

Learning about loss through objects



Co-designed
by St Michael's
Hospice and
Hollington
Primary School.



This activity introduces children to loss, explores the feelings it may bring, and encourages seeking support from a trusted person.

Learning aims:

- Explore how we feel when we lose something special.
- Empathise with others who may feel differently about loss.
- Identify trusted people who can help when we experience loss.

What you'll need:

- A3 Storyboard Worksheet - in digital toolkit or folder (one per child).
- Coloured markers, pens, or pencils.
- Small ball or item (for circle time sharing).
- Pictures of objects with meaning (e.g. headphones, book, football, video games, photos of family or friends, etc.).
- Pictures of trusted people (teacher, sibling, parent, social worker, doctor).
- Display space (wall or table for finished storyboards).

Please adjust the activity to fit the needs of your group.

Activity timetable (55 minutes):

Introduction (8 minutes)	Storyboard creation (15 minutes)
Exploring feelings of loss (7 minutes)	Sharing and discussion (8 minutes)
Trusted people (7 minutes)	Closing activity (5 minutes)
Optional break (5 minutes)	

Step-by-step guide

Step one: introduction (8 minutes)

Objective: introduce the concept of an object with meaning and help children understand its emotional value.

Guidance:

- Gather the group in a circle.
- Begin by explaining that an object with meaning is something special because it reminds someone of a person, place, or memory. For example, a photo of a fun day out with their family or a keyring they got during a trip.
- Show and pass around pictures of objects with meaning.
- Introduce a small ball and explain that whoever holds the ball gets to share what their object of meaning is.

- Encourage the children to share either an example from the ones provided or any object that is meaningful to them.
- Draw attention to the differences in what makes each object special, promoting empathy and understanding of how others might feel.

Step two: exploring feelings of loss (7 minutes)

Objective: engage children in understanding the different emotions related to loss and how they might handle these feelings.

Guidance:

- Talk about the variety of emotions that might occur when we lose something important to us (sadness, frustration, worry, confusion).
- Encourage children to think about how they might feel if they lost an object they care about.
- You can use communication or emotional regulation tools to help children express themselves.
- Guide the children to understand that all emotions are valid, and it's okay to feel many things when something special is lost.

Step three: trusted people (7 minutes)

Objective: help children understand who they can turn to for support when experiencing difficult emotions caused by loss.

Guidance:

- Introduce the concept of trusted people - those who can help when we need support with loss (e.g., parents, teachers, friends).
- Show pictures of different trusted people (teacher, parent, sibling) to help them visualise who they could talk to.
- Use the small ball again to give children a chance to share who they would trust for support and why.

Optional break (5 minutes)

If needed, take a quick break here.

Step four: storyboard creation (15 minutes)

Objective: help children express their feelings and thoughts through storytelling.

Guidance:

- Break up the circle to use tables.
- Distribute the A3 Storyboard Worksheet to each child and place markers, pens or pencils on the tables.
- Guide the children through the Worksheet.

First scene:

- "My special object is..."
- Encourage the children to draw their special object.



Second scene:

- “It makes me feel...”
- They can draw how their object makes them feel. This could include feelings like happy, safe, excited, etc.

Third scene:

- “I lost my special object and now I feel...”
- They can draw the emotions they might experience if they lost the object (e.g. faces that represent sadness or anger).

Fourth scene:

- “A trusted person helps me feel better by...”
- They can draw a trusted person (a parent, teacher, sibling, etc.) and how they might help them feel better.
- Encourage the children to add a few words under each drawing to explain what’s happening in their story. Be prepared to offer help where needed.

Step five: sharing and discussion (8 minutes)

Objective: foster compassion by sharing and discussing the children’s work.

Guidance:

- Gather everyone back into the circle.
- Use the small ball to encourage the children to share or act out their storyboards with the group.
- Ask gentle questions such as “What is the best thing about your object?” or “How can you help a friend feel better when they’ve lost something, like a trusted person helps you?”
- Reassure them that it’s okay to feel different emotions and thank each child for sharing their story and contributions.

Step six: closing activity (5 minutes)

Objective: showcase their work in the space as a reminder of what they did today.

Guidance:

- Display the storyboards around the room to create a visual reminder of the activity.
- This can serve as a valuable tool for the children to reflect on in the future when they may face feelings of loss.
- End with a gentle reminder that it’s okay to talk about how loss makes them feel whenever they need support.



Title:

Name:

Date:

- Use the four boxes to draw each part of your story.
- Underneath each drawing, write a few words or a sentence to explain what's happening.

Scene 1

My special object is...

Scene 2

It makes me feel...

Scene 3

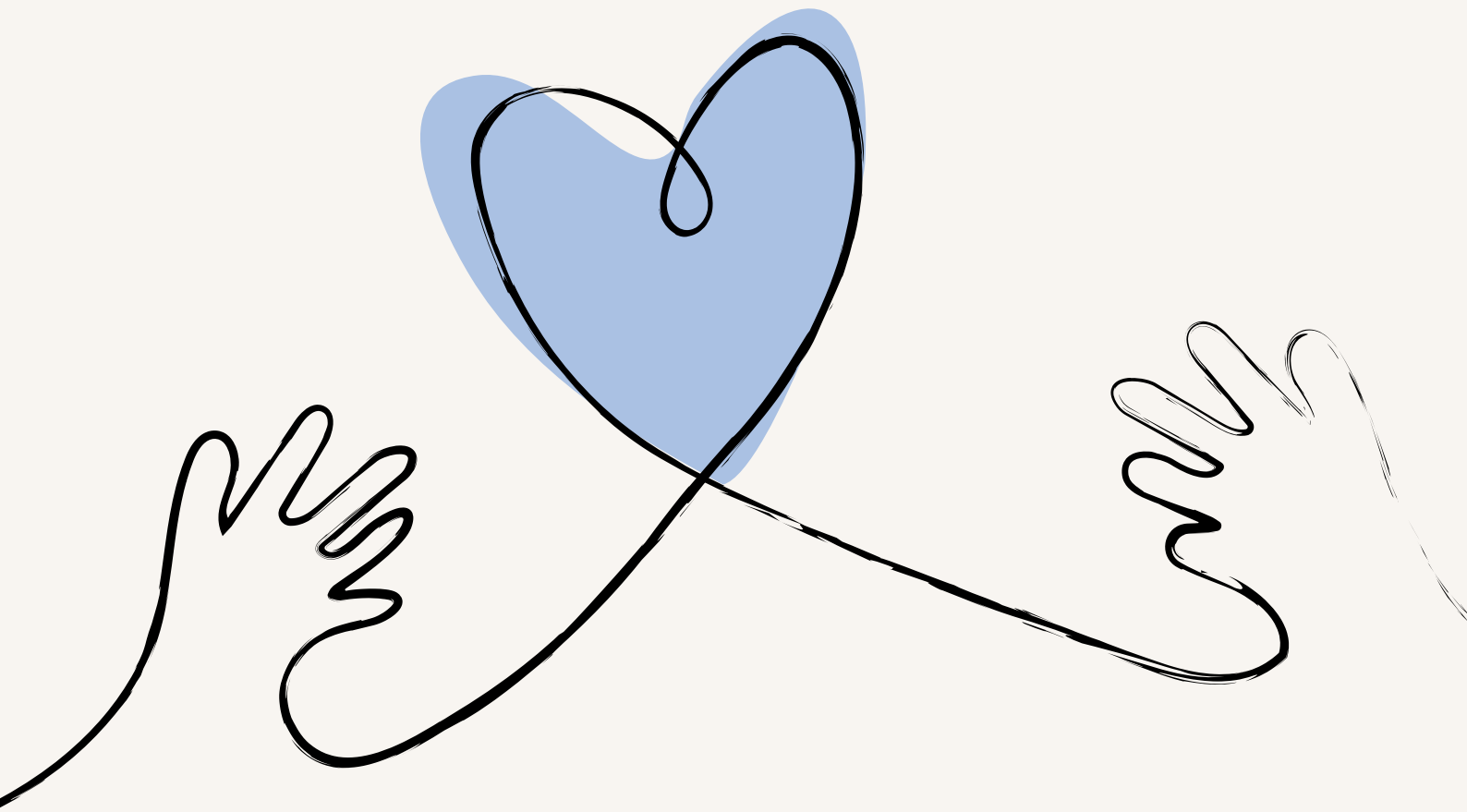
I lost my special object and
now I feel...

Scene 4

My trusted person makes me
feel better by...

Remembering someone special

Grief, loss and connection activity.



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This activity encourages children to explore loss through storytelling, video, or visuals, and connects this to remembrance through a small craft project.

Learning aims:

- Understand relationships and loss by exploring how connections to special people continue, even after they have died.
- Reflect on ways to remember special people or moments.
- Express these connections creatively by making a remembrance keyring loop.

What you'll need:

- A story or video about loss and remembrance (choose from the list in step two).
- Printed images representing remembrance, such as stars, flowers, hearts, trees, or sunsets (diverse cultural representation and symbols).
- Craft materials per child:
 - Pre-cut thin cord (approximately 30 cm long).
 - Keyring (to attach the loop to).
 - 10-15 colourful beads (4-6 mm size, with 1-2 mm holes).
 - Keyring loop guidance sheet available in toolkit.

Activity timetable (50 minutes)

Introduction (10 minutes)

Story or video (10 minutes)

Exploring personal remembrance (5 minutes)

Keyring loop craft (20 minutes)

Closing reflection (5 minutes)

Step-by-step guidance

Step one: introduction (10 minutes)

- Introduce how remembering someone special helps us feel close to them, even if they are no longer with us, or have died.
- Encourage children to think about a special person or pet they remember (sharing is optional).

- Show simple remembrance images (e.g., stars, flowers, hearts) and explain that different people remember in different ways.
- Ask guiding questions to help children reflect:
 “What reminds you of your special person?”
 “Are there any colours, objects, or places that help you remember them?”

Step two: story or video (10 minutes)

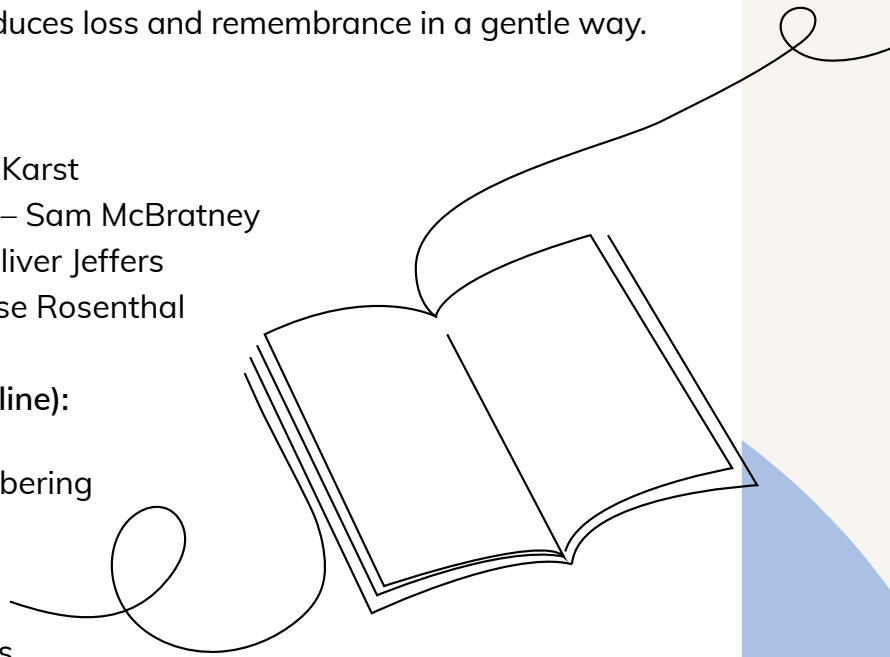
Select a book or video that introduces loss and remembrance in a gentle way.

Suggested books:

- The Invisible String – Patrice Karst
- Guess How Much I Love You – Sam McBratney
- The Heart and the Bottle – Oliver Jeffers
- I Wish You More – Amy Krouse Rosenthal

Suggested videos (available online):

- Water Bugs and Dragonflies
(a simple story about remembering someone we love).
- The Kite (a short film exploring love and loss).
- Child Bereavement UK videos.



Step three: exploring personal remembrance (5 minutes)

After watching or reading, help children connect the story to their own experiences.

Ask simple discussion questions:

- “How did the characters in the story remember their special person?”
- “What helps us stay connected to someone, even if we can’t see them anymore?”
- Gently encourage children to share their thoughts or simply reflect quietly if they prefer.

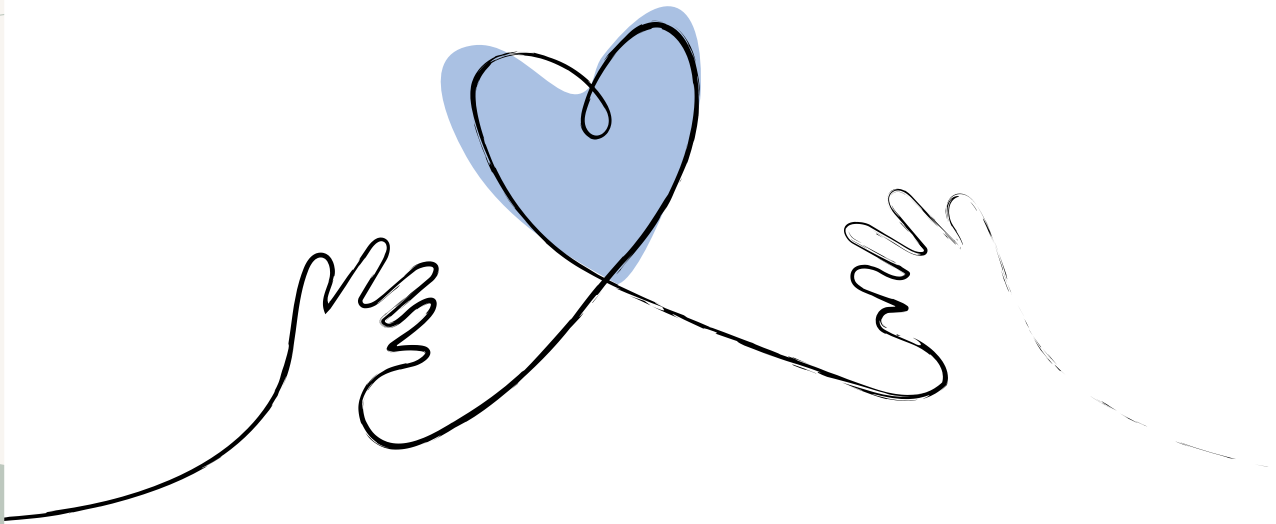
Step four: keyring loop craft (20 minutes)

- Distribute the keyring loop guidance sheet and craft materials.
- Encourage children to choose beads that represent their special person (e.g., their favourite colour).
- Support children through each step, providing help as needed.
- Reinforce that there is no right or wrong way to design their keyring loop - it is personal to them.



Step five: closing reflection (5 minutes)

- Encourage children to attach their keyring to an item they like (e.g., a bag or pencil case) to keep their connection close.
- Remind them that it is okay to talk to someone they trust, such as a caregiver or teacher, if they experience loss.
- Thank them for taking part in the activity and recognising the importance of remembering special people.



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Remembrance keyring loop

You will need:

- 10-15 colourful beads (4-6 mm size with 1-2 mm holes)
- Thin cord (about 30 cm long)
- Keyring (for attaching your beads)
- Child-friendly scissors (for cutting the cord)

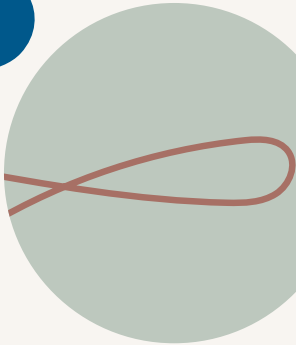
1



Create a keyring loop to remember someone special

- Before you start, think of someone special you'd like to remember.
- This could be a family member, friend, or anyone who is important to you.

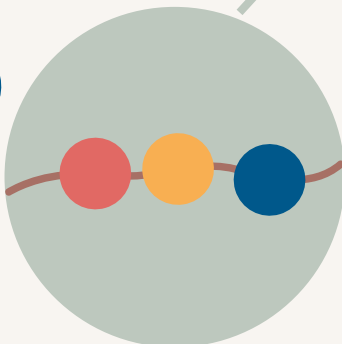
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Prepare the cord:

- Take the 30cm cord.
- Fold it in half to make a loop at the top.
- Slide the folded end of the cord through the keyring.
- Pull both ends of the cord through to secure it.

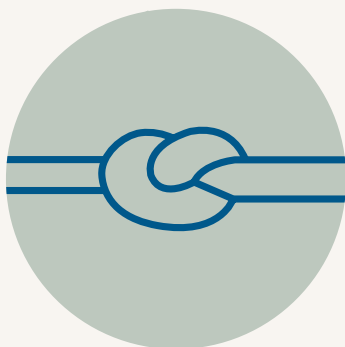
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Pick the beads you like:

- Choose beads in colours that remind you of the special person.
- Thread the beads onto both ends of the cord, one bead at a time.

4



Secure the beads:

- Once you're happy with how the beads look, tie a tight knot at the end to stop the beads from falling off.
- For extra strength, you can double knot it.
- If you need help, ask a trusted adult to help you.

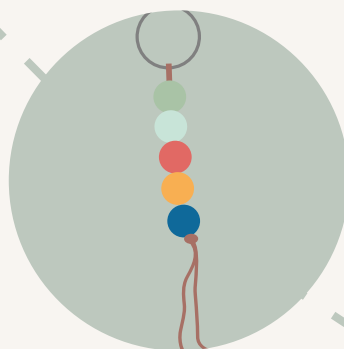
5



Trim and finish:

- Use the scissors to cut off any extra cord, leaving a small tail (a little bit of cord).
- You're finished!

6



Attach it to your stuff:

- Put your keyring on something you use every day, like your bag zip, or pencil case.
- Every time you see it, you'll remember the special person.

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