

## Obituary Box

**Note:** Know your class well before beginning this activity. Make sure that no one has experienced a recent death in the family.

Grade levels: 6-12

Subject Area: Language Arts (Creative writing)

Objective: To learn to write in a given style, such as an obituary.

Materials needed:

- Today's newspaper
- Box of "dead" items such as: a used tea bag; a broken pencil; an old toothbrush; an empty cereal box; a candy wrapper, etc.

Directions:

- Distribute a copy of today's newspaper to each student.
- Direct your students to the obituary section of the newspaper.
- Read several obituaries together.
- Create a list, on the board, overhead or flipchart, of the characteristics of a good obituary. These should include: name, age, location, cause of death, important things done in life; survivors, etc.
- Let each small group select an item from the "Obituary Box." They are to write an obituary for that item.

Sharing:

- Allow groups to share their obituaries with the class.
- Create a bulletin board display with the item and its obituary.

Extensions:

- Create obituaries for comic strip characters.
- Create stories written in other newspaper formats.
- How else could you use this activity in your classroom?

**Note:** We do not suggest that students write their own obituaries except under the direction of a trained counselor.