

FIVE-DAY CURRICULUM

Presented by The Hartage Foundation Inc. • Orlando, Florida

GRADE 2 EDUCATOR GUIDE

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

This five-day curriculum is a structured, teacher-ready plan designed as a repeatable tool for literacy and social-emotional learning (SEL). It aligns with universal skills in reading, communication, and vocabulary, providing safe expression pathways for Grade 2 students navigating complex family emotions.

Emotional Safety Norms

- **Optional Participation:** Sharing family experiences is never mandatory.
- **Story-Based:** Focus prompts on Charlotte to maintain boundaries.
- **Steady Reassurance:** "You did nothing wrong. Love stays."
- **Exit Paths:** Allow students to step out or draw if distressed.

Essential Supplies

- Read-aloud copy of the book
- Emotion cards (Happy, Sad, Confused, etc.)
- **The Box:** Shoebox, cigar box, or sturdy container
- **Decoration:** Markers, paint, collage materials
- Journals & drawing supplies

The Memory Box Construct

The Memory Box is the central instructional tool of this curriculum. It serves as a physical vessel for literacy, emotional expression, and reassurance. **Requirement:** Each student creates and maintains one box.

Containers: Shoeboxes, cleaned cigar boxes, or plastic bins.

Decoration: Paint, markers, or labels. Student choice is key.

Privacy: Students may keep boxes private or use imagined memories.

DAY 1: Meet Charlotte – Feelings & Change

Target: I can identify Charlotte's feelings and tell what happened.

Lesson Flow

- **Warm-up:** Record ideas for "What is a memory?"
- **Read-aloud:** Pause during travel sections. Ask: "How does Charlotte feel?"
- **Feelings Check:** Use emotion cards to name Charlotte's state.
- **Quick Write:** Draw Charlotte + "Charlotte feels ___ because ___."

Teacher Support:

"Why doesn't Grandpa know her name?"
Response: Alzheimer's makes it hard for a brain to find memories. It isn't because he doesn't love her.

DAY 2: What is Alzheimer's?

Target: I can explain Alzheimer's in simple, safe words.

Key Concepts

Focus on the "Cloudy Pathway" analogy. Explain that the brain's pathways (neurons) can get "plaque" or clouds that make remembering hard.

Box Work: Decorate the box. Label it:
"Little reminders of big love."

Reassurance Practice:

Teach these lines today:

1. "You did nothing wrong."
2. "Love stays."

"Can I catch it?"

Response: No. It's not like a cold.

DAY 3: Build the Memory Box (Item #1)

Target: I can choose one memory item and explain why it matters.

Activity

Students create **Memory Item #1**: A drawing of a happy moment (real or story-based). Add a feeling label: *"This memory makes me feel ___."*

Choice is key: If a student has no family memory they wish to share, encourage a "Pretend Memory" or a "Story Memory."

Teacher Support:

"What if my memory is sad?"

Response: Sad memories are allowed. We keep them safely and can add a comfort memory too.

DAY 4: Stories, Photos, and Songs (Item #2)

Target: I can use a story or song to help someone feel close.

Activity

Create **Memory Item #2**: A Song Memory Card or Story Card. Revisit the "Memory Box" moment in the book where Charlotte finds connection through music/stories.

Teacher Support:

"Can a song help him remember?"

Response: Sometimes music wakes up older memories because it feels so familiar.

DAY 5: Reflection & The Message

Target: I can explain the message: Love stays even when remembering changes.

Closing the Week

- **Anchor Chart:** Build a "Love Stays" chart together.
- **Reflection:** "This box helps because ___."
- **Comfort Card:** Add one final sentence the student can reread: "Love stays."

Final Thought

The Memory Box is now a permanent tool the student can return to whenever they feel worried or disconnected.