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# Activity Pack

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## *Tuesdays with Morrie*

BY MITCH ALBOM



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**Pre-Reading****Characterization****Objective:** Predicting character traits and actions**Activity**

People say a picture is worth a thousand words. We treasure photographs we have of our family, friends, and loved ones because those images help us remember fun times and meaningful experiences. Looking at old photos not only brings back memories of events, photographs also evoke emotions about the people in the pictures.

Opposite of the novel's title page is a photograph of Morrie. Study the photograph for a few minutes, and take in the visual details. Think about the way Morrie looks, how he is dressed, the background of the image, and more. In the chart that follows, list traits you believe can be attributed to Morrie based on the photograph.

**CHARACTERIZATION CHART**

| <b>Traits I See Based on the Photograph</b> |
|---|
| Fun   |
|   |
| Loves to dance                              |
|   |
|   |
|   |
|   |
|   |
|   |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**“The Curriculum” and “The Syllabus”**

**Rewriting Figurative Language**

**Objective:** Writing new examples of figurative language

**Activity**

Choose five examples of figurative language (similes, metaphors, personification, or hyperbole) from this section to rewrite using a different literary device. Try to make a comparison as effective or more effective than the original. Use the chart provided. Write the original example, your rewritten version (including what device it), and an explanation of why you think that new uses device is effective. We have provided an example for you.

**REWRITING FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE CHART**

| Original Example  | New Version  | Explanation of Comparison   |
|---|--|---|
| 1. “For many of us, the curtain had just come down on childhood.” | For many of us, the future raced forward, faster and faster, like a smoking and screaming locomotive (simile). | This simile expresses more anxiety about the passing of time. The imagery of smoke and the scream of a locomotive emphasize how fast and unstoppable time is. |
| 2.  |  |   |
| 3.  |  |   |
| 4.  |  |   |
| 5.  |  |   |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**“The Audiovisual”: Part One****Creative Writing and Art****Objective:** Writing an original aphorism**Activity**

This chapter recounts Morrie’s first interview with Ted Koppel of “Nightline.” The producers are interested in Morrie’s acceptance of his own death. Being a well-respected professor at a distinguished university, Morrie is sure to offer interesting ideas about the end of his life.

Morrie had written down many ideas at the time of his illness. While his body was slowly deteriorating and weakening, his intellect seemed to strengthen and deepen. He expresses some of his ideas in the form of an aphorism. An aphorism is a short, wise saying that conveys some deep, universal truth. Confucius was also an author of many aphorisms.

Here are some of Morrie’s aphorisms:

- “Accept what you are able to do and what you are not able to do.”
- “Accept the past as past, without denying it or discarding it.”
- “Learn to forgive yourself and to forgive others.”
- “Don’t assume that it’s too late to get involved.”

For this activity, write an original aphorism that you think would be helpful advice to someone else. Your aphorism should reflect a value you believe everyone should have, or it should give an important lesson you think applies to all people. Avoid writing clichés, such as “Live life to the fullest” or “Never give up.”

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 Eleventh Tuesday: *We Talk About Our Culture*”****Writing a Confession****Objective:** Applying the text to personal experiences**Activity**

On the eleventh Tuesday, Albom and Morrie discuss American culture. It is Morrie's opinion that people in our country are forced to fend for themselves and act in their own self-interest. He says, "People are only mean when they're threatened, and that's what our culture does. Even people who have jobs in our economy are threatened, because they worry about losing them. And when you get threatened, you start looking out only for yourself."

What Morrie describes here is a feeling most of us have had at some point in our lives: we felt vulnerable and as if we had to defend ourselves. It is a situation like this that brings out the worst in people.

For this activity, think of a time you mistreated someone because you felt threatened in some way. Write a confession to that person, and explain your actions. What were you threatened by and why? Clarify why you reacted the way you did, and apologize sincerely for your defensive behavior.