

Lesson Plan:

Letting go

Benny and Penny in How to Say Goodbye

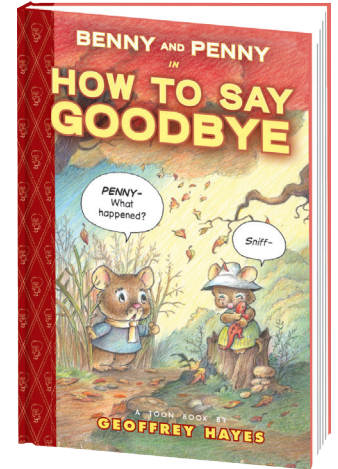
by Geoffrey Hayes
 TOON Books Level 2 – Grades 1-3

Questions and activities by
 Ala Lee, TOON Books Educational Outreach

**BENNY AND PENNY IN
 HOW TO SAY GOODBYE**

by Geoffrey Hayes
 TOON Books Level 2
 Guided Reading Level = K
 Lexile Level = BR

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-935179-99-3



Overview	How to Say Goodbye is a great example of how comics promote empathy. By showing the different ways the characters react to loss, the story provides an accessible way to teach young readers about a difficult but necessary part of life.
Subject	English Language Arts
Grade Level	1st – 3rd Grade
Objectives	Students will learn about different ways people process loss and how to express their emotions during challenging situations.
Before Reading	Have an open discussion about loss with your students. Allow students who are comfortable sharing to speak about a time they had to say goodbye to someone (family member, pet) or something (ex. their old home, their favorite toy).
During Reading	Allow students to share how they feel during the course of the story. Do they feel angry or annoyed when Benny is being insensitive? Do they sympathize with Penny? Encourage students to ask questions during the reading of the story.
After Reading	Talk about good ways to cope with loss or help someone who is grieving. Explain that sometimes people may need time alone before they accept help. This is also a great opportunity to talk about how other cultures view death and how they remember loved ones (ex. Day of the Dead in Mexico).

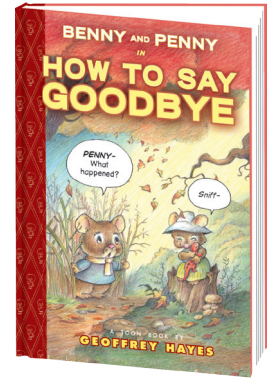
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**ELA COMMON CORE STANDARDS
 (GRADES 1-3)**

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS	
On p. 9 Benny says that the dead leaves cannot be hurt because they are already dead. How does Penny respond? Why does she have a different reaction to Little Red's death?	RL.1.1, RL.2.1
How does Benny react to Little Red's death? Have students describe the emotions shown by Benny throughout the story. What happens to change Benny's feelings about Little Red? Discuss the importance of being sensitive to someone's feelings when they are grieving.	RL.1.2, RL.2.2
How does Melina help Penny cope with her loss? Why is it important to Penny that Little Red gets buried in the right spot?	RL.1.3, RL.2.3

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE	
What does it mean in p. 27 when Penny tells Benny that he "can be nice to [Little Red] now"? What does Benny do to be nice? Discuss the "stuff" that Penny, Melina, and Benny find for Little Red's grave. What is special about the objects?	RL.1.4, RL.2.4
How does the author/illustrator show a memory on p. 22-23? How does remembering Little Red make Penny and Melina feel? Talk about how remembering someone can help a person cope with loss.	RL.1.5, RL.2.5
On p. 23 Melina tells Little Red to "sleep tight." Clarify that sleep is sometimes used as an expression for death, and that Little Red is not really sleeping. Discuss other expressions for death (ex. resting, died in their sleep), and explain how they are meant to provide comfort and are not literal.	RL.1.6, RL.2.6

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS	
Discuss the importance of talking about your feelings when encountering difficult situations like death and loss. Point out how Benny finds comfort in talking to Penny about how he feels on p. 26-27.	RL.1.7, RL.2.7
Have students read <i>The Dead Bird</i> by Margaret Wise Brown and compare the story to <i>How to say Goodbye</i> . Are there any similarities or differences in the way the characters respond to loss?	RL.1.9, RL.2.9

SPEAKING AND LISTENING / WRITING	
Have students talk about a time they had to part with something or someone they loved. How did saying goodbye make them feel? How did they cope with their loss?	SL.1.1, SL.1.4, SL.2.1, SL.2.4
Ask students to write down ways they can help a friend who is grieving. Have them think of what they could say or do to comfort their friend.	W.1.1, W.1.2, W.1.8, W.2.1, W.2.2, W.2.8

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BENNY AND PENNY ACTIVITY SHEET

Name: _____

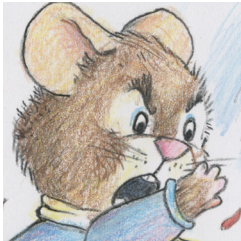
Date: _____

- Write the emotion the character feels in the first blank space. Then explain why the character feels that way.



On page 11, Penny feels _____

because _____



On page 12, Benny feels _____

because _____



On page 14, Penny feels _____

because _____



On page 23, Melinda feels _____

because _____



On page 25, Benny feels _____

because _____

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