



A Teacher's Handbook of Death

Maggie Jackson

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'Some would argue that the teacher's job is to teach, and that hasn't changed. What has expanded is the teacher's role (and, often, by default, increasing responsibility) to meet students in the events we call life. This helpful resource addresses many themes, including: the physical processes which occur during and after death, reasons for illness, sudden death, or suicide, what actually happens to the dead body, what happens at funerals. There are strategies for speaking and listening, insights into the words and questions, and what is behind them, from children, and staying aware of their own needs and issues.' - Resources Hotline (The World Pastoral Centre) 'This is an interesting book that, if used creatively, can provide teachers with useful information about death either as general knowledge or for lesson preparation. It certainly contains a range of death-related information in a form that it would be hard to find elsewhere.' - International Journal of Children's Spirituality 'Impressively focused, but full of useful information. It adds to the literature on teaching about death in interesting ways, because it is so direct and clear in its approach to the topic.' - Morality 'This book goes a long way to addressing these anxieties by offering a clear and accessible introduction to the subject with basic information about the facts of death, funerals and bereavement (including how children grieve and how they might be helped to grieve). In addition to the authors' openness and willingness to "practise what they preach" - by bringing in their own experiences and real-life stories where appropriate - encourages the reader to engage more directly with the subject matter: to consider how their own stories about death and bereavement might influence how they talk about it.' - After Life - Reports from the frontline of death 'This book seeks to support teachers of children from age 8 upwards in this sensitive and not always easy task. Of the ten chapters, nine concentrate on providing the reader with factual information pertaining to different aspects of death and dying, to be used as a handy reference guide. The authors run through arguments for discussing death as an ordinary life event, examine medical and biological definitions of death, consider the process of dying from cancer and AIDS, death by accident and suicide, the death penalty, look at what happens to the body after death, explain the functions of people involved with a death and summarise funeral rites and traditions in the main religions, before listing basic psychological models of the grief process in children. Written in a simplified style that according to a chapter-by-chapter age guide in the introduction, could be accessed directly by the children themselves, this book is recommended for teachers looking for reassurance, factual support and creative ideas for integrating death education into the classroom.' - The Compassionate Friends Newsletter 'The authors have produced an extremely useful book providing teachers with ways of facilitating discussion about death. Teachers are increasingly called upon to explain death and dying - September 11th being a good example, when children were subjected to distressing scenes on television on a daily basis. Many children began to ask teachers questions about death and dying that were causing them anxiety. The authors also offer useful strategies for talking about death in the context of different school lessons with guidance given on page 7 about the suitability of the material for each age group. The final chapter, Death across the curriculum, discusses how death can be brought into the curriculum simply and sensibly. A very interesting read, and one that all teachers should find useful.' - The Teacher Teachers are increasingly called upon to discuss and explain death and dying to children in the classroom. This book provides them with methods to facilitate open discussions of death and to find suitable ways of talking with children about what happens when someone they know dies. It explores some of the most sensitive questions surrounding death such as: * the physical processes which occur during and after death * reasons for illness, sudden death or suicide * what actually happens to the dead body * what happens at funerals. The authors also offer useful strategies for talking about death in the context of different school lessons, in order to prepare pupils of all ages. The final chapter on grief and mourning demonstrates how to give newly bereaved children the support they need. This

handbook combines factual information with strategies for teachers to use when discussing death with children. Readable and practical, it will be invaluable for teachers required to broach this sensitive issue within the school environment.

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Rosalie Dietrich:

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