

Summer Reading: *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom

Due: Read, be ready to discuss and have study guide complete on the first day of school.

Directions: List the five people Eddie meets in heaven and discuss the lesson each character teaches Eddie; provide textual evidence (quotes and specific examples from novel) to support your answer. Respond to the personal reflection.

<p>1st person _____ What lesson did this character teach Eddie?</p>	<p>2nd person _____ What lesson did this character teach Eddie?</p>
<p>3rd person _____ What lesson did this character teach Eddie?</p>	<p>4th person _____ What lesson did this character teach Eddie?</p>
<p>5th person _____ What lesson did this character teach Eddie?</p>	<p>Personal Reflection: Which one of these lessons can you readily apply to your life? Explain.</p>

Choose 3 of the following questions to answer in short essay (2-3 paragraphs) form. These should be full answers in detail. Label them in succession. Final copy should be : finished copy: typed, 12-pt standard font (Times New Roman, Ariel, Courier) and make sure to type your name.

1. At the start of *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*, Albom says that “all endings are also beginnings.” In general, what does this mean? How does it relate to this story in particular? Include three examples from the story to discuss in your answer that reflect this quote.
2. How does counting down the final minutes of Eddie’s life affect you as a reader? Why does Albom do this? Other storytelling devices Albom uses include moving from past to present by weaving Eddie’s birthdays throughout the story. How do these techniques help inform the story? What information do you learn by moving around in time? How effective is Albom’s style for this story in particular?
3. What does Eddie look like and what kind of guy is he? Look at and discuss some of the details and descriptions that paint a picture of Eddie and his place of business. What is it about an amusement park that makes it a good backdrop for the story?
4. Consider the idea that “no story sits by itself. Sometimes stories meet at corners and sometimes they cover one another completely, like stones beneath a river.” How does this statement relate to *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*? Use detailed examples to support your answer.
5. How does Albom build tension around the amusement park ride accident? What is the significance of Eddie finding himself in the amusement park after he dies? What is your reaction when Eddie realizes he’s spent his entire life trying to get away from Ruby Pier and he is back there immediately after his death? Do you think this is important? Why?
6. Share your reactions and thoughts about the Blue Man’s story, his relationship with his father, and his taking silver nitrate. What, if anything, does this have to do with Eddie? Why does he say to Eddie, “This is not your heaven, it’s mine”?
7. Think about Eddie’s war experiences and discuss your reactions to Albom’s evocation of war. What did Eddie learn by being in war? How did he “come home a different man”? Why did the captain shoot Eddie? Explore what it means when the captain tells Eddie, “I took your leg to save your life.” Why does the captain tell Eddie that sacrifice is not really a loss, but a gain? Examine whether or not Eddie understands this, and the significance of this lesson.
8. What is Eddie’s father’s response each time Eddie decides to make an independent move, away from working at the pier? Examine how Eddie’s father’s choices and decisions actually shape Eddie’s life. Why does Eddie cover for his father at the pier when his father becomes ill? What happens to them?
9. Who tells Eddie that “we think that hating is a weapon that attacks the person who harmed us. But hatred is a curved blade. And the harm we do we do to ourselves”? What is the significance of this particular person in Eddie’s life? Why is it important for Eddie to understand? Is it important for all of us to understand? Why?
10. Discuss why Eddie is angry at his wife for dying so young. Examine what Marguerite means when she says, “Lost love is still love. It takes a different form. You can’t see their smile or bring them food or tousle their hair or move them around on the dance floor. But when these senses waken, another heightens...Life has an end. Love doesn’t.” Why does she say this to Eddie? Do you think he gets it? Discuss whether or not you agree with her, and why.