



District 88

WILLOWBROOK HIGH SCHOOL

“Expectations for Excellence”

1250 SOUTH ARDMORE AVENUE – VILLA PARK – ILLINOIS 60181

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District 88

May 2026

Dear Student:

The English Department at Willowbrook High School would like to welcome you to English 9 Honors. We believe that the reading of challenging literature helps students become critical thinkers and proficient writers, so you will be required to read one text during the summer. Please come to school in August ready to intelligently discuss the summer reading selection.

This year’s summer reading selection is:

Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom (ISBN-978-0-7679-0592-3)

***The English Department has ordered the text for you. The texts will be distributed to your current school before your last attendance day. Students who add the course after the distribution will need to pick up a copy of the text at Willowbrook High School. Please e-mail Dr. Jamie Gourley, Assistant Principal, at jgourley@district88.net to make arrangements.**

You must complete the following by the first Friday of the 2026-2027 school year:

- 1. A close reading of the text: This means that you will read the text with a pen in hand and circle unfamiliar words, underline important passages, and make notes or ask questions in the margins. You will need to have the text in class when school starts. *It may be necessary to do some background research to understand unfamiliar references**
- 2. Write a two-paragraph response explaining the importance of relationships with others, and how those relationships are more significant than popular culture and material success.**
- 3. Write ten thoughtful and open-ended discussion questions for the text. These questions will be used during our in class discussion.**

***Please read the attached pages carefully for assignment details.**

If you misplace your summer reading assignment, you can access this information on the District 88 website. Go to www.dupage88.net, then click on **WBHS** (top right), then **Academics** and **English** (top menu), then click the link to **English 9 Honors summer letter** at the bottom of the page.

Finally, we have attached the 2026/2027 Willowbrook English Department Academic Honesty and Plagiarism Policy/Contract. Please sign and date the policy and return it to your teacher during the first week of classes.

We hope you will find this novel interesting and challenging.

Sincerely,

Mr. Daniel Bannon
English 9 Honors Teacher
dbannon@dupage88.net




Mr. Brett Blair
English 9 Honors Teacher
bblair@dupage88.net

English 9 Honors Summer Reading Sample Close Reading of the Text

As a student in an honors-level class, you will need to learn how to annotate a text. Annotation means taking close reading notes right in the text by underlining, highlighting, and writing commentary in the margins. These annotations will help to support your discussion remarks in class and enhance your written analysis of the literature. You will be expected to annotate most literature at the honors-level; texts are often checked and graded for evidence of close reading.

Below you will find an explanation of annotation and a list of symbols to use while annotating. You will also find a few pages from Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie* that you may use as a sample annotation model:

- You should have *at least* 1 annotation (the below symbols) on each page. However, we expect that some pages will have quite a few more than that.
- You must have written in the margins at least once every 2 pages.
- You must engage with the text through your annotations on a deep level.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Moments where you have an emotional reaction, indicate it with a smiley face. Stories often evoke strong feelings in readers, and the feelings you have about a story can be important clues to its meaning. |
|  | At any moment when you have a question about something or you want to revisit it later, use a question mark. Almost anything in the text might puzzle you: a word or a passage, an action, or a statement. |
|  | At any moment that you feel something important is happening, use an exclamation point. What seems important? This is very much a gut-level kind of feeling. The more you read, the better you will become at identifying things that are significant. Generally speaking, anything that an author repeats is worth noting! |
| morose | Circle any words you might not know. Please look them up as you read and note definitions in the margin. |
| <u>Slowly, like a terrier,</u> | Underline any literary elements you see; write what the literary elements are: example: imagery, simile, metaphor, personification, etc. |
| Respond to the above | After indicating the above, write in the margins. Write the questions you have or react to the moments you feel are important. Make connections to the text within the margins. |

The Syllabus

His death sentence came in the summer of 1994.
Looking back, Morrie knew something bad was coming
long before that. He knew it the day he gave up dancing.

He had always been a dancer, my old professor. The
music didn't matter. Rock and roll, big band, the blues.
He loved them all. He would close his eyes and with a
blissful smile begin to move to his own sense of rhythm. It
wasn't always pretty. But then, he didn't worry about a
partner. Morrie danced by himself.

He used to go to this church in Harvard Square every
Wednesday night for something called "Dance Free."
They had flashing lights and booming speakers and Morrie
would wander in among the mostly student crowd,
wearing a white T-shirt and black sweatpants and a towel
around his neck, and whatever music was playing, that's
the music to which he danced. He'd do the lindy to Jimi
Hendrix. He twisted and twirled, he waved his arms like a
conductor on amphetamines, until sweat was dripping
down the middle of his back. No one there knew he was
a prominent doctor of sociology, with years of experience

Dancing?

why does
he like
dancing
so much?

smile

funny ☺

The Twelfth Tuesday We Talk About Forgiveness

1 “Forgive yourself before you die. Then forgive others.”

imagery

This was a few days after the “Nightline” interview. The sky was rainy and dark, and Morrie was beneath a blanket. I sat at the far end of his chair, holding his bare feet. They were callused and curled, and his toenails were yellow. I had a small jar of lotion, and I squeezed some into my hands and began to massage his ankles.



It was another of the things I had watched his helpers do for months, and now, in an attempt to hold on to what I could of him, I had volunteered to do it myself. The disease had left Morrie without the ability even to wiggle his toes, yet he could still feel pain, and massages helped relieve it. Also, of course, Morrie liked being held and touched. And at this point, anything I could do to make him happy, I was going to do.

“Mitch,” he said, returning to the subject of forgiveness. “There is no point in keeping vengeance or stubbornness. These things”—he sighed—“these things I so regret in my life. Pride. Vanity. Why do we do the things we do?”

Theme?

Student Name

Teacher Name

English 9 Honors

21 August 2026

English 9 Honors Summer Reading
Theme Analysis Writing Assignment

This written assignment will require you to follow a theme in the text. You need to complete the reading of the text before you write this response. You will write a **two-paragraph response (in MLA format) analyzing a theme** present in the text.

Your written responses must be complete and ready to submit before class begins on the first Friday of the 2026-2027 school year. Be prepared to discuss your responses with your classmates.

Your written response must:

- Identity and analyze the prompt as stated below.
- Include quotations and paraphrased ideas from the text to support the theme you are following (with proper parenthetical citations)
 - Example of parenthetical citation: Morrie commented to Mitch that “I thought about all of the people I knew who spent many of their waking hours feeling sorry for themselves” (Albom 57).
 - Two cited pieces of evidence per paragraph.
- Have two-full body paragraphs, typed and double-spaced (12 Times New Roman font), with an MLA header (See format modeled at the top of this page)
 - Each paragraph should have a strong topic sentence and detailed analysis
 - This is not a complete essay, so you do not need to have introduction or conclusion paragraphs.
 - Each of your 2 paragraphs should offer a different perspective on one of the themes that you saw emerge and include at least one direct quotation or paraphrased passage from the text.

English 9 Honors Summer Reading
Discussion Questions Assignment

You are required to write **ten open ended discussion questions**. Developing discussion questions for class will allow you to understand the complex text on a deeper level. By analyzing and evaluating ideas within the text and formulating questions, you are preparing yourself to engage in an active class discussion.

To receive full credit for this assignment, you must:

- Write questions from a variety of chapters and ideas found throughout the text.
- Vary the question format; do not begin each question with “Do you think...”
- Create “open-ended” (require more than a one word answer) discussion questions that will foster class discussion.
- It is required that you **use Bloom’s Taxonomy question starters for at least 5 of your discussion questions**.
- It might also be helpful to refer to particular passages or quotes within the texts for some of your questions.

Bloom’s Taxonomy Higher Level Question Starters:

Analyzing: analyze, consider, compare, contrast, criticize, distinguish, examine, question, and explain.

Evaluating: assess, argue, defend, determine, judge, predict, rate, support, evaluate and debate.

- Type your questions and have them ready to submit before class on August 21st.
- Be original: Ask questions that you will truly enjoy discussing.
- You will not receive credit for questions that were copied from an online source, study guide, or another student.

2026-2027 Willowbrook English Department

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and AI

Plagiarism

Definition: Plagiarism is the act of claiming another person's writing or ideas as one's own without giving credit to that original author. Black's Law Dictionary's definition is "The act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts or passages of his writing, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the product of one's mind." Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the written work: musical compositions, artwork, projects, computer software, websites, peer's work, etc.

Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to:

- Copying and pasting from a source without using a citation
- Taking an idea from a source and including it in your paper without a citation
- Forgetting to cite a source or citing it incorrectly
- Taking all or part of another student's work
- Submitting your own work produced for another course
- Using websites that are created to cheat, copy, purchase, and/or take essays

To avoid plagiarism, be sure to conform to the following (adapted from *Lester's Guide of the Research Paper*):

1. Acknowledge all borrowed material, whether it is a direct quotation or paraphrasing of another's idea. Introduce the information with the authority's name and include the source of information in a properly formatted parenthetical citation.
2. Always put quotation marks around direct quotations, along with citing them.
3. Simply rearranging material that is not originally yours into your own words is still plagiarism; be sure to cite the ideas of others clearly.
4. Include documentation for every piece of borrowed material.
5. Include a properly formatted works cited entry in the "Works Cited" page for each source that is used in your assignment; do not include works that you did not cite.

Artificial Intelligence

Definition: "Artificial intelligence" or "AI" is intelligence demonstrated by computers, as opposed to human intelligence. "Intelligence" encompasses the ability to learn, reason, generalize, and infer meaning.

Examples of AI technology include ChatGPT and other chatbots and large language models.

AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers, or complete schoolwork without permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited. The use of AI for these purposes constitutes cheating or plagiarism.

Relying too much on AI can lead to missing crucial nuances and context. Teachers will clarify if, when, and how AI tools can be used on assignments, and students are expected to review outputs generated by AI before incorporating them into their work.

Students may not use AI, including AI image or voice generator technology, to violate school rules or school district policies.

In order to ensure academic integrity, tests, assignments, projects, papers, and other schoolwork may be checked by AI content detectors and/or plagiarism recognition software.

The consequences for academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and improper use of artificial intelligence, may include a zero on the assignment, parent/guardian contact, and a Dean's referral.

WB English Department Academic Honesty Contract

Student: I have read this information sheet. I fully understand my responsibility as a student to produce original work ethically and responsibly.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Contract: I have received this policy and discussed it with my student. I understand the consequences for academic dishonesty.

Printed Name

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date