

Emulation Handbook

tuesdays with
Morrie

an old man, a young man,
and life's greatest lesson

Mitch Albom

Basic Plot Summary:

Mitch Albom is a world renowned successful sports writer for a Detroit newspaper. Hank feels as if he is missing out on a greater purpose in his life after he watches a Nightline documentary about his old philosophy professor, Morrie Schwartz. Morrie was diagnosed with ALS so Hank attempts to reach out to him. The two begin meeting on Tuesdays discussing philosophical topics like: death, culture, and the world as a whole.

The First Element- Chapter Titles

What the Author is Doing Here

Every chapter, Mitch titles the excerpt, On the # Tuesday we talk about...

Why is This Important to The Book?

By doing this, the author is summarizing as well as introducing the topic that will be discussed between Hank and Morrie. The title of the chapter is also useful when summarizing large sections of the book, because each chapter name marks the specific event in the book what is occurring.

Example:

"The Fourth Tuesday We Talk About Death"

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Impact on the Reader

The names of the chapter tell the reader what Morrie and Mitch will discuss before the audience digests the chapter. Titles provide an easy resource when going back into the book to find specific events that have a relation to the chapter title. Not only do chapter titles help inform the reader, but they help the audience understand the subliminal conversations that frequently pop up. These conversations relate to the topic but are hard to follow.

The Second Element- Italics

What the Author is Doing Here

Every few chapters, the author dedicates one or two italicized pages of text to the reflection of a previous event, such as stories about when Mitch was still in college. The italics can also be conversations Mitch and Morrie had that were documented word for word, as well as quotes Morrie was fond of or that pertain to the themes of the chapters. Many of these are quotes by fellow philosophers.

Why is This Important to The Book?

This is important to the book because it expresses a unique style of writing; which separates this story from other books. I have never read a book that uses the aside as frequently as this one does.

Example:

"By the start of senior year, I have taken so many sociology classes, I am only a few credits shy of a degree. Morrie suggests I try and honors thesis."

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Impact on the Reader

To me, it's exciting to read the italicized chapters. As you approach the page you're on the the edge of your seat eager to see what this specific piece has in store for you. The style of the italicized chapters differentiate every time. I don't know what you mean When the chapters are direct quotes from a conversation Mitch had with Morrie, it allows the reader to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the two. This, then goes on to give the reader a deeper connection with the book.

The Third Element-Short Sentences

What the Author is Doing Here

A majority of Mitch Albom's, the author, sentences are gritty and simple with little detail. Yet he still somehow manages to include loads of information. Because the sentences are so simple, it is apparent that the author understands importance of using commas so he can fit as much information into a single sentence as possible.

Why is This Important to The Book?

This is important to the book because it keeps the story and general plot moving at a fast pace. If the book moves at a fast pace it feeds into one of the main themes of the book, life goes by fast. The recurrence of life moves fast appears in the decline of Morrie's from each visit Mitch gives. One week Morrie is having trouble clearing his throat, the next he can no longer eat.

Example:

"The other night, on TV, I saw people in Bosnia running across the street, getting fired upon, killed, innocent victims... and I just started to cry."

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Impact on the Reader

This gives the reader a feeling of little to no control when reading the book. That feeling can be both positive and negative to the reader. There could be some circumstances when the reader wants more explanation and detail about the cause of a specific event, but they don't get that explanation, because the book refuses to stop. That technique can affect the book in a positive way by not boring the reader with long descriptions of every single scene in the book. This writing style keeps the reader's attention. Although it does not keep the reader's attention on one specific event it keeps the reader focused on the book and draws the reader through the story.

1. Friday Night on the Train

We began walking the train tracks at roughly 12:00 AM this was a tradition for Tommy, Sam, and Ethan who are my core group of friends. Although Sam and Ethan have been my friends for nearly as long as Tommy has, the two of us seem to have a considerably closer friendship than the other two.

I heard Sam's voice coming from a couple hundred yards in front of us "What time are we gonna be out until? If your parents wake up and realize we're not in the house we're dead."

Ethan was quick to give his typical smart response, "Shut the hell up Sam. Stop caring so much and live a little."

2. Tommy and I snickered and continued walking down the tracks to the closest Septa R8 stop. Although it had been close to a year since the four of us had been together as a unit, the chemistry between us did not seem like it had changed since when we first met in preschool.

"Tommy what's the temperature? I haven't been able to feel my hands since we got out here an hour ago." I said shivering.

Tommy pulled out his phone and looked at the weather app, "Jesus, it's 30 degrees out."

A couple minutes and a few hundred yards later we heard a train zipping down the track in the opposite direction we were wandering off in. As it came everything became illuminated, we could see each other as if it was daytime. As the final car passed us I began to run after it for little to no reason at all.

I heard Ethan scream "Why?" as he began to follow. Behind him was Sam and in the back was Tommy. We ran all the way home.

3. I remember the first day of our friendship. The two of us met first at Best Friends Day Care, this is where our friendship all began. My parents would tell us stories about how I befriended Tommy by biting him on the finger because he refused to give me a marshmallow that was rightfully his. The rest of the story is somewhat blurry, but this blurred story is what started our long lasting friendship.

Annotations/Reasoning

Portions annotated are underlined in the story.

1. In my piece I gave a general title to my story so it could provide a broad summary of my story. It is also relevant that not only do the chapter names summarize the chapters in *Tuesday's With Morrie*, but the title of the book in some ways is a summary. My goal is to give the reader enough information to understand the story before they read it.

2. At the end of my short scene I added a mini story about how my friendship with Tommy blossomed. Like the asides in Mitch Albom's novel, my scene is random in a sense, but after a bit of thought it fits into the story well. After the reader reads the italicized story I hope it gives them a little more context to the scene. Although the italics, in my opinion work best when they pertain to a story with a much larger timeline. Because they help provide breaks from the long plot of the book. This is not necessary in a 300 word scene.

3. For every sentence I wrote I paused and considered how Mitch Albom, the author I was attempting to portray wrote his sentences. I would go through a checklist in my head before composing a sentence. The first thing I would think over in my mind was whether or not the sentence I planned to write was necessary to the development of the scene. Doing this step helped me dispose of any lengthy detail that was floating around in my head. Once I had the idea and the structure of the sentence, I would revise my word choice. To keep true to Mitch's style I had to use as few adjectives as possible. That step; was rather easy because I was writing in a first person point of view. I hope this element is conveyed when writing my piece so the reader does not slow down and take time to read my scene. I feel as if when a person reads a book with large amounts of detail they pause to think about the things that was written in the text. Like Albom I want my piece to be fast paced so it keeps the reader's attention.

About the Authors

Mitch Albom

On May 23, 1958 in Passaic New Jersey Mitch Albom was born. When Mitch's parents, two siblings and him settled in they lived in Oaklyn New Jersey. For college Mitch attended Brandeis University, in Waltham Massachusetts he decided to major in sociology but in reality he was in love with writing. After college he became a famous freelance writer for sports blogs and magazines like ESPN and Sports Illustrated. After he discovered his old professor, Morrie Schwartz was diagnosed with ALS he began to spend a lot of time with him. This then sparked his passion for creative writing so he decided to drop his prior career and start writing books. Mitch's books have gone on to sell millions of copies, he most recognized work being "The Five People You Meet In Heaven." As of now he is living in Detroit Michigan with his wife.

Eli Zimmerman

Eli Zimmerman is a sophomore in high school. He attends Science Leadership Academy in Philadelphia, PA. Eli Zimmerman has always been wildly fascinated with coming of age novels, such as J.D Salingers, Catcher In The Rye. He loves that genre because he feels as if the author is writing the book to him. He feels as if the author does not need to show off an amazing vocabulary, they just have to be able to write a damn good story.