

TITLE: Delayed Delivery

BOOK: Chicken Soup for the Pet Lover's Soul

PAGE: 3

TIME TO READ: 7 minutes

TOPICS: **On Love**
Tough Stuff—death
Christmas spirit

AGE LEVEL: Grades 3 and up

SYNOPSIS: A recent widow receives a surprise puppy for Christmas—it is a gift planned by her husband three weeks before his death.

NOTES TO TEACHER:

You may wish to have a box of tissues nearby for this story!

Death is a “heavy” topic for any age to discuss. However, this story may help even the youngest students to deal with grief because of the hopeful ending.

This story lends itself to three totally different directions in its questions and activities:

1. What do we *value* in life—and how to live each day to the fullest.
2. Dealing with the death of someone we love and the sadness and/or loneliness that follows.
3. Recognizing and facing our own mortality.

It is probably best to choose *one* direction that best suits your students. Adjust the questions and activities from any of the plans to suit age-levels.

Refer to book appendix for several student worksheets dealing with feelings.

Chicken Soup for the Pet Lover's Soul **Delayed Delivery**

MIDDLE SCHOOL:

PRE-QUESTIONS:

If you were told that you only had six months to live, what would you do with your time?

- What would be *important* to you?
- Is this something that is of great importance to you right now?
- Why, or why not?

Do you think we are ever “ready” for the death of someone close to us? Explain.

Do you think we are ever “ready” for our own death? Explain.

- What would “*ready*” look like, or feel like to you?

Read Story

POST-QUESTIONS:

Why was Stella so totally *alone* at Christmas-time?

Didn't she have any family or friends? Explain.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

Many old people are lonely during the holidays.

- Design a class project to identify the elderly and/or lonely people in your community and away to spend some *time* with them.

NOTE TO TEACHERS:

Remind students that not all elderly are lonely and vice versa.

Read local obituaries in the paper.

- What kinds of things are said about people who have died?
- What would you like your obituary to say about you at some point in the *distant* future?
- What would you like your tombstone to say?

Complete “Memorial Plaque” found in book appendix page 381.

Write your own eulogy – the things you want said about you at your funeral.

Read ***Tuesdays With Morrie*** by Mitch Albom, a story about *living* before you die.