

Say Not in Grief

Name _____

Directions to students: You recently read the Rabindranath Tagore poem, “Say Not in Grief.” Alone or with a partner, try the writing activities below to explore the words and images in the poem.

Activity One: Found Poem

Cut apart the words of “Say Not in Grief” and spread them out on a table. You may choose to cut apart individual words, or phrases such as “the dawn has come.” Use the words and phrases to build a new, original poem from your own imagination. You may add additional words and phrases that are not in the poem, if desired. Your poem can be shorter or longer than the original poem. Share your results with the class. Discuss how the new poems differ from the original. Are all the new poems about a loss or a death? Did anyone change the feelings and emotions of the original poem in a dramatic way?

Activity Two: I Say in Thankfulness...

On your own, compose a poem that begins with the words “I say in thankfulness...” Think of someone for whom you are thankful, such as a parent, sibling, other relative, or even a pet. This could be someone you have lost or someone still living. What would you like to say?

For example:

- I say in thankfulness that you are my sister because...
- I say in thankfulness that you taught me baseball because...
- I say in thankfulness that you are not in pain because...

Activity Three: Lighting a Lantern

For this activity, you will need a clean, empty jar (such as a peanut butter jar). Cut out several long, thin strips of yellow or orange paper to make a lantern pattern; each strip should be no longer than the height of your jar. On each strip, write something about a loved one: things you miss, things you want or wanted your loved one to know, special secrets that you shared, and so on. Glue or tape the paper strips in a vertical pattern around the outside of the empty jar. Then twist together red, orange, and yellow tissue paper to make a “flame,” and glue it to the bottom of the inside of your jar. Alternatively, if you wish to keep your thoughts private, you might paint the outside of the jar a yellow or orange color to represent flames, and place your words on slips of paper inside the jar.



Memory Book

Name _____



Directions to students: For this project, you will be making a Memory Book about a person who has passed away whose memory you would like to honor. If you don't know anyone who has died, you may choose a historical figure, celebrity, or pet. Brainstorm ideas here.

Person's Name: _____

Brainstorming Topics:

• Was this person related to you? Was this person a friend? My relationship to my chosen person:

• Think of your favorite memories with this person. Maybe you went on a trip together, or spent a holiday with him or her? My favorite memory with this person:

• Think about what this person was good at. Maybe he or she was a great cook, a talented musician, fisherman, or maybe he or she was the best at telling stories.

• This person's special skill was:

Draw a picture of the person, or something that represents him or her, in the box:



• This person's hidden talent was:

• What makes you think of this person?

• How will you remember or honor this person?
