Reading Assignments

1. During Reading: CHOOSE either (A) or (B) below to complete:
   (A) Complete the Reading Questions that go with the book.
   (B) Complete the Matchbook Chapter Summaries.

2. After Reading: Complete ONE Character Map for a character in the book.
   a. You may choose Morrie or Mitch for your character map.

   These assignments will be **collected on Wednesday, November 30** in Freshman Seminar Class!

Reading Plan and Chapter List

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Matchbook Chapter Summaries - Instructions

1. Get a file folder from your teacher.
   a. The File Folder should be decorated on the outside to represent the book you are reading.
2. Create a matchbook foldable for each of the chapters in your assigned book.
3. As you read the book, stop after each chapter and finish one matchbook for the chapter.
4. Your matchbook should meet the following expectations:
   a. Outside: decorated with a drawing or visual representation of the chapter.
   b. Inside: Summarize the main idea of the chapter with words.
5. All of your matchbooks should be glued on to a file folder so that you can keep up with your summary of the chapters in the book.
MIND – What does this character think about?

VISION/HOPE - What does the character want to do?

STRENGTHS - How does this character succeed?

WEAKNESSES - How does this character struggle?

FEELINGS – What emotions does this character have?

HISTORY - What has happened to this character in the past?

FUTURE – What is next for this character?
Reading Questions – Page 1

Mitch and Morrie

1. How did your opinion about Mitch change as the book went on?

2. Who do you think got more out of their Tuesday meetings, Mitch or Morrie? Explain your thinking? How do you think each (Mitch and Morrie) would answer this question?

3. Do you think Mitch would have come back to Morrie’s house the second time if he hadn’t been semi-idled by the newspaper strike?

4. Discuss Morrie’s criticisms of Mitch throughout the book. Do you think Morrie should have been tougher on him? Easier?

5. Do you think Mitch would have listened if Morrie hadn’t been dying? Does impending death automatically make one’s voice able to penetrate where it couldn’t before?

Death

6. Does this book make Morrie’s death a public event? If so, how is it similar to other public deaths we’ve experienced as a society? How is it different?

7. Morrie referred to himself as a bridge, a person who is in between life and death, which makes him useful to others as a tool to understand both. Consider about other literary, historical, political or religious figures who have also served this purpose.

8. Most of us have read of people discussing the way they’d like to die, or, perhaps, have talked about it ourselves. 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?

9. On “Nightline,” Morrie spoke to Ted Koppel of the pain he still felt seventy years after his mother’s death. Is your experience with loss similar or different? Does what you’ve read in this book help ease any of the pain?

10. Morrie was seventy-six years old when diagnosed with ALS. How might he have reacted if he’d contracted the disease when he was Mitch’s age? Would Morrie have come to the same conclusions? Felt the same peace and acceptance? Or was his experience also a function of his age?
Reading Questions – Page 2

Meaning

11. Try the “effect of silence” exercise that Mitch described. What do you learn from it?

12. Explain the role of meaningful coincidence (synchronicity) in the book and in Mitch and Morrie’s friendship.

13. Morrie told Mitch about the “tension of opposites.” Explain how this as a metaphor for the book and for society.

14. Mitch made a list of topics about which he wanted Morrie’s insight and clarity. What would be included in your own list of topics.

15. Explain the literary elements book (structure, voice, tone, figurative language, flashbacks, etc . . .) How does his use of these elements add to the meaning?

16. Do college students today have meaningful experiences like the students faced in the 1960s, or are they missing out on something? What would Morrie say about this question?

17. Morrie said: “If you’ve found meaning in your life, you don’t want to go back. You want to go forward.” Discuss this quote using your own life experience.

Religion, culture, and ritual

18. Morrie believed, “You have to be strong enough to say if the culture doesn’t work, don’t buy it. Create your own.” How can people do this? How can this book help?

19. As his visits with Morrie continued, Mitch explored some other cultures and religions and how each views death. Summarize these and others that you’ve studied.

20. To the very end, Mitch arrived at Morrie’s house with food. Explain the importance of this ritual.

Relationships

21. Was Morrie judging people who choose not to have kids with his statement: “If you want the experience of having complete responsibility for another human being, and to learn how to love and bond in the deepest way, then you should have children.” Explain whether you agree or disagree.

22. Mitch wrote, “Perhaps this is one reason I was drawn to Morrie. He let me be where my brother would not.” Discuss Mitch’s relationship with Peter.

23. Discuss the practical side of Morrie’s advice: “Only an open heart will allow you to float equally between everyone.” How could this advice be useful the next time you’re in a social or other situation where you feel out of place or uncomfortable?

24. Morrie said that in marriage, “Your values must be alike.” In what ways to you agree or disagree?

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