

BIBLIOTHERAPY LESSON PLAN

TASK OF GRIEF: Dealing with losing a dog

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BOOK INFORMATION

Book title: Dog Heaven

Author: Cynthia Rylant

Publisher and date of publication: The Blue Sky Press, 1995

ISBN: 9780590417013

Number of pages: 28

Reading level: 2-4 years

BOOK SYNOPSIS

This book helps kids to accept that their dog is happy and well taken care-of in Dog Heaven. The book discusses all the fun things the dogs get to do and all the love they are receiving. It finishes by talking about how the dog remembers his human family and checks on them from time to time to make sure that they are happy and well. It is geared toward young kids in that the story and pictures are very simple and concrete.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

This book and lesson help children to accept the death of their dog and understand that their dog is happy and cared for.

LESSON MATERIALS AND ADVANCED PREPARATION

1. Paper and crayons/pencils for the children to create a picture of their dog. The children will also create a picture letting their dog know that they are going to be okay.

KEY VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS

Investigate: to figure something out

Invisibly: without being seen

Memories: things that have happened in the past

Satisfied: happy or content

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Tell the children the name of the book: Dog Heaven

Ask what their dog's name was and listen to whatever they want to tell you about their dog.

Ask them to listen carefully.

READ THE BOOK

POST READING DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions:

What was your favorite thing that the book talked about?

Where does a dog go when s/he dies?

How do you know your dog is happy?
What is your favorite memory of your dog?

POST READING ACTIVITY

Tell the students that everyone is now going to draw/color a picture. They can make a picture of their dog, a picture of their favorite memory with their dog, or whatever picture they would like about their dog. Hand out the paper and crayons/pencils to the kids and give them time to draw/color.

Additionally, you can have the students create another picture that lets their dog know that they are going to be okay.

CLOSURE

Ask the students to fill in the blank. My dog is now in Dog “(Heaven).” My dog gets to play and eat “(biscuits).” My dog has “(angel kids, kids, or God)” watching over and taking care of him/her. My dog is happy and checks on me to make sure that I am “(okay, happy).”

Let the kids take their pictures with them or hang them up in an appropriate area.