

# Toni Morrison

## Quotes

*Writing, Thinking, Children, People, Men, Art, Mean, World, Book, Black, Eye, Beloved, Country, Differences, Dream, Pain, Needs, Ideas, Inspirational, Mother*

I have only to break into the tightness of a strawberry, and I see summer - its dust and lowering skies.

~Toni Morrison

If you want to fly, you have to give up the things that weigh you down.

~Toni Morrison

The function of freedom is to free someone else.

~Toni Morrison

Don't beg anybody for anything, especially love.

~Toni Morrison

There is no such thing as race. None. There is just a human race - scientifically, anthropologically. Racism is a construct, a social construct... it has a social function, racism.

~Toni Morrison

There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear. We speak, we write, we do language. That is how civilizations heal.

~Toni Morrison

If there's a book you really want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it.

~Toni Morrison

In times of dread, artists must never choose to remain silent.

~Toni Morrison

All water has a perfect memory and is forever trying to get back to where it was.

~Toni Morrison

Oppressive language does more than represent violence; it is violence; does more than represent the limits of knowledge; it limits knowledge.

~Toni Morrison

She is a friend of mind. She gather me, man. The pieces I am, she gather them and give them back to me in all the right order. It's good, you know, when you got a woman who is a friend of your mind.

~Toni Morrison

A sister can be seen as someone who is both ourselves and very much not ourselves - a special kind of double.

~Toni Morrison

Your life is already artful-waiting, just waiting, for you to make it art.

~Toni Morrison

Racism will disappear when it's no longer profitable, and no longer psychologically useful. And when that happens, it'll be gone. But at the moment, people make a lot of money off of it, pro and con.

~Toni Morrison

The peace I am thinking of is the dance of an open mind when it engages another equally open one.

~Toni Morrison

Freeing yourself was one thing; claiming ownership of that freed self was another.

~Toni Morrison

Misery don't call ahead. That's why you have to stay awake - otherwise it just walks on in your door.

~Toni Morrison

I don't think a female running a house is a problem, a broken family. It's

perceived as one because of the notion that a head is a man.

~Toni Morrison

Definitions belong to the definers, not the defined.

~Toni Morrison

Black literature is taught as sociology, as tolerance, not as a serious, rigorous art form.

~Toni Morrison

At some point in life, the world's beauty becomes enough.

~Toni Morrison

Books ARE a form of political action. Books are knowledge. Books are reflection. Books change your mind.

~Toni Morrison

Love is or it ain't. Thin love ain't love at all.

~Toni Morrison

I want to discourage you from choosing anything or making any decision simply because it is safe. Things of value seldom are

~Toni Morrison

All paradises, all utopias are designed by who is not there, by the people who are not allowed in.

~Toni Morrison

I dream a dream that dreams back at me.

~Toni Morrison

At some point in life the world's beauty becomes enough. You don't need to photograph, paint or even remember it. It is enough.

~Toni Morrison

Love is never any better than the lover.

~Toni Morrison

You are your best thing

~Toni Morrison

It was a fine cry - loud and long - but it had no bottom and it had no top, just circles and circles of sorrow.

~Toni Morrison

Black boys became criminalized. I was in constant dread for their lives, because they were targets everywhere. They still are.

~Toni Morrison

If you can only be tall because someone else is on their knees, then you have a serious problem. And white people have a very, very serious problem.

~Toni Morrison

There is an incredible amount of magic and feistiness in black men that nobody has been able to wipe out. But everybody has tried.

~Toni Morrison

Make a difference about something other than yourselves.

~Toni Morrison

Birth, life, and deathâ€• each took place on the hidden side of a leaf.

~Toni Morrison

Schools must stop being holding pens to keep energetic young people off the job market and off the streets. We stretch puberty out a long, long time.

~Toni Morrison

When a child walks in the room, your child or anybody else's child, do your eyes light up? That's what they're looking for.

~Toni Morrison

Don't ever think I fell for you, or fell over you. I didn't fall in love, I rose in it.

~Toni Morrison

A friend gathers all the pieces and gives them back in the right order.

~Toni Morrison

Black people are victims of an enormous amount of violence. None of those things can take place without the complicity of the people who run the schools and the city.

~Toni Morrison

Sexist language, racist language, theistic language - all are typical of the policing languages of mastery, and cannot, do not, permit new knowledge or encourage the mutual exchange of ideas.

~Toni Morrison

Sunk in the grass of an empty lot on a spring Saturday, I split the stems of milkweed and thought about ants and peach pits and death and where the world went when I closed my eyes.

~Toni Morrison

As you enter positions of trust and power, dream a little before you think.

~Toni Morrison

In this country American means white. Everybody else has to hyphenate.

~Toni Morrison

All important things are hard.

~Toni Morrison

If you're going to hold someone down you're going to have to hold on by the other end of the chain. You are confined by your own repression.

~Toni Morrison

It was becoming a habit-this concentration on things behind him. Almost as though there were no future to be had. \*Milkman\*

~Toni Morrison

Freedom is choosing your responsibility. It's not having no responsibilities; it's choosing the ones you want.

~Toni Morrison

From my point of view, your life is already a miracle of chance waiting for you to shape its destiny.

~Toni Morrison

I don't know whether the bird you are holding is dead or alive, but what I do know is that it is in your hands. It is in your hands.

~Toni Morrison

A dream is just a nightmare with lipstick.

~Toni Morrison

You free. Nothing and nobody is obliged to save you but you.

~Toni Morrison

What I think the political correctness debate is really about is the power to be able to define. The definers want the power to name. And the defined are now taking that power away from them.

~Toni Morrison

The pieces I am, she gather them and gave them back to me in all the right order.

~Toni Morrison

Passion is never enough; neither is skill.

~Toni Morrison

We mistook violence for passion, indolence for leisure, and thought recklessness was freedom.

~Toni Morrison

There is really nothing more to say - except why. But since why is difficult to handle, one must take refuge in how.

~Toni Morrison

Definitions belong to the definer, not the defined.

~Toni Morrison

I get angry about things, then go on and work.

~Toni Morrison

I wrote my first novel because I wanted to read it.

~Toni Morrison

I'm always annoyed about why black people have to bear the brunt of everybody else's contempt. If we are not totally understanding and smiling, suddenly we're demons.

~Toni Morrison

I didn't fall in love, I rose in it.

~Toni Morrison

Let your face speak what's in your heart.

~Toni Morrison



We're all surrounded by what I call faux language, fake language of commerce, of news media.

~Toni Morrison

Today is always here,' said Sethe. 'Tomorrow, never.

~Toni Morrison

People say to write about what you know. I'm here to tell you, no one wants to read that, cos you don't know anything. So write about something you don't know. And don't be scared, ever.

~Toni Morrison

Perhaps that's what all human relationships boiled down to: Would you save my life? or would you take it?

~Toni Morrison

From my point of view, which is that of a storyteller, I see your life as something artful, waiting, just waiting and ready for you to make it art.

~Toni Morrison

Writing is really a way of thinking--not just feeling but thinking about things that are disparate, unresolved, mysterious, problematic or just sweet.

~Toni Morrison

Access to knowledge is the superb, the supreme act of truly great civilizations. Of all the institutions that purport to do this, free libraries stand virtually alone in accomplishing this mission.

~Toni Morrison

Anger is better. There is a sense of being in anger. A reality and presence. An awareness of worth. It is a lovely surging.

~Toni Morrison

She learned the intricacy of loneliness: the horror of color, the roar of soundlessness and the menace of familiar objects lying still.

~Toni Morrison

Unpersecuted, unjailed, unharrassed writers are trouble for the ignorant bully, the sly racist, and the predators feeding off the world's resources.

~Toni Morrison

The theme you choose may change or simply elude you, but being your own story means you can always choose the tone. It also means that you can invent the language to say who are you and what you mean.

~Toni Morrison

New York is the last true city.

~Toni Morrison

I write the way women have babies. You don't know it's going to be like that. If you did, there's no way you would go through with it.

~Toni Morrison

Being able to laugh got me through.

~Toni Morrison

The ability of writers to imagine what is not the self, to familiarize the strange and mystify the familiar, is the test of their power.

~Toni Morrison

Sometimes what I write on the page frightens me, so I feel free when I write, but I don't feel safe.

~Toni Morrison

I always know the ending; that's where I start.

~Toni Morrison

We die. That may be the meaning of life. But we do language. That may be the measure of our lives.

~Toni Morrison

I don't think one parent can raise a child. I don't think two parents can raise a child. You really need the whole village.

~Toni Morrison

Laughter is more serious than tears.

~Toni Morrison

Grown don't mean nothing to a mother. A child is a child. They get bigger, older, but grown? What's that supposed to mean? In my heart it don't mean a thing.

~Toni Morrison

I would solve a lot of literary problems just thinking about a character in the subway, where you can't do anything anyway.

~Toni Morrison

Black people have always been used as a buffer in this country between powers to prevent class war.

~Toni Morrison

I can't explain inspiration. A writer is either compelled to write or not. And if I waited for inspiration I wouldn't really be a writer.

~Toni Morrison

What's the world for you if you can't make it up the way you want it?

~Toni Morrison

Women's rights is not only an abstraction, a cause; it is also a personal affair. It is not only about us; it is also about me and you. Just the two of us.

~Toni Morrison

Pain. I seem to have an affection, a kind of sweettooth for it. Bolts of lightning, little rivulets of thunder. And I the eye of the storm.

~Toni Morrison

American means white, and Africanist people struggle to make the term applicable to themselves with ethnicity and hyphen after hyphen after hyphen.

~Toni Morrison

I always start out with an idea, even a boring idea, that becomes a question I don't have answers to.

~Toni Morrison

The isolation, the separateness, is always a part of any utopia.

~Toni Morrison

The past is interesting to me because it's been dumbed down or flattened out, or academically nitpicked so you can't get any life out of it, you just get data.

~Toni Morrison

Something that is loved is never lost.

~Toni Morrison

What difference does it make if the thing you scared of is real or not?

~Toni Morrison

Anything dead coming back to life hurts.

~Toni Morrison

So this is what insanity is. Not goofy behavior, but watching a sudden change in the world you used to know.

~Toni Morrison

The body is ready to have babies. Nature wants it done then, when the body can handle it, not after 40, when the income can handle it.

~Toni Morrison

Somebody has to take responsibility for being a leader.

~Toni Morrison

**Related Links:**

- Writing Quotes
- Thinking Quotes
- Children Quotes
- People Quotes
- Men Quotes
- Art Quotes
- Mean Quotes
- World Quotes
- Book Quotes
- Black Quotes
- Eye Quotes
- Beloved Quotes
- Country Quotes
- Differences Quotes
- Dream Quotes
- Pain Quotes
- Needs Quotes
- Ideas Quotes
- Inspirational Quotes
- Mother Quotes