

Dead Poets Society Study Guide

Words that are **bold** are impolite and should not be used most of the time.

Words that are **underlined> and **bold** are very impolite and should generally not be used.**

For help, go to www.urbandictionary.com or <http://en.wiktionary.org> or check the idiom dictionaries.

Time	Word or phrase	Meaning
0:02:53	Four Pillars	the four foundational principles or ideas for the school
0:03:17	Ivy League	Eight of the oldest and most important universities in the USA are all in the Northeast and are formed into something called the Ivy League. The name was originally used for sports, but now also refers generally to these schools (Harvard, Yale, Princeton, etc.) and also refers to social elitism.
0:03:35	preparatory school	A private high school with high academic standards that specifically prepares its students to go to a top university. Sometimes called a "prep" school.
0:03:58	honors graduate	a person who graduates with high grades
0:04:42	You have some big shoes to fill.	You are expected to follow the example of someone who has gone before you that reached a very high level of achievement.
0:05:05	chin up	raise your chin to show how proud you are
0:05:39	vaporizer	a machine that slowly boils water to increase the humidity in a room
0:05:50	business as usual	let's continue doing things as we have done them in the past
0:05:53	Looks like a stiff!	He has so little activity or facial expression that he looks dead.
0:06:06	He's born with his foot in his mouth.	Having your foot in your mouth means saying the wrong or impolite thing by accident.
0:06:10	you did summer school	In America, summer school is usually considered a punishment by students who would rather be free but are forced to take it

		because they failed one of their courses. Neil took it in order to get ahead and increase his chances of being admitted to a top university.
0:06:17	How's your summer, slick?	How was your summer vacation, my friend? 'Slick' is a slang nickname for anyone with whom you are familiar, although there is no connection to their actual name.
0:06:18	keen	here it means very good, but it also has other meanings, such as eager to do something
0:06:37	excrement	shit
0:06:35	Meeks aced Latin.	Meeks got an 'A', which is called an ace in playing cards ♠♣♥♦. To ace something means to do it very well.
0:06:36	didn't quite flunk	sarcasm that means he did not fail; he did very well
0:06:43	What's his specialty, bootlicking?	What's he best at, flattering others and pretending to admire people?
0:07:08	Valedictorian	the top student in the high school graduating class
0:07:08	National Merit Scholar	a prestigious, nationwide scholarship competition started in 1955
0:07:09	Hell-ton	A pun on the name of the school since Wel and Hell are almost the same and Hell is a terrible place.
0:07:16	trig	short for trigonometry, a high-level math class
0:07:34	extracurricular activities	things outside of the normal academic classes, things like sports, drama, or working on the yearbook
0:07:39	drop the school annual	Stop participating in the production of a yearly book with pictures and information about the school, its students, and their

		accomplishments. The annual can also be called the yearbook.
0:08:06	you can do as you damn well please	an emphatic way to say that you can do whatever you want
0:08:42	tell him off	abruptly and urgently tell him that you do not agree
0:08:55	Jesus	people often use this name to express frustration or surprise, although it's disrespectful according to Christianity because Jesus (Yeshu) is the most important person in that religion.
0:09:00	I wouldn't lose too much sleep over it.	A suggestion that he shouldn't worry about it very much. Just forget about it.
0:09:16	pal	friend
0:09:58	phalanx of pubescence	This is not a common expression at all, in fact it's quite strange, but it means a closely arranged group of young people whose sexual glands are beginning to become active that are moving like soldiers on the march.
0:10:14	<i>agricolam</i> , etc.	The boys are in Latin class so these are not English.
0:11:01	spaz	Short for spastic, it's a kind of mild insult used for people who are clumsy or often make mistakes in sports or physical tasks. Here it's used as a nickname for a boy who is physically weak. In America, this is not considered an insult, but in Europe it is.
0:12:16	Not a clue?	Don't you know?
0:12:31	Now, let me dispel a few rumors so they don't fester into facts.	Let me clear up some things people have said before they become ugly and get accepted as the truth.

0:12:42	I was the intellectual equivalent of a 98-pound weakling.	A 98-pound weakling is an expression that means a man who is physically very weak, so Keating is saying he didn't used to be as smart in the past as he is now.
0:12:45	I would go to the beach, and people would kick copies of Byron in my face.	Keating is making a clever joke based on an old, popular cartoon advertisement for a gym about a weak man being bullied at the beach and having sand kicked into his face by a stronger man. After being humiliated, the smaller man went to the gym, became stronger, and returned to the beach to fight the bully and regain his pride. Keating places this old idea within the context of English literature using a famous poet named Byron.
0:12:58	That's a rather unfortunate name.	Keating is referring to the name of "Mr. Pitts" because the pit is the part of the fruit that nobody wants. A common expression is "That's the pits!" which means that is something bad that no one wants.
0:13:05	open your hymnal	Keating is making a joke, comparing the literature textbook to the Christian song book, called a hymnal, which could mean Keating considers the literature textbook to be sacred in his class.
0:13:58	No! Ding! Thank you for playing.	Keating is making a joke about American TV game shows and repeating what the hosts of these shows would say to the contestants when they make a mistake.
0:14:08	lads	boys
0:14:40	hormones	biological compounds produced by the glands of the body that increase the speed of chemical reactions within cells and trigger the growth of different parts of the body according to age and

		gender
0:14:41	The world is their oyster.	A common expression that refers to the fact oysters can contain pearls and if the world is yours, it may give you treasure of some kind.
0:16:07	spooky	strange and a little bit frightening
0:16:19	Hustle up in here.	Go faster in here.
0:16:32	alums	short for alumnus, which is a Latin word meaning a former male student of a school, college, or university
0:16:33	How'd you swing that?	How did you manage to arrange that?
0:16:38	Hell-ton hash	some kind of mixture of food from Welton Academy that has been chopped up into smaller pieces, usually a difficult to recognize mixture of low quality beef, potatoes, and other vegetables.
0:16:50	suit yourself	do as you please
0:18:35	the spitting image of his father	he looks just like his father
0:18:38	He just did a big case for GM.	He is a lawyer and recently went to court to argue an important case for his client, General Motors, the largest corporation in the world.
0:18:56	You've been hogging it all day.	You've been using it only for yourself all day.
0:19:28	That guy could eat a football.	He's so big, strong, and aggressive that he could destroy anything that he felt like.
0:19:32	Pittsie	a nickname for the boy named Pitts

0:19:34	jerk	an unlikable person
0:20:37	How artfully has the objective of the poem been rendered?	How skillfully has the purpose of the poem been achieved through writing?
0:21:55	American Bandstand	It was an American musical variety show that was shown on TV from 1952 to 1989. Popular singers would appear on the show as young people danced in the audience.
0:23:34	casualties	injuries from battle
0:24:18	huddle up	an expression from American football, it means to gather around the leader in a circle so he may speak to you without the other team hearing what is said
0:26:17	Rembrandts, Shakespeares or Mozarts	Famous artists: a painter, write, and musician.
0:26:28	I never pegged you as a cynic.	I never considered you as a person who always finds fault with other and thinks people only act in their own selfish interests.
0:26:34	realist	a person who accepts reality as it is without confusing it with hopes and dreams
0:26:48	'Twas always thus, and always thus will be.	It was always this way and will always be this way.
0:27:03	Cambridge bound.	Planning on going to Cambridge University in England.
0:27:06	thigh man	the part of a woman's body he most admires is the upper leg
0:27:10	Man Most Likely To	It's a tradition in the USA in these yearbooks to make guesses about the futures of some of the more popular students. One of

	Do Anything	the labels usually given is "Most Likely to Succeed."
0:27:14	Mr. K. was a hell-raiser.	Mr. Keating liked to have fun and wasn't afraid to get into trouble.
0:27:49	Stanley "The Tool" Wilson	"The Tool" was his nickname, probably referring to his genitals.
0:28:16	sucking the marrow out of life	The marrow is the soft, bloody center of the bones that is very nutritious. This is a variation on the expression of sucking the marrow out of the bones, which means getting everything useful and good.
0:28:26	old Indian cave	no special meaning, just a name for a place
0:28:28	the biggies	the big ones; the most important and powerful ones
0:28:44	a Greek organization	a fraternity, a group of males in high school or college who form an exclusive social club and might also live together in the same house
0:29:02	stroll down amnesia lane	another joke by Keating who changed the normal phrase, "stroll down memory lane" that means to fondly remember the past, because Keating may prefer to forget some of these things
0:29:30	demerits	a mark against a person for misconduct or failure; usually given in school or armed forces
0:29:36	No shit , Sherlock.	a sarcastic comment that means it was something already known to everyone. Sherlock was a fictitious character in some famous detective novels who always knew everything.
0:30:27	It's got to be on the banks.	It's got to be on the place where land meets the water of a river, creek, or stream.
0:31:03	Gosh	an exclamation of surprise or frustration used instead of God,

		which is against the rules of Christianity
0:31:58	Cut out that racket in there!	Stop making so much noise in there!
0:35:05	Welton Chapter.	Kind of a little joke making the Dead Poets seem like a large organization with multiple chapters or branches (groups).
0:35:07	new initiates	people who have recently been initiated into the organization
0:35:15	keep minutes of the meetings	record what is said and what happens, minute by minute during the meetings
0:35:25	I'll second that.	A formal statement used in the protocol of official meetings to mean that you approve of someone's suggestion.
0:35:28	to put to rout	to defeat
0:35:40	dig deep	search deep into your pockets for food in this case, but usually for money
0:35:51	bumming my smokes	borrowing my cigarettes
0:36:10	jigsaw puzzle	a game of fitting together small, oddly shaped pieces of thick and stiff paper in order to reassemble the original picture they came from
0:37:08	got his goat	to irritate someone in a way that most people can not do; to push someone's buttons
0:38:47	Congo	a large river in Western Africa that was the subject of many famous stories and legends and considered very dangerous and mysterious until recently
0:39:47	twerp	a small insult meaning a person who is disliked
0:39:59	Are you a man or an	Keating is again making a joke because the usual expression is,

	amoeba?	“Are you a man or a mouse?” An amoeba is a tiny, one-celled organism.
0:40:09	to woo women	to speak to women in such a way as to cause them to like you
0:40:19	root canal work	a kind of work that a dentist performs which is usually painful for the patient and can take a long time to finish
0:40:45	Marlon Brando and John Wayne	both are famous American actors who are now dead
0:41:00	three-course meal	a large meal where three main dishes are served in sequence
0:41:08	canine crudités, Fido flambé, and Pekingese parfait	Keating jokes about different styles of cooking special dishes. Canine means dog and Fido is a stereotypical name for a dog in America.
0:41:59	you must strive to find your own voice	work to find a way to express your own, unique identity
0:42:15	Don't just walk off the edge like lemmings.	lemmings are a small, simple animal but the word is used symbolically to mean a person who blindly follows whatever the person ahead of him is doing
0:42:41	bon chance	French expression that means good luck
0:43:20	Radio Free America	Radio Free Europe is a US government program to provide information to people within the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, so the boys are making a joke about finally having a way to get information for themselves and also listen to music.
0:44:04	open tryouts	anyone can try and get a place on the team, or in this case, in the play

0:44:17	summer stock auditions	summer stock are small plays organized within a community given on summer evenings in the park, usually free to watch
0:45:30	means shit to you	means nothing to you
0:45:36	being stirred up by things	being excited by things
0:46:02	you can just butt out	you can mind your own business and don't interfere in my life
0:48:25	devotees	people who are devoted to something; people who love something
0:48:43	Meeks, time to inherit the earth.	There's a Bible verse from Christianity that says the meek will inherit the Earth, so Mr. Keating is making a joke.
0:50:00	Puck	the name of a character from the play <i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i> by William Shakespeare
0:53:30	barbaric	uncivilized
0:54:37	gibberish	talking that is impossible to understand
0:58:46	Knoxious	a pun on Knox Overstreet's name that sounds like the word noxious, which is used to describe something dangerous to your physical health
0:59:20	goddamn it	1) I don't care about the consequences 2) a curse against someone
1:04:48	unmanned	without a pilot
1:05:33	pledge class	for certain social groups in the USA, you must apply for membership and pledge or promise something in order to join
1:10:16	feeling up	touching someone through their clothes in a sexual way

1:10:58	hi-fi system	Stereo equipment for playing music. Hi-fi is short for high fidelity.
1:11:25	beating off	masturbating
1:11:29	proofer	someone who does a final check for mistakes before printing
1:11:30	I slipped the article in.	I stealthily placed the article in the paper without anyone seeing.
1:12:45	ferreting out	looking for; a ferret is a rodent that is good at finding things
1:16:08	reprimand	punishment
1:16:35	Not on your life!	I won't allow it!
1:17:05	That was a pretty lame stunt you pulled today.	That was a very stupid thing you did today.
1:17:40	Got it, ace?	Understand? Ace is usually a very successful person, but Keating is being sarcastic.
1:17:42	Aye, aye, Captain.	Sailors in the Navy are trained to speak this way to show respect and obedience to their superiors.
1:17:45	Keep your head about you.	Don't do anything foolish.
1:21:13	It's part of the monastic oath.	A joke by Keating. He's comparing himself to a monk who must take an oath or promise of obedience and poverty.
1:22:35	indentured servant	someone who has made a contract to be a servant for several years in exchange for learning a trade
1:28:35	I'll bow out	I'll give up and stop trying to get your attention
1:48:42	We're all fried.	We're in big trouble.
1:48:44	fink	traitor
1:48:58	let this thing just blow	let this pass without taking action

	over	
1:49:02	scapegoat	someone punished wrongly for the mistakes of others
1:49:41	he's a rat	he's a traitor; he can not be trusted
1:49:42	he's in it up to his eyes	he's very deeply involved
1:50:24	cozied up in his room	sitting comfortably, warmly in his room
1:50:34	let Keating fry	allow Keating to be punished