GRIEF

RESILIENCE

INSPIRES

TRIUMPH

grt™

CURRICULUM

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Teacher Manual

OVERVIEW

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OVERVIEW

About this Program

GRIT is designed to provide educators and their students with invaluable tools to navigate life's complexities with grace and grit.

This program fosters an environment where participants gain insight into coping strategies for dealing with loss.

GRIT develops students' resilience in adversity, helps them find inspiration in their personal narratives, and allows them to share triumphs with others.

Finally, GRIT is designed to equip teachers with education and tools to bolster teacher confidence when supporting their students who experience grief.

Teacher Learning Objectives

Gain a comprehensive understanding of the GRIT program, including its objectives and core concepts of Grief, Resilience, Inspiration, and Triumph.

Acquire a deeper understanding of grief and loss and learn practical tools to effectively facilitate this topic in the classroom, fostering a supportive learning environment.

Learn how GRIT is an upstream, resilience-building program.

Gain hands-on knowledge of GRIT's concluding activity: "Paint with a Purpose," a meaningful art activity that inspires, empowers, builds confidence, and develops leadership skills.

Teaching Segments

1. **Educate about grief** by answering the complex question: "What is Grief?"
2. **Practice resilience-building skills** through exercises and discussion.
3. **Demonstrate inspiration** through classroom discussion and writing exercises.
4. **Discover "triumph"** in the face of grief and loss.
5. **Culminate** the curriculum by facilitating the powerful Hearts of Hope Community Service **"Paint with a Purpose"** activity, which integrates art, service, and language arts into a meaningful and empowering student project.

The GRIT curriculum is delivered in five 45-minute segments.

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Lesson Structure

Each 45-minute segment includes:

- Lesson Goal
- Lesson Objectives
- Alignment to Learning Standards:
  - Health Education
  - Language Arts
  - Social Studies
- Key Terms
- Materials Needed
- Integration with SEL
- Lesson Plan
  - Pre-Lesson
  - During the Lesson
  - Closing

Lesson Delivery

Lessons are delivered through film and in-class activities/discussions.

- Lesson components displayed in **black font** represent filmed segments.
- Lesson components displayed in **blue font** represent tips and instructions for the teacher.

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1 LESSON ONE: OVERVIEW OF GRIT AND UNDERSTANDING GRIEF

Lesson Goal

To equip students with the knowledge and skills to navigate grief effectively by understanding its causes, implementing healthy coping strategies, and providing support for themselves and others while also fostering an understanding of the four core concepts of the GRIT program.

Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Learn the four concepts of the GRIT program.
- Learn about grief, its causes, and healthy coping strategies.
- Learn to identify ways to support themselves and others experiencing grief.

Alignment to Learning Standards

Health Education

- Understand the concept of grief and its emotional impact on individuals.
- Identify causes of grief and loss.
- Demonstrate knowledge of healthy coping strategies for dealing with grief.
- Recognize the importance of seeking support and offering support to others experiencing grief.

Language Arts

- Use language effectively to express grief-related thoughts, feelings, and experiences.
- Engage in discussions and collaborative activities to deepen understanding of grief concepts and coping strategies.

Social Studies

- Apply problem-solving strategies to navigate personal and interpersonal challenges related to grief and loss.
- Explore ways in which individuals can contribute to building resilient communities by supporting those experiencing grief or loss.

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GRIEF LESSON PLAN – 45 MINUTES

Pre-Lesson

Introduction: 5 Minutes

Welcome to GRIT, which stands for "Grief Resilience Inspires Triumph." This program is divided into five segments, including videos, activities, and discussions. The GRIT program was created to help you recognize when grief happens and offers helpful tools to support you in navigating this experience.

As we begin, let's look at the word "grit" itself. The formal definition is "courage and resolve; strength of character." As you complete the five lessons of this program, you'll realize that you already have grit and superpowers you never knew you possessed. You'll also learn how to build on what you already have to become stronger and more resilient.

During the Lesson

Defining Grief: 5 Minutes

The first letter "G" in "GRIT" stands for GRIEF. What is Grief? Here is our simple definition: Grief is an uncomfortable feeling that happens whenever you lose something, someone, or a place that is important to you. It's the emotional process of dealing with loss.

When we think of grief, we usually think of the feeling we have when someone we love dies. But maybe you haven't experienced that kind of loss. That doesn't mean you haven't felt grief before. You can feel grief for all kinds of reasons, like when you change schools, lose a pet, or don't get the grade you hoped for on a test. We grieve when we break up with someone. We grieve when we don't make the sports team.

Ultimately, grief is simply what we feel when we lose something or someone important to us. Grief is complicated and hard to handle because it makes us feel vulnerable. It can be a raw, personal experience that makes us feel alone.

These feelings are **normal.** They may be uncomfortable, or maybe you didn't realize what you were feeling was grief. That's okay! There are no right or wrong answers when it comes to talking about how we feel. But talking about grief can be tough. People might not understand, or it might make us feel silly when we say it out loud. However, we know that when we talk to friends and people we trust, it makes us feel better. It reminds us that we aren't alone, and that someone cares about us.

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GRIEF LESSON PLAN – 45 MINUTES (CONT.)

During the Lesson (cont.)

Activity 1: 10 Minutes – Your definition of grief

- Now, let's discuss what grief means to you. Write down, in your own words, your definition of grief. Use the sticky notes provided to share your thoughts and ideas about times you may have felt grief. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. After a few minutes, I'll write your responses on the board.



Teacher Note: Use sticky notes for this activity. Thank students as they share their responses. Observe your students as you do this activity to see if anyone seems uncomfortable or withdrawn. Encourage students to connect with you individually if they have challenges with the discussion.

Thank you for sharing. Defining anything is hard, especially something as complicated as grief. That's okay. This is a process, and we're only at the beginning. For our second activity, we'll identify some of the causes of grief in our lives. Some are obvious, like the death of a family member or pet, but there are many experiences that can also lead to feelings of loss. Try to think of a few more examples.



Activity 2: 10 Minutes - Additional causes of grief

- Pair up with someone and take 2-3 minutes to brainstorm additional causes of grief. Write your ideas on a sticky note and put them up on the board when you're finished.



Teacher Note: Encourage students to write as many sticky notes as they want to describe additional causes of grief. Have students add notes to the board. If students prefer, you can collect these and add them to the board to maintain student anonymity. Promote and support discussion that develops from this activity.

Now, let's go over your notes. Everyone goes through grief in their own way and may feel it differently. Again, that's okay! You own this process. There is no set timeline for grief. Your experience is unique and will be different from your friends, your parents, your teachers, and even me.

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During the Lesson (cont.)

Activity 3: 10 Minutes – "Grief made me feel..."

- Now that we know what grief is and what it looks like, think about a time when you've experienced grief. How did that affect you? What feelings did it bring up? Whatever feelings you felt, whatever words came to mind, remember: there is no wrong answer.
- Finish the sentence: "Grief made me feel..." Be honest; this is a safe space. I will put everyone's responses on the board once you're finished.



Teacher Note: After students have completed the activity, group similar answers together and review them with the group. Encourage students to share their own experiences with grief (if they feel comfortable) and discuss how different people may react to loss in various ways.

Supporting Yourself or Others Experiencing Grief: 5 Minutes

As we wrap up our opening segment on 'Grief,' here are a few tools that might help you navigate the grief experience.

Suggestions for Healthy Coping Strategies

- Talk to trusted friends or family members.
- Seek support from counselors or support groups.
- Do something you love, like a hobby or exercise.
- Listen to music.
- Express yourself through writing or art.
- If your life journey is faith-based, speak with a spiritual leader.

Think about what works for you. How can you take care of yourself? When a friend is grieving, how can you support them through their experience? When we help others, we are helping ourselves. You're going to see that when we get to the end of GRIT.

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GRIEF LESSON PLAN – 45 MINUTES (CONT.)

Closing

Thank you for listening and sharing, being vulnerable, and trusting each other. Your compassion and empathy made this session more meaningful for everyone. As we continue with this program, you'll see how the upcoming sessions lead to a final activity you'll really enjoy.



Teacher Note: Thank the students for their participation and engagement in the lesson. Encourage students to reach out for help if they are struggling with grief or know someone who is.



Suggested Extensions:

- Assign a reflective activity where students write a story about a time when they experienced grief or supported someone grieving.
- Ask students to share their understanding of grief with a trusted adult and ask the adult to share their experiences with grief/loss.
- Create a box where students can drop notes to share with you when they experience grief or loss. They can share anonymously.
- Assign students to research grief and share more details about grief experiences and/or healthy coping strategies.
- Have students interview one or two people and ask them to share their definitions of grief.
- Assign a journaling exercise, "What Grief Means To Me," to be reviewed at the beginning of the next segment of GRIT to tie segments together.

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Thank you for your interest!

For a free consultation on
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