

# READ★PRAY★WONDER★PLAY

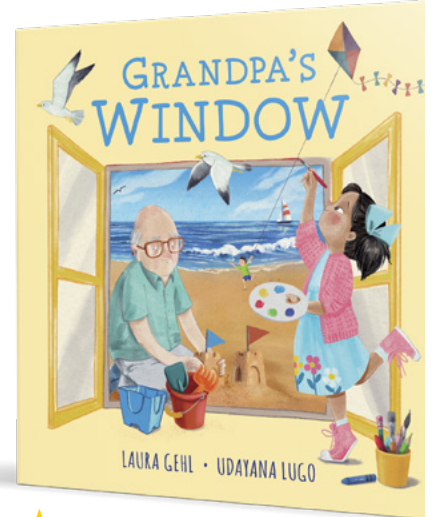
## A GUIDE TO SHARING STORIES WITH CHILDREN

### Grandpa's Window

By Laura Gehl & Udayana Lugo

Conversations around the death of a loved one are among the most difficult aspects of parenting. Thankfully, there are resources, like this book, to assist in framing these conversations. With beautiful illustrations, *Grandpa's Window* uses both words and powerful images to share the experiences of one little girl, Daria, as she goes through the illness and death of her beloved grandfather.

If you are reading this story because your family has experienced a death, rest assured that your presence and openness to questions and conversation is the most important support you can give to your child. As you and your family grieve this loss together, follow the lead of this book—you don't need to always show support with words. Sitting in loving silence is a powerful balm. The final page of this book includes a helpful letter from child psychologist Dr. Sharie Coombes, as well as a list of resources.



### ★ ★ WONDER TOGETHER ★ ★

- The book begins by sharing how Grandpa had a window that looked out to the ocean. If you were not able to leave your room, what would you want your window to look out on?
- Daria carried Grandpa's window home with her after he died. What are some objects or memories that connect you with people you love?
- *With Younger Children:* Daria and Grandpa saw lots of activity outside his window. Which one would you most like to do?
- *With Older Children:* Daria's grandfather dies in this story, yet, when it happens, we learn about it through pictures rather than words. Why do you think the writer and illustrator made that choice?

### ★ ★ EXPLORE THE STORY ★ ★

- Near the end of the book, there is a double-page image of Grandpa's funeral. Talk about funerals with your children to demystify what can be an unfamiliar ritual. Share any family or church traditions around memorial services and funerals including Scripture, hymns, and visitation practices.
- For Daria and Grandpa, squeezing hands became an important way to communicate and show love. The memory of this lasted even after Grandpa died. Think together about special things that members of your family do to show love or communicate without words, and if nothing comes to mind, consider creating a practice (either physical like Daria and her grandfather had, or a word or phrase that holds meaning) that can serve as a touchstone of love and connection with people close to you.

### PRAY

Loving God, we are grateful that you are present with us when we are happy and when we are sad. We are thankful for the people who love us. May the stories we share help us to remember the love that connects us. Amen.



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## ★ ★ DIG DEEPER ★ ★

Whether you have chosen this book because you have experienced or are anticipating a loss of someone special in your child's life, or simply to normalize talking about death, take this opportunity to be open to whatever conversations, questions, fears, or curiosities might arise in your child. Be comfortable in not having all the answers and in normalizing conversations around illness and death. Some ideas for engaging with your child about this topic include:

- Visiting a cemetery. Many cemeteries offer walking tours, and while it may seem a strange outing, cemeteries hold fascinating and informative histories, stories, and geneologies. This could be particularly interesting if there are any local cemeteries where notable individuals are buried, if there is a cemetery connected to your church, or if there is a family plot that holds special meaning to you.
- Creating a memory box. If a loved one has died, this can be a healing activity. To create a memory box, gather items that hold meaning and/or create items that help your child to remember special things about the person. Your child can decorate the box and fill it with items that remind them of the person such as greeting cards or letters, photographs, or hand-crafted mementos.
- Planning an "imaginary trip" with a grandparent or other loved one. In the book, Daria and Grandpa imagine all of the things that they would do on the beach. Although they did not get to experience the activities of flying kites, searching for pots of gold, or building sand castles, the process offered the opportunity for loving conversation. Consider taking travel books out of the library or doing internet research on a dream destination. Look for YouTube videos or documentaries on your chosen location and create a "dreamcation" together!

## MORE TO READ & DO

CLICK THE LINKS BELOW TO LEARN MORE

### ADDITIONAL DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCE FOR *GRANDPA'S WINDOW*

- Download the [Discussion and Activity Guide](#)

### ADDITIONAL BOOKS THAT ACKNOWLEDGE & EXPLORE EMOTIONS

- [Max and the Purple Worry](#), by Kitty Black and Jess Rose
- [One Thursday Afternoon](#), by Barbara DiLorenzo
- [Simon and the Big, Bad, Angry Beasts: A Book about Anger](#), by Ian De Haes
- [My Elephant Is Blue](#), by Melinda Szymanik and Vasanti Unka
- [Sidney the Lonely Cloud](#), by Tim Hopgood
- [What in the World Is Wrong with Gisbert?](#), by Jochen Weeber and Fariba Gholizadeh

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