

**The Center for Emotionally Responsive Practice at Bank Street
Lesley Koplow LCSW, Director**

Teddy Bears in Traumatic Times: *A Trauma-Informed & Healing-Centered Practice*

Revised for the 2022-23 School Year

This monthly curriculum (“TBTT”) has been created to support the implementation of using teddy bears in the classroom to nurture emotional well-being overall. TBTT also enables schools and educational staff to address the deep needs of children affected by the multiple traumas of this era. While Covid-19 brought universally-experiences anxieties and losses, each child’s experience of the pandemic was different, and the stressors of this era extend beyond Covid-19 to the stressors brought on by experiencing the many *isms* (racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, etc.) that continue to plague our society. Each child brings their own life story within their hearts and bodies to the classroom every day. While the classroom alone cannot fix the deeper social problems that may have brought on trauma, nor can it fix individual children’s personal life losses and stressors, it CAN become a safe emotional holding space for children’s authentic selves to feel in community, and for children to experience joy and meaningful learning. TBTT encourages joy, empowerment, self-awareness, empathy and community.

TBTT guides the implementation of the teddy bear program and offers suggested read-alouds, routines, discussion prompts and drawing/writing activities.

While teachers may wish to use these books and activities exactly as written, teachers are also encouraged to consider the emergent themes in their own classroom and group, and to adjust their implementation accordingly.

List of Themes by Months

September: A Safe Place for Bears

October: The Many Feelings of Teddy Bears

November: Same and Different

December: Together and Apart

January: Teddy Bears & Kids Reunion: Discoveries and Artifacts from a Visit Home

February: Lost and Found

March: Superheroes, Fairy Grandparents, and Imaginary Friends

April: A World for Teddy Bears: Teddy Bear Town

May: Transformations (Growing and Changing)

June: A Good Good-bye for Teddy Bears

Rationale for September-December Themes and Process

These themes coupled with transitional object use are designed to:

- Create a welcoming and comforting school climate.
- Promote capacity to self- comfort and have empathy for others.
- Make a bridge between the 2021-22 school experience and the current school year experience
- Identify, value and communicate all kinds of feelings within community
 - Build Community in order to decrease social and emotional isolation in children and teachers.
 - Give the big feelings that come with loss and disruption a voice in school-friendly ways.

Resources for Staff Book Group:

[Koplow, L. \(2009\). *Bears, Bears Everywhere*: Chapter 2, 3 and 9.](#) New York: Teachers College Press.

[Koplow, L. \(2002\). *Creating Schools That Heal*: Chapter 12.](#) New York: Teachers College Press.

[Koplow, L. \(2020\). *Emotionally Responsive Practice: A Path for Schools That Heal*: Chapters 6 and 7.](#) New York: Teachers College Press.

Video Resource: (2015) [Bringing ERP to Life](#): Transitional Objects Chapter

Pre-Implementation Orientation Meeting for Staff

Before beginning the teddy bear work, plan to meet with the colleagues in your building who are also following the *Teddy Bears in Traumatic Times* Curriculum.

Meeting Agenda:

- One colleague **reads aloud** to the others the book *Outside, Inside* by LeUyen Pham. Take time to study the pictures

- After the read-aloud, take five minutes of **quiet writing and/or drawing** responding to the prompt, “*what did this book make you think about? What are the ripples of the pandemic that are still affecting you?*”
 - **Share out** in the group (not necessary to read what is written, but tell about it!)
 - **Ask**, “what was it like to have time to think about our pandemic stories and to hear each other’s stories?”
- Discuss.**
- **Ask**, “how can we support the different feelings that children and parents will continue to bring in the wake of Covid-Times disruption and loss?” **Discuss.**
 - Ask, “How do we hope the teddy bears might support all the feelings that are coming to school with the kids?” Discuss and brainstorm.
 - Look together at the September theme and activities and share initial ideas.
 - Make a plan for everyone to check in regularly over the school year as you implement the *Teddy Bears in Traumatic Times* curriculum.

September	A Safe Place for Bears
<p>Orientation and Rationale for This Month's Theme</p>	<p>This theme invites children to identify with their Teddy Bears who will need to feel safe at school in order to be emotionally stable, socially connected and engaged in their learning. The activities invite children to create their bear’s identity, as well as representing important things that they want peers to know about their own identities. When bears and children represent what they need to feel safe at school, they become connected within community in authentic ways.</p>

Sub-Themes & Inquiry	<p>How can our classroom become a safe place for Teddy Bears?</p> <p>Routines: How and when can Teddy Bears be part of classroom life?*</p> <p>Who is who? Our Teddy Bears all look the same. What makes your bear unique? How will we recognize your Teddy Bear?</p> <p>Some of us speak different languages at home. What languages does your teddy bear speak?</p> <p>What are your teddy bear's home cultures like? What special foods, music, clothes, religions, family activities does your teddy bear want us to know about? What are similarities and differences we notice between our bears' home cultures?</p> <p><i>*This should be done alongside similar identity studies with children.</i></p> <p>What makes each Teddy Bear feel afraid or worried? What makes each Teddy Bear feel safe, cared for and included?</p>
How to Introduce this Theme	<p>Have Teddy Bears on a high shelf, visible to children. Address the first two inquiry themes with children in a morning meeting. Write down children's ideas on easel paper. Write the Teddy Bear interaction guidelines on another easel paper. Discuss. Give out the Teddy Bears so that children get to know their bears.</p> <p><i>Suggested parameters for classroom use are available here: Starting with Teddy Bears: Where to Begin</i></p>

Thematic Books and Resources	<p> <i>I Will Keep You Safe and Sound</i> by Laurie Haskins Houran (3k-2) <i>Bear Feels Scared</i> by Karma Wilson (3k-2) <i>Corduroy</i> by Don Freeman (3k-2) <i>Corduroy's Pocket</i> by Don Freeman (3k-2) <i>Julian is a Mermaid</i> by Jessica Love (3k-2) <i>The Colors of Us</i> by Karen Katz (3k-2) <u><i>Behind My Mask/Detrás de mi cubrebocas</i> by Martha Samaniego Calderón (3k-2)</u> <i>Same, Same but Different</i> by Kosteck-Shaw(PreK-2) <i>We're Different, We're the Same</i> by Kates (3K-K) <u><i>What's the Difference?</i> by Doyin Richards (3k-2)</u> <u><i>Where I'm From</i> by Chante Thomas (K-2)</u> <i>Who We Are</i> by Harris (PreK-2) <u><i>Who Belongs Here? An American Story</i></u> <u>by Margy Burns Knight and Anne Sibley O'Brien (2-5)</u> <u><i>What Would You Do in a Book About You?</i> By Jean Reidy and Joey Chou (3K-2)</u> <u><i>The Day You Begin</i> by Jacqueline Woodson(k-2)</u> <i>Eyes that Kiss in the Corners</i> by Joanna Ho and Dung Ho <i>I Am Whole: A Multi-Racial Children's Book Celebrating Diversity, Language, Race and Culture</i> <i>I am Mixed</i> by Maggy Williams </p>
Activities	<p> Introducing Bears Mask making for bears (Covid-19 protective masks) Naming Bears (chart) Dressing Bears Housing our Teddy Bears Group discussion </p>

	Read Alouds Charts: Teddy Bears' likes and dislikes Teddy Bear Journals
<p>*Recommended routines to include bears: arrival, meeting and story times, library, bear journals, open ended worktime, choice time, center time, and any time comfort is needed.</p> <p>*Highly Recommended: After returning from recess/lunch.</p>	

October:	When Teddy Bears Remember
-----------------	----------------------------------

Orientation and Rationale for This Month's Theme	<p>This theme acknowledges that children and bears are living through stressful times in the wake of Covid-19, and allows for the identification and expression of all kinds of feelings. As Bears get to know each other, they will learn what makes them and their peers feel happy, sad, angry, afraid, etc. Children and bears will develop their shared language for emotion, their own sense of social and emotional cause and effect, and become better able to predict reactions from peers. Being able to play, draw, talk and write about big feelings that their Teddy Bears carry, can bring relief, heighten teacher- child connection, strengthen classroom community. peer empathy and diminish a feeling of vulnerability in the classroom.</p> <p><i>What teachers can anticipate hearing about/responding to:</i> <i>illness, loss, parental conflict, loss, hospitals, protests, Black Lives Matter, gun violence, fears, scary memories, worries.</i></p>
Sub-Themes & Inquiry	<p>Where can big feelings live in our classroom?</p> <p>What are helpful ways to express big feelings in school?</p> <p>Where can we find comfort when sad or scary times are on our minds during the school day?</p> <p>How can we communicate when sad or scary times are on our minds during the school day?</p>

**How to
Introduce this
Theme**

Say the following. Allow children to respond. Take note of their responses:

“Sometimes Teddy Bears remember times when things changed. Maybe people had to stay home because they got sick from Covid. Maybe people they loved moved far away. Maybe bears lost someone they loved. Sometimes bears remember something that made them sad or angry or scared, and they get upset in the classroom. Sometimes, something in the classroom happens that makes bears feel sad or afraid or angry or worried.”

“Since *all bears and all children* have *all kinds of feelings*, and feelings change every day, let’s learn about what makes all of those feelings come, and what to do with all kinds of big and little feelings in school.”

Introduce Interactive feelings chart for children, which includes **at least** these 5 emotions: **happy, sad, angry, afraid, worried.**

For children K-5, additional feelings can be added. Configure chart so that children can stick their photo, name or symbol on the feeling that reflects their emotional status.

“When big changes happen, sometimes, big feelings about changes make it hard for Teddies to feel safe.”

“When Teddy Bears remember sad and scary times, they may need you to hold them. You may need to help them draw and write in their Teddy Bear journals.”

“When you remember about sad or scary times, you may want to hold your Teddy. You may want to draw or write or talk to grown ups about what you remember.”

	<p>“Here are some other things that Teddy Bears and children can do if they are having big feelings:”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draw or paint or dictate or write about what they are feeling ● Make a book about what they are thinking about or worried about ● Hold their Teddy Bear and talk to their bear. ● Use the cozy corner to feel safe ● Read a book from our Teddy Bear Book Collection. <p>*Allow children to respond to the themes and inquiry in open ended ways. Use reflective language to acknowledge contributions. Write children’s contributions on easel pad to save the dialogue, and show its value.</p>
<p>October Thematic Books & Resources</p>	<p><u>Behind My Mask/Detrás de mi cubrebocas by Martha Samaniego Calderón</u></p> <p><i>While we Can’t Hug</i> by Eoin McLaughlin (3K-2)</p> <p><i>Don’t You Feel Well Sam?</i> by Amy Hest (3k-2)</p> <p><i>Bear Feels Sick</i> by Wilson (3k-2)</p> <p><i>How Can you Care for A Very Sick Bear?</i> by Bayer(3k-2)</p> <p><i>Outside, Inside</i> by LeUyen Pham (3K-2)</p> <p><i>Wade Through the Pandemic</i> by Williams (3K-2)</p> <p><i>Lilah in the Land of The Littles</i> by L. Koplow (PreK-2)</p> <p><i>Jasmine’s Big Idea</i> by L. Koplow (PreK-2)</p> <p><i>Wilson’s Wishes</i> by L. Koplow (preK-2)</p> <p><i>Love is Powerful</i>, by Brewer (PreK-2)</p> <p><i>Keeping the City Going</i> by Floca (3K-2)</p> <p><i>I Want My Hat Back</i> by Klassen (3K-2)</p>

	<p>No! My First Book of Protests by Julie Merberg (Pre-K-2) Saying “no” when things are not fair; historical</p> <p>*Article with “how-to” create a Feelings Chart</p>
Activities	<p>Introduce Interactive Feelings Chart Group Discussion Read Alouds Expressive arts Teddy Bear Journals Create a “feel better” Quilt with squares from each child Pretend Play focused on emergent themes (<i>Possible themes include hurting and healing play, covid testing play, getting shots and having band-aids, doctor’s kits, benign masks and non-scary mask-making for Halloween</i>)</p>
<p>*Recommended routines to include bears: arrival, meeting and story times, library, bear journals, open ended worktime, choice time, center time, and any time comfort is needed.</p> <p>*Highly Recommended: After returning from recess/lunch.</p>	

November	Same & Different
<p>Orientation and Rationale for This Month's Theme</p>	<p><i>Often children have big reactions to changes in school routines, adult expectations, or relationship losses that happen during the school year, between one school year and another, or between one day and another (example: multiple absences because of COVID). When changes are not discussed and loss is not acknowledged, children are alone with their thoughts and feelings about what has happened, leaving them emotionally isolated.</i></p> <p><i>Young children in traumatic times may be hyper-sensitive to change, and may need adults to both acknowledge changes and connect to continuity factors in order to keep their emotional balance in the classroom. In addition, as children grow during their school years, they often experience a developmental pull toward sameness, but a school community pull toward accepting and valuing difference. This theme allows for exploration of both developmental and community aspects of same and different.</i></p> <p><i>Young children and Teddy Bears who have experienced loss may resist connection to prevent further losses, be distracted and preoccupied, or fight sad feelings with heightened activity or angry outbursts . Bringing up change and continuity within the school community can work to protect children from social and emotional isolation; both risk factors for depression and antisocial behavior as children grow.</i></p>

Sub-Themes & Inquiry	<p>What about our school has changed? What about our school has stayed the same? (for k-2)</p> <p>How have our Teddy Bears changed since we first met them? In what ways have they stayed the same?</p> <p>How did your Teddy Bear feel when first coming to our school? How did they feel about so many new things and new people?</p> <p>Does your Teddy Bear still miss someone from times before they joined our classroom?</p> <p>Can Teddy Bears have friends that are different than they are?</p> <p>Can children have friends that are different than they are?</p>
How to Introduce this Theme	<p>Read the recommended stories one day/week at a time in the order presented. After each read aloud, ask children open-ended questions: “What did this story remind you and your Teddy Bear of? How did things change in this story? What did you/your Teddy Bear feel about the changes ? What do your teddy bears WISH they could change now? What do they wish would always stay the same?”</p> <p>Use reflective language to respond to whatever the children bring forward, always keeping in mind to allow for all kinds of feelings about change, as well as all kinds of stories about children’s own experiences.</p> <p>Follow the read aloud with activities that include an expressive invitation.</p>

<p>November Thematic Books & Resources</p>	<p>Corduroy by Freeman(3K-2) Some Things Change by Mary Murphy (3K-2) Changes, Changes by Pat Hutchins (3K-2) The Carrot Seed by Ruth Kraus (3K-K) A Chair for My Mother by Vera B Williams (PreK-2) Lilah in the Land of The Littles by L. Koplow. (PreK-2) Waiting by Henkes (3K-1) Jasmine’s Big Idea by L. Koplow (PreK-2) Good-byes by Rotner (3K-2) City Garden (1st-2nd) Jayden’s Impossible Garden by Mélina Mangal (K-2) Wade Through The Pandemic by Williams (3k-2) A Ball for Daisy by Chris Raschka (3K-K) The Little Snow Plow Wishes for Snow by Koehler (3K-PreK) Carmela Full of Wishes by Matt de la Pena (3k-2)</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<p>Mural of things Teddy Bears want to remember Reflective Discussions Posters and Venn diagrams about ways that friends are same and different (likes and dislikes, appearance, Identity, etc) Expressive arts activities: drawing, building, creating, pretending, drama, story acting Planting seeds Teddy Bear Journals Visual schedules that have Velcro components and can represent changes</p>

*Recommended routines to include bears: arrival, meeting and story times, library, bear journals, open ended worktime, choice time, center time, and any time comfort is needed.

*Highly Recommended: After returning from recess/lunch.

December	Together and Apart (Before December Break)
Orientation and Rationale for This Month's Theme	<i>This theme is intended to help children make a bridge between school and home and back. Children and Teddy Bears who remember school abruptly coming to a halt in Covid times will be reassured by the activities that accompany this theme and help to diminish separation anxiety as winter vacation approaches. Children with traumatic disruptions in their history may have difficulty feeling connected when they are apart from peers and teachers, and may doubt that reunion is possible.</i>
Sub-Themes & Inquiry	How do Teddy Bears feel when we go home every day and they stay in school? How do they feel when we come back? How can we help them if they feel lonely and miss us over the break? How will we help them think about us when we are at home? How can we help them predict when we will be coming back to school?

**How to
Introduce this
Theme**

Say, “Sometimes, we have to stay home from school all of a sudden when kids or teachers get sick with the Coronavirus. It can be hard and disappointing for children and bears when school closes all of a sudden! Even if we can do zoom school, it is different than being together.

“Sometimes we have to be away from school for other reasons, too, like we have to go to the doctor or do something with our family.”

“On December __th, we have our Winter Break. For Winter Break, we already know when we will be staying home, and we also know when winter break will be over and school will be open again.”

**Show children visual calendar symbol for school closing and school opening in January.*

“We will be coming back on January ____.”

“Since we already know about Winter break, we can help our Teddy Bears get ready.”

**Use a calendar with picture symbols to see December vacation and January return to school. Refer to all the days in between now and vacation to get Teddy Bears ready for their trip home.*

**Read the recommended stories one day/ or week at a time in the order presented. After each read aloud, ask children open-ended questions: “What did this story remind you and your Teddy Bear of? Has your Teddy Bear ever gone on an adventure? Did they know how to find their way back? How did they know the way back?”*

**Allow children to respond to the themes and inquiry in open ended ways. Use reflective language to acknowledge contributions. Write contributions on easel pad if you would like to save the dialogue.*

<p>December Thematic Books & Resources</p>	<p><i>Five Little Ducks</i> by Ives (3K-K) <i>Now We Can Go</i> by Jonas (3-k-K) <i>Hello!! Goodbye!</i> by Alikei (3k-K) <i>Biscuit and the Lost Teddy Bear</i> by Capucilli (3K-2) <i>You Go Away</i> by Dorothy Corey (3K-2) <i>A Pocket for Corduroy</i> by Don Freeman (3K-2) <i>Toot and Puddle</i> by Hobbie (3K-2) <i>The Invisible String</i> by Patrice Karst (3K-2) <i>I Miss You Every Day</i> by Taback (3K-2) <i>Lost and Found</i> by Oliver Jeffers (3K-2) <i>Oh No! Time to Go! Book of Goodbyes</i> by Doughty (3K-2) <i>Ira Sleeps Over</i> by B. Waber (K-2) <i>Flashlight</i> by Lizi Boyd (All Ages) <i>Penelope and Jack: Together and Apart</i> by Stork and Uncle Inkwell (All Ages)</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have children draw or write in their Teddy Bear journals about being apart during winter break. • Have children make something comforting to leave with their bear during winter break. (Blanket with comforting symbol, etc) • Create a visual “map” of school, with roads to children’s homes so that Teddy Bears know where children are. • Children make drawings of themselves at home to leave in the classroom for bears.

• Drawing, building, creating, pretending, drama, Story Acting Teddy Bear Journals.

***VACATION HOMEWORK:** Send a few pieces of paper, small box of crayons and a stamped, school-addressed envelope with each child. During the break, ask children to write, dictate or draw a letter about their time at home and mail it to their Teddy Bear at school.

***Include room number in address**

***Let parents know, and request their support!**

***VACATION HOMEWORK:** Bring something from home to show to your Teddy Bear to help them understand the story of your time at home. (Let parents know)

**Schools continuing with the work January-June will ask children to bring something back/take a photo of something that their bear did/saw/felt that they want to remember about their visit to the child's home.*

***Recommended routines to include bears:** arrival, meeting and story times, library, bear journals, open ended worktime, choice time, center time, and any time comfort is needed.

***Highly Recommended:** After returning from recess/lunch.

Rationale for January-June Themes

These themes coupled with transitional object use (teddy bears) are designed to:

1. Help children with home-school transitions since multi-day school breaks may bring up anxiety and uncertainty from Covid time experience.
2. Promote continuity of classroom experience during a time of uncertainty.
3. Foster executive function, community connection, and creative capacities planning and constructing a safe, emotionally responsive, inclusive, equitable world for Teddy Bears, using under the umbrellas of literacy, social studies and expressive arts.
4. Decrease social and emotional isolation in children and teachers.
5. Reduce the risks of unresolved grief and post-traumatic stress in children and teachers and parents* by addressing these issues in small groups for those community members in need.

January	Coming Back to School: Discoveries and Artifacts from a Visit Home
Orientation and Rationale for This Month's Theme	<p>This theme is intended to help make a bridge between home and school as children return after a long break. Teddy Bears will learn about children's home lives through stories and artifacts that they bring to school to help bears understand their experiences at home, and help them reconnect after a long break.</p> <p>Bears may find that many things that are different between home culture and school culture, may also find some things that are the same.</p> <p><i>*What teachers might hear about: a range of home experiences.</i></p>
Sub-Themes & Inquiry	<p>Read /show your letter from home to your bear.</p> <p>What did your bear learn about your time at home?</p> <p>What did you bring from home to help Teddy understand what home life is like?</p> <p>What made you choose that artifact/photo to help your bear understand you story of being at home? (or on a trip if child traveled)</p> <p>How do you think your Teddy Bear felt about being in school during the break? What did they do while we were on break?</p> <p>Use your Teddy Bear journal to write the story about your Bear's time apart.</p>

	<p>What did your Teddy Bear learn about children's home life compared to life at school? What was the same and what was different?</p> <p>What did you Teddy Bear miss about being in the classroom without children?</p> <p>What did you miss about being at home but not coming to school?</p> <p>Did your Teddy Bear have any worries about coming back to school?</p>
How to Introduce this Theme	<p>Welcome children and bears back to school. Acknowledge the number of days that you've been apart, and how glad you are to see everyone. Let children and bears know that they will have many different ways to share their stories, the first being the first being the sharing of the letters that they wrote to their bears from home.</p> <p>The next activity is sharing the photo or artifact that the tells something about the child's home life experience during break.</p>

<p>January Thematic Books & Resources</p>	<p><i>You Go Away</i> by Dorothy Corey (3K-2) <i>I'm New Here</i> by O'Brien (PreK-2) <i>Someone New</i> by O'Brien (PreK-2) <i>Feelings</i> by Aliko (Pre-K-2) <i>Ira Sleeps Over</i> by Waber (PreK-3) <i>Outside, Inside</i> by Pham (All Ages) <i>Jasmine's Big Idea</i> by Koplow (PreK-2) <i>Little Bear's Visit</i> by Else Minarik (3K-2) <i>Maria Feels Left Out</i> by Walsh (PreK-2) <i>Casey Caterpillar Feels Left Out</i> by Kurtzman-Counter (3K-2) <i>Daniel Feels Left Out</i> by Kesta (3K-K) <i>Same, Same but Different</i> by Kosteck-Shaw(PreK-2) <i>We're Different, We're the Same</i> by Kates (3K-K) <i>Who We Are</i> by Harris (PreK-2) <i>Who Belongs Here?</i> By Knight (2nd) <i>What Would You Do in a Book About You?</i> By Reidy (3K-2) <i>The Adventures of Beckle: The Un-imaginary Friend</i> by Santat (PreK-2) <i>Ways to Make Sunshine</i> by Renee Watson (3-5) <i>Ways to Grow Love</i> by Renee Watson (3-5) <i>Dream Street</i> by Tricia Elam Walker</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<p>Artifact/photo "show and tell" Whole group discussion with children and bears (Use easel paper to record) Writing in Teddy Bear Journals Reflective read alouds</p>

***Recommended routines to include bears:** arrival, meeting and story times, library, bear journals, open ended worktime, choice time, center time, and any time comfort is needed.

***Highly Recommended:** After returning from recess/lunch.

February	Lost and Found
Orientation and Rationale for This Month's Theme	<p>This theme acknowledges the variety of losses that children have had in Covid times, as well as the new things that they have experienced and discovered.</p> <p><i>What teachers might hear about: Loss, abandonment, loneliness, separation, togetherness, pleasures of downtime.</i></p>
Sub-Themes & Inquiry	<p>Before the vaccine, when so many people had Covid 19, children lost so much! They lost in-person school, play dates, visits to family who lived far away, friends and neighbors who moved away, after school activities, etc. Did children also <i>find</i> anything new during that time? (New ways to spend time, play, think, feel, etc.) Did Teddy Bears?</p> <p>Covid still sometimes makes us lose time being together at school when we have to close our classroom if someone is sick. When that happens, what else happens that feels like losing something important?</p> <p>When that happens, do our Teddy Bears discover anything new to do in the classroom when we are at home?</p> <p>What do the children in our stories have big feelings about losing?</p>

	<p>What do the children in our stories find that helps them feel better?</p> <p>We know that the coronavirus can make people very sick, and it can even make older people, or people with other health problems die. If children or Teddy Bears lost someone they loved during the pandemic, their feelings about losing that person can last a long, long, time. Since we can't make people come back after they die, how can we find ways to remember them in ways that help?</p> <p>What does it mean to honor someone's memory? If children or Teddy Bears lost someone important during the pandemic, how can we find a way to honor their memory?</p> <p>Since feelings of sadness, anger and fear often follow a loss, how can we make room for those feelings in our classroom, and comfort the children and Teddy Bears who are still feeling those big feelings?</p>
How to Introduce this Theme	<p>Read one of the books at the beginning of the book list. Ask open ended questions. Then use themes of inquiry to guide discussion.</p> <p>Read at least one book a week to children and Teddy Bears, remembering to invite bear perspectives and experiences as well as children's. Follow up with one of the activities listed below.</p>

Thematic Books & Resources	<p>Lilah in the Land of the Littles by Lesley Koplow (3K-2)</p> <p>Jasmine’s Big Idea by Lesley Koplow (3K-2)</p> <p>Wilson’s Wishes by Lesley Koplow (K-2)</p> <p>Inside, Outside by Le Uyen Pham (3k-2)</p> <p>Wade Through the Pandemic by Wade Williams (Pre-K-2)</p> <p>Someone Special Died by Singleton Prestine (3K-2)</p> <p>The 10th Good Thing About Barney by Viorst (3K-2)</p> <p>Love is Forever by Casey Rislov (3k-2)</p> <p>The Patchwork Quilt by FLOURNEY (K-2)</p> <p>The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polacco (K-2)</p> <p>Lost and Found Cat by Kuntz (K-2)</p> <p>Good-byes by Shelley Rotner, (3K-2)</p> <p>Good-bye, Hello by Alike (3k-2)</p>
Activities	<p>Read alouds</p> <p>Group discussion</p> <p>Drawing invitations, story dictation, writing invitations, story acting</p> <p>Individual scrapbooks</p> <p>Group memorial projects such as quilt making, creating book of poetry re: losses, memory, sources of comfort, new discoveries during Covid times (see resources re: quilt making)</p> <p><i>* For K-2, add “letters to children in times of quarantine” , or “letters for children in zoom school” inviting kids to give younger children advice about learning from home , and about how to come back to school and feel safe.</i></p>

***Recommended routines to include bears:** arrival, meeting and story times, library, bear journals, open ended worktime, choice time, center time, and any time comfort is needed.

***Highly Recommended:** After returning from recess/lunch.

March	Superheroes, Fairy Grandparents, and Imaginary Friends
Orientation and Rationale for This Month's Theme	<p>When classroom and school community has had time and support to grow strong, it can contain the developmental and life experience issues that emerge during traumatic times. Using the symbolic process of play, expressive arts and literacy metaphors can give children's anxieties, fears and hopes safe places to "live" in the classroom, instead of "erupting" in emotional storms.</p> <p>The "Superheros, Fairy Grandparents, and Imaginary Friends" theme is intended to help children and Teddies feel " in good company," and set the stage for hopeful feelings as well as for managing the more complex issues and dynamics that happen in classrooms once children and teachers know each other well.</p>

Sub-Themes & Inquiry

Are superheroes real or pretend?

Where do superheroes get their powers?

Where do superheroes come from? How does someone become a superhero?

Can superheroes save the day? In what ways?

If you were a superhero, what would your special power be?

If your Teddy Bear was a superhero, what magical powers would it have?

Why do kids have imaginary friends?

Does your Teddy Bear have an imaginary friend?

What can an imaginary friend do that a real friend might not be able to do?

Can imaginary friends come to school? How can they help children at school?

Can imaginary friends make wishes come true? How?

Imaginary friends are invisible to everyone except to the person who imagines them. Why?

Are imaginary friends always around, or do they come and go?

	What makes them come around and what makes them go away?
How to Introduce this Theme	<p>Read one of the books listed below to introduce the topics of superheroes and imaginary friends.</p> <p>Ask what the book reminds the children and their Teddy Bears of.</p> <p>Discuss the themes above. Listen to children's answers and provide reflective affirmations of their ideas. Help create group knowledge by drawing on and adding to the ideas that children bring up.</p>
Thematic Books & Resources	<p><i>Little Gavin's Adventures: The Boy with Magical Powers</i> by <i>Gavin Scott Colella, Ollie Colella & Connie Colella</i> (K-3)</p> <p><i>The Top Secret List to Becoming a Superhero</i> by <i>Adisan Books</i> (1-3)</p> <p><i>Kamala & Maya's Big Idea</i> by <i>Meena Harris</i> (K-5)</p> <p><i>Love is Powerful</i> by <i>Heather Dean Brewer</i> (K-5)</p> <p><i>Me and Neesie</i> by <i>Eloise Greenfield</i> (3 K-2)</p> <p><i>The Adventures of Beekle</i> by <i>Santat</i> (3K-2)</p> <p><i>Daisy Dreamer and the Totally True Imaginary Friend</i> by <i>Anna</i> (K-2)</p> <p><i>Scribbly, A Real Imaginary Friend</i> by <i>Adamson</i> (3K-2)</p> <p><i>Imaginary Fred</i> by <i>Colfer</i> (3K-2)</p> <p><i>Madlenka's Dog</i> by <i>Peter Sis</i> (3K-2)</p> <p><i>Otto and Pio</i> by <i>Dubec</i> (Pre-K-2)</p> <p><i>Leon and Bob</i> by <i>Simon James</i> (Pre-K-2)</p>

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing /drawing about self and or Teddy as a superhero • Listing powers • Inventing a <i>classroom superhero</i>. (naming, drawing, and or constructing.) Deciding on its powers as a group. • Drawing or making imaginary friends using craft materials • Introducing an imaginary friend (child's or Teddy Bear's) • Identifying imaginary friend's important features: (Ways that they help the child who created them) • Story dictation or story writing and or Story Acting about superheros and imaginary friends including responding to prompts such as, <i>How do imaginary friends help make wishes come true? How do they make life better?</i>
<p>*Recommended routines to include bears: arrival, meeting and story times, library, bear journals, open ended worktime, choice time, center time, and any time comfort is needed.</p> <p>*Highly Recommended: After returning from recess/lunch.</p>	

April	A World for Teddy Bears: Teddy Bear Town
Orientation and Rationale for This Month's Theme	<p>This theme invites children to invent and create a town that is “just right” for Teddy Bears. This involves thinking together about what the bears need and want in their own town, what the policies/rules/laws there should be that are fair and just for all Teddies, and make their Teddy Bears feel safe and powerful when they are together in Teddy Bear Town. Making</p>

	<p>things for their bears as well as being decision makers for the town gives children experience with individual contribution as well as collective decision making.</p> <p><i>This will look different according to age level.</i></p>
Sub-Themes & Inquiry	<p>If we could invent a “just right world” for our Teddy Bears, what would it be like?</p> <p>What would Teddy Bears need in their “just right” world? What would they want?</p> <p>Some Teddies might like the same things, but some might like different things. How can we make sure that every Teddy Bear has something that makes them feel safe and happy?</p> <p>What is “infrastructure?” What would make a strong enough infrastructure to support a Teddy Bear town?</p> <p>One thing we know about Teddy Bears is that they don’t like to rush. What should we make sure our Teddy Bears have enough time to do in the Teddy Bear world?</p> <p>How can we make sure that they have space for all kinds of feelings?</p> <p>Right now our bears live in the individual beds we made for them and when they’re not with us, they are usually in bed in our cubbies. Maybe we can build a whole Teddy Bear town for them to be in when we’re at lunch or gym, or when they feel like being together.* <i>(Teacher guides and advises these decisions so they are manageable for the classroom)</i></p> <p>Let’s make a list of what they want in their town, and who will work on making that part of the town. What are some ways that we can make those things?</p>

<p>How to Introduce this Theme</p>	<p>Explore these themes during morning meeting, or other whole or small group times.</p> <p>Use this inquiry approach as a foundation for helping children to brainstorm, plan, develop and build a “just right” town for their Teddy Bears.</p>
<p>Thematic Books & Resources</p>	<p>Billy Makes a Wish by Kevin Henkes (K-2)</p> <p>Revisit: Lilah in the Land of the Littles by Lesley Koplou (PreK-2)</p> <p>Wolf in the Snow by Matthew Cordell (K-2)</p> <p>Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de la Pena (3K-2)</p> <p><i>Carmela Full of Wishes</i> Matt de la Pena (K-8)</p> <p>The Hundred Dresses by Eleanor Estes (2-5)</p> <p>The Little Island by Margaret Wise Brown (3K-2)</p> <p>Frederick by Leo Lionni (K-3)</p> <p>The Little House by Burton (K-2)</p> <p>Drawn Together by Minh Le (K-3)</p> <p>The Little Gardener by Emily Hughes (3K-2)</p> <p>The Story of Ferdinand by Munroe Leaf (3K-2)</p> <p>Harold and the Purple Crayon by Crockett Johnson (3K-2)</p> <p>All Are Welcome by Alexandra Penfold (3K-3)</p> <p>Builders by Reina Ollivier (3K-2)</p> <p>Jump at the Sun: The True Life of Unstoppable Storycatcher Zora Neal Hurston by Alicia D. Williams (K-5)</p>

	<u>Jayden's Impossible Garden by Mélina Mangal (K-2)</u>
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group discussion, recorded with easel paper • Interviewing Teddy Bears • Identifying components of “town” • Individual creative work, or small, interest -based project groups to make components of “town’ with a variety of materials • Putting creations together to construct a “town” that meets the needs of the Teddy Bear community (<i>Stay within the developmental “zone” of your age group</i>)
<p>*Recommended routines to include bears: arrival, meeting and story times, library, bear journals, open ended worktime, choice time, center time, and any time comfort is needed.</p> <p>*Highly Recommended: After returning from recess/lunch.</p>	

May	Transformations (Growing and Changing)
Orientation and Rationale for This Month's Theme	<p>This theme invites reflection on the many ways that children have grown and changed over the school year. It encourages self awareness and helps them acknowledge growth and change in self and others as the year comes to a close.</p> <p>*It also can expand, for older children, to consider ideas of transformation beyond the personal.</p>

Sub-Themes & Inquiry

What does it mean to transform?

What do “transformers” do? How do they do it?

Do plants transform? Do animals transform? Do people? How ?

Everyone changes over time. Everyone here has changed in many ways since they were born!
What are some ways that you have grown and changed over time?

What are some ways that you have grown and changed during the school year?

Have your Teddy Bears changed during the school year? In what ways?

*Were our lives transformed by the Coronavirus? In what ways? Was your bear’s life transformed? In what ways?

*Were there other events in the city and in the country and in the world that you feel transformed your life this year? What were they?

<p>How to Introduce this Theme</p>	<p>Read the book about Transformers. Help guide understanding from the action-adventure oriented transformers to other ways that transformation can happen.</p> <p>Explore themes through inquiry re: partner talk, large or small group discussions, using easel paper to record children's thoughts and connections. Drawing and taking dictation about how teddies and children have transformed.</p> <p>Follow up with activities that support connection, engagement discovery and sense of agency with change process, keeping in mind the changes that happen for children at the end of the school year. * for 1st-5th grades</p>
<p>Thematic Books & Resources</p>	<p>Transformers: Rescue Bots by Hasbro (3K-2) Some Things Change by Mary Murphy (3K-2) Changes, Changes by Polanco (3K-2) The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle (3K-2) Caterpillars and Butterflies by Turnbull (3K-2) The Caterpillar That Learned to Fly by Clark (3K-2) From Seed to Plant by Gail Gibbons (3K-2) The Tiny Seed by Eric Carle (3k-2) Growing and Changing by Heapy (3K-2) From Tadpole to Frog by Maloney (3K-2) From Cub to Panda by Boothroyd (3K-2) After the Fall by Santat (PreK-2) Circles All Around Us by Montegue (PreK-2) What Would You Do With An Idea? by Yamada (K-2) Love is Powerful by Pham (3K-2)</p>

	I Can Say “No!” by Jenny Simmons (3K-2) Inside, Outside by Pham (1st-2nd)
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring, manipulating, drawing and writing about toys that transform re: <i>what they become and how</i> • Planting seeds or bulbs and recording growth and change • Animal studies: re: growing and changing • Timelines re: growth and change from baby to present age • Before and after books re: Covid times
<p>*Recommended routines to include bears: arrival, meeting and story times, library, bear journals, open ended worktime, choice time, center time, and any time comfort is needed.</p> <p>*Highly Recommended: After returning from recess/lunch.</p>	

June	A Good Good-bye for Teddy Bears
Orientation and Rationale for This Month's Theme	<p>This theme will help children and Teddy Bears process end of year issues, and help children have a “good good-bye” at the end of the school year.</p> <p>By processing the separation and transition with their current teacher and peers, children will have a stronger relationship foundation for beginning the next school year.</p> <p>*IMPORTANT: Schools must make decision for K and 1st grade children about whether teddies will go home with children, or be passed to teh next grade. <i>*In our experience,</i></p>

	<p><i>bringing them home ensures that children have them if any life changes occur over the summer. Returning children may be asked to bring them back in the fall, or may be given new bears for a new year.</i></p>
Sub-Themes & Inquiry	<p>How many ways can you think of to say “good-bye”?</p> <p>Why is it important to find ways of giving our Teddy Bears a “good good-bye”?</p> <p>What if we forgot to talk with them about the end of the school year and then one day they went home with you and didn’t come back to school ? How would they feel?</p> <p>What are some ways that we can help bears remember all of the important things we have shared?</p> <p>How can we give ourselves a “Good Good-bye” so that we feel ready to say good-bye on the last day of school?</p> <p>So many things happened during the time that we have been together! We have shared happy times, sad times, scary times, and frustrating and angry times. All of those times have been important. How can we remember them while we are still together? How can we remember them when we’re apart?</p> <p>How can friends stay connected during the summer when they are apart?</p> <p>Does your Teddy Bear have end of the year worries? What are they?</p> <p>How have you changed during the school year? How has your Teddy Bear changed?</p>

	<p>What do you think will be the same about (the next grade)? What do you think will be different?</p> <p>How can your teddy help you remember school friends when the summer begins?</p>
<p>How to Introduce this Theme</p>	<p>Explore these themes with children and bears during meetings. Write children’s ideas on easel paper.</p> <p>Offer both individual and Group projects that invite children and bears to remember and represent the events that are important to them that happened within the classroom community, or that were addressed in the classroom.</p> <p>Offer group projects that involve study of the next grade.</p>
<p>Thematic Books & Resources</p>	<p>Oh No! Time to Go! By Doughty (3K-2) Our Class is a Family by Olson (English and Spanish) (3K-2) How to Get Your Teacher Ready by Reagan (K-2) Last Day Blues by Danneberg (K-2) Same, Same but Different by KOSTECKI-SHAW (Pre-K-2) What’s Your Habitat? by Leidhold (3K-2) Good-bye Summer, Hello Autumn by Pak (3K-2) Goodbye Brings Hello by White (3k-2) The Rabbit Listened by Doerrfeld (3K-2) The Luckiest Snowball by Kreloff (Pre-K-2)</p>

	<p>Lizzie and the Last Day of School by Noble (k-2)</p> <p>Now We Can Go by Ann Jonas (3k-2)</p> <p>Waiting by Kevin Henkes (3K-2)</p>
Activities	<p>Discussion, verbal narrative, drawing, writing</p> <p>Interviewing</p> <p>Teddy Bear Journals</p> <p>Scrapbooks</p> <p>Artifacts and Photographs</p> <p>Next Grade Study: Same and Different</p> <p>Including:</p> <p>Interviews of next grade students,</p> <p>Interviewing next grade teachers</p> <p>Classroom observations of next grades</p> <p>Brainstorming and answering questions through above.</p> <p>Book making</p> <p>Inventing meaningful last day rituals</p>
<p>*Recommended routines to include bears: arrival, meeting and story times, library, bear journals, open ended worktime, choice time, center time, and any time comfort is needed.</p>	

** NOTE: While we believe that TBTT enacts and nourishes social justice values, we also see even more possibilities in classrooms and schools where social justice orientation is part of the mission. A Parallel Curriculum to expand the social justice orientation of these monthly themes, with additional books and activities is available. Please reach out to ERP: mblachly@bankstreet.edu to receive that document!*