



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE

BY MITCH ALBOM



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Written by Marleena Young

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Theme**

Objective: Predicting events in the novel based upon its theme

Activity

The full title of Alбом's novel is *Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, a Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson*. The cover is rather plain: it is only the title and the author's name. There are no pictures or graphics that hint at the plot. Could you make a prediction about the plot based on only the title and subtitle?

Alбом did not title his novel carelessly. Why do you think he chose *An Old Man, a Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson* as the subtitle? What lessons could these people learn from each other? It is common for young people to learn from the older generation, but what can older people learn from the young?

Write a paragraph in which you explain what each age group could learn from the other.

Name: _____

Date: _____

“The Curriculum” and “The Syllabus”**Recognizing Figurative Language**

Objective: Recognizing similes, metaphors, hyperbole, and personification

Activity

In “The Curriculum” and “The Syllabus,” there are several examples of figurative language (metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and personification) used to describe things, actions, and people. On the chart provided on the following page, list at least ten you find in these sections. We have found the first one for you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

“The Student”**Character Analysis**

Objective: Analyzing the main character (by making a collage)

Activity

In this brief chapter, Albom goes into detail about the man he was as a college student and the man he becomes after graduating. Albom's dreams are shattered after a career setback and the death of a loved one. As a result, he throws himself entirely into the world of work and money. Albom's descriptions of himself present an image of the man he was and what he has become. Consider Albom's journey from idealist college student to harried sports journalist, and note particular examples of how he has changed.

Make a collage of pictures that represent the younger Albom and the older Albom. Clearly divide your collage into two sections, and label which side represents which era of Albom's life. You may obtain pictures from the Internet or magazines, or you may make your own illustrations for the project.

Name: _____

Date: _____

“The Orientation”**Point of View**

Objectives: Recognizing the point of view used in the novel
Rewriting a portion of the chapter in a different point of view

Activity

The entire novel is told by the author, Mitch Albom, in the first-person point of view. Albom's emotional state during his first arrival at Morrie's house can be described as nervous, anxious, and awkward. Albom is afraid to get out of the car and greet his old professor, and he pretends to search for his keys on the floor. Once he gets out of the car and sees Morrie, he is startled by Morrie's deteriorating appearance and is embarrassed by the overwhelming affection Morrie shows him. Morrie, on the other hand, seems calm and happy.

Rewrite this chapter from Morrie's point of view. What is he thinking when Albom drives into the driveway and takes several minutes to get out of the car? Try to include all the events of the chapter that you can, but write from Morrie's perspective instead of Albom's.

Name: _____

Date: _____

“Taking Attendance”

Exploration of Theme

- Objectives:** Explaining the title of the chapter
Listing activities that foster a feeling of connection to others

Activity

In this chapter, Albom contrasts Mitch’s lifestyle with Morrie’s. Albom confesses that he enjoyed reading tabloid magazines, he worked too much, and he has had few experiences interacting with other people. He also feels displaced when the newspaper unions go on strike and he has no work to do.

Morrie, however, lives a different and unique lifestyle. While most Americans are immersed in the O.J. Simpson trial, money, material possessions, and gossip, Morrie values “conversation, interaction, [and] affection,” which fill his life completely. Who is richer: the person rich in material goods or the person rich in experiences?

Morrie counsels Albom on his ever-growing feeling of emptiness. Morrie explains that our culture creates an addiction to excess and leaves us always wanting more. Morrie says, “The culture we have does not make people feel good about themselves.” Because of this, Morrie creates his own culture and, as a result, never experiences emptiness and purposelessness. According to Morrie, “the way you get meaning into your life is to devote yourself to loving others.” We all could do more to increase our connection to others.

This activity has two parts:

1. Explain why you think this chapter is called “Taking Attendance.”

2. On the same paper, make a list of activities you engage in or would like to engage in. Which activities feed your soul instead of improving your self-image and earning you money? Which activities make you feel more connected to your true self and to the other people around you?

Name: _____

Date: _____

“The Third Tuesday: *We Talk About Regrets*”**Conducting an Interview**

Objective: Tape-recording a friend's or loved one's story

Activity

Albom decides to take his tape recorder with him on this Tuesday because, like photos and video-tapes, a voice recording is a memento people cherish after someone has died. Additionally, Albom is so impressed with Morrie's stories and advice that he wants to share it with others. The world can learn so much from Morrie.

For this activity, choose a person to interview. The person may be a classmate, a friend, a parent, a grandparent, or any other loved one. Ask that person to tell a story about an important moment in his or her life and what he or she learned from that experience. Also, ask that person to give some advice to the rest of the world or relate some important lesson that he or she has learned. Tape-record that person's story.

Name: _____

Date: _____

“The Professor: Part Two”**Connections****Objective:** Identifying a character's influence on others**Activity**

In the second installment of “The Professor,” Algom discusses Morrie's younger years. Specifically, Algom discusses Morrie's introduction into the working world. It becomes clear just how much Morrie affects those around him and how involved he is in the community. Morrie worked in a mental institution, listened compassionately to his students' protests of the Vietnam War, and most recently, enjoyed the visits from hundreds of former students.

Use the chart that follows to show how Morrie influenced various individuals. In the circle is Morrie's name, and from this circle, different lines point outwards. On these lines, write who Morrie influenced and how.

Name: _____

Date: _____

“The Eighth Tuesday: *We Talk About Money*”**Research Project**

Objectives: Researching a charity
 Presenting research results

Activity

Morrie's discussion with Albom about money is one of the most touching and inspirational conversations in the novel. Morrie has found a way to disentangle himself from a greedy society and give to others despite the fact that he is so seriously ill. Morrie says:

You can't substitute material things for love or for gentleness or for tenderness or for a sense of comradeship...neither money nor power will give you the feeling you're looking for, no matter how much of them you have...The truth is, you don't get satisfaction from those things. You know what really gives you satisfaction? Offering others what you have to give...Devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community around you, and devote yourself to creating something that gives you purpose and meaning...When I give my time, when I can make someone smile after they were feeling sad, it's as close to healthy as I ever feel. Do the kinds of things that come from the heart. When you do, you won't be dissatisfied, you won't be envious, you won't be longing for somebody else's things. On the contrary, you'll be overwhelmed with what comes back.”

Think of how wonderful the world would be if everyone accepted this philosophy.

For this activity, choose a major charity as the focus of your research. Find out the history of the charity, the problem the charity tries to help or fix, and ways (events, fundraisers, concerts, medical research, etc.) the charity tries to help. For example, if you choose the SPCA, you should write about the history of the SPCA, a problem or two the SPCA tries to address, and what the SPCA does to fix that problem.

Be sure to paraphrase the information you find and cite the sources you used. Do not copy the text word for word. When you are finished with your research, present what you have learned on a poster or in a PowerPoint.

Name: _____

Date: _____

“The Audiovisual: Part Three”**Letter Writing****Objective:** Interpreting events through letter writing**Activity**

This chapter features Morrie’s third interview with Ted Koppel for “Nightline.” Morrie is closer to death now than in the previous shows, and at parts of the interview, Koppel is almost moved to tears. Albom says that even though Morrie literally deteriorates in front of the television audience, his spirit shines bright for all to see.

This is an emotional moment for all who are present at Morrie’s house and for all who are viewing Koppel’s show. How did you feel after reading this scene in the text?

Pretend that you watched the interview on television. Then, write a letter to Koppel’s editor describing how this scene made you feel. In the letter, address whether seeing Morrie’s declining health and bright spirit touched you, or if you thought filming a man in Morrie’s condition was cruel. Cite information from the text to support your ideas.