllis Glowatsky and Karen J. Stringer
*The Very Best of Friends*, Margaret Wild
*Where Is Grandpa?* T. A. Barron
*Why Did Grandpa Die? A Book About Death*, Barbara Shook Hazen
*Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge*, Mem Fox

Ages 9–12

*A Song for Cecilia Fantini*, Cynthia Astor and Anthony Turpin
*Coping with Death*, Shasta Gaughen

Divorce

Ages 4–8

*Dinosaurs Divorce*, Laurene Krasny Brown and Marc Brown
*I Don’t Want to Talk about It*, Jeanie Franz Ransom and Kathryn Kunz Finney
*I Have Two Dads*, Linnea Schulz and Susan Aitken
*Mama and Daddy Bear’s Divorce*, Cornelia Spelman and Kathy Parkinson
*The Little Flower Girl*, Linda Trace Brandon

Ages 9–12

*Dear Mr. Henshaw*, Beverly Cleary
*Divorce Happens to the Nicest Kids*, Michael S. Prokop
*Don’t Fall Apart on Saturdays! The Children’s Divorce–Survival Book*, Adoph Moser and David Melton
*Don’t Make Me Smile*, Barbara Park

Teens

*How It Feels When a Parent Dies*, Jill Krementz
*My Brother Stealing Second*, Jim Naughton

*Teenagers Face to Face with Bereavement*,

“I Wish I Could Hold Your Hand:” A Child’s Guide to Grief and Loss, Pat Palmer and Dianne O’Quinn Burke

*Tear Soup*, Pat Schweibert and Chuck Deklyen
*What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?*, Trevor Romain and Elizabeth Verdick
*When Someone Dies*, Sharon Greenlee and Bill Drath

The Loss of Other Children (Friends, Siblings)

Ages 9–12

*A Taste of Blackberries*, Doris Buchanan Smith
*Bridge to Terabithia*, Katherine Paterson
Karen Gravelle and Charles Haskins
*Telling Christina Goodbye,* Lurlene McDaniel
*Time to Let Go,* Lurlene McDaniel

**Change**
*Changes,* Anthony Browne (preschool)
*My Hiroshima,* Junko Morimoto (ages 4–8)
*The Burnt Stick,* Anthony Hill (young adult)

**Moving**
*Ages 4–8*
*Alexander, Who’s Not (Do You Hear Me? I Mean It!)*) *Going to Move,* Judith Viorst
*Hey, New Kid!* Betsy Duffey and Ellen Thompson
*I’m Not Moving, Mama,* Nancy White Carlstrom
*Ira Says Goodbye,* Bernard Berner
*Lucy’s New House,* Barbara Taylor Cork
*Matthew Jackson Meets the Wall,* Patricia Reilly Giff
*My Name Is Mar’a Isabel,* Alma Flor Ada
*The Berenstain Bears Moving Day,* Jan and Stan Berenstain
*What’s the Recipe for Friends?* Greg M. Williamson and Greg Abele

**Loss of a Pet**
*Ages 4–8*
*Barn Kitty,* June Kirkpatrick
*For Every Dog an Angel,* Christine Davis
*The Tenth Good Thing about Barney,* Judith Viorst
*When Your Pet Dies,* Diane Pomerance

Q. I am a new second-grade teacher who has a student with ADHD. His mother recently took him off medication because she doesn’t want him to be medicated his whole life. He has no self-control. He doesn’t listen, interrupts constantly, and when I ask him to do something, he acts silly. Even the specialist teachers have lost patience with him. What should I do?
–Stefanie

A. I have several suggestions for you:
1. If possible, have the mother come in to observe the child. Though she may deal with his behavior at home, she may not realize how disruptive it is in a classroom. She also will see the range of acceptable behavior from other students compared to her son’s behavior.
2. Create a study carousel. A large cardboard box from a stove, television, or refrigerator easily transforms into a private study haven. Not seeing other students should deter his attention-getting antics, especially when he is doing seatwork. If space is limited, angle the box so he can’t see the other students.
3. Time his good behavior. Use a timer to set a specific amount of time for the student to practice self-control. Reward success and positive behavior with compliments or other incentives, and gradually increase the amount of time: “Austin, I am so proud that you were able to sit quietly doing your work for 10 minutes. Let’s see if you can do that again.” Have him chart his successes and progress and send it home daily or weekly, depending on which one seems the most helpful.

Get the mother involved in the plan. Have her help praise and reward positive behavior at home, as well as give consequences for poor behavior to reinforce your behavior plan. I would suggest giving nonmaterial rewards, such as extra play or TV time, or a special family activity. Try to get the family involved—it’s not your burden alone.

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**Q&A**

**What questions about teaching can we answer?**
Contact the FAQ Editor, karena@kdp.org!