

# QUINN SAYS GOODBYE

## HELPING KIDS TALK ABOUT LOSS



### Activities

- 1 Discussion Guides for younger and older kids
- 2 Object lesson
- 3 Crafts for younger and older kids
- 4 Extra resources for teachers and parents

### About "Quinn Says Goodbye"

by Christie Thomas

Beautifully illustrated and thoughtfully written, *Quinn Says Goodbye* is designed for children dealing with different kinds of loss, whether it be death of a pet or a family member, or simply the loss of a favorite toy. Remind children that although people and things might not be in their life forever, God will never leave them.



# DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR "QUINN SAYS GOODBYE"

*For Preschool–Grade 6, emphasis on faith and mental health*

After reading the book, ask:

1. Have you ever lost someone?
2. When Quinn goes to search for Blink, her mama is right behind her even though Quinn doesn't notice her until she lands. How is this like God? (Read Psalm 34:18 out loud together.)
3. Mama snuggles Quinn under her wings. Did you know that God treats us the same way? (Read Psalm 91:4) That's a word picture that reminds us that God cares for us. Close your eyes and imagine God snuggling you like that.
4. The Bible uses another word picture to help us understand how close God is. (Read Isaiah 41:10, then invite a child to hang off your arm.) How is my hand different from God's hand? What does God promise in this verse?



# DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR "QUINN SAYS GOODBYE"

*For Grades 4–6, emphasis on literary elements*

After reading the book, discuss the following literary elements:

1. **METAPHOR:** A metaphor is a word picture that shows how unexpected things are alike. The Bible (and this book) uses the metaphor of a mother bird snuggling her chicks under her wings as protection and comfort. What other metaphors does the Bible use to describe God? (possible answers: rock, shepherd, father, king, fire, living water, etc.) What metaphor would YOU use to describe God?
2. **SHOWING VS. TELLING:** When we write, we always have the choice to show OR tell. When Quinn dives out of the nest, the author writes "Quinn felt like something had gotten stuck in her throat, and her eyes began to hurt." How do you feel when you're trying not to cry? This is an example of "showing" a feeling instead of telling the reader that Quinn was trying not to cry. Can you think of some ways to show anger? Jealousy? Love?

# CAN WE TRUST GOD?

An object lesson for ages 5-12

## SUPPLIES:

- a plastic zip top sandwich bag filled with water
- several sharp pencils
- a volunteer!



## INSTRUCTIONS:

Hold the water-filled bag over a child's head, and ask if they trust that they won't get wet. Then, stab the SHARP pencil all the way through the bag! You'll want to practice this before doing it with kids, because some people find it best to stab slowly; others like to do it fast.

TIP: Watch the stress on the zip top! It's the weak link in this experiment.

## WHAT TO SAY:

Do you trust me?

Do you trust that I won't spill this entire bag of water on your head?

What about if I poke a hole in this bag with a pencil?

Well, I'm going to do it. I'm going to poke this pencil through the bag, and you are NOT going to get wet. Do you still trust me not to spill on you?

*Poke first pencil.*

Did you get wet? It seems impossible, doesn't it? **Trusting me in this moment makes no sense.** And yet, here we are with a bag full of water and two holes without any leakage.

Would you trust that I won't get you wet even if I poked another pencil through this bag? How about another? And another?

*Poke as many pencils as you can!*

**Sometimes in life, we can feel like we're getting poked with holes. Friends move away, family members get sick, or our pet dies. It hurts, but trusting God is a bit like trusting that you wouldn't get wet when I held that bag of water over you. We CAN trust God, even when it seems like everything is going horribly wrong. He loves and cares for us.**

## SCIENCE CONNECTION:

The plastic bag is a type of polymer. A polymer is a large molecule made up of many repeating units. When you poke the pencil through, the polymer simply rearranges itself to close the gap between the pencil and the bag, keeping the water inside. (Want to dive deeper into this? Watch [this](#) Science Max video!)

# BLINK THE FIREFLY

*A connection craft for younger children, emphasis on fine-motor skills*

## SUPPLIES FOR EACH CHILD:

- toilet paper tube
- scrap paper or wings/face template
- a small square of yellow paper
- tape/glue
- OPTIONAL: an electric tealight candle, pipe cleaners, google eyes

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pre-cut a half circle at the bottom of the tube.
2. Allow children to cut out wings and face and attach with glue. For really young children, you'll need to pre-cut them.
3. Glue the yellow paper inside the open half-circle at the bottom.
4. OPTIONAL: Set the firefly on top of the lit tealight candle, and watch your firefly's bum glow!



# EMPATHY CARDS

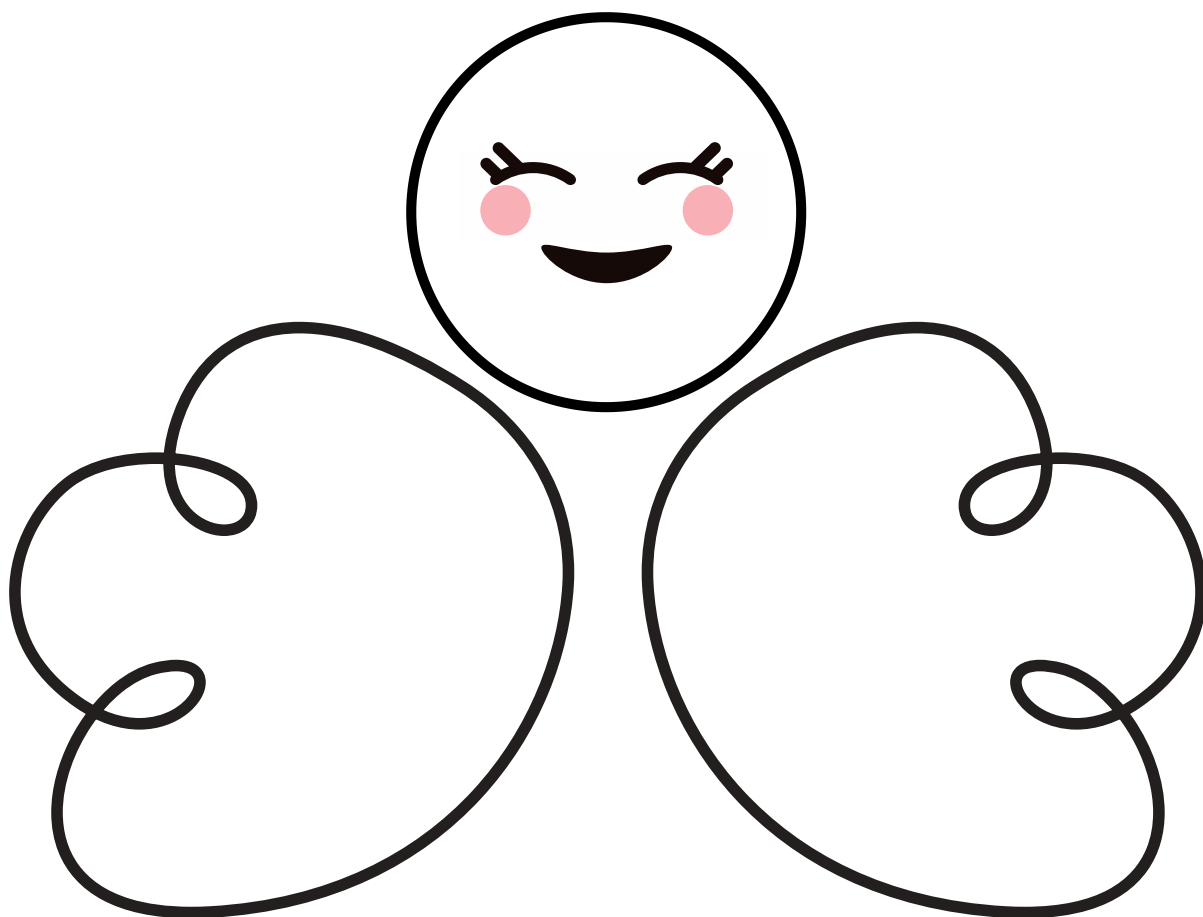
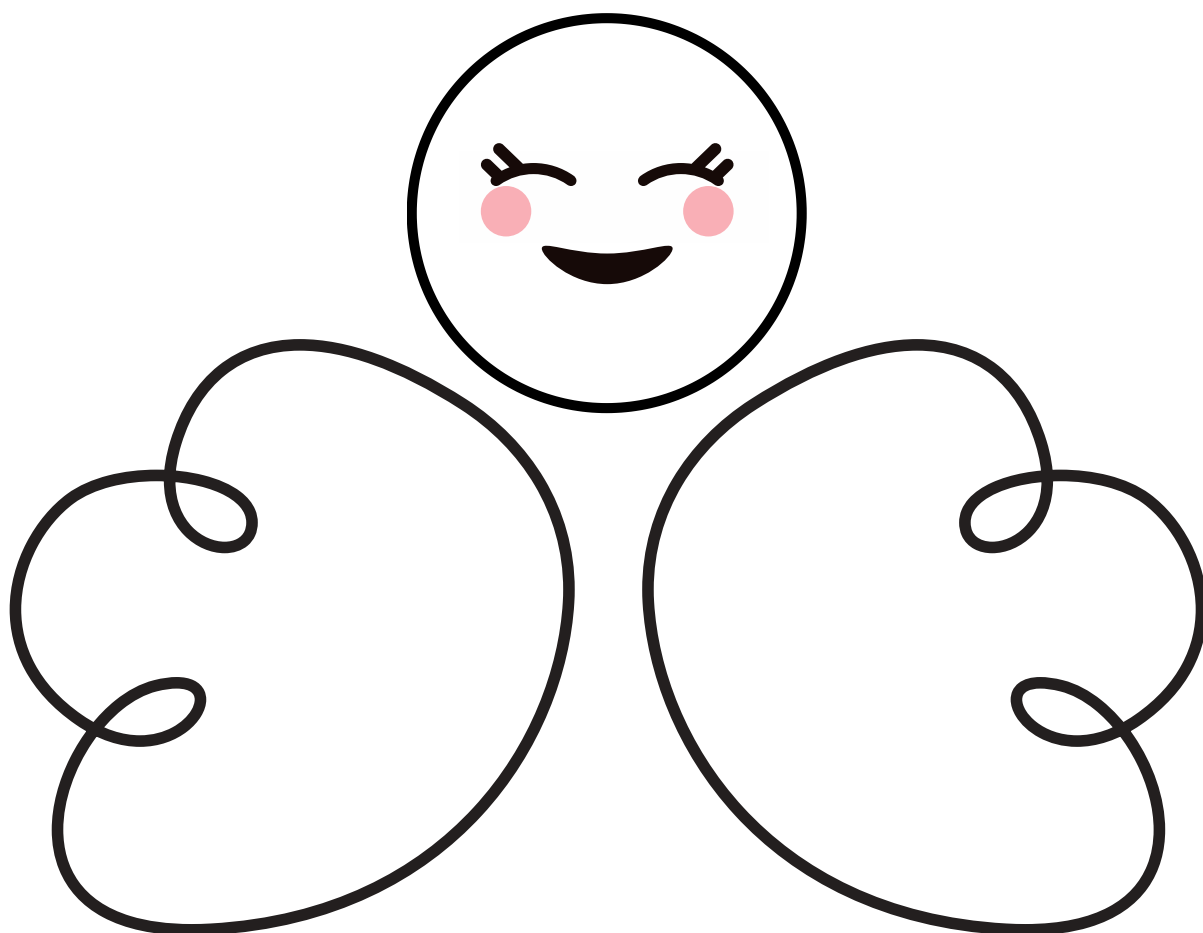
*A connection craft for older children, emphasis on empathy building*

## SUPPLIES FOR EACH CHILD:

- blank paper
- pencils, markers
- extra card-making supplies as desired

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Invite kids to think about someone they know that is sad. Maybe it's a friend or family member. This might be difficult for some kids, if they don't notice the feelings of others. If you've followed the discussion guide, there might be kids in the class they can encourage.
2. Ask child to create a card for that person. Since kids don't often know what to say in such situations, here are some suggested phrases:
  - a. I love you.
  - b. I'm here for you.
  - c. I like you because...
  - d. I'm sorry you have to go through this.
  - e. I'm sorry for your loss.



# Extra Resources

## ARTICLES

### 4 Uplifting Phrases for kids dealing with loss

<https://www.christiethomaswriter.com/kids-ideas-blog/4-uplifting-phrases-for-kids-dealing-with-loss/>

### Books About Heaven

<https://www.christiethomaswriter.com/kids-ideas-blog/books-about-heaven-for-kids/>

### How to explain death to a child, from a Biblical perspective

<https://www.christiethomaswriter.com/kids-ideas-blog/how-to-explain-death-to-a-child-biblically/>

### How to help a child deal with pet death

<https://www.christiethomaswriter.com/parenting/how-to-help-a-child-deal-with-pet-death/>

## CHRISTIAN BOOKS FOR KIDS GOING THROUGH HARD TIMES

It Will Be Okay – Trusting God Through Fear and Change (Lysa TerKeurst)

Little Mole Finds Hope (Glenys Nellist)

Henry Says Goodbye (Edward T. Welch)

Goodbye to Goodbyes (Lauren Chandler)

The Moon is Always Round (Jonathan Gibson)