

Dead Poets Society





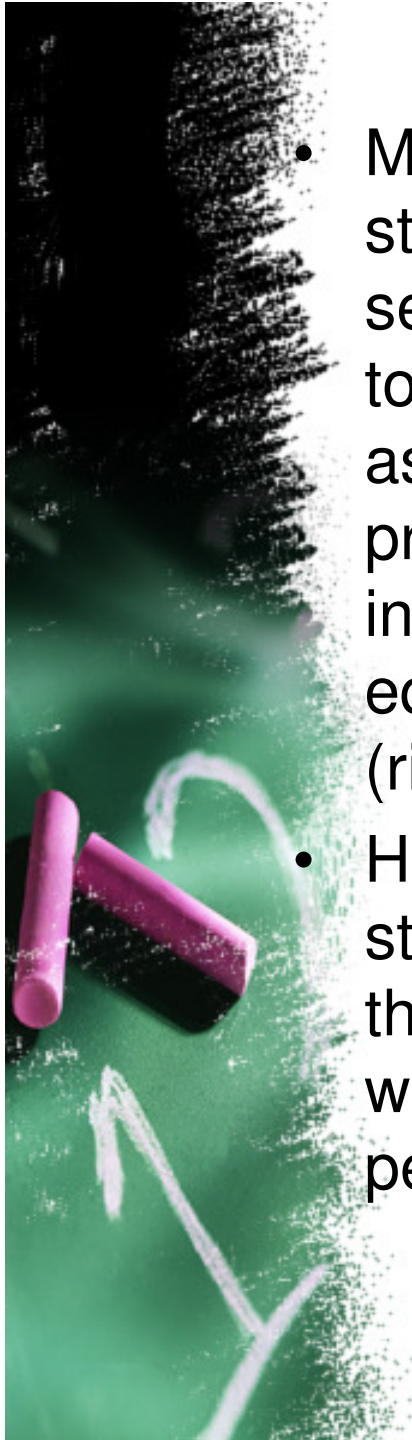
Summary

- **Time:**
 - Late 80s
- **School:**
 - Welton Academy Prep School
- **Motto of the school:**

“Tradition, Honour, Discipline and Excellence.”
- **Protagonists:**
 - Mr. Keating (A teacher teaching poetry and literature), Neil (A gifted boy under heavy parental control to study Medicine in college)

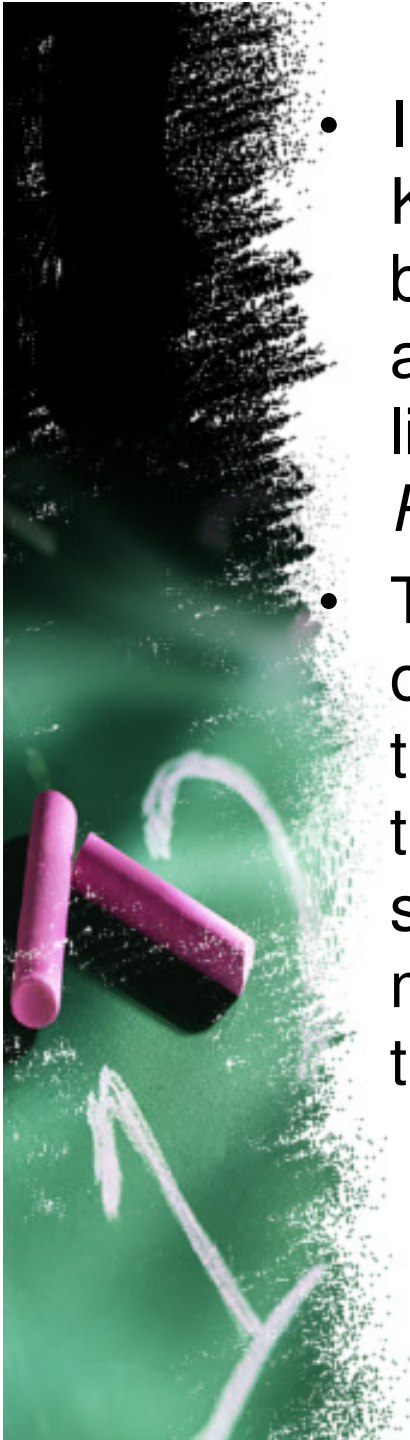


- **Welton:**
 - A traditional high school which parents send their child there for the preparation of entering the best college in the town.
- **Mr. Keating:**
 - The new English teacher who practices unorthodox pedagogy to teach poetry and literature.
 - He introduced the idea of “**Carpe Diem**” to a senior class.
 - “Carpe Diem, seize the day, boys, make your lives extraordinary” – quotation from Mr. Keating.



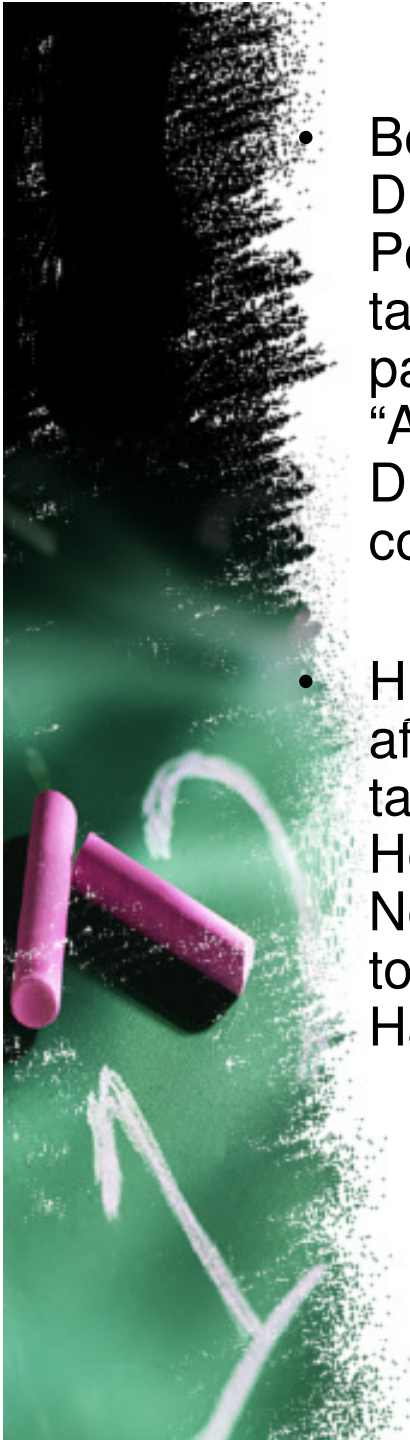
- Mr. Keating asks the students to rip off the section “Introduction to Poetry” in the book as that book prescribing literature in mathematical equations. (ridiculous)
- He also asks the student to stand up on the table: to see the world from different perspectives.





- Inspired by Mr. Keating, a group of boys has organized an underground literary club, *Dead Poems Society*.
- They meet each other in a cave under the school grounds, they read out poems, sing, and play musical instruments there.



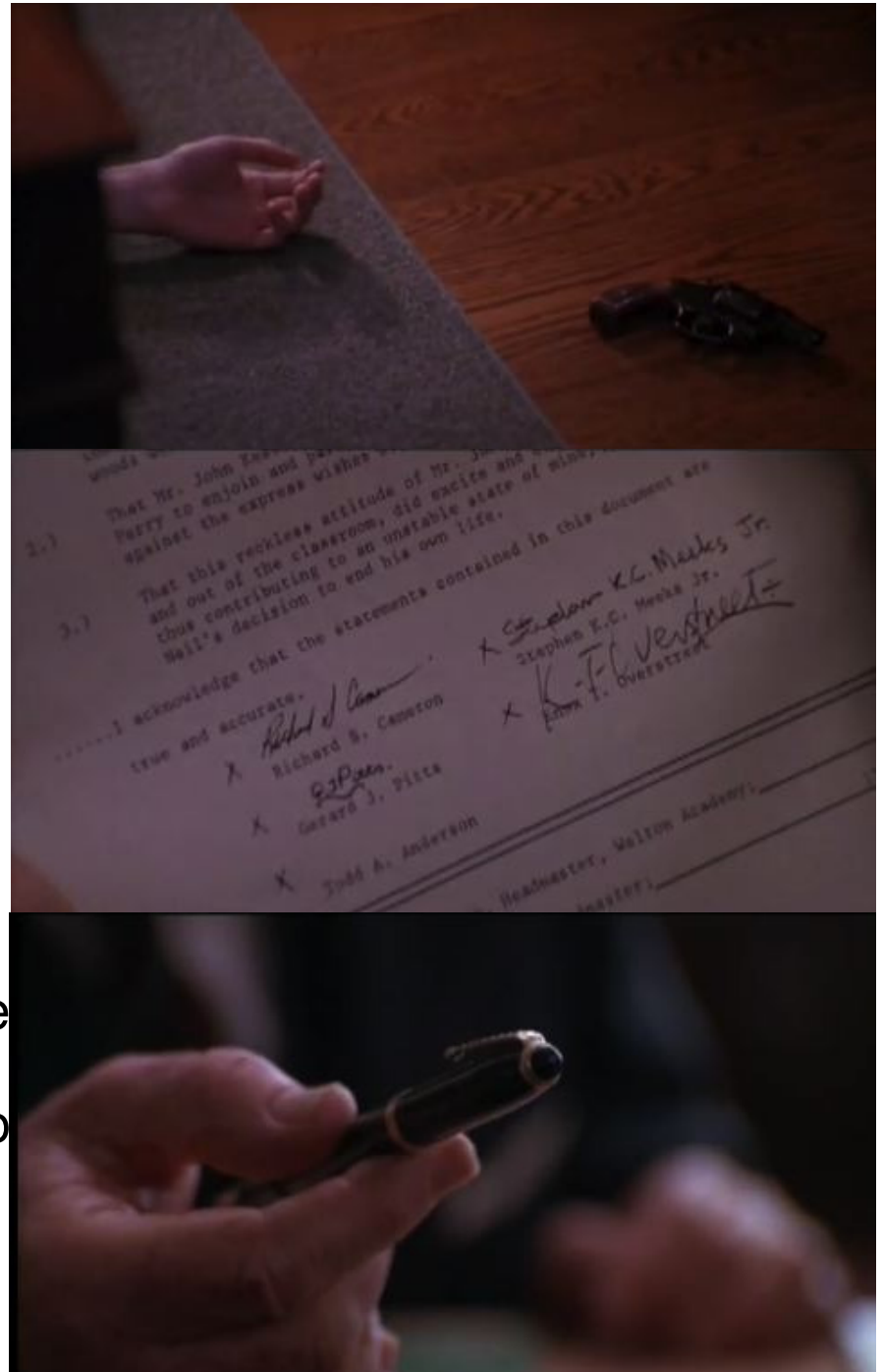


- Because of “Carpe Diem” and the “Dead Poets Society”. Neil takes the courage to participate in a drama “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”, without the consent of his father.
- His father is furious after knowing Neil has taken part in the drama. He intends to enroll Neil to a military school to prepare him for Harvard University.





- Because of unable to cope with the future, and make his father understands his feeling, Neil(won't spoil the ending).
- The headmaster of the school launches an investigation by the request of Neil's parents.
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- The headmaster forces the members of the society to sign a document blaming Mr. Keating for abusing his authority, encouraging the student to start the club, as well as teaching Neil to go against his parents.
- They all signed.



- Keating is fired after all the boys have signed on the document.
- Before he leaves, the student taught by Mr. Keating use a special way to farewell their teacher.



CHARACTER ANALYSIS
AND
THE PHILOSOPHICAL STANCES



Major characters



- Teacher
- The boys' source of inspiration and encouragement.
- Makes poetry "drip from [their] tongues like honey," using it as a medium to encourage his charges to strive for excellence and individuality.
- introduces his students the phrase, *Carpe diem*, a Latin expression that translates as 'Seize the day'.
- His teaching methodology is highly unconventional and conflicts with Welton's four pillars: "Tradition, Honour, Discipline, Excellence".
- Dismissed from his position at the end of the film, charged with causing Neil Perry to commit suicide.



Major characters



- A confident and popular student who excels in his studies.
- Well-liked by both his peers and teachers and is a natural leader.
- Inspired by his passionate English teacher, Mr. Keating, he reestablishes the 'Dead Poets Society'. This shows that he is prepared to challenge the school's authority.
- Neil's aspirations to become an actor are snuffed by his controlling father who refuses to give Neil any choice about his future. As a result, he commits suicide at the end of the film.



Major characters



- **Mr. Perry**
- Neil's paternalistic and dominating father.
- He is determined that Neil will finish school at Welton and study medicine.
- To this end, he ensures that Neil is focussed and not distracted by unnecessary extra-curricular activities such as the school magazine.
- Mr. Perry's refusal to support Neil's acting aspirations ultimately leads to Neil's death.



Major characters



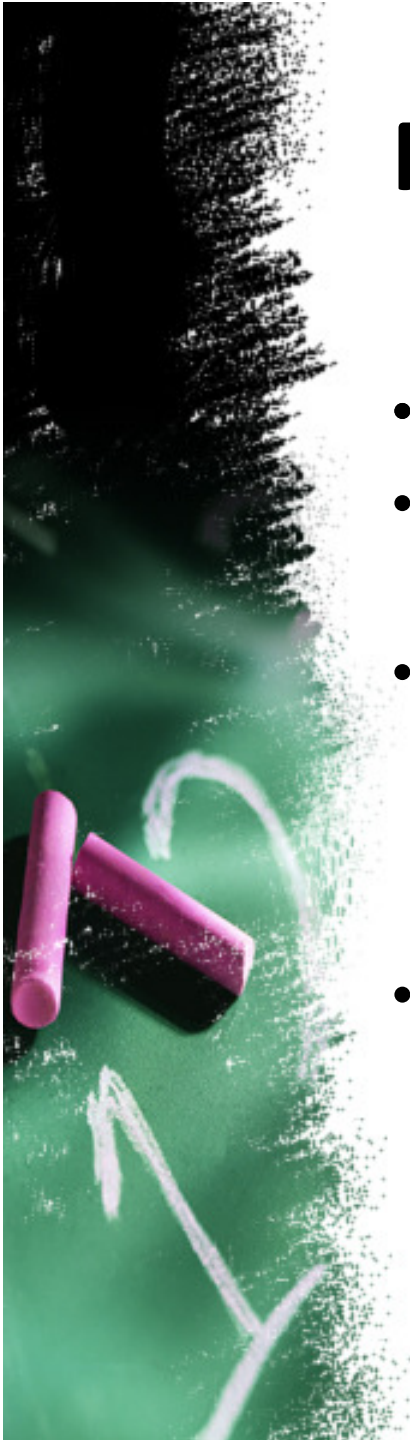
- **Charlie Dalton**
- Rebellious, recalcitrant and reckless, attention-seeking
- The most extraverted and daring of Welton's students.
- He resists the authority of the school and is ultimately expelled for refusing to sign the document condemning Mr Keating.
- Though he admires and respects Mr Keating, he takes Keating's principles too far and takes several imprudent risks.



Major characters



- **Richard Cameron**
- Conforms totally with both the school's and his parents' expectations.
- To succeed academically and win the favour of his teachers, he is very compliant and is prepared to betray his friends in order to further his own interests.
- Cameron is responsible for the dismissal of Mr Keating as he selfishly accuses Keating of encouraging Neil to commit suicide



Major characters



- **Mr. Nolan**
- Stagnant old man
- Wanted total control
- Never thinks of the students themselves but spoon fed them the norm of the society





Go for our
dreams?

Be
practical?



- It's never appropriate to go to extreme on the neither side.
- Parents and teachers should reassess the purpose of education: to develop every individual into their fullest potential, intellectually and morally.
- Always strive our balance between achieving good academic result and giving freedom of choice.
- Major premise: balancing between study and interest (compromise can be made.)
- Nurturing our next generation with freedom, bringing a less pressurized society for them.