

The Alchemist Speech

Your journey through *The Alchemist* has introduced you to one man's worldview on the meaning of life and how one achieves the goals and dreams one has. Your job as a reader is to critically assess that information, embracing what you feel speaks to truth and getting rid of the stuff that you feel doesn't fit with your own worldview. Hopefully, this process has occurred.

One of the other challenges for a student of literature is to start making connections. Many people write about the meaning of life, our purpose, and how to go about achieving it. The pursuit of fulfillment, happiness, joy, courage, love, etc. are all topics of discussion from theologians, musicians, artists, novelists, poets, movie makers, etc.

Your job is to start making those connections. Using one other source, compare what that person is thinking to the thought process that Coelho puts us through in his novel. What are the similarities and the differences, who has the stronger case if any, how do these views compare with the views you hold, do you believe that one has a more solid, appropriate view on the issues than the other? These are all questions you can possibly explore (there may be others as well).

You will be responsible for a one to two minute talk to the class about your findings and will be evaluated not only on content, but your ability to present clearly to the class.

One may ask, where do I even begin to look? Good question! Most of you listen to music. The lyrics of your favourite groups may in fact be a place to start. Do the lyrics reflect a searching for meaning or purpose or propose a philosophy for how to live life. If so, you can draw comparisons and contrasts to *The Alchemist*. You might want to choose a couple of pages out of a book from a library – Christian authors in particular are quite interested in the topic of purpose. Books like *The Purpose Driven Life* work well for this project. Others will perhaps pick a number of passages from the Bible to compare. I have also found that *Calvin and Hobbes*, the comic strip, often gives us messages about the meaning and purpose of life. You can also dig around in the world of poetry or other novels to draw comparisons. You could even use movie clips in comparing different ideas.

In terms of presenting format, I would encourage you to use any number of multi-media technologies. For example, power point could be used to highlight some of your main points or include handouts of lyrics to the class so they can see them while you play a song for example. (If you play a song or show a movie clip, then your presentation will be longer than one to two minutes) Try to keep any clips you use to five minutes or less please.

You will have one class period to prepare your talk. On the next class, we will begin presenting these. Do remember that your speeches should make use of the linking language we worked on before the break.