**Beyond the Ridge** by Paul Goble (1993) At her death an elderly Plains Indian woman experiences the afterlife, believed in by her people, while the surviving family members prepare her body according to their customs. [NHCPL]

*** Charlotte’s Web by E. B. White (1952) E. B. White's Newbery Honor Book, a tender novel of friendship, love, life, and death, may be the first encounter with death for many American school children. [NHCPL]

**Death** by Janie Amos, illus. by Gwen Green, photos. by Angela Hampton (2002) Uses letters, stories, and informational text to help children cope with the death of a loved one. [NHCPL]

**Emma Says Goodbye** by Carolyn Nystrom, illus. by Annabel Large (1994) Here the author helps reassure children undergoing the stress that a death in the family causes.

**I Miss You: A First Look at Death** by Pat Thomas, illlus. by Lesley Harker (2001) Aimed at very young children, ages 4 to 8, this book is straightforward, simple and reassuring without resorting to vague allegories. Definitely a first choice for people ready to address young children’s questions and concerns.

**When Dinosaurs Die** by Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown (1996) A thoughtful and helpful picture book aimed at children ages 5-10, it will help explain what death is and what customs we use to honor a life. Read it with a child and help them with their questions. [NHCPL]

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### Funerals & Cemeteries

**After the Funeral** by Jane Loretta Winsch, illus. by Pamela Keating (1995) This book deals with the death of a father and the aftermath that comes with it.

**The Bug Cemetery** by Frances Hill, illus. by Vera Rosenberry (2002) Neighborhood children imaginatively stage funerals for dead bugs, but they experience real sadness following the death of a pet. [NHCPL]

**The Dead Bird** by Margret Wise Brown (1979) Finding a still warm but dead bird, a group of children give it a fitting burial and every day, until they forget, come again to the woods to sing to the dead bird and place fresh flowers on its grave. An excellent handling of the subject of death in which all young children have a natural interest.

**Our Special Garden: Understanding Cremation** by Karen Carney (1995) Tells the true story of the author’s grandfather who had asked that his body be cremated and placed in the garden. It explains the cremation process, describes what ashes look like, and offers suggestions for finding a special place for our loved ones.

*** Tell Me, Papa: Answers to Questions Children Ask about Death and Dying by Joy and Dr. Marvin Johnson, illus. by Anne Catharine Blake (2005) The authors are founders of the Centering Corporation, a world-wide grief resource center. In this book a grandfather helps three young children understand their feelings and explains what funerals are.

**What is the Meaning of Shiva** by Karen Carney (1997) describes the Jewish tradition of burial and mourning. It includes an explanation of the term "Sitting Shiva" and of the rich symbolism of mourning ribbons, covering mirrors, memorial candles, the meal of consolation, unveiling, and other practices of the Jewish heritage.


**What We Do When Someone Dies** by Caroline Arnold, illus. by Helen K. Davie (1987) Explains different customs of dealing with death and remembering the dead, such as funerals, burials, cremation, mourning, wills, and memorials.

*** You Hold Me and I’ll Hold You by Jo Carson, illus. by Annie Cannon (1992) A curious young girl travels with her family to the funeral of a Great Aunt. This book walks young (ages 6-10) readers through the experience of traveling to and attending a funeral. [NHCPL]
Bereavement and Hope

Aarvy Aardvark Finds Hope: A Read Aloud Story for People of All Ages by Donna O’Toole, illus. by Kore Loy McWhirter (1989) Aarvy has lost his family and is filled with despair and hopelessness until a true friend helps him learn about the strengths within himself. [NHCPL]

Aunt Mary’s Rose by Douglas Wood, illus. by LeUyen Pham (2010) A heartwarming, true story of a family linked through time by the tending of a beloved rosebush. [NHCPL]

Badger’s Parting Gifts by Susan Varley (1997) Badger’s friends are sad when he dies but treasure the memories he left them.

Children Facing Grief by Janie Romond (1989) Letters from bereaved brothers and sisters telling of their experiences and offering hope.

Gentle Willow: A Story for Children About Dying by Joyce C. Mills, illus. by Cary Pillo (2004) Amanda the squirrel is upset that she is going to lose her friend Gentle Willow, but the tree wizards give advice that helps both her and Gentle Willow accept the change that comes with death. [NHCPL]

Grandpa’s Soup by Eiko Kadono (1999) After the death of his wife, an old man gradually realizes that making the soup she used to cook and sharing it with friends eases his loneliness. [NHCPL]

Lost & Found: A Kid’s Book for Living Through Loss by Marc Gellman and Monsignor Thomas Hartman (1999) This heartening book reminds us of the many ways that we can keep hope alive. Compassionate, practical, and non-denominational. [NHCPL]

Up in Heaven by Emma Chichester Clark (2004) A tender and hopeful story that will comfort children who have lost a pet or someone close to them. [NHCPL]

What is Goodbye? By Nikki Grimes, illus. by Raul Colon (2004) Through the alternating voices of a brother and sister, Nikki Grimes eloquently portrays the grieving process in this gem of a book that is honest, powerful, and ultimately hopeful. [NHCPL]

Remembering

Always and Forever by Alan Durant, illus. by Debi Gliori (2003) When Fox dies, Mole, Hare, and Otter are devastated. Then one day, Squirrel come to visit and reminds them of the funny things Fox used to do. As the friends share dinner and tell stories, they realize at last that in their hearts and memories, Fox is still with them. [NHCPL]

Chester Raccoon and the Acorn Full of Memories by Audrey Penn, Illus. by Barbara L. Gibson (2009) Chester and his friends celebrate the life of a friend who will not be returning to play. [NHCPL]

In the Piney Woods by Roni Schotter, illus. by Kimberly Bulcken Root (2003) Grandpa and his granddaughter spend his last summer visiting and enjoying the pine woods near their house. [NHCPL]

Lighthouse: A Story of Remembrance by Robert N. Munsch, illus. by Janet Wilson (2003) This poignant story is about a little girl and how she begins to heal after the loss of her grandfather. [NHCPL]

Thank you, Grandpa by Lynn Plourde (2003) On her many walks with her grandfather, a young girl learns to appreciate life and deal with death. [NHCPL]

Death of a Grandparent

*** Annie and the Old One by Miska Miles, illus. by Peter Parnall (1985) This Newbery Honor book tells the story of Annie, an Indian child, who resorts to extremes in trying to prevent her beloved grandmother from dying.

Come Back, Grandma by Sue Limb (1993) Bessie and her grandmother spend many hours together before her grandmother passes away, and years later, when Bessie has a daughter of her own, she is able to share the happy memories.

Grandad’s Prayers of the Earth by Douglas Wood, illus. by P.J. Lynch (1999) Each time that he and Grandad walk in the woods, the boy listens for the prayers of the earth. While he isn't always sure he hears them, Grandad's words inspire him to keep listening. [NHCPL]
**Grandpa's Chair** by Terence Thornton (1987) As a boy and his grandfather grow older and are eventually parted by death, the boy treasures the old man's chair as a special memento of a happy relationship.

**One More Wednesday** by Malika Doray (2001) When a little animal's grandmother dies, he remembers good times with her and asks his mother about death. [NHCPL]

*** Saying Goodbye to Grandma *** by Jane Resch Thomas and James Cross Giblin, illus. by Marcia Sewell (1988) Susie is curious about what will happen when she travels with her parents to attend her grandmother's funeral in the small town where her mother grew up.


**Why Did Grandpa Die? A Book about Death** by Barbara Shook Hazen (1985) This picture helps open up communication about death between parent and child. [NHCPL]

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**Death of a Parent**

**The Best Gift for Mom** by Lee Klein (1995) A story of a boy and his feelings about his father, who died when the boy was a baby.

**DAD! Why'd You Leave Me?** By Dorothy Frost (1991) Although ten-year-old Ronnie feels anger, sorrow, and confusion over the sudden death of his father, his life slowly returns to normal as he experiences the support of his loving family and God.

**Daddy's Chair** by Sandy Lanton (1991) Michael's dad has died, and the family is observing Shiva, the Jewish week of mourning. As the days go by, and friends and family visit, Michael gradually comes to terms with his father's death.

**Everett Anderson’s Goodbye** by Lucille Clifton, illus. by Ann Grifalconi (1983) A touching story of a little boy who is trying to come to grips with his father’s death. This was a Reading Rainbow selection. [NHCPL]

*** Geranium Morning *** by E. Sandy Powell (1990) A young boy copes with the sudden death of his father in a traffic accident. Great discussion starter. [NHCPL]

**Her Mother's Face** by Roddy Doyle (2008) This British tale is the story of a young girl whose mother died when she was three, too young to remember her mother clearly. But a wise woman in the park tells her to look in the mirror and she will see what her mother looked like as a child. [NHCPL]

**How it Feels when a Parent Dies** by Jill Krementz (1988) Eighteen young people ranging in age from seven to sixteen discuss the questions, fears, and bereavement they experienced when one of their parents died. [NHCPL]

**I Heard Your Daddy Died** by Mark Scriveri and Susan Atiken (2008) This is a simple and helpful tool for family members and caregivers to read to the child who has lost a parent. This book lets the child know it is okay for them to cry and be sad as well as be happy and play. The book includes many ideas to help child remember their parent.

**Learning to Say Goodbye When a Parent Dies** by Eda Leshan (1991) Helps children recognize their emotions and actions and helps them overcome them.

**A Quilt for Elizabeth** by Benette Tiffault, illus. by Mary McConnell (1991) Elizabeth’s grandmother helps her understand her feelings after her father dies.

**Rachel and the Upside Down Heart** by Eileen Douglas (1990) At first Rachael feels so sad that it’s as if her heart is upside down. After a while Rachel discovers happiness - while keeping the memory of her father alive in her heart.

**Samantha Jane’s Missing Smile: A Story About Coping With the Loss of a Parent** by Julie B. Kaplow (2007) In this gentle story, Sammy Jane comes to accept her feelings of grief and fear and to understand that they won't go away if she ignores them. Excellent note to parents on helping children who are grieving at the end. [NHCPL]

**Saying Goodbye to Daddy** by Judith Vigna (1991) Frightened, lonely, and angry after her father is killed in a car accident, Clare is helped through the grieving process by her mother and grandfather. [NHCPL]


**Where Are You?** By Laura Olivieri, illus. by Kristin Elder (2007) Written by a “Mom” who struggled with how to explain her husband’s suicide to her young son, this picture book to read together is for children from ages 5-10.
Death of a Sibling

*Am I Still A Sister?* by Alicia M. Sims (1992) The author asks the questions and expresses the feelings experienced by bereaved siblings. [NHCPL]

*Ben's Flying Flowers* by Inger M. Maier (2012) This story follows Emily as she tries to overcome her grief following her brother's death. As time passes, Emily finds a way to remember her brother and grows to understand that although Ben has died, her happy memories of him can continue to live. [NHCPL]

*Children Are Not Paperdolls* by Erin Levy (1982) This is a book of drawings and quotations from young bereaved siblings. They talk about their personal experiences of loss, hearing the news, what the funeral was like, how they reacted, how their families changed, their feelings of guilt and sorrow, and what helped them to heal.

*Mick Harte Was Here* by Barbara Park (1995) How could someone like Phoebe’s brother die? Mick Harte was one of the coolest kids you’d ever want to meet. Mick was also the kid who would still be alive now if he’d only worn his bicycle helmet.

*Nadia the Willful* by Sue Alexander (1992) When her favorite brother disappears, Nadia refuses to let him be forgotten despite her father’s bitter decree that his name shall not be uttered.


*Thumpy's Story: The Story of Grief and Loss Shared by Thumpy the Bunny* (1984) The story of Thumpy’s sister, who was not strong enough to keep living.

*We Were Going to Have a Baby, But We had an Angel Instead* by Pat Schwebert (2003) A young boy describes his feelings about the death of a baby in his family. Includes a section written for parents on how to help their children cope with the death of an infant.

*Where’s Jess: For Children Who Have a Brother or Sister Die* by Joy and Marvin Johnson (1986) A small boy’s sibling dies and he notices she is gone. The parents tell him what death is about and how it is all right to remember and talk about Jess.

Death of a Classmate or Friend

*The Class in Room 44: When a Classmate Dies* by Lynn Blackburn (1991) Explores the many different feelings classmates will have while giving ideas to help remember the student.

*Goodbye Rune* by Marit Kaldhol and Oyen Wenche, illus. by Michael Crosby-Jones (1987) When her best friend accidentally drowns, a little girl with the help of her parents, tries to come to terms with his death and her feelings of loss and sadness.


*If Nathan Were Here* by Mary Bahr, illus. by Karen A. Jerome (2000) A young boy grieves the loss of his best friend and thinks about how things would be if he were still alive.

*Remembering Crystal* by Sebastain Loth (2010) In this gentle story, children learn that true friendship is a gift that doesn’t die. [NHCPL]

*** Books I personally think are exceptional either in content or readability or both. Worth buying.

Death of a Teacher, Older Relative, or Family Friend

*Bye, Mis' Lela* by Dorothy Carter, illus. by Harvey Stevenson (1998) Sugar Plum, an African American preschooler, must come to terms with the death of her elderly babysitter. [NHCPL]

*I Remember Miss Perry* by Pat Brisson, illus. by Stephanie Jorisch (2006) When their beloved teacher dies in an automobile accident, the children of Miss Perry’s class learn to find comfort in their memories of her. [NHCPL]

*Losing Uncle Tim* by Mary Kate Jordan, illus. by Judith Friedman (1989) When his beloved Uncle Tim dies of AIDS, Daniel struggles to find reassurance and understanding and eventually finds that his favorite grown-up has left him a legacy of joy and courage.
Cycles of Life

The Fall of Freddie the Leaf by Leo Buscaglia, Ph.D. (1982) For a long time this was the only book from a mainstream publisher there was to read with younger children about death. Though somewhat removed from the topic, it could present a way to open the discussion on the cycle of life and hope after loss.

Grandmother, Have the Angels Come? By Denise Vega (2009) A grandmother and her granddaughter share a dialogue about aging in which the woman answers the child’s questions with reassurances about the physical changes that come with time. [NHCPL]

Lifetimes: The Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children by Bryan Mellonie and Robert Ingpen (1983) This simple book begins: “This is a beginning and an ending for everything that is alive. In between is living.” [NHCPL]

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Love You Forever by Robert Munsch (1986) Traces the cycles of life and through generations in a simple picture story aimed at children ages 5-10. [NHCPL]

Mountains of Tibet by Mordicai Gerstein (1987) After dying, a Tibetan woodcutter is given the choice of going to heaven or to live another life anywhere in the universe. [NHCPL]

The Next Place by Warren Hanson (1999) A luminous journey through hope and love and life. Wonderful for reading aloud to children who are asking questions about death and what lies beyond. [NHCPL]

Tear Soup: A Recipe for Healing After Loss by Pat Schwiebert and Chuck DeKlyen, illus. by Taylor Bills (2004) A modern-day fable told in a richly illustrated children’s book format about a woman who has suffered a terrible loss. Gorgeous illustrations and a story that will appeal to all ages. [NHCPL]

Water Bugs and Dragonflies Doris Stickney, illus. by Gloria Ortiz Hernandez (1997) This little picture book tells an allegorical tale of life and rebirth that may help children ages 8-12 better understand an important person in their life’s passing.

Death of a Pet

Dog Heaven by Cynthia Rylant (1995) Recommended highly by pet lovers around the world, Dog Heaven not only comforts but also brings a tear to anyone who is devoted to a pet. [NHCPL]

A Funeral for Whiskers by Lawrence Balter (1991) Sandy is very sad and upset when her cat Whiskers dies, but her parents help her understand and accept the loss.

Goodbye, Mousie by Robie H. Harris, illus. by Jan Ormerod (2001) A boy grieves for his dead pet Mousie, helps to bury him, and begins to terms with his loss.

Harry and Hopper by Margaret Wild, illus. by Freya Blackwood (2011) Harry loves his dog, Hopper. But when Hopper dies, Harry has a difficult time. The author delivers a gentle and comforting story about losing a beloved pet and the process of healing. [NHCPL]

I’ll Always Love You by Hans Wilhelm (1985) As a young boy grows taller, his beloved pet dog grows rounder and older. After the dog dies, the boy says, “I was very sad, too, but it helped to remember that I had told her every night, “I’ll always love you.”” [NHCPL]

Jim’s Dog, Muffins by Miriam Cohen (2008) Jim’s dog Muffins is hit by a garbage truck and killed, and the first-grade class sends him a condolence letter. When Jim returns to school, the first graders try to share his loss and ease his pain, but Jim refuses to talk or even let anyone come near him. [NHCPL]

Let’s Talk About When Your Pet Dies by Arianne Johnston (1997) Describes the feelings that a child might have when their pet dies and discusses how to cope with these feelings. [NHCPL]

Paw Prints in the Stars: A Farewell and Journal for a Beloved Pet by Warren Hanson (2008) Written in the voice of the pet that has passed on, this story brings peace and comfort while celebrating the lessons of life and death.

Sammy in the Sky by Barbara Walsh (2011) A deeply affecting tale of love, loss, and remembrance told in clear-eyed prose. [NHCPL]

Saying Goodbye to Lulu by Corinne Demas, Illus. by Ard Hoyt (2004) Often the passing of a pet is the first experience children have with death. While never trivializing the death of a person, this story helps children understand the meaning of grief and loss and that it won’t last forever. For ages 6-10.

The Tenth Good Thing About Barney by Judith Viorst (1986) Barney was a cat. He died last Friday. They had a funeral and they tried to think of good things about him. They wanted to remember him as he was. Simple language for a profound lesson. [NHCPL]
Grief Management

Children Also Grieve: Talking About Death and Healing by Linda Goldman (2006) The death of a grandfather is told from the family pet’s point of view. Particularly focuses on sharing emotions through talking and suggests a number of activities to “break the ice.” A picture book for children ages 8-12. [NHCPL]

Don't Despair on Thursdays! The Children's Grief-Management Book by Adolph Moser, Ed. D., illus. by David Melton (1996) Examines in simple text how to deal with feelings of grief when people or pets die or when friends move away. [NHCPL]

*** Michael Rosen’s Sad Book by Michael Rosen, illus. by Quentin Blake (2005) With unmitigated honesty, a touch of humor, and sensitive illustrations by Quentin Blake, Michael Rosen explores the experience of sadness in a way that resonates with us all. [NHCPL]

Sad Isn't Bad: A Good-Grief Guidebook for Kids Dealing with Loss by Michaelene Mundy (1998) Loaded with positive, life-affirming advice for coping with loss as a child, this guide tells children what they need to know after a loss -- that the world is still safe; life is good; and hurting hearts do mend. [NHCPL]

The Secret Places by Dr. James Campbell (1992) The story of Ryan and his journey through grief allows children and adults to gain an in-depth understanding of childhood grief.

Sometimes Bad Things Happen by Ellen B. Jackson, photos by Shelley Rotner (2002) Mentions some of the bad things that happen in the world and presents some positive ways to respond to them. [NHCPL]

A Terrible Thing Happened by Margaret M. Holmes, illus. by Cary Pillo (2000) After Sherman sees something terrible happen, he becomes anxious and then angry, but when a counselor helps him talk about these emotions he feels better. [NHCPL]

*** Timothy Duck by Lynn Blackburn (1987) Timothy Duck talks about all the feelings he has after his favorite boy gets ill and dies. He discovers the importance of saying goodbye. He also discovers that even though he will miss his friend and remember him, life at the pond goes on.

Together, We'll Get Through This: Learning to Cope with Transition and Loss by Karen Carney (1997) This book recognizes and validates all kinds of losses that children may have including divorce, moving to a different neighborhood, and illness or death of pets and other loved ones.

What Do You Know about Death and Dying by Pete Sanders (1998) Explores the feelings and issues that may arise after the death of a loved one and the importance of confronting such issues. [NHCPL]

*** Everything Changes, but Love Endures: Explaining Hospice to Children by Karen Carney and William Pilkington (1995) The hospice philosophy of care and its team members are introduced. Virginia, the main character, explains that she hopes that she doesn’t die, but if she does, the hospice team will be there to support her family.

Fireflies, Peach Pies, and Lullabies by Virginia Kroll, illus. by Nancy Cote (1995) When Francie’s Great-Granny Annabel dies of Alzheimer’s disease, Francie finds a way to help people remember the real person rather than the shell she had become as the disease ran its course. [NHCPL]

Gran-Gran’s Best Trick: A Story for Children Who Have Lost Someone They Love by L. Dwight Holden M.D. A solemn story about a young girl whose grandfather battles cancer becoming a very different person than the Gran-Gran she had known. After he dies, she is determined to “keep his memory alive” for her baby sister. [NHCPL]

*** Nana Upstairs & Nana Downstairs by Tomie dePaola (1998 edition) Every Sunday a little boy visits his Grandmother (“Nana Downstairs”) and Great-Grandmother (“Nana Upstairs” in bed) and loves them both. But one day Nana Upstairs is gone and he is sad and confused. Perfect for children in an extended generation or caregiver family. [NHCPL]

Precious Gifts: Katie Coolican’s Story, Barclay and Eve Explain About Organ and Tissue Donation by Karen Carney (1999) Based on the true story of six year old Katie Coolican, this sensitively written and illustrated book will help children and adults understand the process of organ and tissue donation.

*** Books I personally think are exceptional either in content or readability or both. Worth buying.

This bibliography was prepared by Rebecca Taylor, Funeral Consumers Alliance – Costal Carolina. Notation of “NHCPL” means the New Hanover County Public Library. Please check your local public library, or request titles by Interlibrary Loan. Virtually all titles are also available from online bookstores, like amazon.com, often in “used” and other inexpensive editions.,