

# A Grand Old Tree - Reading Guide

Author/Illustrator: Mary Newell DePalma

Themes: death/grief, legacy, life cycle

Lesson/Notes: This uplifting book gently approaches the topic of death by observing the natural life cycle of a tree. It also shows the continuing impact a life can make. This book is appropriate for helping children understand death whether they are grieving or have not yet been impacted by the loss of a loved one (e.g. if a friend's grandparent dies).

*When someone you love dies, it can be difficult to talk about. You may have lots of different feelings - sadness, anger, fear - or it may seem like you don't feel anything. Many people find it helpful to talk (or draw) about their feelings or what they miss about the person who has passed away.*

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## Discussion Questions

- *What did the tree do while it was alive?*
- *What happened after the tree died?*
- *How did you feel while we were reading this story?*
- *What parts of the story did you like or dislike?*
- *Do you have any questions after reading this story?*

## Activity: Leaf Art

Suggested Supplies: crayons (large or peeled, dark colors), paper, leaves

- Go on a nature walk. Notice trees and their leaves as you walk.
- If possible, collect a few different types of leaves on your walk.
- After your walk, create leaf art!
  - Peel the paper off the crayon(s) you plan to use.
  - Place the paper on top of the leaf.
  - Lay the crayon on its side on the paper to do a leaf rubbing.
  - Try the different leaves and notice differences.