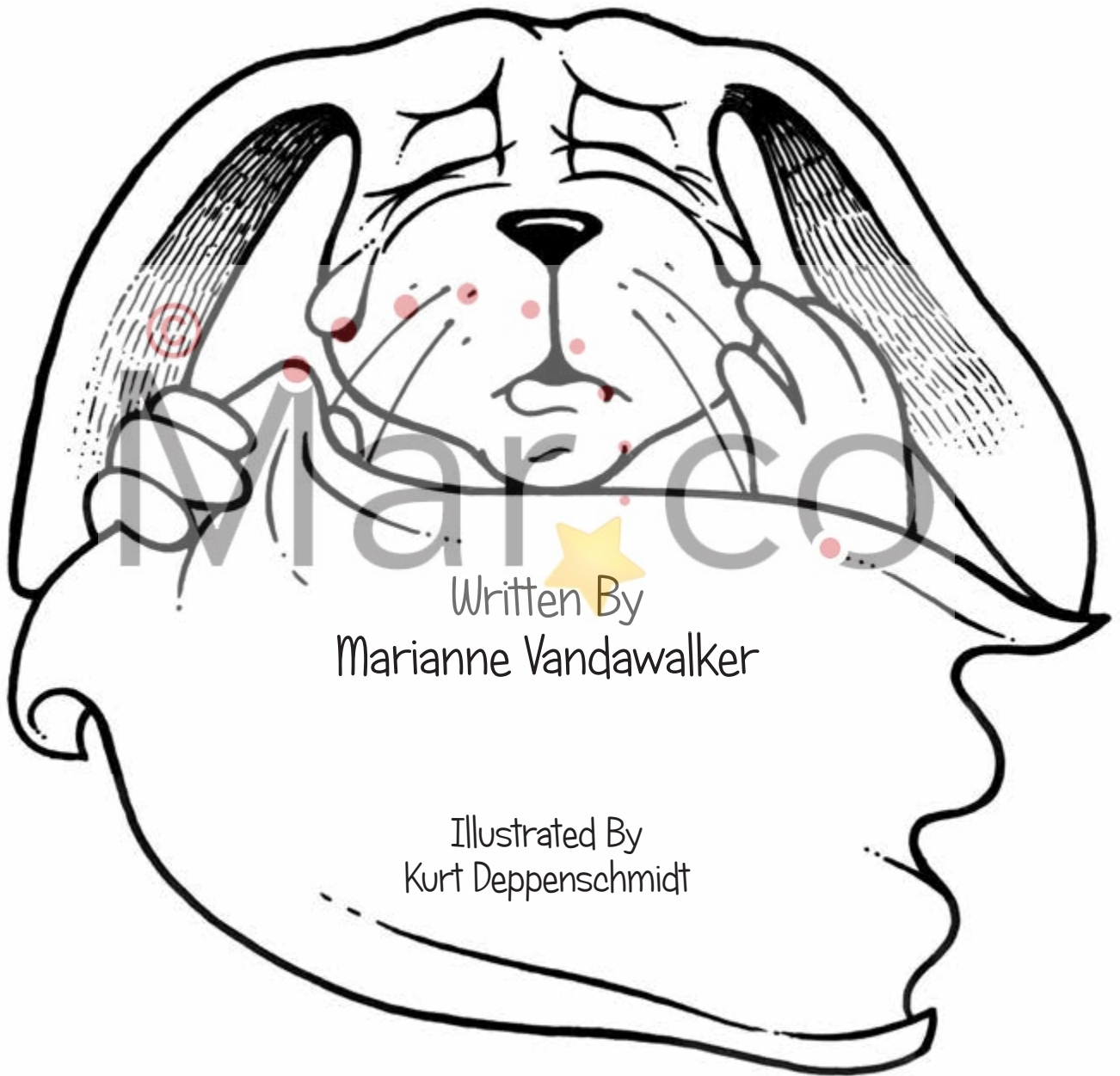


What Color Are Tears?

A Grief And Loss Interactive Workbook
For Young Students



Marianne Vandawalker

I am a retired counselor, but I continue to develop guidance activities that are successfully used in the classroom as well as in small-group and individual counseling settings. I actively keep up with new materials and emerging needs. My counseling experience succeeded 12 years as reading specialist and 28 years as a classroom teacher.

I've often found myself in need of good material to use in situations involving grieving and loss. Unbelievable as it still seems, a student died on our school's playground one Friday morning, and one of our kindergarten teachers died unexpectedly the following Monday morning. On those occasions, I conducted classroom guidance as well as small-group and individual counseling sessions. I wish I'd had *What Color Are Tears?* during those very trying times.



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Introduction

Counselors need a wide variety of materials in order to respond appropriately and effectively to a wide variety of situations and student needs. In the area of grief and loss, a counselor can never have too many resources. Material dealing with these sensitive topics must reach out to each child in a personal, realistically emotive way that encourages interaction and reaction. Students feel their emotions validated by feelings described in the story. Bibliotherapy helps readers relate to characters' predicaments and see how they resolve their situations and move on with their lives.

This story may be presented in a single session. Or individual pages may be presented in a workbook format as the youngsters show readiness.

The main character in *What Color Are Tears?* moves through the stages of grieving, and the positive way he deals with his loss are healing and instructive for students. Bitty Bunny is a likeable character, and Grandma Bunny lends a sense of nurturing and reassurance to a troubling situation.

Eliciting oral, written, or drawn responses to each question benefits the student by fixing solutions and answers in his or her developing mind.

How To Use *What Color Are Tears?*

PRE-READING PREPARATION:

- Ask:** Have you ever had a pet that died?
Have you ever had a family member or close friend who died?
What did you do when you found out about the death?
How did you feel about the loss?

VOCABULARY PREPARATION:

- Memories:** Do you have memories of something that happened to you?
What do you think memories are?
- Tears:** Have you ever cried or seen someone else's tears?
What causes tears?
- Feelings:** Tell me about different feelings that you have had.





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“I feel so sad since my friend Robbie Rabbit isn't here any more.”



“I want to draw pictures of my memories, but I’m having trouble choosing the colors. Right now, I want to draw with only the black crayon.”



What color shows how you feel now?
Color the blank piece of paper on the table that color.

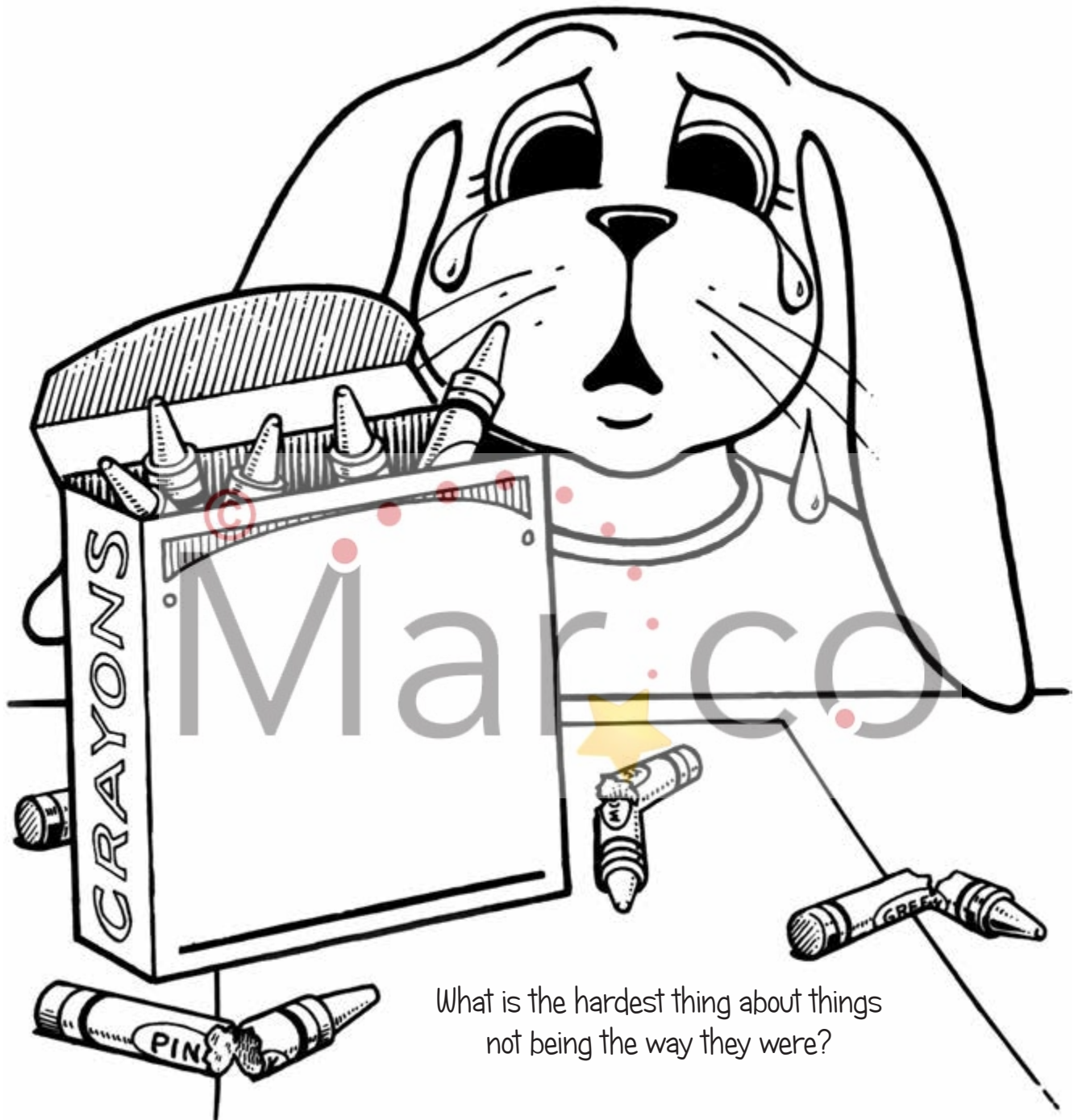
“I have so **many** feelings!” he tells Granny Bunny. “What color are feelings? I’ve seen pictures of hearts in science books, but my feelings are dark, like shadows in the late afternoon.”



“Try to remember the good memories,” Granny says as she pats Bitty Bunny on the head.



“I can’t color any happy memories, because my happy colors are broken,” Bitty Bunny cries. “I’ll need a whole new box of crayons.”



What is the hardest thing about things not being the way they were?

“But what will I do when I’m finished?” Bitty Bunny asks himself. “Will I have to put my collection of pictures and belongings in a box? Will I forget about them and the memories they show?”

Where would you keep your memory collections?

