
**Literary Reading– Symbolism/Coming of Age
Middle School, 8th Grade
Fall 2011**

Project READI Technical Report CM #2

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Project READI operated as a multi-institution collaboration among the Learning Sciences Research Institute, University of Illinois at Chicago; Northern Illinois University; Northwestern University; WestEd's Strategic Literacy Initiative; and Inquirium, LLC. Project READI developed and researched interventions in collaboration with classroom teachers that were designed to improve reading comprehension through argumentation from multiple sources in literature, history, and the sciences appropriate for adolescent learners. Curriculum materials such as those in this module were developed based on enacted instruction and are intended as case examples of the READI approach to deep and meaningful disciplinary literacy and learning.

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Objective of Module: Negotiating Disciplinary Practices of Literature: Symbolism and Coming of Age Through Novel Study

Setting the Stage

- Activating schema: Everyday symbols in the classroom
- Cultural Data Sets: Symbolism
 - What is symbolic?
 - How do you know?
- Gateway Activities:
 - Role of criteria when articulating beliefs/making judgments
- Cultural Data Sets: Allegory
 - What is the meaning beyond the literal?
 - How do you know?

Interpretive Practices

- Instructional Routines: Making Thinking Visible by Attending to Dimension of Literary Text via Reading Journal: Following Plot, Following Characters, Interpreting Symbolism, Noticing Unusual Things, Character Maps, and Reading Journal Reflections
- Dialogic Interaction: Reading Groups, Pair-Share & Blogging
- Interpretation as Dynamic Interaction Between Reader & Text

Argument

- Sentence & Paragraph Frames to Support Oral Discourse
- Argument of Judgment (Oral and Written)
- Negotiation of Argumentative Elements: Claim, Evidence, & Reasoning
- Introduction to Counter-Argument

*This is the overarching module objective. All designed modules are guided by the six interrelated learning objective below.

Literature Learning Objectives

- 1 Engage in close reading of literary texts to construct interpretations
- 2 Synthesize within and across literary texts to construct generalizations about theme, characterization, structure, and language
- 3 Construct claim-evidence relations based on evidence from texts, reader's experiences, other texts, and literary constructs
- 4 Establish criteria for judging interpretations of theme
- 5 Develop structural and thematic interpretations derived from general knowledge of literary conventions and genre structures
- 6 Demonstrate understanding that literary interpretation is based on an open dialogue between texts and readers

Sequence for 7th/8th grade Symbolism/Coming of Age Module

Unit Launch: Activating Schema, Cultural Data Sets (CDS) & Gateway Activities (GA)

- Everyday Symbols in Classroom Use
- Symbolism & the Poetry of 2Pac (CDS)
- Anticipation Guide & multiple versions of the story of Narcissus (traditional myth & Prologue: *The Alchemist* (GA)
- Allegory & "The People Could Fly" (CDS)

Bridging to Disciplinary Practices of Literature

- Elements of Plot Structure: Key Terms
- Completion of Character Maps of self: Understanding character dimensionality

Introduction to Reading Journal in *The Alchemist*: Gradual Release of Responsibility: "I Do, We Do, You Do"

- Following the Plot (Event/Causal Relation)
- Following Characters: Santiago & Other Major Characters (i.e. important quotes & student comments)
- Interpreting Symbolism (4 step process)
- Noticing the Unusual (i.e. unusual, repeated, pattern, contradictions, prominent position, etc.)
- Character Maps
- Reading Reflection Log

Continual Support of Students with Negotiation of Reading Journal & Literary Analysis (Process of Engaging w/ Anchor Text: *The Alchemist*)

- Evolving participation structures to engage in dialogic interaction & share contents of reading journal: whole, class, reading groups, pair-share
- Multiple exposures to reading of text: independent reading, audio, pair-readings, etc.
- Periodic comprehension assessments: multiple choice, literal dimensions of text
- Word work: vocabulary development
- Text-dependent questions: literal to inferential to analytical

Argumentative Writing

- Claim, evidence and reasoning chains as it relates to arguments of judgment (literary analysis); Completion of Graphic Organizers
- Practice in Oral and Written Argumentation
- Multiple Participation Structures: Silent Discussion, Group & Ind'l Argument Writing
- Launch of Blog & Related Discussion Prompts

Promoting Intertextual Conversations

- Analysis of "Everyday" song lyrics
- Examination of Will Smith interview regarding alchemy
- Biography of Paulo Coelho; Interview w/ Oprah
- Analysis of Robert Frost's *The Road Not Taken*

Bringing It All Together: Final Assessment of *The Alchemist*

- Vocabulary in Context Assessment
- Multiple Choice Comprehension Assessment
- Essay Test: Symbolism, Theme: coming of age, Structural Generalizations (i.e. author's use of language & its effect)

Anchor Text

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho, 1988

Key Questions:

Related to Theme/Author's Generalization:

(a). How much of one's life is controlled by fate and how much in one's life is under one's control?

Sub-Question:

(b). Which is more important, the journey or the destination?

Related to Symbolism:

(a). How does the recognition and use of symbols and symbolic representation contribute and/or affect meaning making within texts?

Related to Structural Generalization:

(a). How do authors organize text or use language in specific ways to convey ideas and feelings?

1. What challenge does the protagonist face?
2. Of what broader problem is this particular challenge an example?
3. What characteristics of the protagonist make him or her particularly vulnerable?
4. What characteristics of the setting or the protagonist's relationships with other characters make the challenge particularly difficult?
5. What supports make it possible for the protagonist to learn an important lesson?
6. How do the protagonist and other characters change over time?

Focus throughout the Module:

Symbolism

1. What in the text is symbolic?
 - a. Object, image, event, character, place, action
2. What rules of notice helped you identify that which you hypothesize is symbolic?
3. On what basis do you reject a literal interpretation?

A text can be understood on a literal level; however, the true meaning of the text is found when taking a more interpretive/.analytical stance.

Show how you reasoned from that part or those parts of the text that contribute to your understanding of the meaning or meanings of the symbol.

Structural Generalization

1. Describe how the author uses language to convey what you think the symbol communicates.
 - a. Thick description, understatement, exaggeration, parallelism, contrasts
2. Describe how the author organizes details to convey what you think the symbol communicates.
 - a. Repetition, contrasting details, parallel details,

Argumentation

1. Write an argument of judgment that is evidenced-based, grounded with sound and logical reasoning.

Module Texts

Anchor Text:

Novel: The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho [Multiple modalities]
(Harper Collins print edition, 2006, 10th Anniversary Kindle Edition, 2009, and Audible Audio Edition [Unabridged], narrated by Jeremy Irons, 2005)

(**During the 1st iteration of this module, I would play the audio version of the text segment the following day it was assigned for homework. My intent was to give the students a second reading of the text segment and also to provide the “hearing” of the language. What I found was that many students stopped reading on their own knowing that they would hear the text the next day. In later iterations, I only used the audio text for select passages for modeling instructional strategies. The audio also served as a “catch-up” tool for students transferring in during the semester as our school had a high mobility rate.)

Supplemental Texts:

Visuals: Assorted symbolic visual representations [9-11, heart, peace sign, inspired 365 plaque, sign language example]

Poem: “The Sun and the Moon” by Tupac Shakur (1999)

Myth: Story of Narcissus (Greek Mythology)
(via <http://narcissus.info/the-story-of-narcissus.html>)

Short Story: African American Folktales: Virginia Hamilton “The People Could Fly” (1985)

Blog: Mr C’s Cyber Café (Teacher created)
Via www.peacefulpersistence.blogspot.com

Video Clip: Will Smith Interview with Tavis Smiley (December 13, 2007)
via <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M88uMRwsjOU>

Song lyrics: “Everything” by Radio Citizen from the album “Berlin Serengeti” (2006)

Bio: Paul Coelho http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paulo_Coelho

Poem: Robert Frost “The Road Not Taken” (1916)

Module Sequence of Instruction

Week 1:

Day 1: CULTURAL DATA SET

Common Core Standard Correlation:

- Reading Literature 8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Reading Literature 8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Objective: Understand that symbols are an everyday experience in the world, representing both concrete entities and abstractions of larger ideas. Use the process of annotation to critically evaluate the poem, "The Sun and the Moon" by Tupac.

Text, Materials: Assorted symbolic visual representations (heart, peace sign, 9-1-1, emoji, etc.) teacher provided; Poem "The Sun and the Moon", directions for reading, analysis questions (See attached Activity D1.a)

These are a part of the cultural data set to evoke prior knowledge of symbolism, and extend work with unpacking extended metaphor, in preparation for The Alchemist. The poem allows for a multiplicity of interpretations, ranging from a very literal reading to a more stylized, interpretive reading.

Description of Lesson Taught: Students were asked to think of common, everyday symbols in the classroom. Students volunteered tangible objects, and I engaged them in an exploration of what abstract concepts they represented. Finally, they were given a formal definition of symbolism in class: a symbol is a word or object that stands for another word or object. The object or word can be seen with the eye or not visible. For example a dove stands for Peace. The dove can be seen and peace cannot.

Students were given the Tupac poem, and asked to annotate it for 15 minutes (annotation had been previously introduced in class). Students were then assigned to groups to discuss their analysis/interpretation. The assigned speaker for each group synthesized their analysis, and the other members in the group documented something interesting/new they had learned, an observation, strong idea presented, or a question (a quick note). Afterwards, the whole group reported out what they had written for their quick notes. I transcribed student commentary on the poem, using the document camera, asking them to pay close

attention to literary devices. This gave me a window into which literary devices they already knew and could apply.

Assessment: Collection of quick notes to determine levels of participation; individual annotations were assessed based on a 10-point scale. In order to earn full credit, students needed to analyze each line of the poem, identifying symbolism and figurative language examples, as well as include a brief summary, which included the 'gist' of the poem.

Homework: Students were given a series of questions to answer independently, to be discussed the following day. Questions: (1). What is being compared in the poem? (2). How does the author use this comparison throughout the poem? List specific examples? (3). What do you notice about the way the poem is organized and written? How does it affect your understanding of the poem? (4). What are possible symbols used in the text? How are they used? (5). Explain how your previous knowledge of these symbols affects the way you interpret what Tupac is trying to convey?

Reflection: I spent a lot of time crafting the lesson, figuring out the actual things the students would be doing to unpack this poem and bring their intuitive knowledge sets forward. I am surprised by how much the students enjoy annotation...line by line. They have stated it helps them make meaning, and I am starting to believe them. Developing roles for all group members can sometimes be a challenge, and I observed focused, sustained work from all groups.

I allowed students to throw everything out, including the kitchen sink...personification, metaphor, symbolism, differing theories of interpretation, etc...I think it's appropriate the first couple of days to not try to harness the thinking in the room. Just collect it, most of it will be useful later; some, in ways that you have not anticipated before.

Day #2: **CULTURAL DATA SET**

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Objective: Use the process of annotation to critically evaluate the poem, "The Sun and the Moon" by Tupac.

Text, Materials: Student homework: "Sun and the Moon" analysis questions

Description of Lesson Taught: Continuation of lesson from day 1, whole group discussion of the homework questions: (1). What is being compared in the poem? (2). How does the author use this comparison throughout the poem? (3). What do you notice about the way the poem is organized and written? How does it affect your understanding of the poem? (4). What are possible symbols used in the text? How are they used? (5). Explain how your previous knowledge of these symbols affects the way you interpret what Tupac is trying to convey?

Assessment: The analysis questions were collected and used to inform instructional next steps in regards to figurative language and subsequent analyses, symbolism, and structural generalizations.

Reflection: I didn't quite know when to stop advancing the line of questioning to pull out what students knew exactly (effective questioning when you don't necessarily know what intuitive knowledge the students will bring forth as part of their respective cultural data set). Part of the tension was feeling very much an outsider, when using a "cultural data set." My questions often seemed leading, rather than guiding; the re-articulation of student thinking for the benefit of the class became more reflective of my thinking than my students.

(Day #2, Part 2) **GATEWAY ACTIVITY**

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Writing 1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a: Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- b: Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- c: Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- d: Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e: Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Objective: Students will take a stand (make a claim) regarding prospective argument of judgment statements, in an effort to lay the foundation for writing

personal arguments of judgment that are evidenced-based, grounded with sound and logical reasoning.

Materials: The Alchemist Anticipation Guide (See attached Activity D2.a), Activity Directions with Claim-Evidence-Reasoning Graphic Organizer (See attached Activity D2.b)

The intention for this gateway activity was to tap into students' already existing belief systems, regarding big ideas that would arise through a close examination of The Alchemist. Also, I wanted to gather baseline data, regarding their ability to develop arguments of judgment, employing the claim, evidence and reasoning chain (previously introduced).

Description of Lesson Taught: Students were given the anticipation guide which contained belief statements regarding The Alchemist. They were given the following instructions: If you agree with the statement, put a plus sign: "+". If you disagree with the statement, put a minus sign: "-". If you are unsure of your belief, put a question mark: "?". If you do not understand the quote, circle the statement "O". Afterwards, I asked students to pick statements that were most interesting, and we discussed them as part of a whole class discussion, for 2-3 minutes each, making sure not to exhaust all thinking in regards to a statement, before moving on to the next.

Homework: After going over the directions together as a whole group, students were given the C-E-R graphic organizer to complete paying close attention to explaining their claim in their own words, and citing evidence and reasoning to support claims.

Assessment: Students were given participation points for completing the Anticipation Guide; students were given points for completing the graphic organizer.

*Collect Anticipation Guide (Activity 2.a) and C-E-R (Activity 2.b) for Day 8 activity.

Reflection: I spent a great deal of time crafting the statements of the Anticipation Guide so they would flesh out my particular genre/thematic: coming of age/fate vs. free-will. I infused my own thinking with statements that had been previously crafted by upper high school teachers. I allowed students the chance to debrief/unpack the statements but stopping them before they were ready to let go. 'Leave them wanting more' has become the clichéd rhetoric I employ to my students when I cut time short on a rich discussion; I need students to see multiple lenses for how to view this book.

Day #3 GATEWAY ACTIVITY

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.5: Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

Objective: Distinguish themes and compare/contrast key ideas between two similar texts that differ in terms of point of view.

Texts, Materials: Narcissus poem (See attached Activity D3.a); The Alchemist-Prologue (See attached Activity D3.b)

The story of Narcissus served as a Gateway Activity to build background knowledge/schema for the prologue of The Alchemist, (Coelho, 1988). Many students were familiar with this story, based on their unit the year before regarding mythology. This more traditional telling of the classic myth really allowed the students a concrete entry into identifying the theme/lesson presented by the story. The goal was to contrast this with the prologue, which offered a more complex and layered thematic.

Description of Lesson Taught: Students were given the short myth text to read and annotate. Upon completion, a brief whole class discussion ensued, to determine comprehension and provide a shared understanding of the aspect of the world that came into being as a result (vanity; self-absorption) of the myth. So students focused on analysis (their own and each other's), I transcribed student responses on the document camera and distributed them to each upon lesson completion. The framing questions were as follows: What do you think? What happens here? Is there any symbolism? What is the message/theme of the story? What is the story trying to teach? Students were then asked to read and listen closely while the prologue of The Alchemist was read aloud, looking for new insight/information in this revised retelling of the story. Students were again asked the framing questions, while I transcribed. Finally, students were asked to write a sentence or two about the lesson of the prologue version. Students were asked to share their quick writes aloud with the class.

Assessment: Student writing samples were collected and compiled in a document to demonstrate the variety of interpretations that can accompany close reading/textual analysis.

Reflection: I realized yesterday that allowing students to elaborate on their misconceptions made them facts for other students. Closing off avenues of

misguided thinking, not grounded in appropriate citation of textual evidence, really did the class a huge favor...it forced them to dig deeper. For example, one student tried to defend that Hera was married to Narcissus. She was leveraging this 'misconception' to justify invalid analysis (Hera, looking for her husband Narcissus, was thwarted by Echo, who had some type of feeling for Narcissus) more reflective of a soap opera storyline. In my scan of the room, I could tell some students were beginning to validate this student, since they perceive her to be a bright student. Righting the misperception was an important move that brought clarity to the class, and more coherence to the lesson.

Week 2:

DAY #4 CULTURAL DATA SET/GATEWAY ACTIVITY

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

-Reading Literature 8.9: Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

Objective: Define allegory and identify how it shapes or frames the narrative, "The People Could Fly" (Hamilton, 1985). In addition, understand how to create a plot map.

Texts, Materials: Story "The People Could Fly" (see attached Activity D4.a); Plot Chart and Elements of Plot Structure think sheets (see attached Activity D4.b)

The story "The People Could Fly" is part of the cultural data set intended to introduce the literary device of allegory. Using this story serves many purposes. It affords the opportunity to explore more complex and stylized symbolic representations, and the story, although not a coming of age story, deals with a transformation (in this case from enslavement to freedom), an integral part of the coming of age experience.

Description of Lesson Taught:

I provided a definition of allegory to students via chart paper: ***Allegory** is the representation of ideas or moral principles through the use of symbolic characters, events, or objects. It is a form of extended metaphor, in which objects, persons, and actions in a narrative, are equated with the meanings that lie outside the narrative itself. The underlying meaning has moral, social, religious, or political significance, and characters are often personifications of*

abstract ideas as charity, greed, or envy. Thus an allegory is a story with two meanings, a literal meaning and a symbolic meaning.

I contextualized this definition with multiple examples: (i.e. The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein and Lord of the Rings-student generated).

Students were given the text in class, and they followed along as I read the text aloud. (The story was familiar to students - they had it read it the previous year and also watched a staged production of it during our Black History Assembly.) They were told the purpose of the activity was to listen and figure out what these characters or actions could represent, literally and symbolically. As I read, "The People Could Fly", I asked students to jot down what the characters/events of the story, or objects used in the story could represent. I modeled the thinking I was eliciting by jotting down wings = freedom. I engaged the students in a discussion as to other symbols and their allegorical significance. In this category, I also provided blackbirds, to show students how prior knowledge and/or intuition dictates symbolic significance (I think blackbirds are symbolic, but I'm not sure what they symbolize, so I am going to look it up) = renewal; vitality. Finally, I provided the allegorical reference for Sarah = disciple, and guided the students in their attributions of other characters. I charted their responses on the board. Finally, I asked to students to describe in detail the transformations that took place with the characters and the story itself.

To conclude the lesson, a handout was given to each student entitled, "Elements of Plot Structure: A Glossary of Key Terms" and I modeled/guided the students as we analyzed the structure of the plot in "The People Could Fly."

Assessment: Informal, collecting student comments/analyses in an effort to create an anchor chart for the room on examples of allegory.

Reflection: Sometimes there is synergy in teaching...to steal a line from The Alchemist, a moment "where the universe actually conspires in the teacher's favor." I was extremely familiar with the African American folktale "The People Could Fly" by Virginia Hamilton as I knew my students were. Imagine my surprise as I googled 'children's books and allegory' to find this as the first hit...payday!

Allegory is such a nuanced and highly complex figurative mode of representation that I worried that my students wouldn't be able to wrap their brains around it, let alone the half-page chart paper definition to frame the lesson. However, they rose to the challenge. Once they were given the nudge of wings = freedom, and prompted to share what they think of when they think of "wings" (conjured up images of "angels", which made them think of "heaven"), we were on our way. I was impressed by how they wrestled with the meaning and tried to defend their thinking with textual examples.

This lesson served multiple purposes. First of all, it functioned as a cultural data set. Second, it allowed for teaching of allegory. Third, it provided an

opportunity to model the story mapping process: (i.e. which characters were main, which were minor, the duality of setting as both time and place, the mood, tone, plot structure, theme, conflict, and point of view), which I found students had a considerable amount of background knowledge/schema from previous years of instruction.

Wonderings going forward:

How much of the collective knowledge created is actually owned by individual students? I need a way to assess this aspect, since I am certain not every learner in the room comprehended it to the same degree, or would have had the schema (“The People Could Fly” in this case religious) to make the session as meaningful as the whole group did.

Day #5 **GATEWAY ACTIVITY (character map of self)**

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Objective: Understand how to examine the text through multiple lenses (plot, characters, symbolism, unusual things, etc). In addition, document the information in the appropriate organizer.

Texts, Materials: The Alchemist (individual student copies; audio); reading journal (heuristic templates provided by Carol Lee) (See attached Activity D5.a)

The reading journals consisted of multiple copies of the following documents: following plot, following characters, following unusual text features, following symbolism, character trait graphic organizer, and a reflective journal. These documents were created by Carol D. Lee and became the students’ main mechanism used to have students engage in close reading of the text.

Description of Lesson Taught: Reading journals were pre-assembled, in the following order: Following the Plot, Following Characters, Interpreting Symbolism, Unusual Things I Noticed, Character Map, and My Personal Reading Journal. Each student was asked to take a few minutes to familiarize themselves with the reading journal in its entirety/design of each template. I proceeded to go over instructions for each page, walking students through the entire journal. I made a deliberate and repeated attempt to frame the purpose of the journal...”the purpose of these reading journals are to periodically stop and check in with

yourself as the reader; you can write at any point in the story. This is what the most effective readers do, and it is my hope that after engaging in this process for our shared novels, that you will be able to transfer this skill when you read independently...you will become aware of all the things you are noticing while you read a book.”

To get us started (and build interest), I chose to play the audio of The Alchemist for pages 1-9. I then modeled how to fill out a couple of the charts in their reading journal.

Homework: Complete Character map of self; read The Alchemist pgs 9-13

Reflection: There was a lot going on here...so many tensions to negotiate, in terms of the reading journal components. I suppose I should have introduced each sheet independently, and allowed students to become familiar with each and adept at how to use the sheet to support comprehension; however, I am a firm believer in trial by fire, especially as it supports authentic instruction. When reading, we tend to have scattered thoughts, a little nougat about this aspect, a small serving of that, perhaps a slightly larger meditation on another aspect we deem to be key or salient to our interest. This is how reading and comprehension of a novel unfold. I know that I have to offer additional support in helping my students navigate each of these sheets, so I have decided to use the first several sessions to do just that...play a little audio, and jot down my thinking.

I guided them to the character map of Santiago, and worked with them in filling it out. I noticed while showing them the character map (graphic organizer), there seemed to be a lot of confusion and resistance. I have found in my previous experience that students have tremendous difficulty in differentiating between the different components of the character (physical traits vs. personality traits vs. what you know about the character for example). I then proceeded to use myself as a character example, which worked to some degree. In order to engage them more fully in the process, I asked them to create a character map of themselves, viewing Room 315 as the cast and the setting of their stories.

Day #6

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

-Reading Literature 8.10: Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text-complexity band, independently and proficiently.

Objective: Continue to examine The Alchemist text through multiple lenses (plot, characters, symbolism, unusual things, etc.). In addition, document information in the appropriate graphic organizer.

Texts, Materials: Student character maps (homework), reading journal, The Alchemist

Description of Lesson Taught: Students were asked (4-6) to volunteer individual character maps while students provide feedback and critique depth of specific categories of the character map. Audio of short segment of The Alchemist text was played and I modeled documentation of my thinking in the reading journal. Students were asked to copy the notes I wrote, as a guide for them in the future.

Assessment: Character map of self (Simple rubric: 24 points total; 3-points for each category; 3= excellent development; 2= sufficient development; 1=aspect needs improvement).

Reflection: I tried to be explicit in my connection of the character map to a detailed analysis and how in so doing, the reader forms a strong connection with the characters.

Day # 7

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

-Reading Literature 8.10: Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text-complexity band, independently and proficiently.

Objective: Continue to examine The Alchemist text through multiple lenses (plot, characters, symbolism, unusual things, etc.). In addition, document information in the appropriate graphic organizer.

Texts, Materials: Reading journal – focus on plot chart, The Alchemist

Description of Lesson Taught: (This is a continuation from yesterday's lesson). Play a section of the audio of The Alchemist, stopping periodically to fill in appropriate graphic organizer, really trying to isolate the most appropriate location as I modeled my thoughts. Another focus of the lesson was to try to get students to see the need to be a little bit selective in the events they listed in following the plot organizer.

Small discussion/reading groups were formed. [I pre-selected 5 students who I deemed to be adept at closely following the text, and for their respective diligence in documenting their thinking. I gave them post-it notes, numbered 1-5 and instructed them not to open them. Next, I had the remaining students count off [1-5] and group leaders opened papers, establishing the discussion/reading groups].

Assessment: N/A

Reflection: Yesterday, students expressed difficulty in determining which events in the plot were worthy of writing in the journal, since they deemed everything to be important. This is why I spent some time picking four events from the plot to document, as a way to promote summary and synthesis of the plot, so it wouldn't feel so cumbersome.

In developing discussion/reading groups, my intention was to gradually release the responsibility of the work to the student leaders and the small groups. I met with them privately to explain the expectations associated with being a leader (solicit responses, equity of voice, debate about thinking shared by students, resist the urge to copy all comments shared, etc). I am hopeful in so doing, the groups will take ownership of the process and create a knowledge base around the text. I chose to have the groups be random because I did not want students to choose groups based on their friendships/desire to be partners with high-achieving students, so they could 'coast'.

Week 3:

Day #8

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

-Reading Literature 8.10: Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text-complexity band, independently and proficiently.

-Writing 8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

Objective: Critically evaluate text, determining central/key ideas and their relevance & Compose a lead/intro/thesis to frame our argument of judgment essay

Texts/Materials: reading journal; student work C-E-R Graphic organizer (Activity D2.b) (completed on Day 2)

Description of Lesson Taught: I started the lesson with a brief comprehension quiz of the text (multiple choice). Students were then assembled into their small groups and were asked to fill out reading journal/debate about the contents read thus far. I explained scoring point system (see attached Activity D8.a); feedback was given to students on reading journals.

In Writing, we worked on the introduction of a persuasive essay [argument of judgment from The Alchemist Anticipation Guide] and the importance of lead, using Nancie Atwell's *Lessons that Make Good Writers*. In addition, I provided students with several resources that could be used in the room, including The Quotationary (a dictionary of quotations, The Longman Dictionary (user-friendly dictionary), and The Write Source (a writer's manual of style).

Assessment: Quiz #1; In addition, students were given journals with preliminary feedback, both on post-it notes (formative) and with the rubric (summative).

Homework: Students were asked to develop a lead for their argument of judgment.

Reflection: Students didn't do as well on the quiz as I had anticipated they would. This is concerning moving forward, because I have asked the students to read independently. Coupled with the reading journals, I was hoping to see better results.

My students seem to lack a certain degree of analytical prowess, which has made the launch of this module challenging. While trying to be cognizant of this, I do try to push my students to become more critically minded, since this is most associated with academic success/potentiality.

It appears that those students who read closely were able to complete their journals while those that did poorly on the journals experienced

comprehension difficulties while reading or did not read independently. Finally, characterization needs to be addressed, since there are some issues happening in regards to delineating between major/minor characters as well as the author's intention/purpose for creating characters.

Day #9

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

-Reading Literature 8.10: Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text-complexity band, independently and proficiently.

-Writing 8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

Objective: Critically evaluate text, determine central/key ideas and their relevance & build a foundational understanding of the terminology associated w/characterization.

Writing: Compose a lead/intro/thesis to frame your argument of judgment essay

Texts, Materials: Quiz; reading journal; The Alchemist

Description of Lesson Taught: Based on the quiz results, a further lesson on characterization was needed. I addressed the differences between major and minor characters w/ a t-chart. I frequently referred students to the anchor chart in the room, so they would begin to understand it and use it as a referent. Also we needed to establish group norms and set protocol for group work [discuss comments before writing others' down; attribute ideas to others; debate/engage in conversation, using evidence and reasoning; challenging claims of students w/ the use of counterclaims, equity of voice]. Students assembled into their small groups and engaged in a discussion about assigned reading adding to their journals as appropriate.

Assessment: N/A

Homework: read 25-33 annotate

Reflection: Again, I need to think more like a student and less like an adult, teacher, avid reader, etc...I'm seeing that many students tend to think all characters are major, and feel that as long as they can find some piece of textual evidence to justify their thinking it's okay. More work to be done on C-E-R process.

Day #10

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Writing 8.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 on page 52.)

-Writing 8.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Objective: Compose a lead/thesis to frame argument of judgment.

Texts, Materials: reading journal; The Alchemist; C-E-R student work

Description of Lesson Taught: I distributed the C-E-R Graphic Organizers from Day 2 and provided time for students to review my comments/ask questions. In addition, I reviewed a variety of lead types (e.g. anecdote, quotation, news, background, announcement, quotation) and reiterated reasoning is where you show where the claim and evidence don't fit together, frontloading the contextual need for a counterclaim. In writer's workshop students spent 20-25 minutes coming up with lead, reviewing from anchor chart. A couple of kids shared leads, and received feedback from class and myself.

Assessment: Informal assessment of graphic organizers, with commentary offered to push individual thinking

Reflection: After reviewing the graphic organizers, there clearly seems to be issues with my students gathering evidence and reasoning to support their claims. I knew this would be extremely difficult, given the existential nature of the claims listed in the anticipation guide, and I know that introducing warrants would be a vehicle to help them figure out evidence that is generally accepted as true, but there is genuine struggle constructing the claim-evidence, and reasoning chain.

Homework: Write two possible leads, trying a couple of the strategies provided.

Day #11

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Writing 8.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 on page 52.)

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading 8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

-Reading Literature 8.10: Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text-complexity band, independently and proficiently.

Objective: Compose a thesis statement to focus or frame your argument of judgment.

Texts, Materials: C-E-R student leads; Check Your Essay Lead check-list (See attached Activity D11.a); The Alchemist; reading journal

Description of Lesson Taught: I launched the lesson with a connection to the place of technology in the discipline of Reading, trying to elicit possible interest in a blog. I explained that in “friending” Paulo Coelho on Facebook, you can receive a daily quote...interesting life lessons to consider.

I also re-presented Writer’s INC, as a resource for leads/writing process. A working definition was provided to frame a thesis statement: a statement of position, as well as a formula: specific subject + a specific feeling or feature = a effective focus or thesis statement. Students were given a brief amount of time in class to begin developing a thesis statement. In addition, students were given a checklist to determine the effectiveness of the leads they had composed. I wanted them to understand the components of a strong lead, and be able to self-assess the quality of the leads they created.

Time was given to finish up reading assigned section of The Alchemist followed by a brief discussion on symbols

Assessment: self-assessment (students used essay lead check list to determine strength of lead/areas for revision)

Reflection: Many students contributed to discussion, offering their suggestions/ideas as to possible symbols. I was particularly impressed that this discussion included many students who often choose to remain quiet. There were a lot of symbols to discuss, and when interpreting symbols, there can be a lot of room for interpretation, in terms of associations/significance.

Homework: Work on developing thesis making sure thesis has one and only one position, sounds academic, is both clear and concise; check your essay leads according to checklist.

Day #12

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

-Reading Literature 8.10: Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text-complexity band, independently and proficiently.

Objective:

To continue to critically evaluate plot and symbolism in The Alchemist and its implication on the story.

Description of Lesson Taught: Our discussion continued regarding the reading journals, where the rules of notice charts were discussed in greater detail, specifically following symbolism [butterfly, Urim, Thummin, Melchizedik]. I really isolated the last two columns, pushing them to think more deeply about symbolism charts in terms of the last two columns: associations you can make with the symbol, and what those associations cause you to think about the meaning of the symbol in the text.

Texts, Materials: reading journal; The Alchemist

Reflection: Students, through their work and reflections, acknowledged a lot of misconceptions about the following symbolism heuristic, which I found a bit surprising, given the preliminary work done in class before the launch of the unit. I realized students don't have a lot of prior knowledge about symbols; therefore, they struggle when asked to think about the associations they can make with the symbol itself. For example, a student would have no context for what a butterfly could be emblematic of, so because its in the story, they write that its symbolic,

but the associations they make with the symbol are grounded in the text. When asked what it means, it appears they are at a loss, because they just documented that in the association column. I know that my lens for potential symbolism has really been widened by my life experience, and the texts I have been exposed to throughout my life.

Homework read pgs 33-44 in The Alchemist

Week 4:

Day #13

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

-Reading Literature 8.10: Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text-complexity band, independently and proficiently.

Objective: Justify claims (statements of fact or opinion written in the journal) with sound and logical textual-based evidenced and reasoning.

Description of Lesson Taught: Students were given a comprehension quiz. After walking around the room, it became clear students struggled because most did not read. I changed the lesson, giving students time to read while I circulated around the room, asking questions of students, and eliciting their thinking regarding the text. I supported individuals in adding to their reading journals.

Artifacts: Quiz; The Alchemist, reading journal

Assessment: Quiz

Reflection: The original objective of the lesson was thwarted because students did not read; therefore, I opted to change the lesson at the beginning of instruction. I know that this is a challenging text (Lexile level 9-10 +). The complexity of the symbolism and the unfamiliar location work in tandem to create text complexity. The plot of the story itself is reasonable. In terms of vocabulary, of course there are some challenging words, but once again, their comprehension companion guides have provided definitions for all the terms. Negotiating the wealth of resources is a challenge, but there has to exist a baseline willingness to even examine the resources in the first place. What's

interesting is that the students are doing a good job on their reading journals with what they have read thus far.

Homework Read The Alchemist pgs. 43-47

Day #14

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Writing 8.6: use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish --- Writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

-Reading Literature 8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

-Reading Literature 8.10: Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text-complexity band, independently and proficiently.

Objective: Promote engagement and ownership of the critical reading processes & Produce evidence and reasoning chains that support (or refute) claim.

Texts, Materials: Silent Discussion Quote Charts (teacher made) (Activity D14.a)

Description of Lesson Taught: Top launch, I introduced students to “Mr. C’s Cyber Café” (teacher created via www.peacefulpersistence.blogspot.com and the logistics for gaining access to the blog. I explained the site would provide an opportunity to engage in discussions about the text across groups, dealing with the content that was not necessarily a part of class time. The blog was inspired by being responsive to the smart phone culture of my room, and their affinity for social networking. The intention was to give students an opportunity to continue discussion of the book outside of the L.A. block, in a way that could be documented/archived.

I asked students to do a quick write: What do you make of what has happened to Santiago so far in the story? They were instructed to include the most recent events (as evidence of their reading, and in order to provide a more open-ended assessment of their comprehension). Upon completion, students were asked to add to their reading journals.

Finally, chart papers were hung around the room with “meaty” quotes from The Alchemist (Dreams are the language of God?; When you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you achieve it?; If I can understand the language without words, then I can understand the world?; It’s the possibility of having a dream come true that makes life interesting?; I see the world in terms of what I would like to see happen, not what actually does?; We have to be prepared for

change?). Students were asked to stand by their favorite quote. A couple of students were asked to relocate to evenly distribute the groups. Each student in the group was given a unique color marker, and asked to first respond to the quote, and then react/respond/challenge/agree/disagree with the others in the group. I showed exemplars to demonstrate the non-linear, messy quality of the activity. I was the only one with a black marker, and my role was to write questions, comments which would challenge/push the thinking of the student groups. Finally, and **most important, students were told they were not allowed to talk**, so as to push them to express their thinking in words, not through talk. Groups were told any member in the group who spoke would lose points for the entire group, since credit for the first part of the activity was a simple 10-point participation grade (2 points off per interruption, and a 30-second penalty from filling in the chart). Students were given approximately 25-30 minutes to complete task.) I circulated to ensure adherence to rules, as well as to offer commentary on the charts.

Assessment: Quick write question: What do make of what has happened to Santiago so far in the story?; Participation grade for completing silent discussion activity.

Reflection: I see the blog as being a place of discussion as well as documentation of the class work for the day, homework, etc...the kids seemed less thrilled about it than I expected, which tells me my students may not be so blog-minded, even though they are Twitter and FaceBook fanatics. Perhaps this is a new medium for us all.

After reading the Quick Writes, I learned students had a lot more to say about the text. So as I reflect, I'm thinking perhaps they are reading the text so closely, focusing on unusual, symbolic, characters, etc that they are missing the plot. When students are asked to zoom in so closely on very specific aspects of the text, perhaps they fail to zoom out and see the general plot/storyline, which is what the quiz was assessing. Perhaps the macro-micro perspective needs to be discussed in class and students need some direct instruction on how to navigate/negotiate between the two. But how...I appreciate the fact that they are zooming in closely, and I don't want that to be sacrificed for a more general reading, which is more akin to glossing over the text. I'm not sure I can have it both ways here, especially as this is really one of the first times they have been asked to be such critical readers.

Students really enjoyed the Silent Discussion Activity ...I would go on record as saying it was their favorite activity thus far. Carol Lee (at a project design team meeting) pushed my thinking by asking me "Is there an everyday context I can get them to think about, and write about that argument, and then pull it apart...what claim were you making...why did you say...why did you think that

was support for that claim. An everyday argument can be argued in this way”. This got me thinking that this activity could be used to pick up the argument of judgment that I had previously tabled. I knew this could become a gateway activity to elicit this prior knowledge that I hypothesized students had in arguments they had with their parents, teachers, peers, siblings, etc. I looked for quotes that resembled the type of statements provided in The Alchemist Anticipation Guide. I know I’ll have students write arguments of judgment in these groups, as a way to leverage the power of those who get it (at least enough to take a risk and give it a go) with those who are all too ready to give up.

Day #15

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Writing 8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationship among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

-Writing 8.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research.

- a. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new”).

Objective: Identify components of argument (claim, evidence, reasoning, counter-claim) and assemble C-E-R strands, using Silent Discussion Quote Chart

Texts, Materials: Silent Discussion Quote Charts (See Activity D.15.a for completed examples of the charts); notes regarding C-E-R chain (previously given).

Description of Lesson Taught: I launched with a discussion on the difference between a fixed vs. growth mindset, in response to a student who was being pessimistic in regards to the work associated with The Alchemist. This back and forth (engagement in argumentation) provided the segue to the real launch: Well I guess at some point, “You have to be prepared for change.” Silent Discussion

Quote Charts were given back, and students were asked to circle claims (the main claim = quote students responded to); put boxes around the evidence, star the examples of reasoning (which showed how claim and evidence fit together). Students asked about the counter-claim, and I decided to see if they could mark those with a cloud. I explained the task required collaboration and agreement amongst the members, so before anyone could get a marker, they had to meet with me to explain their thinking. Students assembled in small groups, discussing the task, and how to approach it before signaling for to obtain the marker and finish the task.

Assessment: Informal [students explaining rationale before given a marker].

Reflection: Compelling them to discuss first was a great idea, so as not to ruin the fine work they did the day prior on the posters. I also appreciated the comment made by a student at the opening of the lesson that this helped teach students about the difference between a growth mindset and a fixed mindset.

Week 5:

Day #16

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

-Reading Literature 8.10: Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text-complexity band, independently and proficiently.

Objective: Justify claims (statements of fact or opinion written in the journal) with sound and logical textual-based evidenced and reasoning.

Texts, Materials: Quiz; reading journals; *The Alchemist*

Description of Lesson Taught: Students were given time to read next section of *The Alchemist*. They worked in pairs reviewing and discussing assigned reading and filling in pertinent information in their reading journals.

Assessment: Quiz #3

Reflection:

Motivating students to read is something I am really struggling with, and looking over my anecdotal notes, it's not a situation of students being unable to read the text, it's their refusal and/or other responsibilities in the home (i.e. babysitting, cleaning, running errands with their parents, etc) and them settling in the house in the evening to read, and falling asleep because they're tired. Not sure how to solve this dilemma.

Day #17

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Writing 8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

-Writing 8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 on page 52.)

Objective: Finish composing C-E-R chain to solidify your argument of judgment & Begin to compose counter-argument to address the counter-position to your argument of judgment

Description of Lesson Taught: Students spent time, via the writer's workshop, composing their group's C-E-R chains paragraphs, using the poster. I stopped the group work to discuss counter argument, providing them with sentence starter suggestions for counter claim. Finally, students provided feedback to other groups, who presented their arguments of judgment via the author's chair

Technology: 1 to 2 laptops per group

Artifacts: C-E-R argument posters (See Activity D15.a for examples of completed posters)

Assessment: informal anecdotal notes regarding groups' area of instructional opportunity/next steps.

Reflection: I decided to let students work in small groups before launching the mini-lesson, for fear of overwhelming them. Also, I wanted to take the process one step at a time, and my students tend to forget the lesson unless they have the opportunity to practice the skill immediately after it is taught. This is where they can begin work on writing the introduction, now that they see where the body of the essay has led them. Even working in groups, this task is quite the endeavor. I'm pleased that I put the brakes on having them write the argument of judgment individually – they're at a point where they need the scaffolding and collaboration of others to write a well-developed argument of judgment.

Day #18

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Writing 8.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

-Reading Literature 8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

-Reading Literature 8.5 Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

Objective: Use evidence and reasoning to justify claims about The Alchemist.

Description of Lesson Taught: I launched with a sharing-out of entries from the blog, to build interest. I continued with a discussion of The Alchemist, really focusing on citation of evidence. I asked questions to get them to connect to crystal merchant, and lessons learned.

Texts/Materials: reading journals; The Alchemist; C-E-R argument essays

Assessment: Informal (anecdotal notes regarding specific student and their contributions).

Reflection: Lots of evidence and synthesis of thinking; allowing them to wrestle with ideas that I know are not necessarily relevant to the book, but it builds and bridges understanding. They made worthwhile text to world connections, via our guest speakers from the Black History Makers presentation (they spoke of losing

sight of their path, but not of their dream, and shared the lessons learned by accessing these unexpected detours). Also, the students identified the crystal merchant as a possible antagonist, to which I explained that literature affords more in terms of acceptable interpretations, so long as they are supported by valid and sound evidence. Given that I am encouraging students to understand the idea of an antagonist, it's natural to think they would ascribe this quality to the him. It's right for them at this stage of the game; I just need to remember to come back to it and address it as the novel unfolds, where the true antagonist is revealed.

Homework: Read pgs 80-112; reflection journal (students on fall break for a week thus assigned reading is lengthier than usual)

Week 6:

Day #19

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Writing 8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

-Writing 8.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

-Writing 8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 on page 52.)

Objective:

To evaluate the strength of peer writing in terms of the quality and caliber of the introduction (lead and thesis) as a frame for the argument of judgment

Texts/Materials: quiz; argument essay w/ introduction added.

Description of Lesson Taught: Today started with Quiz #4. Afterwards, the groups spent time listening to the introductions written by individuals over the break and working the introductions of individuals into a cohesive effort from the group. Students were explicitly told of the need to synthesize the thinking, rather than simply using the introduction of one person. Afterwards, all groups shared their group introductions.

Reflection: I am not having students build their essays in a traditional sense, or in any manner that I have approached it in the past. Students clapped for each other's introductions, which signals they are really understanding and appreciating the sense of accomplishment that comes with creating an artifact that is rigorous, complex, and well thought out.

In my informal conversations with struggling students, and their subsequent thoughts on the book, I learned that most really like the text, with 1 stating he didn't and two citing they didn't understand the book.

Day #20

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

-Reading Literature 8.10: Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text-complexity band, independently and proficiently

Objective: Justify claims (statements of fact or opinion written in the journal) with sound and logical textual-based evidenced and reasoning.

Texts, Materials: reading journal, The Alchemist

Description of Lesson Taught: Reading journals were handed back complete with comments. We had a group discussion about the term capricious, and how the desert could be seen in this manner [symbolism]. Finally, I explained some religious differences between Christians and Muslims. This lesson was very much structured like a start/stop, in terms of going back to the text and to their journals.

Reflection: They seem to have lost motivation. However, the students are better for the work, and I've learned a lot about expectations and how far to push, and my expectations. I think if I had to do this again, I would have the students read the text beforehand, but not add to their journals. The second exposure could come in the form of them reviewing the text to locate the references they wished to document in their journals. (**In later iterations, this is what I had students do. I was also more select in what pages of the reading journal students would add to at certain points of the text.)

Homework: Annotate "Everything" song lyrics. (Activity D20.a) Write what it means on the left, and explain how it connects to The Alchemist on the right.

This is a gateway activity designed to introduce how to make inter-textual connections to The Alchemist, using multiple texts, in preparation for the students' reading of "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost. The song provides a lot of literal connections, and the work of the lesson revolves around making those connections more evidenced based, through sound reasoning.

Day #21

Common Core Standard Correlation:

- Reading Literature 8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Reading Literature 8.5: Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
- Reading Literature 8.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Objective: Evaluate the strength of connections between two differing texts (intertextuality) that share a common theme & Justify claims (statements of fact or opinion written in the journal) with sound and logical textual-based evidenced and reasoning.

Texts/Materials: reading journal, The Alchemist; song "Everything" (annotated for homework)

Description of Lesson Taught: Students were given time to read the assigned segment of The Alchemist. [the part where Santiago sees a mirage]. Pairs then met and discussed what they had read. An impromptu class discussion ensued about why that was an important event. Students were given time to fill in their reading journals. Afterwards, discussion/reading groups met to discuss their

journals. Finally, we held a brief discussion about the connections between the song "Everything" and the Alchemist.

Assessment: N/A

Reflection: After a quick spot check of the student work samples, I noticed that many of the students did not annotate the song lyric, as directed. Many did not make explicit connections to The Alchemist so I decided to give students an additional day to add to their thinking. Perhaps the mini conversation had in class will generate additional thinking that will make them more successful in completing this task. I am really trying to experiment with different avenues to promote academic success given the fact that many of my student seem to struggle with the more formalized aspects of instruction (i.e. you have to do a lot of work, and most of it has to be written down in order to demonstrate that you learned something).

The mirage portion of the book needed additional context, so I decided to provide different examples that might appeal more to my students...not sure if it worked, but I was pretty sure they had never been to the desert. This is going to be one of those things (i.e. the desert) that ends =up being symbolic, but because of the limited background knowledge students bring, they may need additional support in deciphering its symbolic significance.

Homework: Continue to annotate song "Everything." In addition, Refine your reading journal by reviewing what you've written, editing, adding, and deleting as you see fit. Remember to date any changes made.

Week 7

Day #22

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Writing 8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

-Writing 8.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

Objective: To understand the features of effective conclusions and to compose conclusions which incorporate such features in the argument of judgment.

Texts/Materials: Nancie Atwell: "Lessons That Make Good Writers": Writing Essay Conclusions; Donald Graves quote

Description of Lesson Taught: I launched with a quote by Donald Murray: "The end must connect with the opening. What has been promised must have been delivered. Read the opening to see what closing it implies." Next, I provided multiple examples of how to close an essay (including: admonition or instruction, prediction, strong punched statement, anecdote, pointed question, and echo). I modeled various examples orally, by showing students how the conclusion could have been different if I employed a different strategy. I emphasized several times the conclusion was not the place to repeat what has already been stated. Finally, I gave them several sentence starters, in an effort to help them navigate their own conclusion writing. Students were told to get in their Writing groups, and they wrote the conclusion to their group's argument of judgment. As they wrote, I circulated, assisting groups as needed.

Assessment: Informal, anecdotal notes,

Reflection: Sometimes when you teach, you have to be willing to do a deep dive in just one area. I have found that students really appreciate the opportunity to engage in sustained writing. First of all, the constant starting and stopping disrupts the train of thought. I know many students have trouble starting, but once they start, even the most reluctant student can take off. Working in a group setting, I know there are trade-offs...while working with a group, I know that the other groups will be off-task at times, and I accept that as par for the course. I think of my own productivity, and how I take breaks while working on a sustained activity (e.g. essay writing, grading papers, lesson/unit planning). Taking a step back allows you to feel like a sane human being, but having the time to focus allows you to really connect with your thinking. So many students remark (both this year and in years past) that they appreciate the extra time to work on writing. While conferencing, I am quite pleased; students are really trying to work with these new strategies, and there's some validation that the conclusion, as understood before, was useless, because it stated what they already had said. It seems like there's a renewed sense of purpose and interest in writing conclusions

Day #23

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Writing 8.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

-Writing 8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 on page 52.)

Objective: To revise essay in its entirety to ensure that the reader has a clear and interesting argument of judgment, that is both valid and sound.

Texts, Materials: rough draft essay; argument of judgment

Description of Lesson Taught: based on yesterday's observation, I opted to launch the lesson with another mini foray into the world of conclusion writing. I was trying to marry the needs in the room, balancing the need to address those still having difficulty in finishing their conclusions, with the reality that most groups were at a place to revise and make final edits to their pieces, on the whole. I provided several tips for revision: Take each paragraph one at a time and reread...is it clear? Does it make sense? Look for opportunities to strengthen vocabulary and sentence construction while maintaining integrity of content. Add/remove sentences as necessary. Don't make the reader infer what you are saying. Make sure you are explicit. Use active language, especially in regards to verbs. I entertained a few questions from students before turning them loose in their groups, trying to coach them home.

Assessment: Anecdotal notes regarding group work. Final essays (to be graded).

Reflection: My goal is that the essays were completed by today, and they were. I'm hopeful that students have been able to transfer the instructional moments provided in class, and I wonder if the essays will require much editing, since so many sets of eyes are looking over the document. I know I have to add an additional component of having the students assess each other in the group, in order for me to ascertain which students were working diligently, and which were coasting on the coattails of their peers. I will say that whenever I came upon a group, I observed them really trying to negotiate meaning, and if they were stuck, there was an exchange of ideas, and a discussion of those ideas. Looking at how these students have progressed, it really blows my mind

Day #24 CULTURAL DATA SET

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading informational Text 8.7: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Objective: Provide context about how the discipline of alchemy is part of the philosophical tradition, as well as the scientific tradition. Understand how The Alchemist is a book about transformation.

Texts, Materials: Video Clip: Will Smith Interview with Tavis Smiley (December 13, 2007) via <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M88uMRwsjOU>

This is a part of the cultural data set as well as a gateway activity to introduce the philosophy of alchemy, and Will Smith's connections with The Alchemist. The purpose for using the clip at this point of instruction is to really flesh out the more abstract notion of alchemy, beyond the literal transformation of lead into gold. Using an actor with ties to the African American community will make the message more salient to the students' lives/experience.

Description of Lesson Taught: "We are who we choose to be" quote is written on board. After viewing the clips, students will discuss in small groups the significance of the videos and how they influence/help re-define their understanding of the novel, and the process of alchemy.

Reflection: Students were shown the clip in class, and a whole class discussion followed, asking students to share their emergent understandings of how Will Smith defined alchemy, beyond the literal definition provided in class. In addition, students shared their wonderings, questions and connections related to the clip, in an effort to connect back to the anchor text, The Alchemist.

Day #25

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

-Reading Literature 8.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Objective: To build comprehension through a second exposure to text (via audio), supporting fluency and critical insight (as it relates to reading journals).

Texts/Materials: reading journals, inc. character map of the Alchemist, bio of Paul Coelho (See Activity D25.a)

Description of Lesson Taught: Today, a section of the audio was played in an effort to begin the construction of a character map for The Alchemist. However, the lesson really became a vehicle to justify why a second exposure to the text is necessary in order to engage critical insight and support fluency. Periodically, I stopped the audio, so students could add to their reading journals.

We also read together and discussed the biography of Paul Coelho. The use of this text helps students to do a closer examination of text through the lens of the author's purpose/intention. Also how authors use language and their own experiences to generate ideas for the writing.

Reflection: I know the writing piece has really gained traction, and the exemplars produced by the students are really well done, but at the end of the day, they represent a collaborative effort, and I'm wondering what the transference would be, in terms of their individual writing, as well as what it might suggest about their performance on a district wide writing task, graded by an outside, third party source.

At this point, it seems like I'm trying to promote the benefits of second exposures to the text when my focus should really be on getting students to expose themselves to a text...in other words....READ!

Day #26 Week 8

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

-Reading Literature 8.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Objective: To build comprehension through a second exposure to text, supporting fluency and critical insight (as it relates to reading journals).

Texts/Materials: The Alchemist, reading journal

Description of Lesson Taught: Students were assigned pages to read in the text. After reading, they worked with an assigned partner adding to their reading journal. The partner discussions help build accountability for both students to do the reading and contribute to the discussion.

Homework: Identify strong examples of personification and metaphor (2 of each)...why do you think they are examples of this?

Reflection: Students have made a lot of connections between the text and the biography of Paulo Coelho. Many comments have come in up discussions between partners and in the whole group about the connections they're seeing.

Days #27 – 30

Common Core Standard Correlation:

-Reading Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

-Reading Literature 8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

-Reading Literature 8.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

-Reading Informational Text 8.3: Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

Objective: Continue to examine The Alchemist text through multiple lenses (plot, characters, symbolism, unusual things, etc.). In addition, document information in the appropriate graphic organizer.

Texts/Materials: The Alchemist, reading journal

Description of Lesson Taught: We are working to finish up reading The Alchemist this week. Students were assigned pages to read in the text. After reading, they worked with an assigned partner adding to their reading journal. The partner discussions help build accountability for both students to do the reading and contribute to the discussion. Students worked in their small groups building the plot map events which were most important; rich discussion about what qualifies as an important event. Group discussion followed bringing any questions, aha's, connections, etc. to the forefront for discussion.

Day 29 and 30 we created a class exemplar of the plot events. Lots of rich discussion with students going back to the text and reading; lots of agreeing and disagreeing; good debate (its right here on page 162).

Day #31

Common Core Standard Correlation:

- Reading Literature 8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Reading literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
- Reading literature 8.5: Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
- Reading literature 8.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Objective: Compare and contrast two texts and analyze how the language and structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

Texts/Materials: Poem “The Road Not Taken” (Frost,1916). (See attached Activity D30.a); plot maps

This poem is used at the end of the novel to assess students’ ability to both closely annotate poetry as well as develop inter-textual connections, drawing on symbolic significance. The thematic of a journey is also central to both texts.

Description of Lesson Taught: filling out 2nd column of plot map for The Alchemist: what events had to do with other events. Students worked in their small groups filling in the 2nd column. Students came back as a whole group and added to the class exemplar plot map.

Students were given the poem “The Road Not Taken” and asked to read and annotate independently for 15 minutes.

Day #32

Common Core Standard Correlation:

- Reading Literature 8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- Reading literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
- Reading literature 8.5: Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
- Reading literature 8.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Objective:

Frost poem

This poem is used at the end of the novel to assess students' ability to both closely annotate poetry as well as develop inter-textual connections, drawing on symbolic significance. The thematic of a journey is also central to both texts.

Texts/Materials: annotated poem “The Road Not Taken”; The Alchemist

Description of Lesson Taught: Students were given colored pens for them to document new thinking based on 2nd reading of “The Road Not Taken”. They were asked to record strategies they used to understand the poem (i.e. why did I underline 2 roads; did I look up an unfamiliar vocabulary word?) Students were also asked to make relevant connections to The Alchemist. Group discussion followed with students naming many different strategies they used to understand the poem. The discussion then turned to connections between the poem and The Alchemist.

Days #32 – 35

Final Assessment tasks related to The Alchemist

Directions: Annotate the poem independently for 15 minutes. You may use the dictionary if you like.

Working in groups of five groups of four, share your thinking about the poem with your peers. (2 minutes per student). Each listener must write down a quick note about what was said for each presenter.

Share what someone in your group shared...(from your quick notes)

Answer the following questions:

1. What is being compared in the poem?
2. How does the author use this comparison throughout the poem? List specific examples?
3. What do you notice about the way the poem is organized and written? How does it affect your understanding of the poem?
4. What are possible symbols used in the text? How are they used?
5. Explain how your previous knowledge of these symbols affects the way you interpret what Tupac is trying to convey?

Answer the following questions:

1. What is being compared in the poem?
2. How does the author use this comparison throughout the poem? List specific examples?
3. What do you notice about the way the poem is organized and written? How does it affect your understanding of the poem?
4. What are possible symbols used in the text? How are they used?
5. Explain how your previous knowledge of these symbols affects the way you interpret what Tupac is trying to convey?

THE SUN AND THE MOON

YOUR WAYS R SIMILAR 2 THE RAYS OF THE SUN

WARM 2 MANY BUT 2 STRONG 4 SOME

THE MORE U R NEEDED THE BRIGHTER U SHINE

WATCHED 4 2 LONG AND YOUR BRILLIANCE WILL BIND

THE ~~3~~ OF MORTAL MEN WHO THREATEN U WITH DOOM

THEY REGRET 2 C U SET BUT IT IS TIME 4 THE MOON



The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

Anticipation Guide

Part I Directions: Respond to each of the following statements below. If you agree with the statement, put a plus sign: "+". If you disagree with the statement, put a minus sign: "-". If you are unsure of your belief, put a question mark: "?". If you do not understand the quote, circle the statement. "O"

_____ Everything in our world comes from one source.

_____ All that exists has no beginning and no end.

_____ Being selfish is acceptable, if it helps you achieve your goals and purpose in life.

_____ Ignorance is the only source of evil.

_____ Human-beings have no choices, because everything in life has been pre-determined.

_____ Every person has full knowledge of the ultimate truth contained in his/her soul.

_____ If you disregard the material things in life and believe only in virtue and wisdom, you will achieve freedom and peace.

_____ No man (or woman) does evil voluntarily.

_____ The present moment gives us everything we need in life.

_____ Every person has a soul-mate, one person that is meant for them and only them.

_____ You can achieve any of your dreams if you work hard.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part II Directions: Choose the statement that you feel the strongest about. The statement you select should be the one you understand best. Your task is to write an argument (essay) where you defend your belief.

The statement you select will serve as your claim. In order to defend your claim, you need to provide **at least three** evidence and reasoning chains, which support your claim. Finally, since this is an argument of judgment, there will be people who disagree with you. Therefore, to make your argument stronger, you **MUST** include **at least one** counterclaim, and the evidence and reasoning chain that refutes, or disproves it.

Keep in mind good writers use leads to engage the reader, write organized arguments that are valid and sound, choose words that reflect their grade level, and have interesting conclusions which unify the writing. We will work on all of these elements, so consider this to be a rough draft...you will have the opportunity to receive feedback and produce a final draft.

The focus of this assignment will be to craft strong evidence and reasoning chains that support the claim (belief) you have selected.

Have fun and do your best! Be willing to take a risk! You might surprise yourself!

Name: _____

Date: _____

Graphic Organizer:

The claim I chose is:

To me this claim means:

If I were to rewrite the claim in my own words, I would write:

| | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| Claim: | | |
| Evidence #1: | Evidence #2: | Evidence #3: |
| Reasoning: | Reasoning: | Reasoning: |
| Counterclaim #1: | | |
| Evidence challenging counterclaim: | | |
| Reasoning which proves counterclaim false: | | |

The Story of Narcissus

The story of Narcissus in Greek mythology begins with the story of Echo. Echo was a beautiful nymph who lived in the woods and often accompanied the goddess Artemis on her chase for deer and other wildlife. Echo's downfall was that she loved to talk and one day when goddess Hera was looking for her husband in the woods, Echo tried to stall her by continually speaking with her. When Hera found out that Echo was successful in making sure that Hera didn't catch her husband amusing himself with the other nymphs in the woods, Hera placed a curse on Echo. This curse did not allow Echo to say anything except to repeat what she had heard.

Echo was in the woods one day when she saw Narcissus and immediately felt how much she loved him. Narcissus heard her but could not see her and when he asked, "Who's here?" all Echo could reply was "here." Coming out so Narcissus could see her and return her love, she was shocked when Narcissus rejected her. She fled into the mountains, scorned by him. Narcissus was quite famous for rejecting the many nymphs that wanted to show him love. He was a beautiful young man and had been since he was just a child.

Narcissus was walking in the woods one day when he came by a pond that had water so clear it could have been crystal. The water was free of debris and no one ever came by to disturb the peaceful waters. Narcissus bent down to take a drink from the beautiful pond and saw his own reflection looking back at him. He instantly became mesmerized by it and sat for some time staring into his own beautiful face. He continually tried to reach down and embrace the image that he saw in the water, and he also tried to bend down and kiss the image. As soon as he touched it however, it fled from him. Narcissus became happy just to be able to stare at the beautiful creature and he forgot of all need for food and drink as he sat beside the pond, staring at his own reflection.

Narcissus pined away by the side of the pond and eventually died there. When the elders had prepared a funeral for him and went to gather the body however, it could not be found. But in the exact same place that Narcissus had sat for all that time, grew a beautiful flower that we know today as Narcissus.

Activity D3.b

The Prologue from the book, The Alchemist

The Alchemist picked up a book that someone in the caravan had brought. Leafing through the pages, he found a story about Narcissus. The alchemist knew the legend of Narcissus, a youth who daily knelt beside a lake to contemplate his own beauty. He was so fascinated by himself that, one morning, he fell into the lake and drowned. At the spot where he fell, a flower was born, which was called the narcissus. But this was not how the author of the book ended the story. He said that when Narcissus died, the Goddesses of the Forest appeared and found the lake, which had been freshwater, transformed into a lake of salty tears. "Why do you weep?" the Goddesses asked. "I weep for Narcissus," the lake replied. "Ah, it is no surprise that you weep for Narcissus," they said, "for though we always pursued him in the forest, you alone could contemplate his beauty close at hand." "But.... was Narcissus beautiful?" the lake asked. "Who better than you to know that?" the Goddesses said in wonder, "After all, it was by your banks that he knelt each day to contemplate himself!!" The lake was silent for some time. Finally it said: "I weep for Narcissus, but I never noticed that Narcissus was beautiful. I weep because, each time he knelt beside my banks, I could see, in the depths of his eyes, my own beauty reflected." "What a lovely story," the alchemist thought.

The People Could Fly.

Hamilton, Virginia. "The People Could Fly." *The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales*. New York: Knopf Books for Young Readers, 1985. (1985)

They say the people could fly. Say that long ago in Africa, some of the people knew magic. And they would walk up on the air like climbin' up on a gate. And they flew like blackbirds over the fields. Black, shiny wings flappin' against the blue up there.

Then, many of the people were captured for Slavery. The ones that could fly shed their wings. They couldn't take their wings across the water on slave ships. Too crowded, don't you know.

The folks were full of misery, then. Got sick with the up and down of the sea. So they forgot about flyin' when they could no longer breathe the sweet scent of Africa.

Say the people who could fly kept their power, although they shed their wings. They looked the same as the other people from Africa who had been coming over, who had dark skin. Say you couldn't tell anymore one who could fly from one who couldn't.

One such who could was an old man, call him Toby. And standin' tall, yet afraid, was a young woman who once had wings. Call her Sarah. Now Sarah carried a babe tied to her back. She trembled to be so hard worked and scorned.

The slaves labored in the fields from sunup to sundown. The owner of the slaves callin' himself their Master. Say he was a hard lump of clay. A hard, glinty coal. A hard rock pile, wouldn't be moved. His Overseer on horseback pointed out the slaves who were slowin' down. So the one called Driver cracked his whip over the slow ones to make them move faster. That whip was a slice-open cut of pain. So they did move faster. Had to.

Sarah hoed and chopped the row as the babe on her back slept.

Say the child grew hungry. That babe started up bawling too loud. Sarah couldn't stop to feed it. Couldn't stop to soothe and quiet it down. She let it cry. She didn't want to. She had no heart to croon to it.

"Keep that thing quiet," called the Overseer. He pointed his finger at the babe. The woman scrunched low. The Driver cracked his whip across the babe anyhow. The babe hollered like any hurt child, and the woman fell to the earth.

The old man that was there, Toby, came and helped her to her feet.

"I must go soon," she told him.

"Soon," he said.

Sarah couldn't stand up straight any longer. She was too weak. The sun burned her face. The babe cried and cried, "Pity me, oh, pity me," say it sounded like. Sarah was so sad and starvin', she sat down in the row.

"Get up, you black cow," called the Overseer. He pointed his hand, and the Driver's whip snarled around Sarah's legs. Her sack dress tore into rags. Her legs bled onto the earth. She couldn't get up.

Toby was there where there was no one to help her and the babe.

“Now before it’s too late,” panted Sarah. “Now, Father!”

“Yes, Daughter, the time is come,” Toby answered. Go, as you know how to go!”

He raised his arms, holding them out to her.

“*Kum...yali, kum buba tambe,*” and more magic words, said so quickly, they sounded like whispers and sighs.

The young woman lifted one foot on the air. Then the other. She flew clumsily at first, with the child now held tightly in her arms. Then she felt the magic, the African mystery. Say she rose just as free as a bird. As light as a feather.

The Overseer rode after her, hollerin’. Sarah flew over the fences. She flew over the woods. Tall trees could not snag her. Nor could the Overseer. She flew like an eagle now, until she was gone from sight. No one dared speak about it. Couldn’t believe it. But it was, because they that was there saw that it was.

Another and another fell from the heat. Toby was there. He cried out to the fallen and reached his arms out to them. “*Kum kunka yali, kum...tambe!*” Whispers and sighs. And they too rose on the air. They rode the hot breezes. The ones flyin’ were black and shinin’ sticks, wheelin’ above the head of the Overseer. They crossed the rows, the fields, the fences, the streams, and were away.

“Seize the old man!” cried the Overseer. “I heard him say the magic *words*. Seize him!”

The one callin’ himself Master come runnin’. The Driver got his whip ready to curl around old Toby and tie him up. The slave owner took his hip gun from its place. He meant to kill old black Toby.

But Toby just laughed. Say he threw back his head and said, “Hee, hee! Don’t you know who I am? Don’t you know some of us in this field?” He said it to their faces. “We are ones who fly!” And he sighed the ancient words that were a dark promise. He said them all around to the other in the field under the whip, *...buba yali...buba tambe...*”

There was a great outcryin’. The bent backs straighten up. Old and young who were called slaves and could fly joined hands. Say like they would ring-sing. But they didn’t shuffle in a circle. They didn’t sing. They rose on the air. They flew in a flock that was black against the heavenly blue. Black crows or black shadows. It didn’t matter, they went so high. Way above the plantation, way over the slavery land. Say they flew away to *Free-dom*.

And the old man, old Toby, flew behind them, takin’ care of them. He wasn’t cryin’. He wasn’t laughin’. He was the seer. His faze fell on the plantation where the slave who could not fly waited.

“*Take us with you!*” Their looks spoke it, but they were afraid to shout it. Toby couldn’t take them with him. Hadn’t the time to teach them to fly. They must wait for a chance to run. “Goodie-bye!” the old man called Toby spoke to them, poor souls! And he was flyin’ gone. So they say. The Overseer told it. The one called Master said it was a lie, a trick of the light. The Driver kept his mouth shut.

The slaves who could not fly told about the people who could fly to their children. When they were free. When they sat close before the fire in the free land, they told it. They did so love

firelight and *Free-dom*, and tellin'.

They say that the children of the ones who could not fly told their children. And now, me, I have told it to you.

Elements of Plot Structure: A Glossary of Key Terms

Exposition is the beginning of the story. The exposition introduces the setting and characters. It also establishes the tone for the novel.

- **setting** -- the time and place of the novel
- **characters** -- the people, animals and/or creatures who are part of the story
- **tone** -- The author's **attitude** toward a subject. Some possible attitudes are pessimism, optimism, earnestness, seriousness, bitterness, humorous, and joyful. An author's tone can be revealed through choice of words and details.

Foreshadowing is the use of hints or clues to suggest what will happen later in the story. Not all foreshadowing is obvious. Frequently, future events are merely hinted at through dialogue, description, or the attitudes and reactions of the characters. Foreshadowing builds suspense and makes a narrative more believable.

Rising Action are a series of events that builds from the conflict. It begins with the inciting force (the event that triggers the conflict) and ends with the climax.

Conflicts are problems or complications. There are many types of conflicts, but the most common types of conflict are:

- Man vs. man – two people arguing or fighting
- Man vs. himself – a person who has problems within, such as depression, unresolved anger or love, feelings of rejection, etc.
- Man vs. nature – a person against a natural disaster or Mother Nature, i.e. a storm, blizzard, hurricane, etc.
- Man vs. supernatural – a person against things that are not easily explained or "normal", such as ghosts, evil forces, gods, etc.

Crisis refers to when the conflict reaches a turning point. At this point the opposing forces in the story meet and the conflict becomes most intense. The crisis occurs before or at the same time as the climax.

Climax is the turning point of the story. Frequently, it is the moment of the highest interest and greatest emotion. The climax is the point at which the outcome of the conflict can be predicted.

Falling Action includes events after the climax. These events lead to the resolution and start tying up loose ends.

Resolution (Denouement) is the end of the story where all of the loose ends are tied up for the reader. It concludes the action of the story.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Fiction Map Graphic Organizer:

A. Characters

Main

Minor



B. Setting:

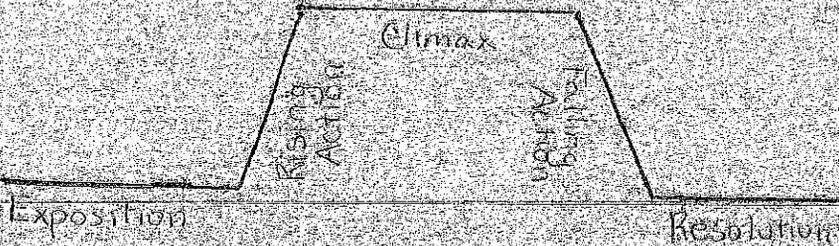
Time:

Place:

C. Plot

Conflict

D. Theme (There may be several in a novel, but think of one that can be defended with a C-E-R chain).



E. Tone & Mood

F. Point of View

Name: _____ Text: _____

Following the Plot

| Action/Event | Page | Order | What does one action/event have to do with another? |
|--------------|------|-------|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Name: _____ Text: _____ Character _____

Following Characters

| Page # | What the text says | Your comments |
|--------|--------------------|---------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Name: _____ Date: _____ Text: _____

Interpreting Symbolism

| What I think is symbolic: Image, event, character, action, object, name, places | What the text says (p. #) | Associations I can make with the image, event, character, action, object, name, or place | What do the words in the text and the associations I make lead me to think about what the symbol means? |
|---|---------------------------|--|--|
| | | | |

BSICS Symbolism Graphic – 8.24.11

Name: _____ **Text:** _____

Unusual things I notice --- description, action, event, object

I paid attention because of the following:

- Very unusual
- Repeated
- In a prominent position (title, beginning, ending, where an important action takes place)
- Pattern
- Something in tension
- Something that seems contradictory

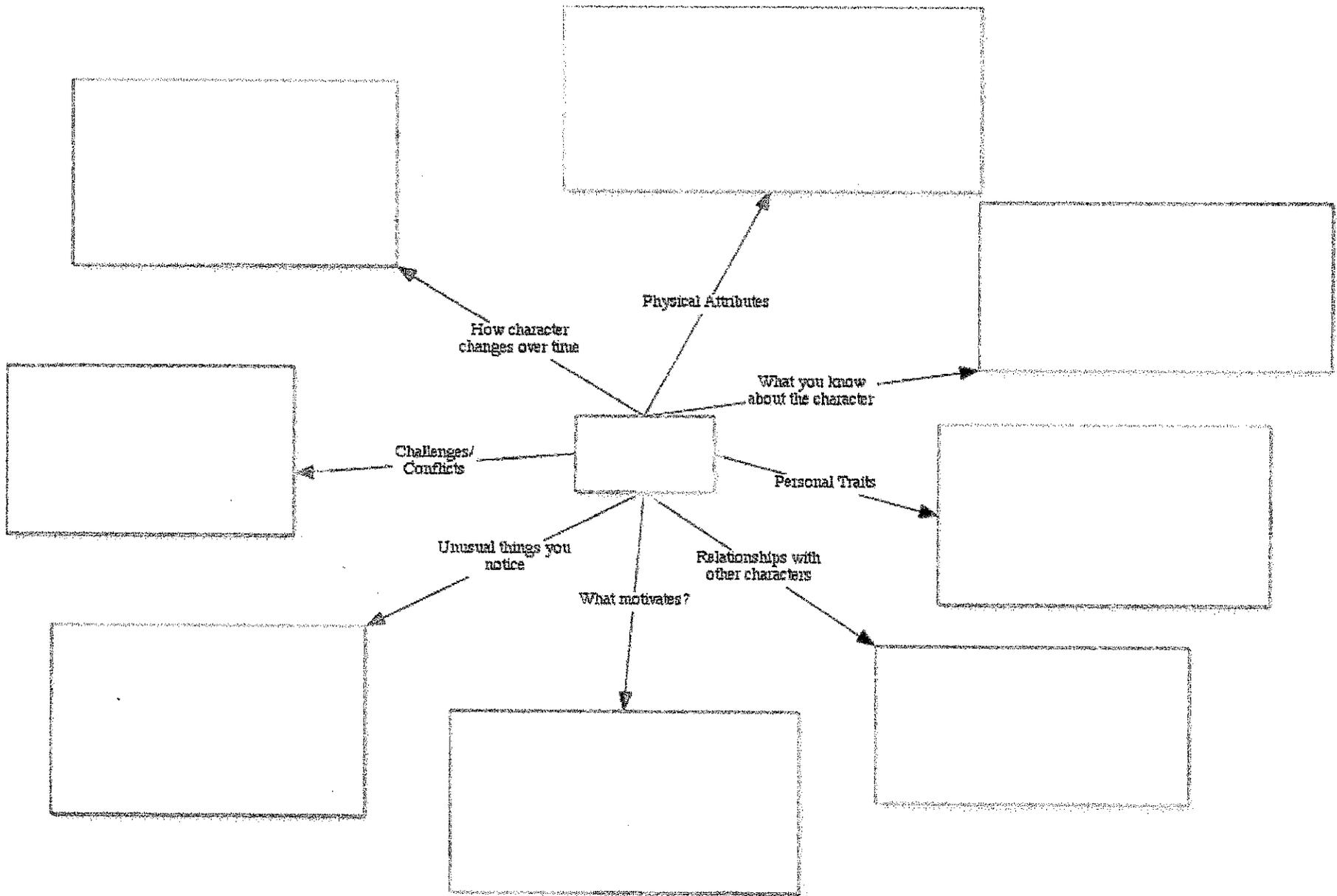
| I noticed | Pg. # | It is | I paid attention because | I think it means |
|-----------|-------|-------|--------------------------|------------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Patterns I Notice:

| The object, event, action, character,description | Where I found it | What I think it means |
|--|------------------|-----------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Name: _____ Text: _____ Character: _____

Character Map



Name: _____ Text: _____ Pages: _____

Date: _____

My Personal Reading Journal

What I like:

What I don't like:

Questions I have:

What I want to know:

What I've learned:

Reading Journal Rubric:

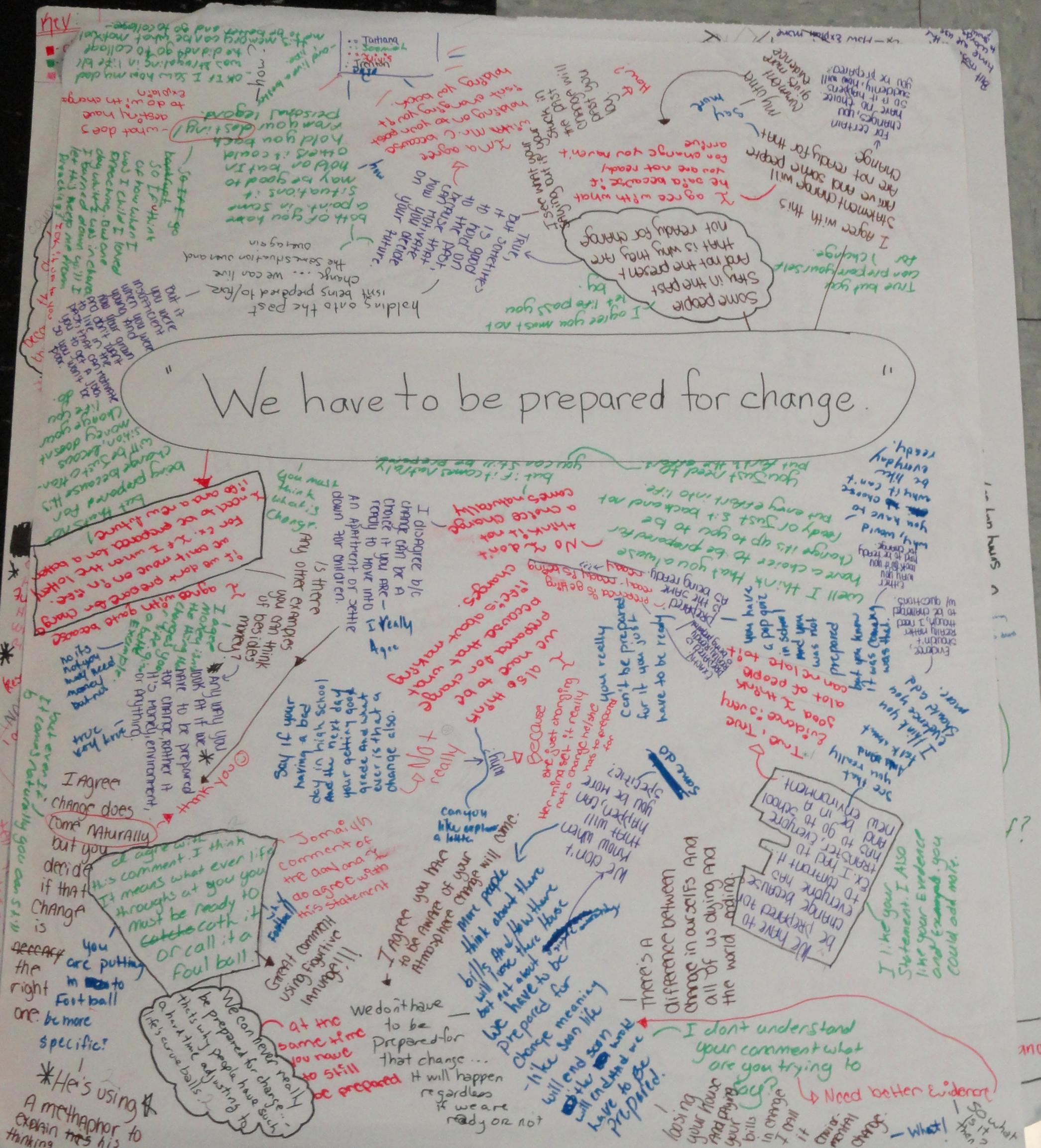
| Category/Points | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Total: |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Following the Plot (Points x 2) | | | | | | |
| Following the Characters (Points x 4) | | | | | | |
| Interpreting Symbolism (Points x 4) | | | | | | |
| Unusual Things (Points x 4) | | | | | | |
| Character Map (Points x 2) | | | | | | |
| Reading Journal (Points x 2) | | | | | | |
| Comprehension Questions (Points x 2) | | | | | | |

CHECK YOUR ESSAY LEAD*

- ___ *Is it inviting?* Is there a voice? Is it lively? Will it engage a reader's interest?
- ___ *Is it clear?* Does the reader immediately understand what specific issue or problem you're going to explore in the essay?
- ___ *Is it true?* Are all your statements factual, accurate, and generally the case, so the rest of your essay can be believable to a reader?
- ___ *Is it focused?* Does it point the direction in which the rest of the essay is headed?
- ___ *Is there an attitude?* Does it sound like you, speaking with conviction about your opinion on the issue?
- ___ *Is there a clearly implied audience?* Do you have a target audience in mind? *Who* are you talking to and trying to convince?
- ___ *Is it long and developed enough?* Is there enough meat here to establish what the problem is and where the essay is going?
- ___ *Is it packed with information?* Have you provided sufficient context, background, evidence, concrete examples, quotes, statistics, *information of some kind*, to make a reader want to continue reading?
- ___ *Is it honest and unexaggerated?* Can the rest of your essay deliver on what the lead is promising?
- ___ *Is the language clear and strong?* Are the words you've chosen and the sentences you've structured straightforward, easy, and inviting? Are the verbs strong?

* Adapted from *Write to Learn* by Donald M. Murray (1999) Fort Worth, TX: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston

"We have to be prepared for change."



hey

How Explain more

- Teaira
- Precious
- Annika
- Xavier

Do you think she should take it despite its opposition?

But still you can try and help them see that they have a problem.

Is this the difference between living in the present (what actually happens) and living in the future for a possible future?

I agree with this because it's like living in a house with a leaky roof. It's not the best cause you have to be able to get out of it before it gets worse.

Agreed because it relates to a person who knows they have a problem but doesn't want to get help for it. Because they believe nothing is wrong.

"You can't help a person who doesn't want help."

I agree with this quote because I want to believe things cause them. I agree with this because I want to believe things cause them. I agree with this because I want to believe things cause them.

"I see the world in terms of what I would like to see happen, not what actually does."

I agree with quote because people often like to believe what they want. And when they do that they forget the truth getting wrapped up in their lie. What the real truth is. Also the quote means the world is what you make it.

changing my thinking now that Mr. C shot me down.!! But people can make alot of them selves by work. What if what we see happen is detrimental to someone else? But having a little of your own thinking can help you along the way also.

Meaning... if someone you care about is about to / or are messing up then see life because they can't see the truth. Then you should do everything you can do to prevent them to stop.

I agree to this quote because imagining what I see makes me more of a happy person. By looking at what I do. Volleys makes me more of an anger person. Because in my world I would want peace and love. and a.

So you will rather pretend to be happy in a messed up world rather than do something about it.

Paying attention to all the negative things in life won't help you be any better than what you are but being in your own world can help you alot in this world.

Now I agree!! The real world you get you to chase your dreams but I still believe you need some of your thinking.

No you can't sometimes things are hard to push away... ex. Poverty of discrimination.

Oh yes I would like to change this world but you need a negative to make a positive. Were in my world I would want peace and love. and a.

I'm not saying focus on the negative. I'm saying change the negative into positive.

What if it is a secret?

Agreed people rather be in a mystery than the light of reality.

Check it out! Now my thinking is different.

silence

“Everything” – song lyrics by Radio Citizen from the album “Berlin Serengeti” (2006)

Solution's gotta find a way
Yes or no...nothing ever dies
Everything that's true will survive
Its just change of form, day to day
Everything...
What's true is bound to stay

Solution's gotta find a way
Yes or no...but nothing ever dies
Everything that's true will survive
Its just change of form, day to day
Everything...
What's true is bound to stay

She who binds herself as joy
Does away, life destroys
She who kisses joy's a fire
Lives in eternity...sunrise

He who binds herself to joy
Does away, life destroys
He who kisses joy's a fire
Lives in eternity...sunrise

There are measureable amounts
of soul in our being
Multiplying every second
Dig it and we're seeing
Even the weak shall find speech
The strong become wise

Solution's gotta find a way
Yes or no...but nothing ever dies
Everything that's true will survive
Its just change of form, day to day
Everything...
What's true is bound to stay

Don't need to be strong or weaker
Just say why not
We're living this safe
We gotta give it all we got

It's 8 o'clock for just a seed
They're playing all these tricks on us and we
wanna say, don't believe but
That's not how it's meant to be.
As we're living plant a seed
To grow the tree of quality
Limiting should be not just a word

There are measureable amounts of
soul in our being
Multiplying every second
Digging and we're seeing
Even the weak shall find speech
The strong become wise

Solution's got to find a way
Yes or no...but nothing ever dies
Everything that's true will survive
Its just change of form, day to day
Everything...
What's true is bound to stay

There are measureable amounts of
Soul in your being
Multiplying every second
Digging and we're seeing
Even the weak shall find speech
The strong become wise

Solution's got to find a way
Yes or no, nothing ever dies
Everything that's true will survive
It's just change of form, day to day
Everything- what's true is bound to stay

Solution's got to find a way
Yes or no, nothing ever dies
Everything that's true will survive
It's just change of form, day to day
Everything- what's true is bound to stay

She who binds herself with joy
doesn't wait life destroy (?)
She who kisses the fire
lives in eternity's sunrise

He who binds himself with joy
Doesn't wait life destroy
He who kisses the fire
Lives in eternity's sunrise

Every measurable amount of soul in our being
Multiplyin every second being that we're seeing
Even the weak shall find speech,
The strong become wise

Solution's got to find a way
Yes or no, nothing ever dies
Everything that's true will survive
It's just change of form, day to day
Everything- what's true is bound to stay

Don't need to be strong or weaker, just say why not
We're livin the same, got to give it all we got
It's late o'clock for just to see
They're playin parlor tricks on us and we
Want to say don't believe
Based on how it's meant to be
As we level plant the seed
Grow the tree, equality
Li-ber-ty should be not just a word

Every measurable amount of soul in our being
Multiplyin every second being that we're seeing
Even the weak shall find speech,
The strong become wise

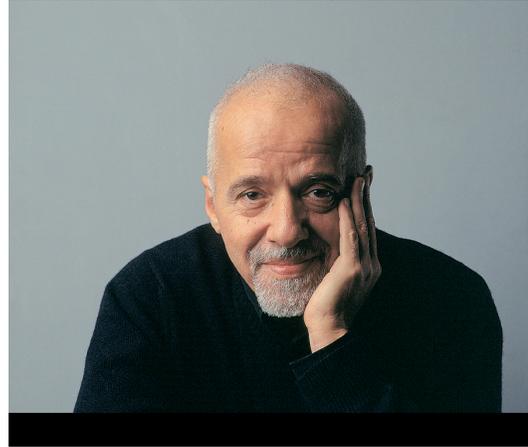
Solution's got to find a way
Yes or no, nothing ever dies
Everything that's true will survive
It's just change of form, day to day
Everything- what's true is bound to stay

Every measurable amount of soul in our being
Multiplyin every second being that we're seeing
Even the weak shall find speech,
The strong become wise..

Paulo Coelho

From Wikipedia:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paulo_Coelho



Biography

Paulo Coelho was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He attended a Jesuit school. As a teenager, Coelho wanted to become a writer.

Upon telling his mother this, she responded with "My dear, your father is an engineer. He's a logical, reasonable man with a very clear vision of the world. Do you actually know what it means to be a writer?" After researching, Coelho concluded that a writer "always wears glasses and never combs his hair" and has a "duty and an obligation never to be understood by his own generation," amongst other things. At 16, Coelho's introversion and opposition to following a traditional path led to his parents committing him to a mental institution from which he escaped three times before being released at the age of 20. Coelho later remarked that "It wasn't that they wanted to hurt me, but they didn't know what to do... They did not do that to destroy me, they did that to save me."

At his parents' wishes, Coelho enrolled in law school and abandoned his dream of becoming a writer. One year later, he dropped out and lived life as a hippie, traveling through South America, North Africa, Mexico, and Europe and becoming immersed in the drug culture of the 1960s. Upon his return to Brazil, Coelho worked as a songwriter, composing lyrics for Elis Regina, Rita Lee, and Brazilian icon Raul Seixas. Composing with Raul led to Paulo being associated with satanism and occultism, due to the content of some songs. In 1974, Coelho was arrested for "subversive" activities by the ruling military government, who had taken power ten years earlier and viewed his lyrics as left-wing and dangerous. Coelho also worked as an actor, journalist, and theatre director before pursuing his writing career.

In 1986, Coelho walked the 500-plus mile Road of Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain, a turning point in his life. On the path, Coelho had a spiritual awakening, which he described autobiographically in *The Pilgrimage*. In an interview, Coelho stated "[In 1986], I was very happy in the things I was doing. I was doing something that gave me food and water – to use the metaphor in "The Alchemist", I was working, I had a person whom I loved, I had money, but I was not fulfilling my dream. My dream was, and still is, to be a writer." Coelho would leave his lucrative career as a songwriter and pursue writing full-time.

Writing career

In 1982 Coelho published his first book, *Hell Archives*, which failed to make any kind of impact.^[7] In 1986 he contributed to the *Practical Manual of Vampirism*, although he later tried to take it off the shelves since he considered it “of bad quality.”^[7] After making the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in 1986, Coelho wrote *The Pilgrimage*. The following year, Coelho wrote *The Alchemist* and published it through a small Brazilian publishing house who made an initial print run of 900 copies and decided not to reprint.^[11] He subsequently found a bigger publishing house, and with the publication of his next book *Brida*, *The Alchemist* became a Brazilian bestseller. *The Alchemist* has gone on to sell more than 65 million copies, becoming one of the best-selling books in history, and has been translated into more than 70 languages, the 71st being Maltese, winning the Guinness World Record for most translated book by a living author.

Since the publication of *The Alchemist*, Coelho has generally written one novel every two years including *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept*, *The Fifth Mountain*, *Veronika Decides to Die*, *The Devil and Miss Prym*, *Eleven Minutes*, *Like the Flowing River*, *The Valkyries* and *The Witch of Portobello*. This dates back to *The Pilgrimage*: While trying to overcome his procrastination of launching his writing career, Coelho said, "If I see a white feather today, that is a sign that God is giving me that I have to write a new book." Coelho found a white feather in the window of a shop, and began writing that day.

In total, Coelho has published 30 books. Two of them – *The Pilgrimage* and *The Valkyries* – are autobiographical, while the majority of the rest are fictional, although rooted in his life experiences.^[5] Others, like *Maktub* and *The Manual of the Warrior of Light*, are collections of essays, newspaper columns, or selected teachings. In total, Coelho has sold more than 100 million books in over 150 countries worldwide, and his works have been translated into 71 languages. He is the all-time bestselling Portuguese language author.

Currently, Coelho publishes short stories for Ode Magazine. Every issue devotes a page to Coelho for his writing pleasure. Coelho is also writing at his own blog three times a week.

Adaptations

Several of Coelho's books have been adapted into other media.

In 1998, TV Manchete made a 52-episode miniseries based on *Brida*. This adaptation was written by Jayme Camargo, Sônia Mota and Agélica Lopes, and directed by *Walter Avancini*. The Brazilian actress *Carolina Kasting* played *Brida*. It was the last novel filmed by TV Manchete. It was an audience failure and this adaptation was even reproved by Paulo Coelho himself. Due to the lack of sponsors, it had a premature ending: the last scenes were not recorded, being replaced by screenshots with narrations.

In 2004, Warner Bros. bought the rights to the film adaptation of *The Alchemist*. The project stalled and never materialized. However, his book *Veronika Decides to Die* was made into a film released in 2009

File sharing

Paulo Coelho is a strong advocate of spreading his books through peer-to-peer file sharing networks. A fan posted a Russian translation of one of his novels online. Sales of his book jumped from 3,000 to one million in three years, with no additional promotion or publicity from his publishers. Coelho took to pirating his own books on The Pirate Bay. Coelho provides free translations of many of his books. The head of HarperCollins, Jane Friedman, who noticed that one of the unauthorized versions Coelho linked to had notes from his own manuscript, caught him. The two reached a compromise: each month a new novel can be read for free on the publisher's website. Due to the openness regarding his content, author Jeff Jarvis named Coelho 'the Googliest author' in his book *What Would Google Do*.

Personal life

Coelho and his wife Christina Oiticica split their time between Europe and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.^[22] He is a Roman Catholic and although he attends Mass, he disagrees with the Pope on several issues both political and social.

In 1996, Coelho founded the Paulo Coelho Institute, which provides aid to children and elderly people with financial problems. In September 2007, Coelho was named a Messenger of Peace to the UN.

- **Member of the Board of the Shimon Peres Center for Peace**
- **UNESCO special counsellor for “Intercultural Dialogues and Spiritual Convergences”**
- **Board Member of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship**
- **Member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters**
- **Member of INI International Advisory Council – HARVARD INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATION INITIATIVE**
- **Member of the Board, Doha Center of Media Freedom**

On May 9, 2006, in Sofia, Bulgaria, Paulo Coelho was awarded by the President of Bulgaria Georgi Parvanov the "The Honorable Award of the President of the Republic".

“The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost (1916)

**Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth.**

**Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same.**

**And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.**

**I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.**