Before reading
1 Read the first paragraph on page v and answer:
   - How old are the students?
   - Why did they look shocked?
   - What would you do if you were Petey?
   - What would you do if you were the teacher?

While reading
Chapters 1–3
2 Make a list of words to describe life in Ireland when Mr. McCourt was a child.
3 Write about a day in the life of Mr. McCourt as a young boy.
4 Who were famous teenage stars in the United States and in your country in the 1950s? What songs were popular?
5 Look up the word headline in your dictionary. Imagine Mr. McCourt is reading the newspaper. Write a headline for an important piece of news in the 1950s.
6 The first class with Mr. McCourt.
   - You are one of the students in Chapter 2. You get home after the first class with Mr. McCourt. Tell your parents what happened. Two of your classmates will take the role of your parents. What will they say? Plan the conversation and then do it for the whole class.
7 Read the first paragraph of Chapter 3.
   - Do you agree with the experienced teachers’ comments? Why? Why not? Discuss this with one of your classmates. Do you both agree?

Chapters 4–6
8 Tell the class a story that you were told when you were very young. Why do you still remember it?
9 What is an Open School Day or Night? Are there Open Days in schools in your country?
10 Work with another student. It’s Mr. McCourt’s first Open School Day. You are an experienced teacher. Give him advice.

Chapters 7–9
11 You want to miss a class you don’t like. Write an excuse note.

12 Work with another student. One of you is the guidance counsellor, the other one is Mr. McCourt. Have a conversation about Kevin.
13 On page 27, Kevin’s mother says, “… the Communists got him”. Who fought the Vietnam war? When? Why?
14 You’re Kevin. Write a short letter to Mr. McCourt from Vietnam.
15 Write why.
   - a Students wrote excuse notes because …
   - b The teacher copied the students’ excuse notes because …
   - c The inspector liked Mr. McCourt’s idea because …
   - d Kevin Dunne was a difficult student because …
   - e Mr. McCourt thought Barbara Sadlar should go to college because …
   - f Mr. McCourt didn’t like teaching at college because …

Chapters 10–11
16 Write a summary of the two chapters in no more than 50 words. What ideas are important for you and why? Compare your summary to the one written by another student. Are they different?
17 Read the text between the two diamonds on pages 34 and 35. Work with another student. Tell him/her what happened at school. What did you learn? Did you like the class?
18 With another student, write the conversation between the head of the Education Department at Fashion High School and Mr. McCourt on pages 33 and 34. Then act it out.

Chapters 12–14
19 You went to the movies with Mr. McCourt. Work with another student. Tell your mother or father what happened.
20 Using books or the Internet, look up information about Hamlet. Would you like to see the play?
21 Make a list of adjectives to describe Andrew. Then compare him with other students Mr. McCourt has taught.
22 Read Chapter 14 again. You’re Andrew. Tell your story to the class.
Teacher Man

Chapters 15–17
23 Using books or the Internet, look up information about Dublin.
24 Imagine you’re Mr. McCourt, and you are in Dublin. Write a letter to your wife.
25 Discuss Mrs McCourt’s life now that her husband is in Dublin. Is she happy?
26 You are the Head of Stuyvesant High School. Make a brochure or a web page for the school. You can include pictures and drawings.
27 Work with another student. You are Mr. McCourt, your partner is his wife. Your marriage is about to end. Write the conversation between the two. Then act it out.
28 Read the dialogue on pages 58 and 59. Work with another student. Imagine you are students in Mr. McCourt’s class. Rewrite the conversation with true information about your dinner last night.
29 Write a note to Daniel. You were in the class and feel sorry for Daniel. Write a note to him.

Chapters 18–20
30 One of you is Mr. McCourt. Your partner is an angry mother who was at the meeting. What should the mother do? What should Mr. McCourt do or tell her? Discuss this with another student and then act out the conversation.
31 Write why …
   a teachers are tired after Open School Day.
   b teachers don’t know much about their students’ private lives.
   c Bob didn’t bring pen and paper to school.
   d Bob wanted to be a farmer.
   e Bob’s father didn’t want him to be a farmer.
32 What is Gilgamesh? Look up information and write about it.
33 Role play the conversation.
   The Korean father and Ken’s father meet at school. Write the conversation between them and act it out.
34 Make a plan of New York. Locate the library, the Bronx, Greenwich Village and other places Mr. McCourt mentions in his book.

After reading
35 Work with another student. Student A: Read three lines from the book out loud. Do not show the page to your friend. Student B: do not look at the book. Try to say what happens before and after.
36 Imagine you work at a big bookstore. Make a poster to advertise Mr. McCourt’s book.
37 Is the ending happy or sad? Do you think it’s a good ending? Change the ending.
38 Tell part of the story. Include wrong information. Can your partner find the wrong information?
39 Make a thank you note.
   Draw and write a thank you note for a teacher you admire.
40 Make a new cover for the reader and think of another title.
41 You are a writer now. Choose one of the chapters and rewrite it as a play. Then act it out.
42 Write. Did any teacher ever make you feel you hated his / her classes? Why? What did you do about it? Write about those memories.
43 Work with another student and make a list.
   What are the good things about working as a teacher? What are the difficulties?
44 Discuss: Do you think teachers should earn more money in your country? Why? Why not?
46 Project: the best teacher. Ask ten other students (if possible, in another class) what they think makes a good teacher. Make a poster with the results. What are the three things most students agree on? Do you agree?
Chapters 1–3

1 Who’s who? Choose the right name to complete the sentences.
   Mr. McCourt  Petey  The principal teachers  Joey
   a ……… brought a sandwich to school.
   b ……… lived in Ireland.
   c ……… wanted to know about Ireland.
   d ……… was traditional.
   e ……… gave advice to new teachers.

Chapters 4–6

2 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?
   a ……… Mr. McCourt and the principals agreed on the value of stories.
   b ……… There were no problems on McCourt’s first Open School Day.
   c ……… Mr. McCourt found something good in every student.
   d ……… Mr. McCourt thought grammar lessons were very important.
   e ……… Mr. McCourt felt proud when his students learned a new word.

Chapters 7–9

3 Choose the right answer.
   a … of the excuse notes were forged.
      1 All
      2 Many
      3 None
   b The principal thought the excuse notes lesson was …
      1 excellent.
      2 just OK.
      3 poor.
   c Kevin Dunne …
      1 was a popular student.
      2 used to be much better.
      3 learnt to like Mr. McCourt.
   d Barbara Sadlar …
      1 was smarter than other students.
      2 had an ordinary job.
      3 wanted to go to a vocational school.
   e Mr. McCourt’s college students …
      1 had done research before.
      2 led very easy lives.
      3 were not good at writing research papers.

Chapters 10–11

4 What happened first? Number these events in the correct order, from 1 to 6.
   a Mr. McCourt had a problem with Hector.
   b Mr. McCourt took a job at his wife’s school.
   c Mr. McCourt taught at Fashion High School.
   d Nancy’s story moved everybody.
   e The principal didn’t want Mr. McCourt back.
   f Mr. McCourt explained grammar using a pen.

Chapters 12–14

5 What’s the right answer?
   a At Seward Park Mr. McCourt had (five classes in all/29 girls in all/all ninth grades).
   b The girls (traveled to the cinema by bus/enjoyed the movie/paid for their tickets).
   c Serena (had small eyes/was taken to prison/met her grandmother for the first time).
   d Andrew (hated all the teachers/loved Mr. McCourt/was June’s son).
   e Mr. McCourt (saw June again/was nice to Andrew/wrote a letter to June).

Chapters 15–17

6 Match the sentences.
   a Mr. McCourt …
   b Alberta …
   c Roger Goodman …
   d Ben …
   e Students at Stuyvesant …
      1 worked at Stuyvesant High School.
      2 didn’t want to become a principal.
      3 told Mr. McCourt about his family.
      4 were much better than at other schools.
      5 had been on vacation with Mr. McCourt while he was doing his doctorate.

Chapters 18–20

7 Are these sentences right (√) or wrong (×)?
   a Mr. McCourt liked Open School Days.  √
   b Bob was an excellent student.  ×
   c Bob’s father didn’t understand his boy.  ×
   d Ken was born in Korea.  ×
   e Guy died at war.  ×