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Composting Grief Into Light: Building Agentive Healing Literacies with BIPOC Adolescent Writers

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ABSTRACT

Responding to a general recognition that teachers are often ill-prepared to address the intersections of healing, literacy learning, and grief, this paper offers an overview of classroom practices and curricula that support the co-creation of containers of safety for students to explore grief while building academic literacies. Acknowledgment that grief with layers of trauma can often be a subtext of classroom life requires that teachers consider and adopt suitable manners of healing-centered and trauma-informed instruction. Drawing on the voices of students and on fifteen years of experience working with embodiment practices in the classroom, this article provides descriptions of tangible approaches and curricula that organically weave together agentive healing literacies with academic literacies.

Keywords: trauma, somatics, critical literacy, healing literacies, pedagogy, education, teachers, students, grief

Grief is bigger than what's already happened to us—it is connected to our fears, what we love, and who we aspire to become. Grief impacts our relationship with ourselves and one another, and our social location determines the amount of harm we inflict against others based on our inherent relationship to grief.

~Breeshia Wade*, Grieving While Black*

As teachers, we are often trained to maintain a formal boundary with our students, to deal with the science of teaching, scaffold, differentiate, and measure. We are rarely trained to be fully human and responsive to the expanse of pain our students experience as they navigate what author and end of life caregiver Breeshia Wade (2021) called the "ghost of grief." In the passage above, Wade describes the audacious work of unburying the voices of her ancestors to build a life free from the grips of traumatic grief.

As teachers, even though we can't avoid the impact of the haunt, we are encouraged to ignore the ghosts of grief. We've been trained to reinforce a false binary between the human endeavor and the academic one. In classrooms that cultivate space for students to critically examine the world, space for the haunt, Wade reminds us, is a moral obligation. A project of becoming more fully human. Despite the reality that grief is central to the human experience and many students are navigating loss of various sorts while in secondary classrooms, more broadly in the profession, the expectation is for teachers to hide the emotions we experience in response to loss (Dunn & Garcia, 2020).

Early in my tenure as a secondary literacy educator, I became familiar with the hauntings of grief. As most novice teachers, I struggled to teach content in meaningful ways and manage my classroom. I engrossed my life in the work of becoming a strong pedagogue and although I began to see the seeds of my efforts begin to grow and blossom, nothing prepared me for the year I lost three young people. First, Javon was murdered. Then, just a few weeks later, two other students were shot and killed. Our small school community of 350 students collapsed in on itself. Frozen in pain from these losses, I felt powerless. Nothing in my training had prepared me to navigate the constellation of emotions and sorrow present in my classroom. Unfamiliar with the terrain of grief and completely ill equipped to create a container for the pain—the students' or my own—I hid behind my curriculum and left the healing work to counselors I felt were trained to deal with the dimensions of grief and healing.

Students were given "grieving passes" to leave class and have space for their feelings in the counseling office and library where the overflow of students would be held by community agencies brought in to address the swell of students needing support. This lasted for a little over a week, and after the agencies moved on, as a community of teachers, we were left with questions of what to do now and how to move forward in the face of the tragedies that had befallen us.

What I learned that year I knew as we moved through that school year and the ones that came after, there was more to be done—that the work of holding space, processing and healing, had to be centered and sustained inside the classroom. However, I had no idea how to begin. The journey of healing from loss, was for me, a sacred one. One that transformed me into a more connected human—both broken and whole.

Although this article presents approaches that can be used to explore grief in literacy classrooms more broadly, my journey into griefwork at the classroom level began with traumatic grief or grief that occurs under external traumatic circumstances. Sudden loss such as that described above forced me to consider the intersection between trauma and loss because in circumstances where school communities experience losses of this nature, grief can be overlaid with trauma

symptoms particularly when the impact of the loss is sudden and traumatic. As such, the curriculum described below takes into consideration three pillars of trauma-informed approaches to working with grief in schools: safety, connection, and working with emotions (Goldman, 2017).

Despite the lack of teacher support and training, the reality remains that grief and loss are subtexts to classroom life and unprocessed grief has an adverse impact on learning (Eftoda, 2021). Because students may be unable to talk to family members and because of racialized and gendered social stigmas around seeking support, schools may be an important spaces for reaching and supporting students who are navigating loss (Gross & Lo, 2018). Studies of healing modalities embedded into classroom life as curriculum and pedagogy show the potential to facilitate students' healing (Cariaga, 2018; Ginwright, 2016; Kokka, 2019).

The conceptual frameworks that inform the pedagogy described in this article draw heavily from healing-centered engagement (Ginwright, 2018) and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (Paris, 2012). These frameworks offer valuable lenses for considering how to center grief in the classroom and craft both content and pedagogy that reinforce academic literacy skills, build students' socio-emotional literacies, and reinforce and affirm cultural practices that students and communities use to process grief and loss.

Below, I outline my twenty-four-year journey to become trauma-informed in my classroom practice in secondary schools, curricular decisions I make to engage healing-centered approaches for working with grief, the academic and socio-emotional outcomes that unfold, and ongoing considerations for the work.

Composting Grief Into Light

In an interview published in Guernica (2012), acclaimed Chicana author, Sandra Cisneros, discussed a creative revival she experienced in the wake of grief after her mother died. She explained to radio host, Richard Wolinsky, that for her, intimacy with the grief came through writing. Writing allowed her to "compost grief into light" as she explored her pain and loss while writing the book, *Have You Seen Marie*. I find this a helpful frame for approaching loss and grief with students and use this text and metaphor to enter conversations about loss with them.

Composting involves taking waste and creating a context for it to decompose and alchemize into fertile soil that grows new life. I find richness in this metaphor for approaching grief and loss in the classroom. Similar to a master gardener employing a carefully planned process for a natural process to unfold, I imagine teaching and working with grief to be the same—carefully creating a context for students' natural inclination towards healing to unfold.

Preparing the Collective Soil

Composting is a slow, methodical process that turns waste into nourishing soil to grow new life. It is a process of intentional, organic transformation. Similarly, trauma-informed work with grief in the classroom requires a methodology grounded in frameworks that prepare the classroom soil. This requires intentionally centering

trauma as both an individual and collective phenomenon that can be considered within wider systems and contexts (Castrellon et al., 2021). Given that meaning making related to grief, loss, and trauma is happening in contexts shaped by environments, relationships, and people, healing and recovery can also be practiced in the social contexts of family, school, and community (Ginwright, 2018).

Baker-Bell, Stanbrough, and Everette (2017) defined a pedagogy of healing as curriculum and instruction that offers a cathartic experience in that it makes space for students to express and process emotions. They build on Morrell's (2015) notion of literacy as care for the self in that literacy practices such as writing, can be used "as part of the healing process, when the actual words can assist us in transcending difficult emotions," and become a means for, "...letting out of emotions that become painful or even dangerous if they remain internalized" (p. 169). They describe a pedagogy of healing that consists of the following:

> (1) tools to heal: acknowledging that the wound exists and identify its culprit, and (2) tools to transform: responding to the wound using a tool that works to transform the conditions that led to the wound. (p. 139)

Healing-centered engagement (Ginwright, 2018) offers secondary classroom teachers a rich framework for developing curriculum and pedagogical approaches to work with grief. More specifically, it argues for an expansive view of trauma-informed care, one that restores young people's well being through culture and identity.

Healing Centered Engagement (HCE) consists of four pillars: Student Agency; Culture and Identity; Asset-Driven Possibilities for Wellbeing; and Support for Adult Providers. *Student Agency* refers to a commitment to positioning students as agents in the healing process and as agents in cultivating well-being. By centering students as agentive in the healing process, we create classrooms as containers within which they can address the conditions that prevent well-being in their lives. Acknowledging the role that purpose, power, and control over one's life plays in well-being, HCE asks teachers to cultivate student agency in ways that allow student learning to directly address the conditions of their lives. The very conditions that may be barriers to health and wellbeing.

Ginwright (2018) highlighted the importance of identity and culture in healing work for BIPOC Youth:

> Healing centered engagement uses culture as a way to ground young people in a solid sense of meaning, self-perception, and purpose. This process highlights the intersectional nature of identity and highlights the ways in which culture offers a shared experience, community and sense of belonging. Healing is experienced collectively, and is shaped by shared identity such as race, gender, or sexual orientation. Healing centered engagement is the result of building a healthy identity, and a sense of belonging. (para. 14)

This way of braiding culture with community as collective healing asks teachers to consider the epistemological frameworks BIPOC students possess and positions

them as agentive in the healing process. Acknowledging that BIPOC students come from communities with healing traditions and cultural practices that have allowed for persistence and survival through colonization, enslavement, and ongoing structural oppression means that we develop content that bridges the worlds of home and school to access the knowledges students' families and communities hold for healing.

The curriculum described below was designed such that it allows students to build on existing epistemologies held in their cultural and community contexts surrounding death, loss, and grief while also growing their capacity to effectively learn and employ analytical reading skills and conventions of writing. It is culturally sustaining because students are asked to bring practices that are used in their homes and communities into classroom discourse for sharing and exploration while simultaneously cultivating their repertoires of practice (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003) for healing and academic literacy learning.

Turning the Soil

Continuing with the metaphor of composting as grief work, after the right elements are combined, for compost to alchemize, it needs to be regularly turned. Turning allows for oxygen and heat to move the decomposition process along. In the classroom, I think of "turning" as the consistent use of intentional practices that build the container of safety needed to explore loss in community. In my classroom, "turning" happens through three core practices used throughout the school year: practices of vulnerability, practices of embodiment, and practices of resourcing.

The Practice of Vulnerability

There is risk involved in approaching grief in the classroom. It is messy work that requires the relinquishing of control. It also requires us to take responsibility for actively creating a container of safety and for considering the implications for how to explore grief, ethically (Dunn & Garcia, 2020).

A container must be built intentionally before asking students to explore the dimensions of loss in their lives. It should be acknowledged that school is not a safe place for many students, but rather, a space where harm occurs. In addition, the dominant culture in the US is an anti-vulnerability culture, one that equates vulnerability with weakness. For students to enter an exploration of grief, vulnerability as a practice needs to be modeled. Moreover, Dutro (2019) reminded teachers to acknowledge the power dynamic present in classroom life and commit to reciprocal vulnerability in which both teachers and students share vulnerably.

While there is no formula for how to do this effectively, what is described below is how I construct a container of safety in my tenth-grade English classroom. Each of the elements described briefly are established as practices in so far as they are utilized daily and weekly with the intention of shaping classroom culture and expanding students' repertoires of practice related to vulnerability.

Before working with loss and grief, there are several writing assignments we do carefully crafted to have students experience sharing about their lives and that ask for increased vulnerability while simultaneously building community and holding space

for witnessing. Through personal narrative writing, students regularly engage in sharing, and creating that builds the practice of vulnerability. Importantly, a practice, I always write alongside my students and share personal narratives that allow me to model vulnerability.

The Practice of Somatics

Decades of research document the benefits of mindfulness in promoting student health and well-being (Zenner et al., 2014). However, mindfulness practices taught without critical awareness of the conditions that foster oppression and trauma disembody students and ourselves from the root of the conditions that shape the material conditions of students' lives. For this reason, over a decade ago, I began to turn to a politicized somatics as a theory of change for personal and collective transformation. Generative Somatics (2014) defined a politicized somatics as a theory of change that integrates the body's wisdom as a source of healing while simultaneously acknowledging the centrality of the social context of both trauma and healing.

> Somatic practices help to build new skills and competencies…Given many of our community and family experiences, and because of oppressive social conditions, there are fundamental skills that many of us don't learn to embody, such as: having boundaries that take care of yourself and others, mutual contact and intimacy, moving toward what is important to you,building trustamidst conflict, centered accountability, among others. (p. 3)

As a classroom teacher another draw towards a politicized somatics for building resilience is the acknowledgement of embodied resilience found in both individual and community practices that unfold when we reconnect with the body both individually and collectively. This is critical for those of us working in dispossessed communities that may lack quality mental health services and supports for students. Somatics positions all of us as agentive in our own healing through developing a relationship with our bodies. For working with grief, somatic practices allow us to use the body as a tool for healing by building awareness of the interaction between emotions and sensations in the body.

Somatic practices such as paying attention to breathing, tensing and relaxing the body, visualization and body scans help to build students' capacity for emotional regulation (Roemer et al., 2015). When frequently woven into classroom life, students become accustomed to the practices and can draw from them when difficult emotions arise to build presence with the body's reactions to challenging content. There is wisdom in the body. Therefore, exploring the embodied experience of grief requires cultivating mindful awareness of its presence and what it has to teach us. Before entering an exploration of grief, my students are regularly engaged in the practices of grounding, centering, and resourcing described below.

The Practice of Resourcing

As a justice-oriented educator that finds value in examining and confronting issues of justice and injustice through texts, I have found that opening and closing with embodiment practices for resourcing is a valuable trauma-informed practice. Embodiment practices offer students a tool for self-regulation and a way to meet needs for safety, connection, and dignity (Cariaga, 2021). In particular, when exploring loss and grief, resourcing is an important and necessary aspect of engagement as it involves somatic practices that allow students to identify internal resources. For many students, school is emotionally unsafe; so even though I carefully co-construct a container of safety with students in our classroom, they are moving through a larger ecological context and may need a psychic container that allows them to move forward with their day.

Resourcing is the practice of growing and attuning to an embodied sense of calm, safety, and well-being. One resourcing exercise I use regularly with students is identifying and visualizing a protective figure from whom they can draw a sense of strength, empowerment, and trust. I have found the practice particularly useful when students are working to analyze or create texts that may trigger traumatic stress responses or conjure challenging emotions.

We begin by turning the lights off and playing soft music. Students are invited to put their heads down on their desks or close their eyes and resettle into a relaxing position. I guide the practice by asking them to bring forward their "resource" or protective figure in their mind's eye, to imagine the person standing in front of them with a loving smile on their face. Sometimes students have no way of accessing a person so they consider a space where they feel safe or an object from which they draw comfort. We spend time conjuring this image and feeling into it, noticing how the presence standing with them, perhaps with a hand on their shoulder, offers them strength and support they can bring to the rest of their day. By the end of the school year, students grow a "tool belt" of "resources" and have many moments of practice working with them.

Storytelling as Griefwork

Storytelling and writing is a powerful tool for working with grief and loss. It is a process that integrates the right hemisphere of the brain which processes our emotions with the left hemisphere to make sense of difficult emotions, process them, and put them in order for them to be dealt with effectively (Siegel & Bryson, 2011). Naming and defining our experiences is a therapeutic process that supports integration and healing (Siegel & Bryson, 2012). When grief is unexpressed, we have what Francis Weller (2015) called a congested heart, or a heart that closes off to the world, unavailable, because it is burdened with that which it cannot express.

To begin an exploration of grief at the intersections of culture and language, students need to know they will explore writing about something that may bring up challenging feelings—feelings they may often try to avoid, or escape, and some they may not feel safe or supported feeling at school. I always allow students to enter our inquiry into loss and grief on their own terms. It must be consensual. I offer students

the option of an alternative if the curriculum feels too burdensome for them, and I closely collaborate with staff in our school's wellness center who are on notice that students may need support during this unit of study.

To enter the sacred world of grief, I use a series of lessons I created inspired by Cisneros' interview and curriculum developed by poet, Catherine Barnett. Barnett (1998) used Zora Neal Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* to acquaint students with Hurston's work and explore emotions through the literary device of personification.

"Is death timid or bold?" I ask students at the start of the unit. Students are often confused having never thought about death in this way. Next, I ask students a different question to move their thinking.

"Everyone close your eyes. Now imagine death as a person. What does it look like? What is it wearing? What does its voice sound like?"

I continue to follow with a series of questions leading students through imagining an image of death—its gender, clothes, body, hair, and smell. Once students tell me they have a strong image of death in their mind's eye, I ask them to open their eyes and write about it with so much detail that we can "see" it. I write a few sentence starters on the board for students struggling with the abstraction.

Death looks like…
Death sounds like..
Death wears…

As I wander the room, I find writing like Bryan's:

> *He makes it to the sky. Builds a 12 foot fence, bigger than you. The path he chooses down here will take you to the other side of the fence. Where a man in a throne will greet you. Death is peaceful with this man.*

I also find writing like Stephanie's:

> *Death picks up the phone, giving papa the chance to say his last words. Death takes a moment to think "Should I run back?" Death asks his creator to take his eyes away, because he didn't want the see the person whose life he was taking away. He asks his creator to take his ears away, because he didn't want to hear the screaming and crying of the people who love papa.*

The energy and power of student writing here can be attributed to the passages from Hurston's (2009) novel where death is personified as an entity with a home, and movement, and wings:

> So Janie began to think of Death. Death, that strange being with the huge square toes who lived way in the West. The great one who lived in the straight house like a platform without sides to it, and without a roof. What need has Death for a cover, and what winds can blow against him? He stands in his high house that

> overlooks the world. Stands watchful and motionless all day with his sword drawn back, waiting for the messenger to bid him come. Been standing there before there was a where or a when or a then. (p. 84)

After students' first attempt to practice personifying death, a powerful inanimate force in our lives, I ask them to share what they've written in small groups. I then ask them why writers sometimes make characters out of things like death or grief? Why write about it using personification? What can it help us understand?

We then read Ayodele Nzginga's (2017) poem challenging death by affirming life in "#youwillnotkillmetoday":

> Death will come/ on the day it wants/ dressed as it pleases/at the time he chooses/death will come/ of that there is little doubt/ how it will be received is the matter here.

The speaker in the poem continues to dialogue with death, commanding death to take hold elsewhere:

> I anticipate you in my dreams/and have drawn a circle/in salt around our intentions/ wrapped a prayer in white/cloth delivered it to a tree/ that knows your name. (p. 1)

I ask students what Nzginga shows us about her relationship with death and what they think she means by "how it will be received is the matter here." I draw their attention to the circle in salt and the wrapped prayer delivered to a tree. We discuss the possibility of these elements representing rituals the speaker of the poem uses to relate to death.

To create a shared definition of grief, we discuss what "receiving" death might mean. This moves them toward a collective definition of grief that includes how loss is received in terms of emotions and the body.

To consider grief as a way of "receiving death" and loss, we then read Chimamanda Adichie's (2020) essay "Notes on Grief," where Adichie characterizes her grief as a teacher. We then spend time freewriting on how they have "received" death and loss in their lives and the lessons they were taught.

Depending on time and the energy students hold collectively, I sometimes have them share in small groups or sometimes only with one other person they trust in the room. Other years, depending on the level of safety and collective vulnerability present, I am the only one who reads their writing.

In the subsequent lesson, I share a letter to grief that I wrote shortly after my husband's unexpected death. We read the letter out loud, discussing what the letter captured about my experience and the relationship I learned to build with grief. We discuss how personifying grief may facilitate the relationship I have to it and the role it plays in my life. The letter is never easy for me to share but I find it important for allowing students to see the universal nature of grief and for them to understand that I am also working with its presence in my life. Modeling vulnerability with students is an essential part of this work and invites them to do the same with their writing and

sharing. Using my letter as an anchor text, I then ask students to write a letter to their grief and invite them to work with the literary device of personification.

Every year, powerful writing emerges. Jacqueline wrote about grieving her father who had been deported:

> *You drained the color from me. While everyone lived in color, you turned my world black and white. You made me lose track of time and glued me to my bed. You took my appetite and made me hate being alive. You made me hate my dad for leaving. You make me smell old memories. What was once warm is now a blizzard.*

Another student, Roxanna, wrote:

> *I have to prepare myself each time you come with your crimson cloak. I prepare to rebuild. Sometimes it feels useless. Sometimes, I feel like the pieces of this weary heart are too far scattered to be put together. I am broken by you. You seduce me with whispers that this nothing all there is. Please, will you let me be myself again? Innocent. I want to be the little girl who lived in ignorance.*

After writing, I ask students to share in small groups and have students turn in their writing for me to take home and read. I always ask a few students with particularly powerful letters if I can share their writing with the whole class. Again, only asking as an invitation and privately to ensure students feel no pressure to extend beyond what feels safe and comfortable. It is from these letters that I introduce students to the 5 Stages of Grief (Kubler-Ross & Kessler, 2014). There are always examples of the stages to work with in student writing and this allows for students to name their experiences and connect their journey with universal considerations of the ways grief touches our lives and continuously moves us through each stage, over and over.

Grief is challenging, heart-work students generally conclude from our shared exploration. It requires a special kind of care. From our letters to grief we enter discussions of how we care for our grief, through Sandra Ciscneros' (2012) fable *Have You Seen Marie?* The body of the text explores the universality of grief in our lives. We spend time thinking about the afterword Cisneros wrote where she discusses the nature of loss:

> In Mexico they say when someone you love dies, a part of you dies with them. But they forget to mention that a part of them is born in you—not immediately, I've learned but eventually, and gradually. It's an opportunity to be reborn. When you are in-between births, there should be some way to indicate to all, "Beware, I am not as I was before. Handle me with care." (p. 99)

Here, I stop and ask students to think about why Cisneros calls death a rebirth. They find their way to a conversation about how death and loss changes a person and what qualities may be part of that rebirth. After this discussion, I remind students that all of the authors we've read in the unit at this point and all of our own writing point

to how universal grief is to the human condition. I remind them that this is why people, cultures, and communities have developed traditions for "composting" their grief into light. I share some of my family's traditions for the care of grief like making altars or memorials in our homes, gathering and singing or sharing stories. After I share, I ask students to consider what traditions their families have around loss and ask them to share those with the class.

We spend some time discussing traditions such as memorializing our loved ones on t-shirts and lanyards or building altars in the streets with flowers and candles when someone is shot. Less clear for students is how they offer care for themselves from other forms of loss. I find this important and ask them if all grief is the same. What makes some losses different from others? In our conversations I try to complicate the idea that only some grief is worthy of care. Then, I send students home to interview their families about what traditions have been passed down from generation to generation to care for grieving and the "rebirth" Cisneros discusses in her book.

The next day, we start class with students sharing their findings and reflecting on any new insights, stories, and information they gathered. What ensues is a conversation that creates a collective exploration of healing practices that are present in students' families and communities passed down for personal and collective care of grief.

I write their ideas on the board, and we look at patterns across cultures and generations. The intention here is to create space for students' existing knowledge and cultural practices to be affirmed and for students to build a healing literacy around loss. Students learn that rituals and processes like building altars and memorializing people on t-shirts, or in murals and ceremonies help us process, remember, affirm, and care for ourselves and our communities.

From here we discuss why, across cultures and time, communities have rituals and practices that help them process and metabolize loss. Bringing this ancestral knowledge to the forefront of our learning is important as it offers a way to understand how universal grief and loss are to the human experience and that taking care of grief is heart-work that we all must undergo at some point in our lives.

I teach this unit at the end of October as our community readies itself for Día de Los Muertos or Day of the Dead, an Indigenous, Mexican cultural practice widely celebrated in the Bay Area. The culminating project for students' exploration of grief is to build a classroom altar with objects and photographs to memorialize loved ones and display students' letters to grief.

In "Ritualizing Remembrance in Our School Cultures" Ides, Bey-Jones, and I (2021) argued that bringing cultural practices and traditions to memorialize and commemorate ancestors should be held with reverence, cultural humility, and intention. When thinking about creating a community altar or practicing any other cultural tradition in our school communities, it is important to consider one's proximity to communities rooted in the cultural practices we are elevating. Although widely practiced as a celebration of life and not a somber endeavor, Día de los Muertos activities may be triggering for students. Therefore, allowing students to participate on their own terms is essential—never a forced activity; rather, an invitation.

Figure 1. Honoring Loss: Student Writing Displayed in a Classroom Altar for Día de los Muertos

CONCLUSION

The pedagogical implications of this work requires that teachers build capacity for helping students identify and understand emotions related to grief, intentionally and carefully create containers of safety, and engage in the ongoing practice of vulnerability. Without thoughtful consideration and care as well as assessment of capacity and resources, we may run the risk of leaving students feeling wounded or retraumatized when working with grief in the classroom. Although there are scholars such as Pour-Korshid (2018) researching the potential of collective healing spaces as ongoing professional development that supports teachers in the practice of reflection and reciprocal vulnerability, more exploration in the literature of how to do this in formalized professional development spaces is needed to build educators' capacity and personal experience with healing literacies as this is an essential part of being authentic in the work of exploring grief with students.

Schools may avoid developing teachers' capacity for working with grief in the classroom; however, supporting adolescents to process and metabolize grief is worthwhile because it frees the energy of suppression for more presence in the classroom and life. At the intersections of culture and literacy learning, students can explore grief in their lives, create meaning out of their experiences with loss, and become more adept at understanding and expressing the emotions that arise in relationship to grief. That said, a trauma-informed approach to working with grief considers the potential for retraumatization and the impact of trauma and stress by intentionally working to build resilience. Through a process of carefully curating sacred space for grief such as that described in this article, putting students in

conversation with texts, their communities, and each other, classroom practitioners can build agentive healing literacies that normalize vulnerability and deepen community.

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