

Lesson Plans and Cross curricular ideas

Early years/Primary

There are lots of ways to do this. Here are some general suggestions and examples of more structured lesson plans. If you feel a bit apprehensive, that is natural, but pupils are usually fascinated rather than upset.

Our lesson plans have a natural fit within PSHE, SEAL, Common Core of Skills and Knowledge, and also Schools4Life. Do give any recently bereaved the pupils the chance to opt out if they wish, but they rarely do.

English literature

- Reading and discussing poems such as Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night by Dylan Thomas.
- Vicky Angel by Jacqueline Wilson tackles a death and the Harry Potter series covers death and being orphaned.

History

- Dreadfully Deadly History Book by Clive Clifford - Take a gruesome trip through time with this grisly compendium of death! From the best ways to test a witch, to making a mummy in eight simple steps, and with fascinating facts about botched beheadings, greedy royals and the plague, Dreadfully Deadly History looks at the most gruesome facts from the past.
- When studying the Victorians, investigate their influence on present day funerals and other rituals associated with death and dying. Investigate how they were responsible for the development of out of town cemeteries filled with beautiful trees and planting.
- Compare dying in Victorian times with now. Back then it happened at home and the body would be kept at home until the funeral. Today, very few people die at home. How would we feel if required to wear mourning clothes in the style of Queen Victoria, dressed head to toe in black. Explore what women were expected to wear and for how long.

Music

- Listen to and compare various types of music played at funerals from classical to the popular. Examples could include, Faure's Requiem, and Always Look on the Bright Side of Life from Life of Brian. Discuss why the latter has become so popular (injects some humour, gives a positive message). Tears in Heaven by Eric Clapton written for his son who died age four is another often used.
- Research the top ten tunes used at funerals - great fun. Use the internet or ask a friendly funeral director. My Way by Frank Sinatra is usually number 1.

Visit a graveyard

- Graveyards are a wonderful source of history, research ages/names/families on the headstones. Investigate the design and direction of the headstones, the layout of the graves, why some are raised several layers of bodies).
- Identify different types of plant life, compare areas that are looked after and those which are left wild. Is pollution having an effect? Investigate who looks after the plots, how much litter is around, what will happen when it is full.