

8th Grade Summer Reading Assignment



One of the best parts of summer is, of course, the summer reading! This year you will be reading Mitch Albom's fable, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*. Although not a religious text, Albom's *Five People...* describes one possible view of heaven and life after death. I'm hoping this will be a quick yet thought-provoking read, so I'll be looking for both thoughtful analysis and personal reflection as part of your written assignment. I am looking forward to reading your response, which will be due the first day of school (September 1st).

Here are what others have said about *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*:

"Sincere....A book with the genuine power to stir and comfort its readers." *The New York Times*

"Simply told, sentimental, and profoundly true, this is an contemporary American fable that will be cherished by a vast readership." *Publishers Weekly*

Assignment and Format:

While you are reading, you will be completing a journal based on two types of prompts: analytical and personal. The text has been broken into six sections. Please respond to each prompt in **complete sentences and with specific detail**. Some prompts may have more than one part so be sure to read them carefully.

Responses should be five- eight sentences in length, but feel free to write as much as needed if eight sentences are not enough to answer a particular prompt. I'm looking for quality in your responses with a focus on completeness and thoughtfulness. Your responses should be typed, double-spaced, 12 point, Times New Roman font. Be sure to include the title of the assignment, your name, and label and date each journal entry. Please see model below for clarification.

The Five People You Meet in Heaven Journal

John Smith

Pages 1-31: 7/3/2010

Analysis: The flashbacks are significant....

Personal: I would first....

Pages 32-56: 7/ 10/2010

Assessment:

Completed journals are due the first day of school (September 1st). Your grade will be based on the quality of your responses, which means completeness and thoughtfulness of your responses. Be sure to follow the formal guidelines above. I look forward to reading your responses and spending some time discussing the text as a class.

Journal Entries:

Pages 1-31:

Analysis: Think about how the book is organized. We see different parts of Eddie's life both from the past and present. How are these flashbacks significant to the progression of the story?

Personal: You have one hour left on Earth. How would you spend your time? Who would you spend your time with?



Pages 32-56:

Analysis: Who is the first person Eddie meets in heaven? How are Eddie and this character connected? What lesson does he teach Eddie?

Personal: What is your opinion of the statement "There are no random acts. That we are all connected. That you can no more separate one life for another than you can separate a breeze from the wind"(48)? What might Albom be telling us about life and death?

Pages 56-97

Analysis: How was Eddie developed as a character up to this point in the text? How has Eddie changed through his experience in this particular section of the novel? Be sure to discuss what the captain reveals to Eddie about the war.

Personal: The message of sacrifice is important in this section of the novel. How can sacrifice be not really a loss but a gain? What would you be willing to sacrifice so you can gain something in return?

Pages 98-145

Analysis: Think of Eddie's relationship with his father. What is their relationship like? Why does Eddie blame his father for the way his life ended up? What does Ruby teach Eddie regarding his father? How does this change Eddie's view of his father?

Personal: What is your opinion of the quote "All parents damage their children. It cannot be helped"(104)? Do you agree or disagree with this statement? How can this statement be changed in a more positive way yet still reflect this idea?

Pages 146-178

Analysis: Why does Marguerite want to be in a place where there are only weddings? How does that relate to her own life and to her relationship with Eddie?

Personal: What is your opinion of the idea that love survives past death? Do you believe love can last forever? Why or why not?

Pages 179-196: **Please answer the two analysis prompts along with the personal prompt.**

Analysis: When Eddie is done with his journey, do you think he will become someone else's "person"? Identify five people that Eddie may be waiting for in his next phase of heaven.

Analysis: Which lesson do you think affected Eddie the most? Why?

Personal: Who are the five people you would meet in heaven? What lesson would each person teach you and why?