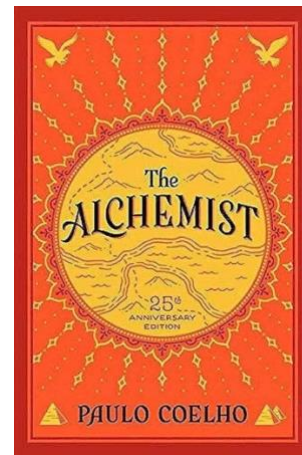


Comparative World Literature Summer Reading

READING MATERIAL

For your summer project, you will need to read *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho. The story follows the adventures of Santiago, a young Andalusian shepherd, who leaves his home and sheep behind to travel the world. Throughout his adventures, he meets new friends and gains new knowledge which help him on his quest to discover a hidden treasure.



The book should be available where all books are sold as well as in the iBooks Store. Students may purchase a physical copy (recommended) or a digital copy of the book based on their personal reading preferences. An audiobook of the novel should also be available for purchase if students would like to listen as well as read.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER and ANNOTATION GUIDE

While you are reading the story, search for plot elements, characters, and themes which may be related to the following questions:

1. What is a rite of passage? What is a coming of age story?
2. How can an individual gain knowledge and wisdom from traveling to new places?
3. What is knowledge? What is wisdom? Are they the same?
4. How do human beings understand themselves within the context of a larger world and universe?
5. How do love and companionship provide meaning to human experience?
6. What is alchemy? How is alchemy both literal and figurative in the story?

Please highlight and label at least eight passages in the book which relate to one of the above questions. You can simply write quick labels like 'alchemy' or 'coming of age' or 'wisdom.' You do not need to write extensive, detailed notes. We will talk about all these ideas during the first two weeks of school, so you do not need to be an expert. Highlight and label what seems important to you. Annotations will be a completion grade rather than an accuracy grade.

Annotations will be checked the first week of school. A quiz on the major plot elements of the book and an analysis writing assignment will take place in class during the first two weeks of school. We will also complete a creative activity in class about our personal legends.

I hope you enjoy reading! If you have any pressing questions, you can e-mail me over the summer. Please be patient as responses may take several days. My e-mail is awilliams@stjohnschs.org.

You may also e-mail the English Department Chair, Mr. Pete Thomas, with any general questions. His e-mail is pthomas@stjohnschs.org.

Have a nice summer!

-- Miss Williams ☺