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TOWARD A DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION IN REFORM JEWISH LIFE-CYCLE CEREMONIES FOR THE ELEMENTARY DEPARTMENT OF THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL (DEATH AS THE MODEL)

By

SAMUEL K. JOSEPH

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR ORDINATION

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

MAY, 1976

REFEREE, PROF. SYLVAN SCHWARTZMAN

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my Dori who has given me so much strength.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank Dr. Sylvan Schwartzman for his encouragement, enthusiasm and time. He is truly my teacher.

I want to thank Helen London for her patience and beautiful job of typing.

And finally, I want to thank my wife Dori for her excellent job of proof reading. She was of unestimable help, and was full of encouragement during this year of work.

DIGEST

This thesis is a model curriculum for the teacher of the elementary department through grades four/five of the Reform Religious School in connection with life-cycle ceremonies. And because of the difficulty on the part of religious school teachers in dealing with the subject, death has been chosen as the model area.

Chapter One contains six sections dealing with an understanding of children and death. The first section shows how adults and children interact concerning death. Section two goes into detail about the developmental growth stages of a child and how these stages relate to an understanding of death. The third and fourth sections of Chapter One are a discussion of the fears and guilt feelings that may manifest themselves in children. Section five attempts to show how Judaism, at least from the maximal observance, is in concert with modern psychological findings about grief and mourning. In section six there is general rationale and a call for death education in our schools.

The curriculum (Chapter Two) contains eight complete lesson plans. Each lesson plan gives the teacher much needed information to present a lesson concerning death for the primary grade student. This includes the materials

needed, background information and the like. Death is shown as part of the cycle of nature. Children are told that there are times that one feels like crying, as at the death of a loved one, and that crying is okay. The Jewish funeral is explored and many of the customs, rites, prayers and traditions are discussed.

Chapter Three contains annotated resources for the teacher presenting lessons about death. There is an annotated filmography, suggested video tapes, filmstrips, recorded tapes, records, supplementary curriculum material, games, books and periodicals.

Finally, the bibliography of this thesis itself would serve as a good resource of books and articles about children and their understanding of death. The list includes the most important primary and secondary materials available on this subject.

מִי גֶבֶר יִחְיֶה וְלֹא יִרְאֶה מָוֶת

"What man shall live and not see death"

Psalms 89:49

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INTRODUCTION

Every individual life has its times of great and high significance. These times, moments in life, become even more special when they are linked to ceremonies. Religious institutions have created such rituals and ceremonies to mark these occasions.

Judaism, throughout its history, has been particularly concerned with giving sacred meaning to the rites of passage, the life cycle events, which man experiences. Ceremony and ritual have been created to help the individual confront occasions such as birth, marriage, and death.

This thesis is intended to produce a model curriculum for the teacher of the elementary department through grades four/five of the Reform Religious School in connection with life-cycle ceremonies. For it is the life-cycle ceremonies, those rites of passage, which link each individual Jew to his past, present and future. Truthfully there is only one subject matter for all education, and that is life in all its manifestations.

The life-cycle events have unusual significance for the Jewish child, both as a spectator and as a participant. The infant child of only a few days is the participant in

the rituals and ceremonies surrounding birth and naming. He is welcomed into the community of Israel with family and friends. His birth is noted as a religious experience.

Then for the rest of his life, as the child develops, he will be involved in the rites of passage of his family, friends, and most importantly, himself. Each stage of development carries with it a special Jewish ceremony and ritual. He will confront each new period of his life with the knowledge that his religion, Judaism, has also noted this major event.

Certainly it would be advisable that our religious schools concentrate more on the ceremonies, rituals and historical background of life-cycle events rather than on holidays because the ritual of the life-cycle events more intimately links the Reform Jew to his environment, both physically and spiritually. For that matter, the study of holidays could actually be taught through the life-cycle events; birth in relation to Rosh Hashanah, death and Yom Kippur; marriage and Shabbat. And the fact is that life-cycle events have become even more meaningful to the modern Jew than many of the festive days in the calendar. The life-cycle is an indispensible coordinate of identity.

Because of the extensive, in-depth material needed to prepare each life-cycle curriculum, this thesis can serve only as a model of what can be accomplished. And because of the difficulty on the part of religious school

teachers in dealing with the subject, death has been chosen as that model area.

Not too many years ago, dying and death were very much a natural part of the total family life cycle. Families lived together, often with several generations in the same household. The dying process took place within the family circle as did the death itself and in most cases the funeral. Young people were thus enabled to view the processes of dying, death, grief, and bereavement as natural parts of the total life cycle and marked by family and community religious ceremonies and observances.

This is not true today because these processes are typically removed from the family experience. Most young people have been excluded from the experience altogether. The resulting void must be filled if the Jewish family and community, and society in general, is to retain a proper perspective toward the value of life.

The first sections of this thesis will attempt to provide a basic factual foundation about death in general for the teacher. There will be material about attitudes toward death that are part of a circle passed from adult to child to adult and so on. The developmental stages of the child will be examined along with the concept of death, fear of death, and guilt feelings during those growth stages.

The succeeding section will deal with Judaism and death. There will be an exploration of the Jewish death rites and rituals compared to modern psychological findings. In the same section the material from this comparison will be applied to the Jewish child.

The concluding part of this section of the thesis will contain a rationale supporting the need for death education in our schools. It will attempt to prove that there is the necessity to deal with real problems that children face and death is the real problem.

The next part of the thesis will be a presentation of the actual curriculum, lesson by lesson. The lessons will pertain to various areas related to the Jewish view of death. Included here will be everything the teacher will need, or need to prepare, for the class. There will be a wide variety of newly created suggestions and curriculum aids.

The final section of the thesis will be an annotated guide to supplemental material related to the curriculum on death. The section will include films and their distributors, tapes, video, games, filmstrips, records, books for children and periodicals. Each item will be discussed briefly by the author.

It is hoped that this thesis may begin to provide the elementary grade teacher with the necessary tools that are needed to teach "Death," as a model for further life-

cycle curricula. Further readings on the subject also appear in the bibliography to the thesis. The books and articles cited there are fundamental in any study of children and death.

CHAPTER I

CHILDREN AND DEATH: A BACKGROUND AND UNDERSTANDING

SECTION 1:1 THE ADULT AND THE CHILD.

The concept of death is exceedingly complex. It is not a fact that one assimilates like one's Social Security number or big toe.[1] It is a concept that requires more contemplation. In fact, the simple statement "I will die" is really very perplexing. The concepts implied by this statement would seem to be beyond the reach of the young child's mind.[2]

What death means and may mean to children also cannot really be considered apart from what it means to the adults who rear their children. And it cannot be considered apart from the whole society and tradition in which they live.[3]

As our knowledge of psychology grows, it has become apparent that adults repress more deeply their thoughts of death.[4] Generally, the subject of death has been a taboo topic. While families may discuss many things, any references to death seem to end the discussion. The wish that children should not think and talk about death often appears to arise from the adult's own fear of death.[5]

Of course avoiding the subject of death does not make questions about it vanish. Frequently adults make concerted efforts to deny the child even the awareness of death. An inevitable result is that the child discovers death through some private individual experience of great magnitude.[6] And then there is no one there to help him cope with his feelings and questions.

In his book, Conversations with Children, Dr. D. Katz states, "We tried in every way to keep from our children the idea of the death of people, and we believe that a similar reticence [is] common to most parents ... [yet] our children also spoke quite often about murder and shooting."[7] And so adults harbor anxieties about death and therefore have a strong tendency to shield a child from death and dying.

The classic adult defense against coping with these anxieties is the assertion that children cannot conceive of death in any form; hence, they do not need to be reassured about it.[8] It is a total misconception, however, to say that a child cannot conceive of death in any form. As will be shown later on, children may deal with "forms" of death at an exceedingly early age. It is parents who cannot face the reality of death, who hide their own feelings and make it a taboo subject. When these parents are through they have confused their children and contributed to their secret fears.[9]

The first thing an adult must do is come to terms with his own fears and feelings on the subject of death. This is extremely important. The psychiatric experiences of Albert Solnit and Morris Green suggest that the adult's own problems in coming to terms with death can have particularly unfortunate effects upon the thought and behavior of their children.[10]

Further studies have shown that although the individual reorganizes his understanding of death many times, he does not completely discard earlier concepts. As an adult one continues to view death through the experiences of his childhood and the adolescence.[11] It is usually through the eyes of the child (within him) that the adult retains his deepest fears. He fears the reality of death! And so one finds the adult himself has never really accepted this, and in a pathetic effort to avoid the inevitable future, he reassures his child (and thus in a sense comforts himself) that death is, in its essence, nothing more than a prolonged sleep.[12]

Fears manifested in adult life may often develop as a consequence of having been told weird stories about ghosts by parents and relatives who entertained morbid superstitions. Or the adult may have fears from having been unprepared as a child to confront a death situation.[13] And so it is an example of the vicious circle. One reacts to situations in adult life by drawing on what one learned and

experienced as a child. If this was colored by adults who themselves were full of anxieties and fears, then it becomes a seemingly never ending cycle of "passing-on" such fears and trepidations.

Many children are reluctant to discuss their fears of death because they consider them shameful. Since adults are ashamed to talk about them, how can he?[14] A child may enter a phase during which he may speak of death in an open, factual way, without sadness or anxiety. But that same child may later on become tongue-tied about it. What is remarkable is not that children arrive at adult views of the cessation of life, but rather how tenaciously throughout life adults hold to their childhood beliefs and how readily they revert to them.[15]

If we understand the facts of life and death and can master our own feelings about them, so will our children. Unfortunately the subject of death is evaded by the adult,[16] and this attitude is absorbed by the child. Part of the problem is also that many adults have an unrealistic view of the fact that man is mortal and will eventually die.

> The ideas about death which the child holds--his denial of an aversion to the thought of a final death as evidenced by his fantasies of killing and bringing his victim (often a loved-one) back to life, and also by his indifference or apparent lack of emotion about the fact of death, his connecting death in his thoughts with killing, violence, aggressions and mutilations, and his fantasy of utilizing it as a means of escape from painful life situations or to obtain love--are comparable to those of the adult: for, although adults behave according to reality in most instances and believe consciously that all living things must die, in their unconscious minds <u>they deny their own deaths</u>.[17]

Essentially, then, what the adult gives the child in the way of suggestions or responses will depend very largely upon his own resources, his own attitude, and the social culture and traditions to which he has reacted. There does not seem to be any reason why children should not, for instance, inspect a dead bird on the lawn, or hear of the deaths of people they have known. Nor need the adult be horrified if the child seems rather excited rather than distressed when dealing with these situations. The child lacks the adult's experience of the world. How desirable it would be if the adult could offer the child his own most constructive encounters with death and receive, in turn, the advantages of the youth's fresh quest for understanding![18]

SECTION 1:2 DEVELOPMENTAL GROWTH OF THE CHILD

The child lives in a world where he is constantly trying to interpret the new experiences around him. When he has questions he turns to the adult. The subject of death or non-being confronts the child from earliest moments and he finds little or no aid from the adult world. He is presented with the seemingly unattainable goal of trying on his own to understand life and death. The phenomenon of death apparently contributes the greatest enigma in the psychic life of the child.[19]

The problem is compounded by the fact that the answers that are often given to the child by the adult may be too difficult for him to understand. Even something as simple as the vocabulary used can affect the child. Ambiguities in adult language and thoughts are apt to confuse him as he attempts to make sense out of death. Death has more than one meaning, so context is important. It is difficult to comprehend how both a battery and a person can be "dead," but in such different ways.[20]

To appreciate the further complexities of the term "death," let us proceed to examine the statement, "I will die," in some detail. The person who makes this remark and

knows what he is talking about has obviously built it upon many concepts:

"1. I am an individual with a life of my own, a personal existence.

2. I belong to a class of beings one of whose attributes is mortality.

3. Using the intellectual process of logical deduction, I must arrive at the conclusion that my personal death is a certainty.

4. There are many possible causes of my death, and these causes might operate in many different combinations; although I might evade or escape one particular cause, I cannot evade all causes.

5. My death will occur in the future. By future, I mean a time-to-live that has not yet elapsed.

6. But I do not know when in the future my death will occur. The event is certain; the timing is uncertain.

7. Death is a final event. My life ceases. This means that I will never again experience, think, or act, at least as a human being on this earth.

8. Accordingly, death is the ultimate separation of myself from the world." 21

There has been much study about how the concept of death develops in children. Psychologists are interested in finding out if the infant is born with some innate feelings about "death," or whether it is a concept that has to be learned. A review of the literature on this subject reveals that there are many different opinions.

Some scientists believe that the toddler has no conception of death whatever. They feel that he is occupied with acquainting himself with this world (immediate world).

The very young child does not deal in remote abstractions. Consequently, during the first two years or so, there is no understanding of death, they say.[22]

Others state that while the infant seems to lack conceptions of death, there is the possibility that certain experiences and behavior of the very young child imply a relationship to a state of non-being.

The main proponent of this idea, Adah Mauer, states that the infant experiments with the "pre-idea" of death.[23]

> By the time he is three months old, the healthy baby is secure enough in his self feelings to be ready to experiment with these contrasting states--asleep/awake and being/non-being. In the game of peek-a-boo he replays in safe circumstances the alternate terror and delight, confirming his sense of self by risking and regaining complete consciousness.[24]

Mauer also interprets the very young child's interest in games of disappearance-and-return as little experiments with non-being or death. There is a suggestion that perhaps the toddler is experimenting with experiences of separation, loss, and non-being more than most adults realize. Mauer believes that these experiences provide the foundations for later conceptions of death in the child.[25]

Watching children play games is one very important way of studying their conceptions of life and death. Many people feel that children may play death games endlessly--like "Wild West"--and that it is not taken seriously. By observing them at play, one can see that they discover death and examine its phenomena before they understand its

significance.[26] But the important thing to always keep in mind is the fact that the certainty and inevitability of death inevitably exerts a profound influence on all human behavior. Virtually everyone holds some idea concerning death.

Generally by three years of age the child has an impressive command of language. His mind is now acquiring greater freedom, range and versatility. At this stage it is important for the child to gain some understanding of his origins and his destination, birth and death. Where was he before? Is it possible that he might go back again? If he is "growing up," does this mean that mother and father are "growing down?"

The child's first answer to his questions about birth and death are usually based upon assumptions of continuity and periodicity. The preschooler believes his identity has no limit in time. He does not grasp the concept of final limits or linear, nonrepetitive time.[27]

Yet while the child believes that his "self" has no limit in time, and cannot conceive of his own death, he will readily enter into a game of playing dead. Death, whatever it may mean to children, readily appears in their fantasy thought.[28] The young child's questioning shows that he may lack the conceptual ability to understand death, but he tries to understand it. It is the first vital intellectual challenge to engage the child's mind and, as such, is a prime stimulus to his continued mental development.[29]

In 1943 Anna Freud found that children who were over two years old at the time of the London blitz realized that people were killed and would never return.[30] Freud's work proved that the commonly held belief that children never should, and rarely do, think about death was untrue.

In an earlier study, Sylvia Anthony in 1940 found that children thought readily of death. It appeared in their fantasies, play, and arose in response to suggestions of grief and fear, loss and separation. Obviously in talking about death it is impossible that they should not think about it as well. Clinical experience and sentence completion tests prove that children have an insatiable curiousity not only about "where people come from" but also "where people go to."[31]

The child's concept of death is not at all unified; rather it is a composite of mutually contradictory paradoxes. Changed concepts may represent some quite different ideas, but the child will still retain many former notions.

Piaget wrote that a child's concept of life passes through different stages. At first everything is alive which is active, which has a function. Later life is defined as motion, which, as the child grows older he classifies into spontaneous motion and motion caused by some external agent.[32] The same is true about the child's concept of death. It passes through different stages.

Death is always relative to the developmental level of the child, not necessarily to his individual chronological age. Guidelines for mental, emotional, and social growth are useful--yet it is important to recognize that the child's psychological growth is more "iffy" than his physical growth.

The developmental goal of death concepts is obscure, ambiguous, or still being evolved. We expect the child's height to increase until it attains its end--adult height. But death concepts cannot be graphed the same way.

There seems to be a close relationship between the development of one's ideas about death and intellectual development in general. Death concepts also seem to be related to behavior. Most of all, the child has thoughts and feelings about death that are usually vague. Death means absence today, injury tomorrow; a dead man is brought to the hospital to be restored to health.

Psychologically a child may be "ahead" or "behind" his chronological and physical age, and for a variety of reasons. In his understanding of death the complications of general child development are always present, add to this two other things:

1. How far children at a certain age advance towards a mature concept of death is uncertain. How can this development be stimulated and how can one determine when the child needs help?

2. The typical adult in the United States prefers <u>not</u> to view death--defends by escapist, diversionary, sugar-coating, and covering up behavior. [33]

In general it can be stated that the child's discovery of death is gradual. Most studies agree that he develops cognition of "you are dead" before "I will die." Moreover the child's thinking about death progresses from a state of non-awareness of the meaning of the concept through a series of intermediate steps to a point where death is considered in logical, causal, naturalistic terms.[34]

Maria Nagy studied the subject of children's conceptions of death during the 1940's. Upon completion of her research she was able to come up with the following classification of developmental stages:

1. Under five years of age--death is viewed as reversible, not final.
2. From five to nine years of age--death is personified; it is an aggressive event contingent upon the actions of others.
3. Nine and up--death is part of natural laws, one of which is characterized by the cessation of vital bodily activities.[35]

This of course is a simplification. The child in stage one is very curious about death. He wants to know all about burial, and the characterizations of dead animals and flowers. And he is quite interested in the accidental features of death.

Nagy found that the child under five does not accept death. He views it only as departure. The dead person lives on, but under changed circumstances.[36] The state of death is temporary. He knows grandfather is dead, yet will suddenly ask, "when is grandpa coming to dinner?"

The concept of a final end is very difficult for him to understand. Cartoon characters live and die many times. Parents tell ghost stories to their children. In the game of "cowboys and Indians" players are shot dead but quickly come to life again.

The very young child readily accepts the explanation that death is similar to sleep. He cannot conceive of it as total destruction. Periodically, one's condition changes--sleep and awake, sleep and awake. So too, you "are made dead" but will return to ordinary life. Even while dead, you still "live," although perhaps in a more restricted style, as while asleep.

In Nagy's study she found that even if a child is familiar with cemeteries, funerals and burials, he still believes that the deceased continues to live, but within the confines of the coffin. There the deceased breathes, eats and knows what is going on in the outside world. Thus they live in the grave.[38] But asks Dr. Fritz Moellenhoff, "Is the idea of the child that the dead are made alive so very far from the belief of adults that one can call up spirits and get their advice?"[39]

Young children see immobility as almost synonymous with death. This is usually their most significant view of death. Referring specifically to the development of concepts of death, Illig and Bates in Child Behavior agree with Gesel and others that the young child regards death as an end and

represents it as complete immobility.[40] It is also important to note that this state of immobilization is very intense and not voluntary.

Dying is recognized by the child as an arrest of his vital functions.

> The organs of locomotion and motor activity, or perception of the alimentary, excretory, and respiratory functions are vital to the child. When death is signified as a loss of any or all of these critical organs or processes, the child's reaction is to make use unwittingly of the many psychological defenses. Death is reconstituted to become a liberation rather than the opposite. What limitations life may have imposed are transcended in death.41

Boris Levinson, in an article in Mental Hygiene, writes that young children do not see the body as decaying after death.[42] This is in line with their belief that the dead person feels, thinks, experiences, senses, yet cannot move. It is natural for disintegration and decay to be associated with death. As long as children find decaying animal bodies it will be something for them to think about.

The child from one to five is usually unable to perceive cause and effect sequences in any complete fashion. Wishes are often not distinguished from facts; realities are altered to suit wishes when questions about death arise. A young child often cherishes a firm conviction that he can control events by just wishing.[43] It is quite a blow to him when he first realizes that his wishes are futile in the face of death. He suddenly feels much smaller and much more helpless.

When the child is furiously frustrated by the limiting, prohibiting or punishing powerful adult, his feelings often become associated with the wish that the loved adult would go away and never return. And at this stage of development the child experiences wishes and thoughts as magically potent.[44] Children's own previous angry or aggressive wishes toward the one who died make them interpret the death as proof of the omnipotence of their wishes. Therefore they tend to believe that their wishes can also undo the death by effecting a resurrection.[45]

For the young child, death is not conceived in relationship to self; still, if strong adults die, can the weaker child survive?

Most authors conclude that a child does or can perceive his own death, but only at a particular developmental level. Of course, a catalyst of some crisis event, such as catastrophic illness, may help.

The problem of not being able to conceive of one's own death is no less common among adults. This was Freud's observation when he asked, "How does our unconscious behave in relation to the problem of death? Almost exactly as does primitive man. In this respect primitive man lives unchanged in our unconscious. Our unconscious does not believe in our own death. It behaves as if it were immortal."[46]

Bromberg and Schilder state that people usually know that they have to die, but most of them do not believe it.

Man never dies psychologically, he believes in immortality.[47] Perhaps the best example of the denial of death can be found in the teaching of Christian Science that there is no death, since immortal mind alone is real; death is merely a "mortal error."

From about the age of five and upward, the child gradually accommodates himself to many of the facets of the conception of death. He begins to see that death is final and inevitable. And as these feelings become clearer, he observes that it is universal and personal.

Many times the five year old will seem to take the concept of death in a matter of fact way.[48] This is because children from five to six years of age still have perceptual problems in seeing death as anything other than a gradual or temporary phenomenon. Life and death are thus interchangeable.

The five year old is interested in the posture of the person who falls dead--did he fall on his back or his face? He also wants to know about the attributes of the dead, can a dead person walk, see or feel?[49] And if the five year old is told that dead people go to heaven after they die, he wonders why they do not fall out of heaven.

Robert Kastenbaum discovered that there is an impression that in mid-childhood youth can neither deny nor accept death as an authentic aspect of his own life. Some kind of compromise is necessary. Death for this age becomes a <u>personification</u>, a distinct personality, really a separate person.[50]

Nagy found that the child from five to nine personifies death. Death is a person. The child will try to keep it away from himself. Only those die whom the death-man carries off, and the death-man is regarded as a creature of the night. There is now a clear aversion to the thought of death. From a process which takes place within the child, death becomes a reality outside of himself. It exists, but it is remote from him, and thus not inevitable. Again, only those die whom the death-man catches and carries off.[51]

Death then is something that occurs outside the child and not universal. Egocentrism or anthropocentrism plays an important role here. Every event and change in the world derives from man. If in general death exists, it is a person who "does it." (One gets no answer to why, if death is bad for people, he does it.)

Finally, the five year old has associated death with age. When you are old you die. He is not usually concerned with the possible death of those around him. Yet he may state, "When I grow up all you people will be dead."

By age six, and still part of the second stage of child development, death becomes more related to feelings of self. There is an increased sense of its reality. The existence of death, in its definitiveness, is accepted.[52]

The child begins to be aware of any deaths that may occur in his immediate surroundings or to his relatives. His reaction is to try to discover the causes. He realizes that

one can be killed, yet death is ascribed to acts of violence or aggression. And by now he may establish connections between sickness, medicine, hospitals and death.[53]

The six and seven year old may seem to have a preoccupation with the appurtenances of death--graves, funerals, being buried in the ground, etc. Children will discuss these matters with parents and peers. They may express a dislike of the notion that their relatives or they themselves should be buried in the ground.

When it comes to accepting death the six and seven year old says that possibly someone else takes the dead person's place--puppies take the place of dogs, and children take the place of parents. They suspect that their parents are going to die some day and that the same fate may be in store for them. However, they now often show less concern with death and speak of it less frequently.

Yet he still is interested in the subject, especially in terms of a specific human experience. There may be a desire to visit cemeteries, looking at tombstones, and noting verses, names, dates, and designs.[54]

Typically the full recognition of death is delayed for awhile. Perhaps the child of six to eight is still too vulnerable emotionally to accept the implications of his own new thoughts about death. Perhaps he is more attuned to mastering life. It could be that while he sees death as "real" it is "real" only in an external and distant sense.[55]

By the age of nine there is great interest in how you stop breathing, have no pulse, and in the fact you are not living. Sylvia Anthony found that at nine years casual-logical explanations are beginning to be used in regard to the word death. This parallels findings by Piaget.[56]

More realistic concepts of death are generally established just before puberty, or at the beginning of puberty. At this time the totality of a child's experiences and sense of time allow the child to recognize the inevitability of death.[57] In 1958 Anna Wolf wrote that by ten or eleven there is "found the beginning of something like adult comprehension of death".[58]

As the child approaches adolescence he is equipped with most of the intellectual tools necessary to understand things in a logical manner. Death is placed in a framework. Death is now a general principle or process among many other general principles or processes, and it can be understood in relation to "natural law." It is no longer a phantom or will-o'-the-wisp.[59] Death comes when essential life functions fail; it is the end of the biological process, the perceptible result of which is the dissolution of bodily life. And it is inevitable.

In adolescence the child encounters the problem that mere comprehension of the facts of death is no longer sufficient. He must be able to integrate death into his

life outlook. So as he grows up he becomes aware that,

> all his hopes, ambitions and expectations require time for their actualization. He stands here, at a certain point in time. Off in the distance stands death. This new self he is developing confronts a natural enemy in death. To grow up--to die. What sense does this make?[60]

There are some youths who devote a great amount of time dealing with such thoughts. Understandings here will be shaped by what he experiences, and the attitudes he forms will be no less important to him as his basic mental capacities.

The nine, ten year old seeks to differentiate between organic and inorganic substances, between the animate and inanimate. He needs these classifications as he equips himself to face the future with hope rather than fear.

Obviously, then, thoughts about death are intertwined with the pattern of personality development right from the very beginning. This is affected by influences or the life's experiences of the child, which in turn influences what he feels about death. Certain basic concepts tend to remain with him such as that death is final. But a full range of other feelings may exist and need to be examined. Here the adult can be of inestimable help.

If the subject of death does not embarrass or dismay the adult, and if he can appreciate and respect the child's view of reality without losing his own, then he can be of help to the child. He will be in the position to

contribute to the child's capacity to cope with life by means of an enlightened orientation toward death.[61]

"It has not been considered desirable that a child should take any interest in--the facts of death."[62] So states the general public. But after a careful review of materials concerning children and death it is apparent that the public's view is far from being so.

The child should be allowed to talk freely about things as he sees them, to ask questions and have them directly answered. The sorrows he may feel will tend to be no less deep, but they then can avoid the unwholesome pain which often attends death, and the morbidity that marks irrational remorse.[63]

Bereavement is one of the most traumatic events in a child's life. The effects of it will vary according to his development. Therefore, when the child reaches stage three, nine years old and upward, he must be allowed to formulate sound ideas of death. He must be allowed to freely express his feelings about death, be given straightforward answers to his questions, and find meaning that enables him to live life constructively amidst this mysterious of all human experiences.

SECTION 1:3 DEATH FEARS

Just as the term death is very complex, so too is the statement "you are dead." These few words have many ramifications, and they may be widely interpreted by a child in light of his previous life's experiences.

"You are dead" means "you are absent--not here and now."[64]

"You are dead" means to him, "I am abandoned." "As a child, I am not merely aware of your absence, but of the presence of discomfort feelings within myself."[65]

"You are dead" means "your absence plus my sense of abandonment contribute to the general sense of separation."[66]

So, in their studies, Bromberg and Schilder found that children did view death as separation from the loved object.[67] This, of course, is separation from the loved object on whom they depend.

"You are dead" means "the separation has no limits. The young child does not grasp the concept of futurity, or time in general, in the way that most adults have come to develop these concepts."[68]

Separation from a loved object can arouse the most profound anxieties in children as it often does with adults. How the young child experiences and attempts to come to

terms with separation might well influence his subsequent ideas of death--the ultimate separation. But it also contributes to the shaping of his basic character structure.

Nagy's studies found that the most painful aspect of life for children to deal with was separation.[69] This coincides with the disappearance of the body which children five and upwards associated with death. During this phase of their development of thought they see that the dead person or pet is not with them and that is probably the most important facet of death.

Freud wrote in The Ego and the Id that "to the child death means little more than departure or disappearance, and that it is represented in dreams by going on a journey."

Death is seen as a typical source of sorrow. This is concretized as loneliness and separation. The child's sorrow and love for the dead person can bring about the desire not to be separated, and hence to want to be dead too.[70]

Dr. George Gardener wrote that the fear of separation is one of the most basic fears of all children. When a loved one dies, "gone and never coming back" has to be made clear, for this is a vital element in a child's anxiety.[71] He must also be helped to understand that he will not be left alone however, with no one to care for him.

Whenever it is possible, we should prepare children for both separation and death. Separation, or the prospect

of separation, especially from a parent, is likely to arouse thoughts of death. Sensitive parents recognize that the child does not always differentiate between short and long, or permanent, separation. It is important that separation be explained. If father is going on a business trip, it should be clarified that he will be back tomorrow. If, however, father is dead, it must be made clear he will never return, but that the child need not fear that he will be left alone or abandoned.

SECTION 1:4 GUILT

A child is liable to feel a strong sense of guilt when a member of his family dies, and it will be expressed by his behavior. From a common sense point of view, this sense of guilt almost certainly appears to be utterly unreasonable. But the child may somehow believe that he caused the death of the person who died, and hence his feelings of guilt.[72]

Death is never conceived of as resulting from chance or some natural happening. Causation is personified and hence the child may feel as if he were the secret slayer. Therefore his sense of guilt, just as he often experiences rage toward the decedent, as though he had been deliberately abandoned by that person.

To be able to deal with his feelings the child sets up psychological defenses. Many of these defenses stem from a denial of reality. For example, beliefs that death is not seen as the end, and that the dead will return.[73]

The conflicts which are aroused by the knowledge, the fears, and the recognition that life comes to an end also produce a welter of other psychological defenses. The old mental mechanisms which have developed from earlier conflicts over separation and the dread of abandonment are reinforced to contend with newer problems.[74]

Clinical facts show that a child's view of death is inseparable from the psychological defenses against the reality of death. This appears not to alter throughout life. One's concept of death fused with its amalgam of defenses becomes the core around which his knowledge of the facts will cluster.

With the great amount of research in recent decades, it has been found that the child will reach a stage where he understands his own fate and sees it to be true for others. But he likewise erects emotional defenses against all this as well.

SECTION 1:5 JUDAISM AND DEATH

Each person tries to cope with death in his own individual way, and as we have noted, we greatly rely upon our childhood experiences. But religion can help us to contend with death. In fact, it can provide a wholesome means of dealing with all the fears, guilts, and defenses that one has built up against death during his lifetime.

Judaism is realistic! It acknowledges that death is part of each man's life and that self-deception does not avail. This approach which prepares one for death all the days of one's life, is a motif that can be traced throughout the entire tradition.[75] Specific laws, rites and mores of mourning, plus establishment of definite time sequences, do not deny one's need for various defenses, but prevent them from becoming pathological. Since death is accepted as a reality, the defense of denial cannot be employed for long.[76]

A fine example of Judaism's attempt to prepare one for death may be seen in the observance of the Day of Atonement, for Yom Kippur is essentially a kind of annual encounter with death. On this day the person abandons all his ordinary pleasures and possessions, blesses his children as if in farewell, and takes to heart the liturgy's stress

on man's frailty. How deeply he feels his mortality on this day![77]

In Jewish tradition the philosophy is that death will come, but it must be forestalled as long as possible. Life on earth is primary, decisive and precious. Such beliefs can be seen in the Bible which emphasizes the problems of living rather than of dying. The Bible's central concern is not how to escape death, but rather how to sanctify life.[78]

This concern with life actually provides a wholesome approach to the problem of death. Through comprehension of the meaning of death, the significance of life increases. The individual dare not shrink from reality, and therefore, he must fully embrace the total experience of living.

For the purposes of this chapter the laws and customs that are discussed represent the traditional, or maximum viewpoint. In general the wide spectrum of observance does include Reform practice. Most of it is based on traditional Jewish ritual, some is not. But it was considered appropriate to deal with the maximal pattern of rites, customs and laws for clarity.

Observances such as the Chevrah Kaddisha have been replaced by Reform Jews by the funeral director and the funeral home. Reform Jews have the freedom to choose what is meaningful for them to observe. New practices develop constantly. Often they are a modification of older Jewish practice which is reconstructed.

Jewish attitudes and practices concerning death reflect elements that date back to Biblical times,[79] and they have developed constantly through all the succeeding centuries into a large body of laws and customs that have no "legal" validity. For example, Deuteronomy 21:23 reveals the Jewish attitude of reverence for the dead. The Talmud Bavli, tractate Baba Batra 154a and b, greatly expands upon this so that here one finds most of the laws concerning the handling of the dead body.

In the language of the Bible to die and be buried, is said to be "gathered to his people" (Genesis 25:8); or "gathered to their fathers" (Judges 2:10). Again from Deuteronomy 21:23 the custom arose to bury all bodies on the day of death, or as soon as possible. Ancient people felt that the corpse was the ultimate defilement. And since the dead must be respected, they must be put to rest in honor. Therefore almost every Jewish community had a cemetery which was deemed sacred and under the jurisdiction of the Chevrah Kaddisha, the burial society.[80]

The Jews have always used burial, not cremation. Since non-Jewish neighbors did not always bury their dead, this was another practice that distinguished the Jews from their neighbors. Interment of the dead even assumed a religious aspect. The earth, it was said, atoned for the sins of the dead.

The Jewish funeral is a rite of separation, and this is its fundamental purpose. It transforms the process of denial to the acceptance of reality.

There is a psychological factor that enters into prompt burial. Principal grief occurs while the body is yet unburied, while it lies before the mourners. As the Rabbis realized, in this greatest period of grief the family could not be expected to carry on even the religious duties of mourners, let alone normal functions. The finality of burial marked an end to this period of hiatus, a time when even the visits of close friends were discouraged.[81] So Judaism recognizes that the pain of separation is most intense during the first few days after death, especially during aninut, before burial, and the laws take into account the shock and bewilderment of the family. The Mishnah notes that immediately after death and prior to the burial it is impossible to console a mourner.[82] The Rabbis may have realized, as many psychologists maintain today, that it is important, if not vital, for the mourner's future mental health that during this initial period grief be worked through and anguish expressed.

In a recent sociological study of rabbis' attitudes toward funerals, rabbis viewed the purpose of the funeral ceremony in much the same light. For them the funeral was basically a religious service which not only "served to honor God" but which "paid tribute to the deceased." It is

a ceremony which "assuaged the grief of the survivors" and was a "comfort" to them in their loss.[83]

Intrinsic to a Jewish funeral is the principle of equality of all men. This idea is reflected in the traditional insistence upon simplicity and the avoidance of any invidious distinction between rich and poor.[84] Death knows no distinction between persons, so caskets should be uniform.

Jewish burial and mourning customs lead to the fact that the "living must go on living." That is why costs should be kept at a minimum. That too, is why funerals should be simple. Many rabbis are insisting today that there is a need to "return to more traditional practices" so there may be "less ostentatious display of wealth and less emphasis upon the physical remains."[85] This is important because realism and simplicity are indeed characteristic of Jewish burial.

For children, as well as adults, the ceremonials surrounding death are of enormous significance. The law, halakhah, forbids a dishonest approach.

In Judaism rites play a vital role in the healing work of grief so that the bereaved is brought to the realization that a loved one is gone and that the void must be filled gradually in a constructive way. Memories are not suppressed. Nor are disturbing thoughts, even guilt-producing recollections which are an inevitable part of all human relationships. Rather, they are all confronted within a religious structure of specified solemn procedures.[86]

In Judaism the mourner at first is allowed full feelings of helplessness. He may not disguise the fact that the loved object is really dead. Realistically he faces the inescapability of death. Gradually after the funeral he begins to assume more responsibility toward the business of everyday living. And so through a total framework of mourning practices the person learns to accept death, mourn completely, and live once again fully. Thereby Judaism helps the person come to terms with death.

Centuries ago the Talmudic sages seem to have sensed the same truth that psychiatrists now articulate; namely, that "the recognition of death is a necessity for continuing life, and grief is a necessary and unavoidable process in normative psychological functioning."[87] The Jewish mourner has not only the freedom but the right to express his deepest feelings of grief.

All humans weep for their dead. In Judaism this is converted into a religious observance. It gives a sure and regular outlet to sorrow and yet, simultaneously, keeps emotions within reasonable bounds, lest they get completely out of hand, with serious consequences.

Crying is an effective way of expressing one's feelings of grief. In Biblical times, weeping was equated with mourning. (See Genesis 23:2; II Samuel 1:2; Isaiah 16:7; Jeremiah 16:5; Job 30:31.) Even professional "wailers" developed in Biblical days, but it was not until Talmudic

times that they actually had a particular liturgy. (See Talmud Bavli, tractate Moed Katan 286.) Some scholars feel that these wailers were used to ward off evil spirits with loud noises. Whatever the origins, what must be emphasized is that public mourning was considered a social responsibility.[88] The mourner, in Judaism, has always been encouraged not to feel inhibited in crying. Rather he should be free to express his suffering and feel that his suffering is justified.

He is repeatedly encouraged to give vent to his feelings and emotional disturbances. (See Talmud Bavli, tractate Moed Katan 266 and 146.)

The Rabbis of the Talmud did not condone excessive grief and mourning for the dead. They based their feelings on the words of Jeremiah, "Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him," (Jeremiah 22:10). According to the Talmud, weeping should be limited to three days, lamentation to seven, and refraining from cutting one's hair for thirty days. Exceeding these limits was said to constitute a challenge to God, implying that human beings were more merciful than God.[89]

Unlike all other laws in Judaism, mourning rituals and laws were not developed as a means of religious discipline, but rather to serve the needs of the bereaved. They gave structure and expression to man's deepest feelings, so that instead of mourning becoming a wild torrent of emotions, it was regulated into a stream of religious observances. And

since mourning for the dead became a religious ritual, detailed laws were inevitably produced.[90]

The rules of mourning realize the need for catharsis by providing for communication, thereby avoiding the danger of excessive intraverted solitary meditation.[91] Symbols are provided which help the individual detach himself from the deceased and become part of the world again. The funeral experience encourages the mourner to maintain meaningful relationships with others and associate himself with the life of the community, thereby resuming a wholesome pattern of living.[92] Throughout the process of mourning the bereaved must continue relating to others. Shiva, for example, is to protect him against a sense of isolation.[93]

In Talmudic times, during the seven days of severe mourning, those who were eager to do a pious deed would visit the house of mourning to console the mourners, and no one went there empty handed. It was customary to bring items of food and even candy "to sweeten sorrow." One even finds a one-word formula for consoling mourners being used in the second century C.E.--titnechamu (be comforted).[94]

The entire process of the mourner's obligation to the group is categorized in Judaism.[95] For the first few days the mourner cannot readily give to others; but he has a profound need to receive. (During Biblical times the mourning lasted at least a week, and people visited the mourner to comfort him.[96]

The second few days the mourner learns gradually to relate to others, but still in a passive, receptive way. Judaism recognizes that the difficult work of mourning takes time; there is no short-cut on the road to recovery. Time is, therefore, aided as a therapeutic measure, by laying down specific periods and requirements so that the mourner who feels helpless and overcome by the agony of grief may know exactly what is expected of him as he makes his way through the difficult period of mourning. Life thus gradually becomes more meaningful to him.

With the commencement of avelut the halakhah commands the mourner to start picking up the debris of his own shattered personality, and re-establish himself as a person, restoring his lost glory, dignity and uniqueness. Each member of a family has his own individual needs and feelings, which may lead to different reactions. But the cohesiveness of the Jewish family at such a critical time helps, and the stipulations about which relatives are required to mourn are intended to pinpoint each person's responsibility.[97] It is therapeutic for the mourner to realize that he is not left alone in his grief, for others share the loss with him.

Many of the laws and rituals of Judaism are developed around a communal or social structure. The death of an individual is an event that immediately disturbs the social balance of the community. It not only affects the surviving relatives, but the entire community as well.

Such observances enabled the Jewish mourner to lean upon his socio-cultural system with confidence in its cultural authority and divine sanction.[98] Thus he knows exactly what is expected of him and feels that he is doing the right thing. This substantially reduces confusion in the mourning process.

Guilt is likewise assuaged through community involvement in mourning because the bereaved person learns that he is accepted. The attention of the community encourages the mourner to restore and develop meaningful relationships with those around him. This concern for the mourner has great therapeutic value. Judaism gives full attention to restoring the mourner to the life of his community.[99] Judaism does not ask the mourner to forget himself, but, on the contrary, his right to suffer because of his own personal loss is affirmed, and he is encouraged to mourn. The self is all important, and the suffering it undergoes is all important. Judaism does not attempt to accelerate the process of adjustment of the mourner to his loss.

Familial and communal participation in Jewish mourning thus encourages the mourner to recover from the loss of his loved object. Even the rabbi has viewed his role primarily as friend of the bereaved, comforter, counselor, a person ready to help and assist in whatever manner possible.[100]

Judaism helps the mourner to confront the emotional complexities involved in his loss, to adjust to a new life

without the loved object, and to realize that there is indeed a "time to mourn." The average Jew's attitude towards death and his mourning observances show a remarkable consonance with sound psychiatric knowledge and with the best that is known about the therapy of grief. Open grieving at the time of death, in the company of sympathetic relatives and friends, is the best antidote and preventive. This has been known and applied for thousands of years in Judaism.[101]

The concept of yizkor, remembrance, is followed by Jews in the years after the death of the loved one. Yizkor says not to build up remorse or guilt, but to teach people. It teaches that the unimportant is stripped away and the meaningless cast aside, so that love, because of memory, is life's proper setting.[102] Yizkor serves as a reminder of the memory of the dead who enobled life through their deeds.

Essentially what adults transmit to the child in connection with the subject of death will depend largely upon their own religious resources. The thought of death has always been a function of religion. Religion socializes individual attitudes to death. It provides a definite pattern for them, and makes that pattern to be considered sane. It is the name given to traditionally tested ways of mental acceptance of death.[103]

> From time immemorial, religious ceremonials have offered a needed expression for mourning, and so have played an indispensable part in healing...it is rare indeed not to crave the healing power of some ceremonial which joins us to others in and in which we play our part.[104]

Death may be said to pose in its most elemental form the question of identity for the Jew, inasmuch as it involves ideas of God, of family, of community, and of religion.

The strength and comfort one's religious faith offers will surely comfort one's children too. If one has a belief about an afterlife share it with the children. Those with doubts may say frankly that they do not know the answers. A child can gain comfort from knowing that adults too have wondered about, and, like him, continue to wonder.

SECTION 1:6 DEATH EDUCATION

Drawing now on what we have discovered about death as it affects children and its context within Judaism, we are now ready to discuss what elements are involved in educating the child about the subject of death. As we have previously observed, death is the taboo subject. Families try to spare their children the full reality of death, hoping to keep grief and sorrow out of the young life, but this feeling is totally contrary to Judaism. "Sparing" the child only tends to confuse him and evasions distress him. "Sparing" the child shuts him out of an important family experience.

Of course the ones who actually need to be spared are the parents. Parents seem to evade the issue of death because they are still struggling for answers. When parents have not formulated their own thoughts of what to say to the child, the asking catches them off guard.

In former times it was easier. Children who lived on a farm saw life and death. When a loved one became sick he was tended to at home, not at the hospital. (The hospital is seen today by the child as a place of sickness and dying.) And funerals were held at home.

But there has been an evolution of dying customs. Today one no longer dies at home in the "bosom of one's family, but in the hospital, alone."[105] Today the dying person does not die with the benefit of being surrounded by loved ones and friends.

The death-bed scene used to be an essential part of the family experience. It was necessary that parents, friends and neighbors be present, and children were brought in. "Until the 18th century no portrayal of a death-bed scene failed to include children."[106] Think of how carefully people today keep children away from anything having to do with death!

Children have a deep need for security. In this connection death becomes the greatest fear in a child. Thanatophobia, the morbid fear of death, according to Wohl, starts as early as three years of age.[107] (This is in contradiction to what has been stated earlier in this work where Nagy believes that children under eight or nine have no full comprehension of the process of dying.)

Death is seen as a typical fear-bringing thing, and the fear is not simply of death. It is of an aggressive outsider, breaking into the house and killing the child and parents. It is a fear of death conceived of as the ultimate effect of aggression, violation and robbery.

Of course the child's reactions will be affected by his age, personality, and by the circumstances of the death. He will also be affected by the support that is given to him.

He needs to express his fears and sorrows, either openly or reluctantly.

A child may have many death-fears. He may be fearful that his mother will die. And being egocentric he is concerned with the question of "what will happen to me?" It is a burden for the child to realize that the end of those who care for him may occur at some unpredictable time or in some unforseen way. The child must be comforted and told that his parents are in good health and expect to live a long time. Also that he is loved and will always be taken care of.[108]

The child will add to his fear of his mother's (or father's) death, the fear of his own death. He begins to realize that this event will happen to him in the unpredictable future. His first reaction is usually one of denial that this could happen to him.

Sleep, "the death of each day's life," bringing with it immobility, may be one of the first harbingers of death-fears in children.[109] Darkness is usually associated at this time with death also. To the child, there is a feeling of experiencing "some part of death" when he goes into his room darkened, and must fall asleep.

Parents must explain to the child the difference between death and sleep. Death is final, but sleep gives us rest. We are able to awaken from sleep, but not from death. "Sleep" and "rest" should not be used in describing the

dead. One should also avoid euphemisms as "gone to his eternal sleep."

When a death occurs in a family, many times the child will blame himself as the cause of the death. Children blame themselves because they see themselves as the center of the universe.[110] This stems from infancy where the entire household probably revolved around the new baby. When the baby wished food, he cried. Food appeared, as if by magic. The new infant had no conception of cause and effect, that his crying caused his parents to bring food. To the infant it seemed that anytime he wanted something all he had to do was cry and it would appear. This gave him a great sense of omnipotence.

So when a death occurs in the family the child may be in terror believing that because in anger he wished someone dead, he caused it. The child must be made to understand that in no way was he the cause of the relative or friend's death. He must understand that he does not have the power to wish a death. Charles Wohl has stated that,

> The well loved and non-rejected child is more likely to retain in his unconscious, throughout life, a quintessence of his infantile omnipotence. It is this proclivity which the average person is able to put to use in handling of the death anxiety. It enables one to effectively isolate the possibility of eventual death from ourselves...Only later does the child learn that death is neither causal or reversible, and he then becomes frightened and concerned about his death wishes towards his ambivalently loved, significant persons.[111]

The concept of immortality in children is generally acquired from parents, as a result of which many children are taught to pray for the soul of the deceased relative. They are told that only by being good can one gain entrance into Heaven. However, as a consequence of this concept, many children regard death as a form of punishment. In one study, a subject experienced an acute state of panic at age twelve because he believed that God would "take him away" for having masturbated. The fear of death becomes, for some children, related to the fear of punishment for one's sins.[112]

For the child who has been frightened by the thought of an avenging God who punishes youngsters for their sins, death has not only the implication of "annihilation and nothingness," but is the "ultimate in loneliness and isolation."[113] As Dr. Robert Furman, of Cleveland's Center for Research in Child Development, has written,

> The surest way to make a confirmed atheist of a young child may be to tell him of a God who takes from him the ones he loves, who punishes by death. The surest way to frighten a young child about religious concepts may be to tell him of our ill-defined place where everyone goes after death.[114]

Children should receive "death education" at an age commensurate with their ability to accept such knowledge intelligently. A child may need to be told many times, in different ways, that death is irrevocable and comes to all living things. Life runs its course and comes to an end eventually.

It is not true that small children are too young to know what is happening. On the contrary, very young children may be more deeply affected by death than grown-ups.[115] For when a young child is confronted with a disturbing event he is presented with two difficult tasks. First he must try to understand what happened. Second he must try to master the feelings called up in him.

Parents should talk with their children about death. The child must know that the parent does not feel the event is so overwhelming that he cannot discuss it. Exposure to death can contribute directly or indirectly, to emotional and behavioral disturbances in early childhood. The child must be allowed to understand what has occured in a warm and sensitive way.

"Actually," says Dr. Walter Char, Chairman of the University of Hawaii Medical School, "it is better at an early age, in a normal matter-of-fact fashion, for a child to be exposed to the concept that death is part of life."[116] The child who is strongly dependent upon his significant adults for his security and his conception of himself as a worthy and adequate person is capable, if they meet these needs, of integrating the concept of "non-being." This is true if his parents can do so, and he is solaced by the thought that his demise, and theirs, is yet far away.[117]

The wise parent will discuss the subject of death from the point of view of their own religion, but at the child's level in an informal and casual atmosphere, while

imparting love, warmth, and support as well as knowledge and belief. The parent should strive for spiritual development rather than the positive acceptance of a theological doctrine. One should never impart a fanciful doctrine that the youngster will later need to unlearn; adults should test their own beliefs in the light of what they teach. A child easily senses the parent's insincerity.[118]

Adults should never try to lead the child to believe they have final answers. They must leave the door open to questions, differences of opinion, and doubt. The child will develop the capacity to understand the real implications of death when he lives in an open, loving and truthful universe and the surviving family are open, loving and truthful to him.[119] The child will learn that death is not to be associated with guilt, superstition, and unchallenging dogma.

Religion is an experience as well as belief. Children learn what they live. They live what is meaningful to them. The wise parent should discuss the Jewish customs relating to death in a gentle and non-threatening manner.

Death concepts are influenced many times by the situational context. (Is there a dying person in the room?)

> The child should not have to wait until the death of a loved one to be hurriedly and frantically informed by a weeping mother that people are buried in special gardens or that stones or plaques are placed on each grave to indicate who is resting there. It is suggested that one explain the realities of death under more ideal circumstances, rather than with retroactive interpretation in the face of grief.[120]

A parent can help the child experience the idea of death through casual remarks about dead flowers and insects and through the experience with the death of birds and pets.

The death of a pet may provide an emotional dress-rehearsal and preparation for the greater losses yet to come.[121] Children can participate in mock funerals. They can re-enact the death of their pet in an attempt to master their fear and to understand their emotions.

Children need to express all their feelings about death. Dr. Haim Ginott wrote,

> A child should not be deprived of his right to grieve and to mourn. He should be free to feel sorrow in the loss of someone loved. The child's humanity is deepened, and his character ennobled when he can lament the end of life and love...The first step in helping children face their loss is to allow them to express fully their fears, fantasies and feelings. Comfort and consolation come from sharing deep emotions with a listener who cares.[122]

Attending funerals and other death rites helps children to accept the reality of death. As an integral part of the family, a child should be encouraged, but not forced, to go to a funeral. Funerals help the child to know definitely what has become of the body and where it is buried. At the funeral the child senses the sadness but also the spiritual atmosphere. Do not keep a child away from a funeral because of an "he won't understand" excuse. He will understand what he needs to understand, and be less frightened of funerals and death rituals that are made to appear as "mysteries."

Dr. Edgar Jackson, writing about child and funerals, has stated:

> Children love a parade, and a funeral is a private family parade from the death bed to the hole in the ground.
>
> If a child wants to participate in this significant family event, he should be allowed to. I think more children have been damaged by exclusion than by inclusion, because they will accept the funeral at the point at which they are able.[123]

Parents have to be the judge as to whether a child should go to a funeral or not. Yet most experts feel that a child should not be sent away, sorrow must be shared. In fact the only reason not to take a child to a funeral is because of attention span that may be short.[124] But a child must never be forced to do things he finds threatening or unacceptable.

By the child's attendance at a funeral, he, too, is offering his last respects, and feels enriched by being part of this person's existence, and through his presence is able to express publicly his own love and devotion.[125] Parents need to recognize that the funeral is not merely the religious service, but it is also all of the events from the time of death through the interment, in which the religious and social community participates. It involves the planning, the visitations, the coming together of the family and the emotional support of neighbors. The child <u>knows</u> something unusual is going on and <u>wants</u> to be part of it.

The child can be made to feel important by sharing family duties such as answering doorbells, telephones, helping with chores, and even in preparation of meals (possibly the meal of consolation). The child could well feel that even though he should have done more for his now deceased loved one, through helping and ritual he can at least do right.

The halacha is lenient with children. The rabbis even felt that they should not receive training with regard to mourning.[126] They probably stated this because they felt that it was not good for someone to engage in limited mourning. They considered the child to be less capable of the deep feelings which overcome someone older as a result of losing a loved object.[127] Of course with modern research it has been found that this is not entirely true.

Rituals, in general, could be the sought for punishment, the neutralizer, the deprivation that could balance off the imagined indulgence at the bottom of guilt.[128] But Jewish rituals are community rituals. The child is brought into contact with those who also have a "we-feeling." So a child may tear or "rend" his clothes, as a sign of great anguish, along with the community.[129] The observances of the rituals help him to face reality, give honor to the deceased, and re-affirm life as part of his community.

Shivah lends the comfort of the loving concern of family and friends, and the child should be included. He

should be afforded the chance to face grief with family and community. Carrying out daily worship may help the child come to peace with his feelings, again as part of the community.

The best way to help children is make them feel free enough to talk about death. If they remain silent they remain locked in their own fantasies. If the adult remains silent in order to protect children, he will achieve the opposite effect by terrifying them. The children will think that the adult is frightened and that is why he will not talk.

When will a child ask about death? By the games he plays, or an event in the neighborhood; when his interest or experience is confronted by it.[130] Honest answers are important to a child. If he is lied to, it compounds his anxiety. But as death becomes less mysterious, more understandable, and in a sense, "palpable," the associated emotions of fear become manageable.

Judaism holds firmly to the view that man's life and his death are organic parts of a grand pattern, divinely ordered, and endowed with an underlying purpose and meaning.[131] Death is unavoidable and should be confronted realistically. (See Bible, II Samuel 14:14; Psalm 49:1-13: Ecclesiastes 2:14 and 3:19-20.) The needed preparation for death should be part of the natural order of living. (Exodus Rabbah 48:1; II Kings 20:1.) And man needs to have a sense of the finality of life. (Deuteronomy Rabbah 9:1.)

It is unfortunate that death is not part of the curricula of most of our religious schools. "We cheat our children if we do not let them know of the existence of this part of their heritage."[132] So little time if any is spent on teaching about death. It is as if they will never need to know about it. The adult who says "let them confront death when they must, and not at a time when they are still so sensitive and tender," is kidding himself. It is much wiser to prepare children to face death before they need to know about it.

Naturally any discussion of death, especially in a classroom situation is controversial. But in the classroom and home it can be accomplished in a simple matter-of-fact way that should not be offensive. Such discussions would certainly offer great consolation to the child who has, or will, lose a loved one, and save him from much unnecessary guilt and shame.

Death is frightening for adults too. But it is the child who is the key. If adults are to understand death and its fears, they must understand the mind of the child. For there, in the mind of the child, is the place where death and its fears first manifest themselves and condition the adult.

CHAPTER II

CURRICULUM TO TEACH ABOUT DEATH

SECTION 2:1 THEME: THE CYCLE OF NATURE

OBJECTIVES	To understand the cyclical nature of things. To see and understand that the natural environment is not static, but constantly in process, and that this movement repeats itself over and over. To understand how all the elements of nature interact.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Stories and pictures of the natural environment--of Israel. Some pictures of the growth of a flower, or the path of a stream as it turns into a river and then empties into the sea. A microscope and some slides. A number of magazines with pictures--scissors, glue, paper. A film projector and screen. A film: "Embryo," Pyramid Films.
APPROXIMATE TIME	Total time: twenty minutes for each activity. Phase one and two may be done at one session. Phase three and four at a different session.

ENVIRONMENT Any open space, preferably outdoors. If in the classroom move the desks away so there is room. A darkened classroom will be needed for the film.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

Direction

This activity could be in conjunction with a nature walk for Sukkot, or Tu B'shevat. The idea is not to imitate elements of nature, but to show how they work in conjunction to form a life cycle, or a progression.

Thought

For those children who live in an urban area, you should provide as many aspects of nature as you can find.

PROCEDURES

Phase One

(1) Step one. Divide the class into three groups in a circle and give them arbitrary names of various elements of nature, such as: sun, moon, wind, river, rain, earth, trees, plants, insects, animals, and humans.

(2) Step two. Ask one "element" to "move" in any way he wishes with any part, or all of his body.

(3) Step three. Ask another "element" (not in order) to answer this movement in his own way. Continue the alternating movements and add another "element" to react to the movement of the "element" before him, until all in the group

are moving. Let them see how some are working together while in motion at the same time. On one level is the interaction of the two elements, such as: sun and plants; while on a larger scale it is the interaction of the groups of elements--sun, rain, earth, river, plants, and insects. This can also be done by making sounds (clapping, snapping fingers, stamping) or mixing the moving and the sounds.

(4) Step four. Let all three groups see how they look all working together.

Phase Two

(1) Step one. Get the children into a circle again, tell them to remember their movements.

(2) Step two. Tell them that you are going to recite a story about the growth of a seed into a flower and how the seed needs all the elements to help it grow. As you tell the story all the elements are to go into the center of the circle when they hear their names and to perform movements.

Begin with the earth and the seed. The seed needs rain to grow. When the seedling is above ground it needs warmth and sun(light) to continue its growth. When it blooms into a

flower, the bees and other insects will transfer the pollen to make new seeds. The wind can also help.

Sometimes a stream will catch a seed that has been dropped and takes it far away where it will be planted in the earth.

(3) Step three. Explain that without all the elements a new seed would not be planted at all. As you do so, have the various elements leave the circle as they are taken away from the growth cycle. If there were no stream or wind (these elements leave) the seed would not be planted. If there were no bees and insects to transfer pollen there would be no new seeds. If there were no rain, the flower would become dry and wither. If there were no sun(light) the flower would be pale and shrivel. And without the earth, the flower would not have food.

Phase Three

(1) Step one. Show the group the pictures you have collected of flowers, rivers and the ocean. Ask them to relate their feelings to the pictures about the "dance" they did. Discuss what feelings they have about each picture.

(2) Step two. Have them look through the magazines and make a collage of pictures of nature. Their collage should represent their feelings about nature's cycle.

Phase Four

(1) Step one. Show the film: "Embryo," Pyramid Films.

(2) Step two. Discuss the film in light of man's cycle and the cycle of nature. How does man fit in?

Phase Five

(1) Step one. Using the microscope, the class should look at different slides--hair, sugar, salt, water. If possible get prepared slides of cells (maybe from the public school) and discuss the size of man compared to the whole cycle of nature.

SECTION 2:2 THEME: DEATH IS PART OF THE CYCLE

OBJECTIVES	To understand that death is a natural part of the cycle. To make a relationship between an inanimate and an animate object. To understand that death is the end.
MATERIALS NEEDED	A flower that has died. A copy of Talking About Death by Earl Grollman, Beacon Press, Boston, Mass. 1970. The film "The Day Grandpa Died," twelve minutes, from King Screen Productions, 302 Aurora Ave., North, Seattle, Washington 98109.
APPROXIMATE TIME	Total Time: twenty-five minutes.
ENVIRONMENT	Sit in a circle on the floor in the center of the room. This will have to be modified for the showing of the film.
TEACHER BACKGROUND	It is very important that a child be able to talk about death before a crisis in his own life arises. Unfortunately many adults avoid the issue. They say that they want to spare children from the pain.

In reality, children think, and worry a great deal about death. (See the "Introduction to the Teacher's Manual" where there is a discussion on children and death.)

What is most important in this lesson is not to tell the children anything that is not true. Fairy tales are unwise. Saying that So-and-So has gone on a long trip will only cause problems later on. "To die is to sleep" will only make a child afraid to go to bed. When you are discussing the dead flower with the class be prepared for many different questions. Answer each one as fully as you can, but also be able to say "I don't know". Read the Talking About Death book in a warm and loving tone.

PROCEDURES Phase One

(1) Step one. Show the dead flower to the class. Tell the class that this is a flower that you liked very much. It has now completed its cycle (this should be a direct reference to lesson number one) and you feel sad. Ask if anyone in the class has had something that he liked and it died? Discussion

(2) Step two. Ask the class what they think happens when a person dies. Discussion

Phase Two

(1) Step one. Read to the class the first eight pages of Talking About Death. Wherever there are questions in the text, stop and discuss them with the class.

> When you die, you're dead. Try saying that word DEAD. It is a hard word to say, isn't it? Not hard to pronounce, really, but hard to make yourself say. Maybe because it's a sad word--even a little frightening. Let's say it again: DEAD. Now, let's say another word: DIE. That's what happened to grandfather: Grandfather died. He is dead. It is not like playing cowboys and Indians. 'Bang, you're dead.'' And then you start all over again and play another game. DEAD IS DEAD. It is not a game. It is very real. Grandfather is gone. He will never come back.
>
> When something goes wrong we may pretend it didn't happen. We hope it isn't true. When grandfather died, we didn't believe it. 'Maybe the doctor was wrong.' 'Maybe grandfather just went away on a long trip and will come back.' But we know we are only fooling ourselves. Grandfather is dead. We miss him. We love him. But we cannot bring him back to life.
>
> Like plants. You put seeds in the ground. They grow. They bud, and beautiful flowers appear. After a time the flowers fade, they fall off, they die. For flowers, and for all of us--for everything 'there is a season.' Which means, there is a time for every living thing to grow and flourish and then die. When a flower dies, it is dead. Life has left it. That flower will never grow again. We can remember how beautiful it was, but now it is gone. 'To everything there is a season.'

These words come from the Bible. 'To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose. A time to be born, a time to die, a time to cry and a time to laugh.' These words tell us that just as there is joy in life, there is also pain. Just as there is happiness, there are also tears. We understand life by both the light and the darkness. What do you think this means?

(2) Step two. Discuss with the class the statement "To everything there is a purpose." Ecclesiastes: 3:1-9.

Make a list with the class of all the opposites they can think of, e.g. happy/sad; hot/cold; boy/girl.

Vote with the class on which statements in Ecclesiastes they agree with, disagree with.

(3) Step three. Sing the song "Turn, Turn, Turn." The Byrds have made a recording of this song which uses Ecclesiastes Three as lyrics.

Phase Three

(1) Step one. Show the film "The Day Grandpa Died." It is the story of the impact on a young boy of the death of his grandfather. The setting is an upper middle-class Jewish suburban home and the style includes flash-backs to happy memories of shared experiences. It is a sensitive and warm treatment of exactly what the class has been discussing.

SECTION 2:3 HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE CRYING?

OBJECTIVES	To understand that to give vent to emotions of grief is natural. To understand that death leads to mourning. Those who lose someone close to them feel sad, and mourn because they loved that person. To begin to understand Jewish rituals associated with death and mourning.
MATERIALS NEEDED	A copy of Talking About Death by Earl Grollman, Beacon Press, Boston, Mass., 1970. The tape of the "El Mo-Le Ra-Cha-Mim" and tape recorder. Drawing paper and crayons.
APPROXIMATE TIME	Total time: twenty-five minutes.
ENVIRONMENT	Set up a place in the room to be a stage for the role playing. The drawing may be done at the children's desks; or the paper may be "masking taped" to the wall, and the children stand to draw.
TEACHER BACKGROUND	It is important to allow a child to discuss and work out his innermost fears and fantasies and feelings. (See the material in the

Teacher's Manual where there is a discussion on Children and Death.) Try not to be judgmental about their feeling.

The role-playing situations should give you some very interesting insights into the feelings of the children about death situations. The same is true about their drawings.

Read the Talking About Death book in a warm and loving tone.

PROCEDURES

Phase One

(1) Step one. Divide the class into small groups of two's, three's, and four's. Give the first group its role situation. (Be prepared to whisper the scene to the group if they do not understand the written directions.) Have the group act out the scene, follow with discussion, then move to the next group and situation.

ROLE SITUATIONS

1. An older brother/sister must tell their younger brother/sister of the death of the family pet.
2. Two friends must go to the house of their friend whose father has died.
3. Three boys make fun of a fellow classmate whose father is not home (because he has died, but they do not know this.)

4. A girl asks her friend if her mother can take them shopping, but she does not know that the friend's mother is dead.

(2) Step two. The situations may be repeated by different people to see if there are different reactions.

Phase Two

(1) Step one. Ask the class if any of them ever felt like screaming or crying?
Did you cry at that time or not?
Are you too big to cry?
Should boys cry in public?
Why do we cry?

(2) Step two. Make a Values Line: Write Crying Clara on one side of the blackboard and Hold-It-In-Harold on the other side. Ask the class to put their initials on the line between the two names, according to where they would rate themselves.

Phase Three

(1) Step one. Read from Talking About Death. Begin with the page after the one you finished in Section 2:2. Read seven pages.

> Death is very sad. We miss grandfather. We miss him NOW. We miss him so much that we may even cry. What is wrong with that? Nothing. It's all right. It is one of our ways of showing how much we miss and want him.

Are you worried? Afraid you did something wrong and that's why grandfather is not here...as a punishment to you? COURSE NOT!

Grandfather did not die because you may have been bad. You did nothing to make him die. Let me say it again. YOU DID NOTHING TO MAKE HIM DIE!

Nothing you did had anything to do with his death. In fact you helped to make him happy when he was with you. But maybe you remember times you were mean to him. You may have said terrible words. But all people are like that sometimes. We may want to be good and loving, but we do not always do the right thing. Sometimes you may not have done the right thing. Perhaps you made him unhappy. But grandfather always understood. He could forgive you. HE LOVED YOU. You had nothing to do with his death. All people die.

Are you angry that grandfather died? How could he do this to you? How could he leave you? Didn't he love you enough to stay alive? You felt left alone and lonely. A little hurt, maybe. Is that how you felt? Let's talk about it.

Do you want to tell me some of the things that are troubling you? Talking about them might help. I will listen. I will try to understand. Because I, too, am trying to find answers. I, too, am troubled and sad. Did you know that?

Are you surprised that I don't know all the answers about death? Don't be.

Even though no one really understands it, death, is something we must accept. We can talk about it. You can learn something from me. I can learn something from you. We can help each other.

Phase Four

(1) Step one. Play the tape of the "El Mo-Le Ra-Cha-Mim." ("O God full of Kindness.") Ask

the class if they think the melody is happy or sad. Explain that this prayer is sung at a funeral.

The translation of the prayer is:

> O God, full of kindness, You who dwells on high! Grant perfect rest beneath the sheltering wings of your presence, among the holy and pure who shine as the brightness in the heavens, unto the soul of ..... who has gone into eternity, and in whose memory charity is offered. May the Lord of Mercy bring him under the cover of His wings forever, and may his soul be bound up in the band of eternal life. May the Lord be his possession, and may he rest in peace. Amen.

This prayer is in behalf of the dead. Discuss with the class their feelings about what happens to a person when he dies.

What do they think the word "God" means?

(2) Step two. While re-playing the tape ask the class to draw a picture of a funeral.

Ask the children to explain their drawings to the class.

SECTION 2:4 THE FUNERAL

OBJECTIVES	To understand the rituals connected with death. To understand that the Jewish rituals for death and mourning are to show our love for the dead person, to show us that life still goes on, and allow people to vent their feelings. To learn the Hebrew words connected with the rituals.
MATERIALS NEEDED	The set of slides and the projector and screen. The vocabulary puzzles. Tape of the "El Mo-Le Ra-Cha-Mim" and tape recorder.
APPROXIMATE TIME	Total time: twenty minutes
ENVIRONMENT	Arrange the classroom seating in the most effective arrangement for showing slides and discussion.
TEACHER BACKGROUND	You should consult the material in the Teacher's Manual concerning the Jewish perspective on death and mourning.

While you are showing the slides the tape of the "El Mo-Le Ra-Cha-Mim" may be played softly in the background.

Make sure that you ask the principal or the rabbi to check your pronounciation of the vocabulary words.

PROCEDURES Phase One

(1) Step one. Show each slide on the screen for thirty seconds and ask the class to make up a story that could go along with the slide.

Leaves falling from a tree

A pile of dead leaves

A scene of dead trees

A forest fire

A bleak winter farm scene

A dead bird in the snow

Old people sitting on a porch

Old person lying in bed

A casket

A cemetery

A funeral procession

(2) Step two. Read Talking About Death. Begin with the page after the last one you read in Section 2:3 and read the next two pages.

We do know that when grandfather died there was a funeral. Friends and family came together. We went to services. We listened to beautiful prayers. Everyone talked about grandfather and his life. We felt happy that people knew that grandfather was such a good man. But we felt sad, too. We cried. We would never see him again.

Then we went to the cemetery. Remember, you asked about the place that looked something like a big park. But it was filled with large stones, one near the other. That is called a cemetery. On one of the stones grandfather's name will now be written. Grandfather's body is under the warm earth, below the stone. We will go together someday to the cemetery. For that is where grandfather's body is.

Phase Two

(1) Step one. Go over each of the vocabulary words slowly. Use each of the words to describe what happens according to Jewish ritual when it comes to death, burial and mourning.

ALAV HASHALOM	"Peace be upon him". Used after the mention of the name of a departed male.
ALEHAW HASHALOM	"Peace be upon her". Used after the mention of the name of a departed female.
AVELIM	"Mourners"
CHEVRAH KADDISHA	"Holy Brotherhood". This group is involved with the burial and the rituals connected with it.

HESPED	"Eulogy"
KADDISH	"Made Holy or Sanctified". Prayer said for the dead that praises God, yet does not mention death.
MATZEVAH	"Tombstone"
SEUDAT HAVRA-AH	"Meal of Consolation". Meal cooked by friends and eaten when mourners return from the cemetery.
SH-LOSHIM	"Thirty". Mourning begins on the first day of the funeral and ends on the thirtieth day.
SHIVAH	"Seven". The first seven days of mourning.
UNVEILING	The tombstone is set, special prayers are said. The cloth that covers the stone is taken off during the ceremony.
YAHRZEIT	A term in German or Yiddish that means anniversary. On the Yahrzeit of the death of a loved one, the Kaddish is said and a Yahrzeit candle is lit.
YIZKOR	The remembrance with a special prayer of the same name of a departed loved one.

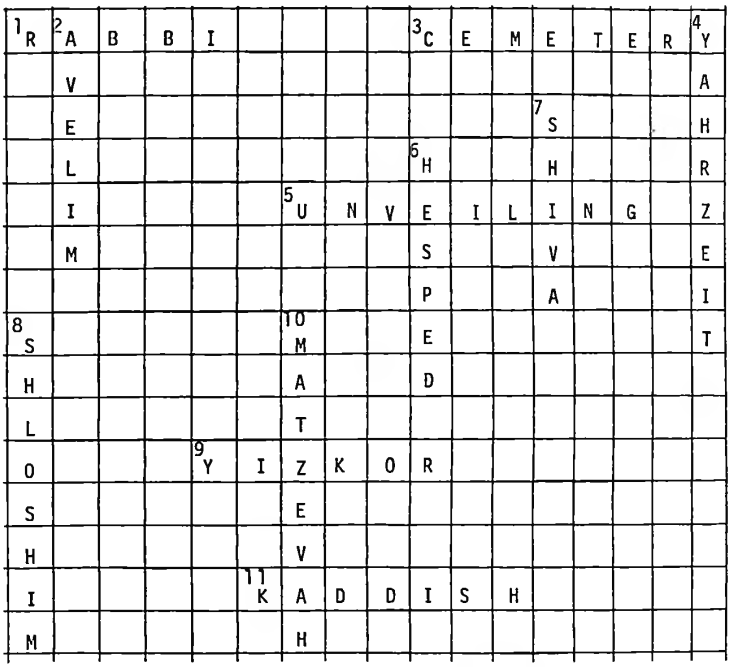
Discuss with the class why we have special words in Judaism dealing with death. (The fact is that death and mourning have religious rituals and customs connected with them.) Ask the class to write a short HESPED for themselves. What would they want said about them?

(2) Step two. Have the class practice the vocabulary words with the help of the puzzles.

EXAMPLE

YIZKOR	REMEMBER
MATZEVAH	TOMBSTONE
YAHRZEIT	ANNIVERSARY
SHIVA	SEVEN

EXAMPLE



ACROSS

1. The Jewish person who usually leads the funeral service.
3. The place where dead are buried.
5. The name of the ceremony when the tombstone is set.
9. The service of remembrance.
11. The prayer that is said for the dead.

DOWN

2. The Hebrew word for mourners.
4. The word that is used to mean the anniversary of a death.
6. The Hebrew for a eulogy.
7. The first 7 days of mourning.
10. The Hebrew word for tombstone.

SECTION 2:5 WHAT KIND OF THINGS CAN YOU FIND IN A CEMETERY?

OBJECTIVES

To familiarize the student with the cemetery.

To see the cemetery as a place that has life and death.

To have an awareness of reverence.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Variable--it depends on the purpose of the trip. See "Procedures" section.

APPROXIMATE TIME

Forty-five to sixty minutes plus the time of transportation.

ENVIRONMENT

Field trip to a cemetery.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

Erecting a "Matzevah" (tombstone) is a very ancient tradition. "And Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob erected a tombstone on Rachel's grave" (Genesis 5:19-20). The tombstone serves a number of purposes:

a) To mark the place of burial.

b) To serve as a symbol of honor to the deceased buried beneath it.

The trip can also contain nature and ecological components. You might want to include:

1. How is the cemetery laid out?
2. Where are the oldest tombstones? Are they predominantly all together or scattered?
3. Do all cemeteries have tombstones?
4. How are the cemeteries maintained? Who mows the grass, keeps up the roads, etc.?
5. How big is the cemetery?
6. What kind of trees are found in the cemetery? Many people study the plant life in a cemetery because of the relatively undisturbed nature of a cemetery. Many native trees of a region are only found in cemeteries due to clearing and farming, the building of cities and towns and lumbering.
   The trip might lend itself to some work with Judaism and ecology.

Have students make a list of the things in the cemetery, some that they can see and some that they cannot see. Have them make a list of the living and dead things. Have the students make up a picture story. Be careful to make sure that everyone listens very carefully to the other person's story.

Divide the class into two parts and have the children put together a little skit or play in mime (non-verbal) depicting a story about the cemetery. Have each group play the mime with the other group attempting to guess what the first is trying to convey. The teacher needs to confirm in fact that there are living and dead things in the cemetery.

PROCEDURES

Phase One

Probably the best way to conduct a field trip, especially with young children, would be to have one specific purpose for the trip. Rather than having students listen to sounds, collect things, study tombstones, choose one major activity per trip. It may be necessary to plan more than one trip.

Below are some suggested activities which could each serve as a basis for a trip to the cemetery.

1. Find evidence of animal life in a cemetery.
   a. Look for animal homes such as ant hills, bird's nests and squirrel dens.
   b. Look for animal droppings, partially eaten plants or plant parts, and mouse trails in the grass.
   c. Look for bird feathers, animal hair, bones and tracks.

2. Determine the average age of the people when they died. Find their occupations, if possible.
3. Determine from the epitaphs what causes of death seem apparent, especially diseases such as smallpox, polio, cholera, rabies, typhoid, etc. Many times there is only a date on the tombstone. The date can give you a clue. This can be done by checking your town's historical records, verses dates on tombstones. If, for example, you find one date that is repeated on many stones, then check the records for that date. See if there was an epidemic or natural disaster etc. for that date.

   This may be the perfect chance for you to let the class know that not everyone dies of disease. Many children become afraid of the hospital, for example, because a loved one went there and died. The child then sees the hospital as a place of death, rather than a place where a person may get a new lease on life.
4. What can be learned about the community from the cemetery?

a. Are the names German, East European, Spanish-Portuguese?

b. Are the dates on the tombstones around a time of large immigration?

c. Can any occupations be determined?

d. Are there any service veterans?

5. Look for evidence of change:

a. Effects of time on tombstones

b. Effects of weather and climate on tombstones

6. Have the students make a list of people who may be involved directly or indirectly with a cemetery. Suggestions may include:

a. Members of the deceased's family

b. Undertakers and funeral directors

c. Rabbi

d. Chevrah Kaddisha

e. Maintenance personnel

f. Doctors and coroners

g. Florists

h. News reporters who write obituaries (explain word)

i. Others

Phase Two

You may want to have a simulated funeral with the class. Probably it would be best to have

a "book burial." This way the class can also begin to understand Jewish reverence for books.

Have different members of the class play the different roles for the funeral.

Review with the class the various parts of the funeral service. See the CCAR Rabbi's Manual for the elements of the service.

SECTION 2:6 COLLECTING DATA IN A CEMETERY

OBJECTIVES	To see the cemetery as a place where historical data of the Jewish community may be collected.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Masking tape Soft paper Charcoal, crayon, chalk, pastel Spray fixative Paper and pencils
APPROXIMATE TIME	Forty-five to sixty minutes plus the time of transportation.
ENVIRONMENT	Field trip to the cemetery
TEACHER BACKGROUND	This trip is a different type of trip to the cemetery than was found in Section 2:5. The children will collect certain data about the people buried in the cemetery, and this data will then be studied upon return to the classroom. It is probably best if the teacher goes to the cemetery beforehand and collects the data himself. Because he knows what to look for, the teacher will then be able to help the students collect their data. Before making the tombstone rubbings, make sure that permission has been granted by the rabbi.

PROCEDURES

Phase One

Epitaphs are the words that are written on the tombstone in the memory of the person buried there. Write down any epitaphs that are very unusual or interesting.

As you explore the cemetery write down the following information:

1. The name, age at death, birth date for the person who was oldest when he died
2. Write down the same information for the person who was the youngest when he died
3. What year is the oldest grave you can find
4. In what year was the most recent grave established

Is there any given year (or short span of years) in which very many people died? If so, what may have been the cause?

Sketch the symbols that are found on the tombstones. Discuss with your classmates and your teacher what you feel the symbols represent. (For example, the hands making the priestly sign.) Why do you think there is Hebrew on the tombstones? What phrases are repeated? What does this tell us about

laws, customs and traditions? What abbreviations do you find? What do they mean? What are the differences between the oldest section of the cemetery and the newest? Look at the epitaphs, symbols, tombstones, length of life, etc.

Phase Two

Make a grave rubbing of one of the interesting tombstones. Do this by:

1. Taping a sheet of soft paper on the face of the marker.
2. Using the side of a piece of charcoal, crayon, chalk, or pastel, stroke evenly across the paper.
3. Dark colors work best.
4. Rub until the underside of the marker shows through the paper.
5. Use your imagination to get different effects. Try different color combinations, different textures, different pressures, or over-lapping designs.
6. Spray on the fixative to prevent smudging.

Phase Three

The rubbings may be posted on the bulletin board when the class returns to discuss the data that was collected.

Phase Four

Upon returning to the classroom, you may want to have the class design their own tombstone. Let them write their own epitaph for the stone.

SECTION 2:7 REVIEW OF THE TRIP TO THE CEMETERY

OBJECTIVES	To understand what was observed at the cemetery. To have the students symbolically represent their feelings, attitudes or impressions about the cemetery. To begin to come to an understanding about the importance of memory.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Paper and paint/crayons/pencils. Tape of the funeral service from the CCAR's Rabbi's Manual. A tape recorder. Film "In My Memory", National Instructional Television Center, "Inside Out" Series, Newton, Mass. A projector and screen.
APPROXIMATE TIME	Twenty-five minutes
ENVIRONMENT	Any open space in the classroom. You will need to arrange the seating for the film.
TEACHER BACKGROUND	The review of the trip to the cemetery will allow the students to ask any questions they might have thought about during the week

after the visit. The discussion will allow the teacher to answer any questions that are fears of the children.

While the students are reacting to the trip symbolically, play the tape of the funeral service for background sounds.

Make sure the students have a chance to explain their treatment, symbolically, of the trip.

The film will help you begin to talk about memory with the class.

PROCEDURES

Phase One

Have the students symbolically (by making a drawing, writing a poem, story or description, or giving an oral presentation) represent the feelings, attitudes, or impressions they have about a cemetery.

This can be structured around such topics as:

1. Writing a story about the animals or plants that live in the cemetery.
2. Symbolically representing the importance of death to life.

Phase Two

Show the film "In My Memory". This film portrays a young girl's response to the death of her grandmother. It deals with

playing dead ("Bang, bang you're dead") and other child reactions.

The funeral is included in the film and tries to make the viewer identify the point at which the young girl understands what her grandmother's death really means.

It is very important to review the film with the class. Have them retell the whole story. Ask them what they identified with in the film.

Ask them to tell you what they liked and did not like in the film.

SECTION 2:8 MEMORIES ARE BEAUTIFUL

OBJECTIVES

To understand that as Jews we emphasize the remembrance of the dead.

To understand that we accept death as part of God's plan for all life and hope the influence towards good of the dead will last.

To understand that the grave is not a shrine, but a place of remembrance.

MATERIALS NEEDED

A copy of Talking About Death by Earl Grollman, Beacon Press, Boston, Mass., 1970; Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl by Otto H. Frank, Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1952.

Drawing paper

Paint and crayons

Tissue paper, colored

Magazines

Construction paper

Scissors

Paste

APPROXIMATE TIME

Total time: twenty-five minutes

ENVIRONMENT

Any open space in the classroom.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

It is understandable that these children will not have long memories, because their lives

have been so short. Something in their "distant" past may have occurred five days ago. This lesson will try to help them realize how important memories are to them. (See the material on children and death in the Teacher's Manual.)

PROCEDURE

Phase One

(1) Step one. Ask the children to recall their earliest memories. Ask them to relate it to the class.

Ask them if they think they will remember what they did in class this year.

Ask them if they remember what they did in Kindergarten.

Discuss

(2) Step two. Ask the students to make two drawings. The first is to be a picture of what they look like right now. The second picture is to be what they think they will look like when they are seventy years old--"three score years and ten" (the traditional life span of a man.) Have them show their pictures to the class.

Phase Two

(1) Step one. Read the last three pages of Talking About Death by Earl Grollman.

(You will probably have to refresh the classes memory about the story.)

> Of course, we shall have grandfather in other ways. But these ways are in our minds, in our memories. We know that we cannot see him or talk to him. But we can talk about him and remember him. Tell me what you remember most about him. Do you remember some of the funny things he did? Do you remember the times you made him happy? Now he is dead. But we remember him. We can never forget that he died. But we will always remember that he lived.

(2) Step two. Discuss with the class about visiting the grave of a loved one during the Holy days. Go over the Kaddish with them again, and talk about Yizkor. Explain the tradition of kindling the Yahrzeit candle.

(3) Step three. As seen in the "El Mo-Le Ra-Cha-Mim" prayer, charity, or more correctly tzedakah, is often times given in memory of a dead loved one. Discuss with the class their feelings about this custom. Allow the class to choose a charity to be helped by the group and have the class decide in whose memory it should be given.

Phase Three

With the tissue paper, magazines and construction paper, ask the class to make a collage that represents what they think death is like.

Have them explain their collage to the class.

Phase Four

We remember in Judaism those people who died (were killed) just because they were Jews. Ask the class if there is anything they would be willing to be martyred for.

Read sections of Anne Frank. Discuss her life and her death. You may want to discuss Yom Ha-Zicaron, Day of Remembrance, that is observed in Israel each year for the war dead--and Yom Ha-Shoah, Day of the Holocaust, to remember the six million killed by the Nazis.

Sing song "Eli, Eli."

ANOTHER PROJECT — Make a Yahrzeit candle

MATERIALS NEEDED

4 oz. glass
Parafin wax
Wicks
Acrylic paint
Brushes

PROCEDURES — Paint the empty glass with any type of "Jewish" decoration. Melt the wax. When the paint drys, pour melted wax into glass. Place wick into melted wax. It can be held in place by tying it to a pencil that is resting across the rim of the glass.

CHAPTER III

ANNOTATED RESOURCES FOR THE TEACHER

This compilation of annotated resources for the teacher has been prepared to aid the teacher in teaching any unit about death. A digest of each of the materials that has been cited here, as well as other pertinent information is provided. Where available, information about source and cost has also been included.

SECTION 3:1 FILMOGRAPHY*

1. "All The Way Home," 103 minutes, black and white, 1963, Films, Inc., (feature film).
   This film is adapted from a story by James Agee. Set in 1915, it reveals attitudes toward aging, religion, illness, and family relationships.
   (Senior high and up)

2. "Between the Cup and the Lip," 11 minutes, color, 1971, Mass Media, $15 rental.
   This film is a short animated film about a funeral procession. Symbols are used to convey activities during life and the inevitable common end in death.
   (All ages if prepared to explore the subject of death.)

3. "Brian's Song," 75 minutes, color, 1972, LCA, $150 rental (feature film).
   True story of football player Brian Piccolo's fight with cancer at age 26. A real tear-jerker.
   (Intermediate and up)

4. "But Jack was a Good Driver," 15 minutes, color, 1974, Kent State, $7 rental.
   Two boys leaving the cemetery after a funeral for their friend discover his death was probably suicide. Grief is turned into guilt.
   (Junior high and up)

5. "Come and Take my Hand," 30 minutes, color, NBC.
   A very ordinary film that shows the work of a religious home for the dying.

6. "The Day Grandpa Died," 11 minutes, color, 1970, BFA, Excellent film about the impact of death upon a young Jewish boy when his grandfather dies.
   (6 to 11 years)

*A key to the abbreviations used for film distributors appears at the end of this section.

7. "Death," 42 minutes, black and white, 1969, Kent State, $13.00 rental.
   Follows a terminal cancer patient through his last days. Doctors discuss the psychology of dying.
   (Senior high and up)

8. "The Dying Patient," 60 minutes, black and white, 1971, UC, $50 rental.
   A difficult film from the technical side, it explores the dynamics of psychiatric interviews with dying patients.
   (Senior high)

9. "The End of One," 7 minutes, color, 1970, Kent State, $5.50 rental.
   Through the imagery of sea gulls, and a hugh city trash dump, the subject of dying and suffering is explored.
   (Primary and up)

10. "Grief," 50 minutes, color, 1972, CF
    This film deals specifically with the problem of the bereaved. It is an assembly of personal accounts of reactions to loss.
    (Senior high and up)

11. "How Could I not be Among You?," 30 minutes, color, 1970, ECCW, $35 rental.
    Visual accompaniment to poetry written by a 30 year old man who died from leukemia. Excellently done as a "song of dying," life and love.
    (Junior high and up)

12. "Ikiru," 140 minutes, black and white, 1952, MAB (feature film).
    Top film about a man who discovers he has just six months to live.
    (Senior high and up)

13. "In My Memory," 15 minutes, color, Kent State, $7 rental.
    Explores a young girl's thoughts about her grandmother who has just died. She attends the funeral and begins to understand death.
    (7-11 year old and up)

14. "Katherine Mansfield's the Garden Party," 24 minutes, color, Kent State, $10.50 rental.
    A story of a young well-to-do adolescent girl's first encounter with death.
    (Junior high and up)

15. "Living and Death," 29 minutes, black and white, IU, $7.75 rental.
This is a film made for National Educational Television that explores the problems of living and dying in our modern society.
(Senior high and up)

16. "The Loved One," 116 minutes, color, 1965, Films, Inc.
A satirical film that pokes fun at the funeral business and its money-making aspects.
(Junior high and up)

17. "The Mystery that Heals," 30 minutes, color, T-L, $30 rental.
In an interview, Carl Jung speaks about his views on psychology and death.
(Senior high and up)

18. "The Parting," 16 minutes, color, Wombat, $21 rental.
This film is an account of the ritual surrounding death in a Yugoslavian mountain village. It is excellent for comparison of death customs.
(Junior high and up)

19. "Passing Quietly Through," 26 minutes, black and white, 1971, Grove, $35 rental.
A blunt encounter between a nurse and a dying elderly man.
(Senior high and up)

20. "Psychosocial Aspects of Death," 39 minutes, black and white, 1971, IU, $9.50 rental.
Prepared for nursing students, this film deals with situations associated with death.
(Senior high and up)

21. "Soon There will be No More," 10 minutes, color, Kent State, $5.50 rental.
A true story of a young mother dying of cancer. The narration was written for her young daughter.
(Senior high and up)

22. "The Star Spangled Banner," 5 minutes, color, 1972, Pyramid, $10 rental.
A graphic presentation of death during war. The film shows a soldier stepping on a mine and his thoughts as he dies.
(Junior high and up)

23. "Those Who Mourn," 5 minutes, color, 1973, FCC, $10 rental. A short film to stimulate discussion. It shows the grief a young widow faces after her husband's accidental death.
(Junior high and up)

24. "Though I Walk Through the Valley," 30 minutes, color, 1972, Pyramid, $25 rental.
This film is about a college professor who has six months to live. It deals with all his fears and hopes and his family's feelings.
(Junior high and up)

25. "To Be Aware of Death," 14 minutes, color, 1974, Kent State, $7 rental.
A series of comments by a group of youths regarding their feelings and experiences with death.
(Junior high and up)

26. "To Die Today," 50 minutes, black and white, 1971, FL $35 rental.
Features Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, the principal teacher about death and dying. The film contains her theory of the psychological stages that a dying person goes through.
(Senior high and up)

27. "Until I Die," 30 minutes, color, 1971, VN, $24 rental.
Another film with Dr. Kubler-Ross. This time she deals with children's reactions to death and with open feelings towards dying patients.
(Senior high and up)

28. "The Upturned Face," 10 minutes, color, 1972, Pyramid, $15 rental.
In an unspecified war, two young men must go through the pain of burying their dead friend. They must take his personal effects, dig his grave, and cover his upturned face.
(Junior high and up)

29. "Warrendale," 105 minutes, black and white, 1967, Grove, $10 rental.
A documentary with Allan King. A cook dies at a treatment center for emotionally disturbed children. It reveals most primitive behavior as the teenagers learn of the death.

30. "What Man Shall Live and Not See Death," 58 minutes, color, 1974, Kent State, $22.50 rental.
An excellent study of how young people approach death. Draws upon the experiences of doctors, clergy, and social workers who deal with the dying.
(Junior high and up)

31. "Who Should Survive?," 26 minutes, color, 1972, Medal, $20 rental.
This film deals with the ethical, legal and scientific issues involved with euthenasia. A mongoloid infant is allowed to die. A panel then discusses this issue.
(Junior high and up)

32. "You See, I've Had a Life," 30 minutes, black and white, 1972, ECCS, $24 rental.
Paul, a 13 year old "all American boy," develops leukemia. He tries to live a normal life until the end. This film reveals his experiences and the feelings of those around him.
(Junior high and up)

KEY TO FILM DISTRIBUTORS

BFA	BFA Educational Media, 2211 Michigan Ave., Santa Monica, California 90404
CF	Concord Films, Nactan, near Ipsewich, Suffolk, England
ECCW	Eccentric Circle Cinema Workshop, Box 1481, Evanston, Illinois 60204
FL	Filmakers Library, Inc., 290 W. End Ave., N.Y.C. 10023
Films, Inc.	Films, Inc., 1144 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Illinois 60091
FCC	Franciscan Communications Center, 1229 South Santee St., Los Angeles, California 90015
Grove	Grove Press Film Division, 53 E. 11th St., N.Y.C. 10003
IU	Indiana University Audio-Visual Center, Bloomington, Indiana 47401
Kent State	Kent State University, Kent, Ohio
LCA	Learning Corp. of America, 111 Fifth Ave. N.Y.C. 10022
MAB	MacMillan Audio Brands, 34 MacQuesten Parkway, South, Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10550
Mass Media	Mass Media Associates, 2116 N. Charles St., Baltimore, Maryland 21218
Medal	Medal of Greatness, 1032 33rd St., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20007
NBC	NBC Educational Enterprises, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, N.Y.C. 10020
Pyramid	Pyramid Films, Box 1048, Santa Monica, California 90406
T-L	Time-Life Films, 43 W. 16th St., N.Y.C. 10011
UC	University of California, Office of Med. Ed., Irvine, California 92664
VN	Video Nursing, Inc., 2834 Central St., Evanston, Illinois 60201

SECTION 3:2 VIDEO TAPES

"Elisabeth Kubler-Ross," Antioch Video, Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio. Rental cost - only postage. From her appearance on the Phil Donahue Show, Dr. Kubler-Ross talks about her book, On Death and Dying. During the program, Dr. Kubler-Ross discusses her theory of the stages of dying. (Senior High and up)

SECTION 3:3 FILMSTRIPS

1. "American Attitudes Toward Death and Dying," Concept Media, 1500 Adams Ave., Costa Mesa, Calif. 92626. Examines death from the perspective of urbanization, medical science, and secularization. Traces the denial of death in every day living.

2. "Psychological Reactions of the Dying Person," Concept Media.
   Focuses on the dying person's response to his fatal illness. Discusses the coping mechanisms of denial, regression, and other states of mind of the dying patient.

3. "Guidelines for Interacting with the Dying Person," Concept Media.
   Discusses how to care for the dying. Shows how to help the dying person maintain dignity, security and hope.

4. "The Dying Patient," Concept Media.
   Personal accounts of dying patients. Uses an open ended format to stimulate discussion.

SECTION 3:4 TAPES

1. "Death, the Enemy," Psychology Today, 595 Broadway, New York city, New York, 10012. Purchase $6.95. A noted thanatologist, Edwin S. Shneidman, examines death and dying. He explains why suicide notes are boring, why people cannot write their own epitaphs, and why death exists only for survivors, not for those who die.

2. "Everyday Heroics of Living and Dying," Psychology Today, 595 Broadway, N.Y.C., N.Y. 10012. Purchase $6.95.
Ernest Becker won a Pulitzer Prize in 1974 for his book, The Denial of Death. Dr. Becker speaks from his bed, shortly before he died from cancer. He talks about his views of death and dying, both as a scholar on the subject and as a participant in the experience.

3. "Death, Its Psychology," Canadian Broadcasting Corp., Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Purchase $14.00.
This is a one hour tape that deals with the various aspects of the work of Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross. A woman, dying of cancer, talks about her feelings. Dr. Kubler-Ross discusses the five stages of dying.

4. "Confronting Death," Thomas More Association, 108 N. Wabash, Chicago, Ill. 60601. Purchase $8.95.
This tape is a 60 minute audio collage of human and religious problems dealing with death. There are interviews with Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, Dr. Carl Nighswant, of University of Chicago Divinity School, and Sister Mary Peter McGinty of St. Mary of the Lake Seminary. While the material is mostly for Catholics, the tape covers so many aspects of the problem of death it has wide appeal.

SECTION 3:5 RECORDS

Rock and folk music has always been concerned with death. There may even be some children in the class that have suggestions of music that relates to the subject of death. Here are some examples.

The Shangra-La's "Leader of the Pack"

Mark Denning's "Teen Angel"

Eddie Cochran's "Teenage Heaven"

Bobby Gentry's "Ode to Billie Joe"

Bobby Goldsboro's "Honey"

The Band's "Long Black Veil"

The Rolling Stone's "Paint it Black"

Judy Collins (on Recollections Album) "Winter Sky"

Laura Myro's "And When I Die" (done by Blood, Sweat and Tears)

George Harrison's (on All Things Must Pass Album) "The Art of Dying"

Procul Harum's Album Home (the theme of the album is death)

SECTION 3:6 SUPPLEMENTARY CURRICULUM MATERIAL

1. "Compass," March, 1974, #27, UAHC, N.Y., N.Y. p. 13-23.
   Using When a Jew Celebrates, by Harry Gersh, Behrman House, Inc., N.Y. 1971, as a text, the material in this article gives background materials and ideas for teaching death to sixth-grade students.
2. "Death, the Enemy," Reprint of Articles from Psychology Today, 595 Broadway, N.Y., N.Y. 10012, 1974.
   These articles are a very interesting compilation of ideas about death. Most useful for the classroom is the questionnaire entitled, "You and Death." The answers from the "Psychology Today" readers who responded are included.
3. "Keeping Posted," March, 1972, Vol. XVII, No. 8, UAHC, N.Y., N.Y.
   The title of the entire issue is "A time to be born... a time to die." The articles deal with many aspects of death, for the teenager's understanding.
4. "The Inkling," 1975, Vol. III, No. 3, Denver, Colorado.
   This is a newsletter for religious school teachers. This issue is devoted to the subject of teaching death. There is an excellent discussion on Judaism and death. And the value clarification strategies for all grades are excellent!

SECTION 3:7 GAMES

1. "Cycle: An Interaction Unit Introducing the Stages of the Human Life Cycle," Interact, P.O. Box 262, Lakeside, California, 92040. Purchase $10.00.

   Working in groups of two's students analyze case studies of people in various stages of the life cycle. They then contact persons living in various life cycle stages and get their opinions on the case studies. There then follows a "solutions" seminar where groups role-play solutions for human problems in each stage.

   Each student then chooses a "contact project" where he studies an event in detail.

   A "Life and Death Survey" is used as a debriefing activity to help students understand how a person's conception of death influences how he lives his unique life cycle.

   (The entire game revolves around Erik Erikson's concept of the human life cycle.)

2. Role-Playing Cards--Concept Media, 1500 Adams Ave., Costa Mesa, California, 92626.

   The cards represent situations of interaction problems with the dying. The student tries out his responses.

SECTION 3:8 BOOKS

Folktales are excellent for students in fourth grade. The following are a few examples:

Chase, Richard (Ed.), Grandfather Tales, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1948

Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm, Tales From Grimm, New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1936

_____. More Tales from Grimm, Coward-McCann, Inc., 1947

Other titles of folktales:

"Rapunzel"

"Snow White"

"The Tinder Box"

"Rumpelstiltskin"

Stories:

Andersen, Hans Christian, Forty-Two Stories, New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1959 (ages nine-ten).

_____. Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales, New York: Henry Z. Walch, Inc., 1962 (ages nine-ten).

_____. The Steadfast Tin Soldier, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953 (ages nine-ten).

Coatsworth, Elizabeth, The Cat Who Went to Heaven, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1958 (ages ten-twelve).

Wilde, Oscar, The Happy Prince, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1952 (ages nine-ten).

Two books that deal specifically with death are Talking About Death, Earl Grollman and My Grandpa Died Today,

Joan Fassler. Both of these texts allow the adult to have a dialogue with the child while he is reading the book. They are written in a warm, sensitive and loving style. The authors have been very careful not to include any death myths, superstitions or statements that would have to be unlearned later on.

Fassler, Joan, My Grandpa Died Today, New York: Behavioral Publications, Inc., 1972.

Grollman, Earl, Talking About Death, Boston: Beacon Press, 1970.

SECTION 3:9 PERIODICALS

1. "Dying With Dignity," Science, June 19, 1970, p. 1403.
   How much control do we have over how and when we die? Is medical science justified in taking the "dignity" out of death?

2. "When Is Death?" Reader's Digest, May 1969, p. 225-26.
   How can we determine the instant of death? Is it when our heart beats its final beat, when we breathe our last breath, or when we think our final thought?

3. "Broken Heart Syndrome," Newsweek, October 23, 1967, p. 92.
   Is it true that a woman's death can actually decrease her husband's life expectancy? Science is studying the possibility.

4. "When Are You Really Dead?" Newsweek, December 18, 1967, p. 87.
   Perhaps the most accurate definition of death is "You're dead when the doctor says you are."

5. "How the Vikings Buried Their Dead," Life, Sept. 15, 1967, p. 54.
   When a group of Eskimos started digging a foundation for a new school, they discovered a Viking burial ground. Apparently the Vikings had some strict regulations concerning the burial of their dead.

6. "Death is Chamula," Natural History, January 1968, p. 48-57.
   Should death be surrounded by silence and quiet reverence, or by loud chanting and drinking? It all depends on where you live.

7. "Facts You Should Know About Funerals," Reader's Digest, September 1966, p. 81-6.
   Learn what is included in a "standard package" funeral; what hidden extras may double the cost of a funeral; what type of vault a cemetery might "require."

8. "Let's Retain the Dignity of Dying," Today's Health, May 1966, p. 62-4.
The findings were conclusive: the patient had only a few more weeks to live. Should he be told of his fate, or protected from the truth? Even more important, who should decide?

9. "Let the Dying Die," Saturday Evening Post, Sept. 10, 1966, p. 12.
The woman spent her last hours before death in a kind of hopeless pain. As I sat with her, she asked, "Why do some people feel it's wrong to bring on death in a case like mine?"

10. "Death Isn't Necessary," Science Digest, July 1965, p. 80-5.
Is death a necessary consequence of life? The latest generation of biologists is starting to suggest that the answer may be NO!

11. "Death of Death," Newsweek, January 24, 1966, p. 53.
Today's scientific knowledge leads men to review their ideas of death. Perhaps heaven and hell are not the top floor and basement of one eternal mansion, but a type of sorting room for the souls of men.

12. "On Death As a Constant Companion," Time, Nov. 12, 1965, p. 52-3.
Attitudes toward death keep changing. The child of the T.V. generation, upon hearing that his grandfather has died, immediately asks, "Who shot him?"

13. "Death and Modern Man," Time, Nov. 20, 1964, p. 92.
The assumption is always made that people want to live. Is it possible that we're overlooking a point at which people become ready to die?

14. "What Happens When You Die," Science Digest, May 1964, p. 80-4.
Death--what's it really like? Is it an experience of pain and agony, or of sudden, surging power? Or is it like falling quietly asleep? Science is finding the answer.

15. "Cremation: Permissible," Time, June 12, 1964, p. 85.
Although the early Roman Catholic Church prohibited cremation of a human body, Pope Paul issued a statement easing this restriction. Find out what his reasons were and how he is affecting Catholics all over the world.

16. "Tutankhamun's Golden Trove," National Geographic, October, 1963, p. 625.
The Pharoah Tutankhamun died in January, 1343 B.C. of causes unknown. As the court mourned, the king's body underwent 70 days of mummification to preserve his "divine flesh" for its journey into eternity. The preservation treatment actually left little but skin and bones.

17. "Last Rites--Do They Bring Fear or Reassurance?" Science Digest, June 1969, p. 60-61.
What is the effect psychologically of last rites on the conscious, seriously ill patient?

18. "Tell Me, Doctor, Will I Be Active Right Up To The Last?" Atlantic, September 1969, p. 55-7.
Our society views dying as being in questionable taste--despite the fact that ten out of ten still do it.

19. "Forever Young?" Newsweek, Sept. 15, 1969, p. 88-90.
One is a purplish-pink capsule; the other is a large red and olive drab pill. Together they represent man's boundless faith in treatments that offer to restore his failing mental and physical powers.

20. "What Is Death?" Scientific American, September 1968, p. 85-6.
Scientific determination of death as defined by a special Harvard University committee.

21. "The Great Search Beneath the Sands," Life, June 14, 1968, p. 55-72.
Part VI of a series on ancient Egypt. Tells the wonders of the pyramids and tombs of ancient Egyptian kings.

22. "Magic Passage to Eternity," Life, June 7, 1968, p. 66-70.
Ancient Egypt, Part V. More about the pyramids.

23. "Time-Saver for Busy Mourners," Life, May 10, 1968, p. 22.
Drive-in funeral parlors--you don't even have to leave your car.

24. "Death, Where Is Thy Sting?" Newsweek, August 19, 1968, p. 54.
A scientific definition of death.

25. "When Death Comes," Newsweek, December 9, 1968, p. 54.
This article deals with the mental and psychological aspects of death.

26. "Cause of Death: Fright," Newsweek, December 27, 1965, p. 62.
Is it true that a person can actually be frightened to death?

27. "Psychological Autopsy," Scientific American, October 1968, p. 60.
What causes death? Psychological studies before the death of an individual.

28. "Death and Suspended Animation," Science News, August 24, 1968, p. 177-78.
Doctors try to define death while other researchers seek to delay death through suspended animation.

CONCLUSIONS

As adult human beings we all share the knowledge that death is inevitable. Babies, of course, are unaware of this. Therefore, somehow, sometime, in the course of growing up, a child comes face to face with the existence of death. He has much to learn and experience before he understands and accepts its inevitability without distress. How such learning can be eased by the adults who love him is the purpose of this thesis.

Two kinds of understanding are needed by the adult who wants to help children with the problems of death. Self-understanding is fundamental to gaining that insight into adult feelings and reactions which can help parents cope with their children's needs.

Secondly, we need knowledge of children's concepts, feelings and methods of defending themselves, all of which are different from those of adults.

Children under five cannot conceive of the finality of death. They expect a deceased loved one to return, and they believe that a dead person "lives," but within the confines of the casket. Death is simply seen as a limitation of mobility. But every separation, even though temporary, is somewhat disturbing to them.

Despite what most adults believe, a child that is over six months of age is deeply affected by the death of someone close to him, a parent, sister or brother. The infant may be reacting only to separation from the loved one, but that reaction is not different with an adult who experiences the death of a loved one.

Children often express their feelings about a death in indirect ways. Often they seem neither to know nor care about their loss, but such appearances are deceiving. They are the outcome of viewing death as only a temporary phenomenon.

Between the ages of five and nine years of age, the child generally accepts the permanency of death. He links it to the fact that old age ultimately brings death. But the inevitability of death for himself and his loved ones is likely to be too difficult for him to understand. He also shows a strong tendency to personify death, and to believe that it is possible to out-wit or out-luck the death man.

From the age nine and upward the child begins to see death as part of "natural law." Death is something that is universal, final and inevitable. It is no longer a phantom or will-o'-the-wisp. Death comes when essential life functions fail; it is a biological process, the perceptible result of which is the dissolution of bodily life.

Since one of the main functions of religion is to interpret death, it offers an appropriate setting in which to discuss the subject. Judaism has given sacred meaning to death, and its ceremonies and rituals help the individual confront the experience.

Judaism is realistic. Death is part of each person's life; self-deception does no good, and death is final. Though death ultimately comes, it should be forestalled as long as possible because life is precious.

This emphasis on life actually provides a wholesome approach to death. By helping the Jew realize the meaning of death, Judaism increases the significance of his life. He therefore need never shirk reality, but can embrace death as part of the totality of the experience of living.

The rituals and ceremonies that surround death and burial allow the individual Jew to move gradually from a period of intense grief back to full participation in life. Mourning is not just the private business of the bereaved, but also concerns the family and the entire community. This helps the mourner reintegrate himself with his family and community. The mourner is encouraged to allow his feelings to surface, and he is given support by that very relationship with the community.

After a month of necessary adjustment, he moves back fully to the tasks of life. But he continues always to carry with him the memory of his deceased through the concept of Yizkor.

Talking with children about death has in the past been taboo to most adults. It has been relatively easier to discuss even sex, but when it comes to the subject of death, modern parents generally remain silent.

The reason is not hard to understand. Death has been taken out of the home, and therefore out of the every-day experience of the family. In former times children watched loved ones take sick and possibly die. It all happened at home, not in a hospital; in the event of death, even the funeral was held at home.

Death today, therefore, is far more threatening to the child's deep need for security. But the child's fears may be assuaged by the understanding, sensitive adult who can talk to him. Naturally death must not be likened to sleep, or a long journey, or that God wants the good people, etc.

Children need to express grief, just as adults do, and parents must not, through over-protectiveness, spare their child from either the truth or grief. The child senses when something is wrong.

Children should never be isolated but be encouraged to join the family in sharing its sorrows, and participate in Jewish rituals related to death. But they should never be forced to participate.

Parents should discuss death with their child long before a family member or friend dies. He hears about death from many sources--on radio and television, from fairy tales, his friends, and listening to adult talk.

Perhaps one of the most natural ways of talking about it is when a pet dies or a dead bird is found, or at the sight of falling leaves.

Death should also be part of the religious school curriculum. Time is spent on teaching the other life cycle events but nothing on death. It is as if the children need to know nothing about it.

In addition to all the essential information about the psychology of death, this thesis provides a curriculum intended for the grades three, four and/or five. It seeks to help the young child come to grips with death, as well as to understand the Jewish ceremonies surrounding it.

As such the work contains eight lesson plans that picture death as part of the cycle of nature, as sad and a time when people cry. There are Jewish rituals and institutions connected with death--the funeral, mourning rites, and a cemetery. Memories of the dead are preserved, so much so that we often learn about our community from data found in a cemetery.

Annotated resources for the teacher for child development, and Jewish views and practices supplement the lesson.

Thus this work attempts to prepare the teacher in the elementary department of the religious school with all the necessary resources for dealing with the subject of death.

There are, of course, important areas still to be dealt with. The curriculum does not include direct family

involvement. No parent orientation session in advance is provided for, nor is there some sort of handbook for parents to go along with the work of the school. If, at the very least, the parent had an outline of the topics to be discussed in class and some related background material, he could hold meaningful discussions at home. Parents would also be prepared to respond to any of the child's questions or fears.

It may also prove interesting to involve parents as well as grandparents in certain class activities. The children may feel added security and love thereby. This would also enable the family to see what the child is learning, and incidentally become a subtle form of adult education.

In general, this curriculum is intended to serve only as a model for the teaching of all the Jewish life-cycle observances in our religious schools. They need ways of exposing all their students to every Jewish rite-of-passage ceremony. And the teachers need the appropriate materials and techniques to carry out this task.

Reform Judaism has to be related by the individual to the spiritual needs of his everyday life. Religious rites and ceremonies have little value if they are simply hollow reminders of the past. The life cycle observances of the modern Jew must reflect an awareness of our newer knowledge, the problems of the environment of the late twentieth century, and the spiritual needs of the age.

If, as we realize, the rituals surrounding death in Judaism are in congruence with today's psychological findings, necessary for improving the quality of American life, and spiritually satisfying to modern Jews, the event can be meaningful. This is what needs to be done for all the life-cycle events. A re-evaluation must be undertaken.

In Reform Judaism every Jew possesses the authority to decide what ritual is meaningful to him. Each Reform Jew must look at the ceremonies of the life cycle and discover what rituals have intrinsic value in themselves. For one cannot participate in a ceremony where the rituals and symbols represent a system which is considered incredible or irrelevent.

The life-cycle ceremonies must reflect the long history of Jewish religious creativity. Life-cycle rituals and symbols must reflect the basic rhythms of the environment. Then they will be meaningful to the individual. Then there will be no need to teach rituals and customs as history, because they will be very much in the present.

FOOTNOTES

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