

Honors English I Summer Reading Assignment

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Please note: All summer reading assignments should be completed in full, and TURNED IN ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. Any student, who fails to turn in his or her summer reading assignments, will earn zeroes for the assignments.

Questions: If you have any questions over the summer pertaining to the assignment, please email me, and I will get back to you as quickly as I can.

1. *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom

You must purchase this book, as PCHS does not provide it for students.

This year, Honors English I is required to read *Tuesdays with Morrie* for the summer reading assignment. We will begin our semester focused on this book, so I am asking you to read and reflect on it over the summer. Part of the reason we read is to learn more about others and ourselves. Many of the stories we read tell about individuals who have transformed their lives due to the impact of a special person.

Tuesdays with Morrie is a nonfiction book, written by Mitch Albom, a columnist and radio host in Michigan. Albom tells the story of a professor, Morrie Schwartz, who taught Mitch and impacted his life through their “classes” together. It was in the last class that the author learns how to live. This book will give you an opportunity to learn what Morrie had to teach while also giving you an opportunity to reflect on your own life. You may shed tears and laugh, but this is not a depressing story because Morrie teaches us how to live. He helps us to see that it is what we do without life that is important.

2. Assignment Requirements

As you finish the summer reading, please complete the following assignments.

- I. Reader Response Journal
- II. Study Guide Questions
- III. Aphorism Assignment Worksheet

The book is short, but the message is large. Do not put off the assignment for this book until the last minute. All assignments require a great deal of writing and thought. If you wait until the last minute, you will risk turning in low quality work.

Assignment 1: *Tuesdays with Morrie* Reader Response Journals

Directions: Answer each of the following prompts on a separate sheet of paper. Each answer should be at least one well-written paragraph long. This means you should have about 8-10 sentences minimum including:

- ☐ a topic sentence,
- ☐ one sentence to introduce each of your three details,
- ☐ at least three comment sentences for each detail,
- ☐ a concluding sentence.

Note: You must label and type each response in 12pt, Times New Roman font, and make sure each paragraph is double-spaced.

1. During one of Mitch and Morrie's first Tuesday visits, Morrie asked Mitch several pointed questions: "Are you giving to your community?" "Are you at peace with yourself?" "Are you trying to be as human as you can be?" (p.34) How would you respond to these questions?
2. Morrie says, "There's a big confusion in this country over what we want versus what we need...you know what really gives you satisfaction? Offering others what you have to give." (p. 126) Morrie is quite critical of the cultural emphasis on consumption and wealth. How do you respond to his thoughts about our culture?
3. "Devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community, and devote yourself to creating something that gives you meaning and purpose." Morrie repeats these concepts multiple times during his conversations with Mitch. Reflect on how you are already, or could be, fulfilling this mandate.
4. Shortly before he died, Morrie described for Mitch his perfect day. What would a perfect day look like for you?
5. The relationship between Mitch and Morrie was important to both of them. In many ways, Morrie was a mentor – someone Mitch looked up to and respected, someone who was willing to help Mitch think about his own life, values, and purpose. Who is a mentor for you? What are some life issues facing you now? How might a mentor be helpful to you with those issues?

Assignment 2: Tuesdays with Morrie Study Guide Questions

The Syllabus

1. How does Morrie know something bad is coming?
2. ALS is likened to a candle. How?

The Student

3. How is Mitch's life different after the death of his uncle?

The Audiovisual

4. How does Mitch discover Morrie's illness?

The Orientation

5. When Mitch arrives at Morrie's for the first time what is he not proud of? Why does he struggle with this first meeting?

The Classroom

6. Morrie says people see him as a bridge, what does he mean by this?
7. How is Morrie going to die?
8. What is Morrie's test to see how long he has left?

Taking Attendance

9. What cultures have Mitch and Morrie each developed for themselves?
10. Why does Mitch suddenly have time to visit Morrie? What day of the week will they be meeting? What is the significance of this day?

The First Tuesday

11. What does Mitch bring Morrie? Why?
12. How does Mitch change as he visits Morrie for the second time (think about his thoughts when he was at Wimbledon)?

The Second Tuesday

13. What exercise in trust did Morrie have his students do one of Mitch's classes?
14. Why does Morrie say his dying is both horrible and wonderful?

The Third Tuesday

15. How does Morrie feel about being tape-recorded?
16. What types of things are on Mitch's list for his Tuesday lessons?

The Audiovisual Part II

17. How is Ted Koppel's second interview different from the first visit?

The Professor

18. Describe Morrie's childhood.

The Fourth Tuesday

- 19. What are Morrie's views on religion?
- 20. Once you learn how to die you learn how to _____.

The Fifth Tuesday

- 21. Describe Morrie's relationship with his sons.
- 22. How does Morrie feel about family and having children?
- 23. Describe Mitch's brother and their relationship.
- 24. How does Mitch's relationship with his brother explain his relationship with Morrie?

The Sixth Tuesday

- 25. Explain what is happening with all the food that Mitch brings.
- 26. How does Morrie detach himself?
- 27. How does Morrie want to die?

The Professor, Part II

- 28. Give examples of Morrie's positive relationships with his students.

The Seventh Tuesday

- 29. How does Morrie stay positive?
- 30. Explain Morrie's views on aging.
- 31. How does Morrie explain envy?

The Eighth Tuesday

- 32. Money and power are not substitutes for: _____.
- 33. What makes Morrie feel alive?

The Ninth Tuesday

- 34. Why does Morrie say it is okay for Ted Koppel and Nightline to use him? Do you agree?
- 35. Explain what Mitch means by saying that when Morrie was with you, he was really with you. Is this a necessary component of a good relationship?
- 36. After experiencing his father's death, what has Morrie decided he wants at his own?

The Tenth Tuesday

- 37. Who does Mitch bring with him to visit Morrie?
- 38. Why do you think Janine sang for Morrie?

39. What are Morrie's views on marriage?

The Eleventh Tuesday

40. What does Morrie mean about building his own subculture? Do you have your own subculture?

41. How are humans alike? What's the secret?

The Audiovisual, Part III

42. Describe his final interview with Koppel.

The Twelfth Tuesday

43. We need to do more than forgive others; we also need to forgive ourselves. Why?

44. At this point, what is Mitch afraid of?

The Thirteenth Tuesday

45. How can we die without ever really going away?

46. What would Morrie do with a perfect day?

The Fourteenth Tuesday

47. How do they say good-bye?

Final Questions:

48. Did your opinion about Mitch change as book went on? How?

49. Most of us have read of people discussing the way they'd like to die, or, perhaps, have been a part of that conversation. One common thought is that it would be best to live a long, healthy life and then die suddenly in one's sleep. After reading this book, what do you think about that? Given a choice, would Morrie have taken that route instead of the path he traveled?

50. Who do you think got more out of their Tuesday meetings, Mitch or Morrie? How? How do you think each would answer this question?

51. Would Morrie's lessons have carried less weight if Mitch and Peter hadn't resumed contact by book's end?

Assignment 3: *Tuesdays with Morrie* Aphorism Assignment

Directions: Make a list of **ten** aphorisms (a succinct statement expressing an opinion or a general truth about life) that Morrie gives to Mitch over the course of their meetings. After listing each aphorism, briefly describe what the aphorism means in a well-written sentence.

1.
Meaning:
2.
Meaning
3.
Meaning
4.
Meaning
5.
Meaning

6.

Meaning

7.

Meaning

8.

Meaning

9.

Meaning

10.

Meaning