

Tuesdays with morrie essay



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It is believed that reading literature affects the social beliefs of man. In fact, according to the book *The Moral Laboratory: Experiments examining the effects of reading literature on social conception and moral self-concept* by Jemeljan Hakemulder, literature-based treatments affect the readers' attitudes, norms, values, beliefs, self-concept, social abilities and level of moral and critical thinking. This has been based on the study conducted by the author to show how literature affects the society. This belief on the effects of literature applies well on Mitch Albom's novel, *Tuesdays with Morrie*.

The novel showcases a real-life story of an old teacher and his views about the different circumstances in life, including life itself, marriage and death among others. It was believed that the novel changed the author's perception about life and society. English novelist and essayist E. M. Foster once said that, what is wonderful about great literature is that it transforms the man who reads it to the condition of the man who wrote it. That is the exact reason why *Tuesdays with Morrie*, an autobiography is an international bestseller.

It is one of the most influential writing of all time with its simple yet conversational way of narration that makes the reader feel the same way as the author. Mitchel David "Mitch" Albom is an accomplished sport writer born in Passaic, New Jersey. Mitch eventually turned full-time to his writing, working as a freelance sports journalist in New York for publications such as *Sports Illustrated*, *GEO*, and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. His first full time newspaper job was as a feature writer and eventual sports columnist for *The Fort Lauderdale News* and *Sun Sentinel* in Florida.

In 1995, he married Janine Sabino. That same year he re-encountered Morrie Schwartz, a former college professor who was dying of ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. His visits with Schwartz would lead to the book *Tuesdays with Morrie*, which moved Mitch away from sports and began his career as an internationally recognized author. *Tuesdays with Morrie* is the chronicle of Mitch's time spent with his beloved professor. As a labor of love, Mitch wrote the book to help pay Morrie's medical bills.

It has spent four years on the New York Times Bestseller list and is now the most successful memoir ever published. ([www. mitchalbom. com](http://www.mitchalbom.com)) Born to a Russian father, Schwartz grew up in the Jewish tenements in New York City. He took his undergraduate degree from City College in New York, and earned his Master's degree and Ph. D. from the University of Chicago in 1946 and 1951 respectively. He wrote three books on sociology in the 1950s and 1960s. He began teaching at Brandeis University, in the sociology department. Among his students was future sportswriter and TV host Mitch Albom.

Schwartz continued to teach at Brandeis into his 70s, until a diagnosis of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (or ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease) made it too difficult for him to continue. He was the subject and reason behind the writing of the book, *Tuesdays with Morrie*. ([www. focusdep. com](http://www.focusdep.com)) *Tuesdays with Morrie* tells the true story of 78 year old sociology professor, Morrie Schwartz and his relationship with his students particularly Mitch Albom as he recounts times after 16 years of not hearing from his professor until one night on T. V. he sees Morrie being interviewed about his terminal disease.

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Mitch begins to visit his professor and soon realizes that, though he has grown remarkably, he still has a lot to learn about values. A newspaper strike frees Algom to commute weekly, on Tuesdays, to visit with Schwartz. The resulting book is based on these meetings, supplemented with Schwartz's lectures and life experiences and interspersed with flashbacks and allusions to contemporary events. The researchers, who are taking up Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Communication Arts in English, choose the novel Tuesdays with Morrie as the basis of their study.

Tuesdays with Morrie is a book full of philosophical inspiration and wisdom and is a good material for Education students to understand how teaching could affect the lives of their students. The researchers believe that the study further develops the relationship among students and teachers. Thus it can greatly benefit those who are also taking up Education courses.

Furthermore, they want to know the probable effects to the education students upon reading the said novel. How the principles contained in the book can affect their outlook in their chosen career as a teacher.

How it will help them in their course of study. Hence, the study aims to have an in-depth analysis to substantiate whether the novel really affects its readers, most especially those with careers similar to that of the main character Morrie, the teacher. Statement of the problem This study aims to analyze the Philosophical and Social approaches in Mitch Albom's Tuesdays with Morrie. Specifically, the study intends to answer the following questions:

1. What are the Philosophical and Sociological approaches that are identified in Mitch Albom's Tuesdays with Morrie?
2. How do the characters reflect the

Philosophical and Sociological approaches in relation to education and society? 3. What are the implications of the Philosophical and Sociological approaches in analyzing the novel? Significance of the study The researchers aim to enrich and boost the interest of the student by presenting and focusing on one literary piece which is Mitch Albom's Tuesdays with Morrie and to know the social and philosophical effects of this book to the students.

It hopes to benefit the following:

Readers, to help them fathom literary principles and concepts discussed in the book and how it affects their perspectives towards sociological and philosophical schemes. Moreover it gives background knowledge to those who have not yet read the book. Students will become aware of the philosophical and social effects of the book and thus serve as a vehicle to appreciate other literary pieces of the same genre. Teachers provide insights and information to others on what things affect students in terms or reading literary pieces.

It also gives them ideas on how they are going to evaluate these literary pieces. Researchers, this serves as a basis for them who plan to do similar studies and to pave way for better understanding as they relate to the philosophical-social perspectives in the selection. Scope and Limitation The study concentrates on analyzing the socio-philosophical effects and life's implications of Mitch Albom's Tuesdays with Morrie. Furthermore, the study only seeks to find out what are the philosophical and social effects of the book towards the students.

In addition to this, they will search on the novel's implication on the philosophical and social perspectives of the respondents. The study is from the month of November 2010 to October 2011.

Assumptions and Rationale A lot of reviews have been done before this study. Writers from different parts of the world have been moved by the way Mitch Albom pay tribute to one of his favorite teacher, Morrie Schwartz. The 1997 best-selling book Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom is the perfect weekend book.

Semi-autobiographical in nature, Albom tells the story of his life after he happens to see a former professor of his from Brandeis University (Massachusetts) on Nightline with Ted Koppel. He finally summed up the courage to visit Morrie Schwartz at his home, after finding out that he was dying of ALS, otherwise known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Morrie offered Albom one final class, with him as the only student, and it met every Tuesday in Morrie's house. The requirements were to visit him, talk, listen, and write down everything he learned, thus culminating in this book.

His conversations on life, religion, families, dealing with our pasts, making career choices, and deciding what's important in life touch everyone. There is not a single person who can't learn something or be touched by something in this book. Therefore, this study assumes that the novel Tuesdays with Morrie discussed a handful of philosophical and sociological aphorisms. Aphorisms which mean a concise expression of doctrine or principle or any generally accepted truth conveyed in a pithy, memorable statement. In the book it refers to Morrie's ideas about life and death.

In the novel *Morrie* presented different aphorisms which he lived by. Each Tuesday presents a maxim that suggest the nature of the characters. The novel discussed Existentialism which views human existence as having a set of underlying themes and characteristics, such as anxiety, dread, freedom, awareness of death, and consciousness of existing, that are primary. That is, they cannot be reduced to or explained by a natural-scientific approach or any approach that attempts to detach itself from or rise above these themes.

org As Algom's visits with Morrie continue, the professor's health is deteriorating. Algom had made it a point to always bring food to his visits, but soon the professor was not able to eat solid foods any longer. Yet, he mustered up the energy for each lesson. It put things in perspective for Algom, whose life was at a crossroads. For thirteen Tuesdays, there was a different lesson: The World, Feeling sorry for yourself, Regrets, Death, Family, Emotions, Fear of Aging, Money, How love goes on, Marriage, Our culture, Forgiveness and The Perfect Day.

The fourteenth Tuesday was time to say goodbye to his dear teacher and mentor. By this time, Morrie was not doing well at all. A few days later, he slipped into a coma and died on Saturday. Even though Morrie Schwartz's body may have stopped living, his lessons are timeless. His love of education continued literally to the very end, concluding with his own graduation death. Millions of readers, who happen to find their way to reading the book, can't help but praise how it is artistically done.

According to Kristin Newman, writer of hit American shows, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, is filled with the experiences, imaginations and, perhaps, fears of a

man who lives in America. Much like the man who lives in the house down the block from you. This book will make you think about what you do with the opportunities God has given you. They make you re-evaluate your treatment of others. Years after it has been published, it never ceased to touch and change people's lives just the way it was meant to be in the first place. " It reiterates that life is so fragile.

Morrie has spoken on occasion of a pink hibiscus plant he has which represents the fragility of life. He also talks about reincarnation and the cyclical orbit of our life and our world, alluding to the idea that waves are not a singular body, but part of the larger whole of the ocean. It's philosophical, insightful and written in an easy-to-read prose that everyone can identify with". (Sinclair, Joyce D. 2008) Each Tuesday Morrie prepares another lesson. The lessons are of life – not religion, although it's discussed; not character, although it's intertwined; not relationships, although that's essential.

Albom's prolific vocabulary seasons the descriptions of common events. The writing is rich with detail without being overly burdensome. He liberally uses flashbacks to relate the significance of simple conversations. Before the first chapter, you find yourself wishing you knew Morrie, wishing you were Mitch. The book, which was a joint project between Albom and Schwartz, is said to be " their last thesis" together and focuses on emphasizing the importance of creating one's personal, individualistic " culture" rather than conforming to the popular culture of the time.

Schwartz, a sociology professor, argues that pop culture is the result of several contributing negative factors: superficiality, selfishness, and greed. "

Albom does a fantastic job of weaving together carefully chosen memories and the present time, which makes the understanding of his intensely personal relationship with Morrie all the more palpable for the reader” said Krystle Hernandez, a writer and attorney-in-training. As a common reader one would wonder, in the beginning of the reading, what is it with Morrie that one of his former student who almost forgotten him decided to collaborate to come up with this book?

The answer is in the book itself, he is a teacher who defied people’s notion about a teacher. A lot of us became his fan, because he stayed as a teacher to the last. “ I enjoyed getting to know Morrie, he seemed like a fun, eccentric, kind and loving professor. I certainly never had any teachers like him at school or college. He was a remarkable man and this book is really a tribute to him. ” said Alison Moss, a physiotherapist and writer. What is more appealing is how he, a man of counted days, seems to love life more and more each day his body deteriorates.