

English 9
Date _____

Name _____
Period _____

Tuesdays with Morrie
Living Eulogy

DUE DATE: _____

In *Tuesdays with Morrie*, Morrie Schwartz had a living funeral for himself so that he wouldn't have to miss hearing from his friends and family. The people that spoke at the service read different versions of living eulogies for Morrie.

What is a living eulogy?

A living eulogy marks our appreciation or gratitude for someone who has powerfully and positively contributed to the quality of our lives. As the name implies, it's a tribute speech celebrating a living person. People write eulogies for different reasons; the person you want to honor might be nearing the end of his/her life and you want them to know how much s/he meant to you before they pass away, your feelings of gratitude and love are so great you want to express them in a special speech, or you have been asked to write your own eulogy. (www.write-out-loud.com)

Task:

- write a living eulogy for an important person in your life
- share it with that person
- write a reflection on the process of writing this and the recipient's reaction

What should be included?

- Include anything that you feel would show that person your honest appreciation.
- Think about using a poem, songs, or a traditional speech format.
- Think about what the recipient of your eulogy would like...this is for them!

**Use the prompts on the back of this page to begin
brainstorming your living eulogy.**

Who will you write a eulogy for? _____

What has this person done in your life that has made such a positive impact?

Do you think you will give this eulogy to the person in a private or more public setting?
Is there a special occasion that you could use to give it to him or her?

What sorts of details or stories would you use in the eulogy?

What format do you think would work best; a poem, a speech, a song or a letter? Is there another way you could give this living eulogy?

AN EXAMPLE

Oprah Winfrey's Eulogy for Rosa Parks

Reverend Braxton, family, friends, admirers, and this amazing choir:

I -- I feel it an honor to be here to come and say a final goodbye. I grew up in the South, and Rosa Parks was a hero to me long before I recognized and understood the power and impact that her life embodied. I remember my father telling me about this colored woman who had refused to give up her seat. And in my child's mind, I thought, "She must be really big." I thought she must be at least a hundred feet tall. I imagined her being stalwart and strong and carrying a shield to hold back the white folks. And then I grew

up and had the esteemed honor of meeting her. And wasn't that a surprise. Here was this petite, almost delicate lady who was the personification of grace and goodness. And I thanked her then. I said, "Thank you," for myself and for every colored girl, every colored boy, who didn't have heroes who were celebrated. I thanked her then.

And after our first meeting I realized that God uses good people to do great things. And I'm here today to say a final thank you, Sister Rosa, for being a great woman who used your life to serve, to serve us all. That day that you refused to give up your seat on the bus, you, Sister Rosa, changed the trajectory of my life and the lives of so many other people in the world. I would not be standing here today nor standing where I stand every day had she not chosen to sit down. I know that. I know that. I know that. I know that, and I honor that. Had she not chosen to say we shall not -- we shall not be moved.

So I thank you again, Sister Rosa, for not only confronting the one white man who[se] seat you took, not only confronting the bus driver, not only for confronting the law, but for confronting history, a history that for 400 years said that you were not even worthy of a glance, certainly no consideration. I thank you for not moving.

And in that moment when you resolved to stay in that seat, you reclaimed your humanity and you gave us all back a piece of our own. I thank you for that. I thank you for acting without concern. I often thought about what that took, knowing the climate of the times and what could have happened to you, what it took to stay seated. You acted without concern for yourself and made life better for us all. We shall not be moved. I marvel at your will. I celebrate your strength to this day. And I am forever grateful, Sister Rosa, for your courage, your conviction. I owe you to succeed. I will not be moved.

<http://www.eulogyspeech.net/famous-eulogies/Oprah-Winfrey-Eulogy-for-Rosa-Parks.shtml#.UFkveY2PW8A>