



Reading List #29

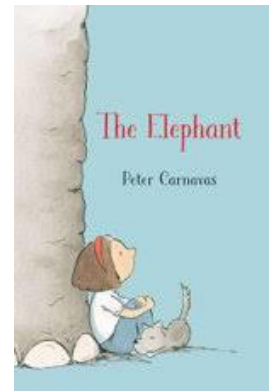
DEATH, GRIEF AND LOSS

through Fiction

for Primary School Students

The Elephant by Peter Carnavas, 2017

When Olive's dad drags himself to work in the morning, the elephant goes with him. When he comes home again, so does the elephant. It's always there, heavy and silent, casting a shadow of sadness over him. Olive can't stand to see her father burdened like this. With help from her grandfather and her best friend Arthur, she hatches a plan to rid her family of the elephant once and for all. Before long, she'll learn that while happiness isn't that simple, small things can move mountains--or elephants. Award-winning author-illustrator Peter Carnavas portrays a child's response to her father's depression, after the loss of her mother, with naive wisdom. In defiance of the looming grey presence, *The Elephant* is a story of resilience, family, dealing with grief and hope.



Grief is Like a Snowflake by Julia Cook, 2011

After the death of his father, Little Tree begins to learn how to cope with his feelings and start the healing process. With the help and support of his family and friends, Little Tree learns to cope by discovering what is really important in life, and that his father's memory will carry on. Best-selling author, Julia Cook, and a lovable cast of trees, offers a warm approach to the difficult subject of death and dying.



Lenny's Book of Everything by Karen Foxlee, 2018

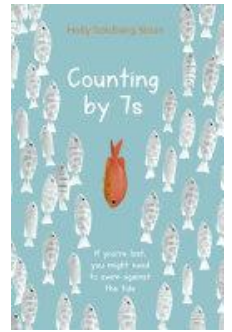
Lenny Spink is the sister of a giant. Her little brother, Davey, suffers from a rare form of gigantism and is taunted by other kids and turned away from school because of his size. To escape their cruel reality, Lenny and Davey obsess over the entries in their monthly instalment of Burrell's Build-It-at-Home Encyclopaedia set. Lenny vows to become a beetle expert, while Davey decides he will run away to Canada and build a log cabin. But as Davey's disease progresses, the siblings' richly imagined world becomes harder to cling to in this deeply moving and original novel about grief and family, who together navigate the harsh realities of life, loss and wonder.



Counting By 7s by Holly Goldberg Sloan, 2014

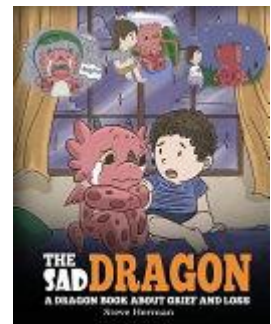
Tells the story of Willow Chance, a twelve-year-old genius who is obsessed with diagnosing medical conditions and finds comfort in counting by 7s. It has never been easy for her to connect with anyone other than her adoptive parents, but that hasn't kept her from leading a quietly happy life . . . until now.

Suddenly Willow's world is tragically changed when her parents both die in a car crash, leaving her alone in a baffling world. Her journey through grief to find a fascinatingly diverse and fully believable surrogate family is a joy and a revelation to read.



The Sad Dragon: A Dragon Book about Grief and Loss. A Cute Children Story to Help Kids Understand the Loss of a Loved One, and How To Get Through Difficult Time by Steve Herman, 2019

Having a pet dragon is fun! He can sit, roll over, and play. He can candle a birthday cake, light a campfire, or so many other fun things that will make you laugh. But sometimes, not every story is a happy one...What if your dragon is suffering from a loss of a loved one? What if he's sad, angry, and heartbroken because his loved one passed away, and he cries and cries and cries? What should you do? You teach him about Grief and Loss. You explain death to him and help him get through this difficult time! But how?

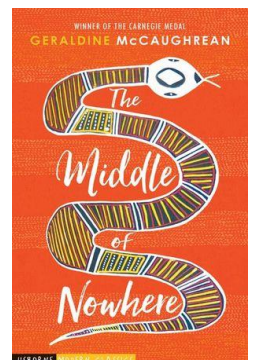


Cute book with beautiful illustrations, this is **a must for children, parents and teachers** to open up conversations about loss, and to help kids who have suffered from the loss of a loved one.

The Middle of Nowhere by Geraldine McCaughrean, 2018

When her mother dies from a snake bite, Comity's life in the Australian outback changes for ever. Now the only person Comity can count on is her friend, Fred, the Aboriginal yard boy. But when her father's new assistant, the cruel and sadistic Quartz Hogg arrives, he sets his bloodthirsty sights on Fred, and Comity must find a way to stop him.

"A clear-sighted, beautifully written examination of grief, racism and courage."

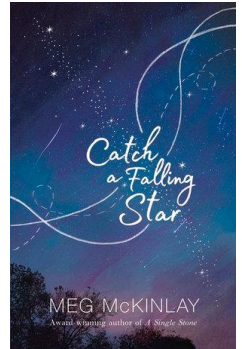


Catch a Falling Star by Meg McKinlay , 2019

This coming-of-age story is about loss and grief, dealing with change and fighting to hold on to what you can, while letting go of what you can't. It's 1979 and the sky is falling. Skylab, that is. Somewhere high above Frankie Avery, one of the world's first space stations is tumbling to Earth. And rushing back with it are old memories. Things twelve-year-old Frankie thought she'd forgotten. Things her mum won't talk about, and which her little brother Newt never knew.

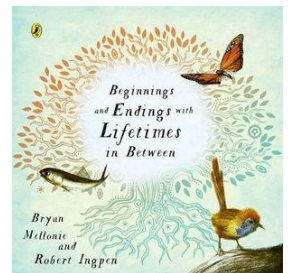
Only ... did he? Does he? Because as Skylab circles closer, Newt starts acting strangely. And while the world watches the sky, Frankie keeps her own eyes on Newt. Because if anyone's going to keep him safe, it's her. It always has been. But maybe this is something bigger than splinters and spiders and sleepwalking. Maybe a space station isn't the only thing heading straight for calamity.

Based on an international media event, this is a story that straddles the intersection between science and belief, between logic and magical thinking.



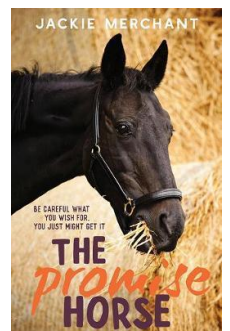
Beginnings and Endings with Lifetimes in Between by Bryan Mellonie, Robert Ingpen (Illustrator), 2005

Have you ever wondered why a butterfly lives for only a few weeks? Or why a tree lives for hundreds of years? You may have been sad when someone in your family, or a favourite pet became sick and died. There is a beginning and an ending to everything that is alive. In between is a lifetime. Dying is as much a part of living as being born.



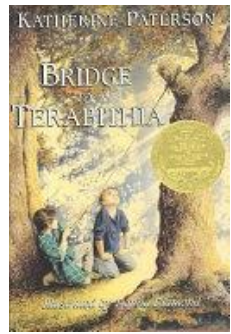
The Promise Horse by Jackie Merchant, 2018

In this middle-grade novel pitched at horse lovers there is plenty of other drama too. Harry and her sister, Sissy, have always longed for a horse. But it is only after Sissy dies and the family moves to the country that Harry is allowed to borrow a horse, a giant on four legs, named Marksman. Harry must learn to care for Marksman and improve her riding skills if she has any hope of being allowed to attend the gymkhana at the end of summer. For any horse lover, there are lovely scenes of getting to know and trust a new horse, as well as gaining confidence riding. There are also added layers of a grieving family, particularly Harry's mother, and her sister's voice that only Harry can hear. Secondary characters, including a kind riding teacher and a troubled bully, are also well drawn.



Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson, 1977

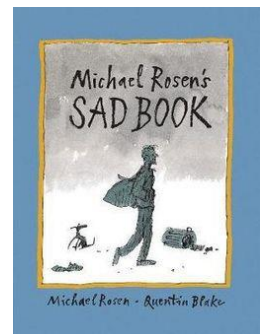
All summer, Jess pushed himself to be the fastest boy in the fifth grade, and when the year's first school-yard race was run, he was going to win. But his victory was stolen by a newcomer, a girl, one who didn't even know enough to stay on the girls' side of the playground. Then, unexpectedly, Jess finds himself sticking up for Leslie, for the girl who breaks rules and wins races. The friendship between the two grows as Jess guides the city girl through the pitfalls of life in their small, rural town, and Leslie draws him into the world of imagination, magic and ceremony called Terabithia. Here, Leslie and Jess rule supreme among the oaks and evergreens, safe from the bullies and ridicule of the mundane world. Safe until an unforeseen tragedy forces Jess to reign in Terabithia alone, and both worlds are forever changed.



A poignant, beautifully written novel, which weaves a powerful story of friendship, grief and courage.

Michael Rosen's Sad Book by Michael Rosen, Quentin Blake (Illustrator), 2010

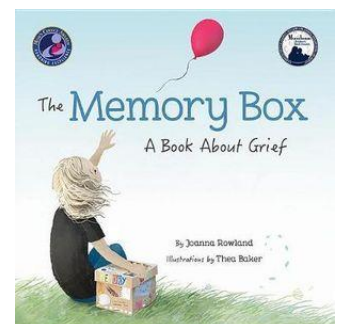
A heartbreakingly honest account of a father's grief for his son from the illustrious pairing of two former Children's Laureates. It chronicles Michael's grief at the death of his son Eddie from meningitis at the age of 19. A moving combination of sincerity and simplicity, it acknowledges that sadness is not always avoidable or reasonable and perfects the art of making complicated feelings plain.



The Memory Box: A Book about Grief by Joanna Rowland, Thea Baker (Illustrator), 2017

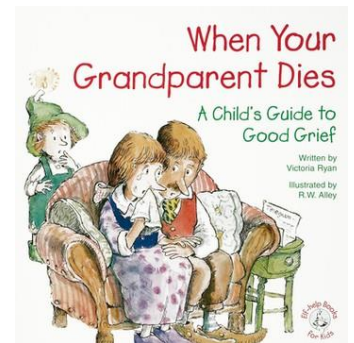
"I'm scared I'll forget you..."

From the perspective of a young child, the author artfully describes what it is like to remember and grieve a loved one who has died. The child in the story creates a memory box to keep mementos and written memories of the loved one, to help in the grieving process. Heartfelt and comforting, *The Memory Box* will help children and adults talk about this very difficult topic together. The unique point of view allows the reader to imagine the loss of any they have loved - a friend, family member, or even a pet. A parent guide in the back includes expert information on helping children manage the complex and difficult emotions they feel when they lose someone they love, as well as suggestions on how to create their own memory box.



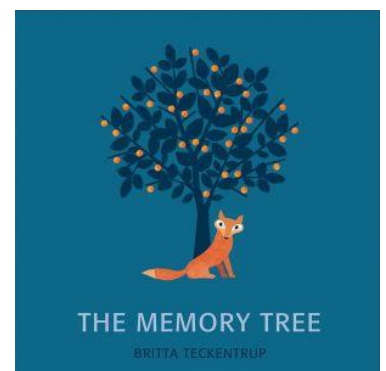
When Your Grandparent Dies by Victoria Ryan, R.W.Alley (Illustrator), 2014

Losing a grandparent is often a child's first experience with grief. The ordeal can be as bewildering as it is painful. Explaining what happens from a child's-eye view, the little elves in this book depict the difficult days before, after, and beyond a grandparent's death. They explore the meaning of death and heaven, as well as how to stay close in spirit with a grandparent who has died. With ideas for action and questions for discussion, this creative guide will help you help your grieving child to create comforting memories and find closure.



The Memory Tree by Britta Teckentrup, 2014

A beautiful and heartfelt story about the death of a loved one and the memories that comfort those left behind. Fox has lived a long and happy life in the forest. One day, he lies down in his favourite clearing, takes a deep breath, and falls asleep for ever. Before long, Fox's friends begin to gather in the clearing. One by one, they tell stories of the special moments that they shared with Fox. As they share their memories, a tree begins to grow, becoming bigger and stronger, sheltering and protecting all the animals in the forest, just as Fox did when he was alive. This gentle and comforting tale celebrates life and the memories that are left behind when a loved one dies.



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