

Everett Anderson's Goodbye - Reading Guide

Author: Lucille Clifton Illustrator: Ann Grifalconi

Themes: grief process (death of father)

Lesson/Notes: Everett Anderson goes through the five stages of grief. This book may help normalize feelings and thoughts children have when a loved one dies. It also shows that, in time, love and life continue.

When someone we 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.

Discussion Questions

- (2) What do you think about what Everett said to his mama?
- (2) How is he feeling? (angry, sad)
- (3) Can Everett do anything to bring his daddy back? (No, we cannot undo death. It's not Everett's fault his daddy died.)
- Does Everett still miss his daddy? (Yes, but Everett doesn't stop living.)
- What did you notice in that story?
- Have you felt like Everett before?

Activity: Remembering by Senses

- Before doing this activity with a child, think of possible answers for each sense in case the child gets stuck and fears (s)he has forgotten the loved one. However, first try to give them a chance to think and answer what they remember best.
- Talk through the five senses as you remember the loved one who has died.
 - Smell: What smell reminds you of him?
 - Taste: Was there a favorite food you made together?
 - Touch: Can you remember them wrapping you in a big hug? Maybe you have a blanket or a gift to remember them by?
 - See: What do you see when you close your eyes and remember her? Maybe you'd like to put a picture up in your room of the loved one or the two of you together.
 - Hear: Do you have an old video or recording by which you can hear the loved one's voice? Is there a favorite song you both liked, or one that reminds you of him/her?