**Answer NO-01**

Paulo Coelho represents Santiago’s quest for personal legend in his novel “The Alchemist”.

“The Alchemist” is a [novel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Novel). It’s [allegorical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegorical) novel. It was written by Brazilian author [Paulo Coelho](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paulo_Coelho). It was first published in 1988. Originally it was written in [Portuguese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portuguese_language). It became a widely translated international bestseller. It is combining magic, mysticism, wisdom and wonder into an inspiring tale of self-discovery. It has become a modern classic. It’s a global phenomenon. It has been read and loved by over 62 million readers. It is selling millions of copies around the world and transforming the lives of countless readers across generations. Its main theme is about finding one's [destiny](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Destiny). It’s although according to “[The New York Times](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_New_York_Times)”. It was first released by Rocco. What’s an obscure Brazilian publishing house. Despite its having sold "well," the publisher after a year decided to give Coelho back the rights. Needing to "heal" himself from this setback, Coelho set out to leave Rio de Janeiro with his wife and spent 40 days in the [Mojave Desert](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mojave_Desert). Returning from the excursion, Coelho decided he had to keep on struggling. and was "so convinced it was a great book that he started knocking on doors."

Coelho wrote ‘The Alchemist’ in only two weeks in 1987. He explained that he was able to write at this pace. Because the story was "already written in his soul." It’s his masterpiece tells the mystical story of Santiago. An Andalusian shepherd boy who yearns to travel in search of a worldly treasure. His quest will lead him to riches far different and far more satisfying than he ever imagined. Santiago's journey teaches us about the essential wisdom of listening to our hearts, of recognizing opportunity and learning to read the omens strewn along life's path and most importantly, to follow our dreams. The plot of the novel builds on the international [folktale](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folklore_genre) type classified as no.1645-"The Treasure at Home" in the [Aarne-Thompson–Uther Index](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aarne%E2%80%93Thompson%E2%80%93Uther_Index" \o "Aarne–Thompson–Uther Index) of folktales: "A man dreams that if he goes to a distant city he will find treasure on a certain bridge. Finding no treasure, he tells his dream to a man who says that he too has dreamed of treasure at certain place. He describes the place, which is the first man's home. When the latter returns home he finds the treasure." The earliest known version of this tale type is a poem by the 13th century Persian poet [Rumi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rumi) and a variant of the tale appears in the [One Thousand and One Nights](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/One_Thousand_and_One_Nights) collection of Arabic folktales.

Paulo Coelho is a Brazilian lyricist and novelist and a member of the [Brazilian Academy of Letters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brazilian_Academy_of_Letters) since 2002. He is counted amongst one of the most widely read writers in the contemporary world. He is known for employing rich symbolism in his depictions of the often spiritually motivated journeys taken by his characters. He is best known for his novel, "The Alchemist". For this he became an international best-seller. He has published 28 more books since then. It sold 65 million copies. It’s also the most translated book in the world by a living author. It was his second book. Which made him famous. He achieved fame with. He’s sold 35 million copies and now writes about one book every two years. He is unquestionably of the most [successful authors](https://www.famousauthors.org/) of recent times, selling more than 100 million books in at least 150 countries internationally. He has met with a lot of success. His books have been widely translated in a number of languages, earning him the prestigious Guinness World Record for most translated book by a living author and has received much honour. However, it should be noted that Coelho was not always necessarily celebrated for being the writer that he is today. It holds the Guinness World Record for being the most translated book in the world by a living author. He is one of the most impactful authors of our times. He was born on 24th August, 1947 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He is the son of an engineer and a housewife. He was born into a family of devout Catholics. He attended Jesuit schools. From a young age he dreamed of becoming a writer. Upon telling his mother this, she responded, "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?" Born into a Catholic family, his parents were strict about the religion and faith. But he rebelled against the conventions of his Roman Catholic upbringing and, as a result, was temporarily committed to a psychiatric hospital by his parents. From which he escaped three times before being released at the age of 20. He 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, he enrolled in law school as a young man and abandoned his dream of becoming a writer. One year later, he dropped out. Then he started living in the "sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll" of hippie life in the 1970s. He wrote song lyrics for Brazilian musicians protesting the country's military rule. He also became involved with a theater group as an actor and director and worked as a journalist, founding a magazine called 2001. He was jailed three times for his political activism. Because of his progressive activities, he was kidnapped and tortured by a Brazilian paramilitary group in 1974. After his release he worked for Polygram and CBS Records until 1980, when he embarked on new travels in Europe and Africa. In 1980 he married artist [Christina Oiticica](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christina_Oiticica). Together they had previously spent half the year in [Rio de Janeiro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rio_de_Janeiro) and the other half in a country house in the [Pyrenees Mountains of France](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Pyrenees), but now the couple reside permanently in [Geneva](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geneva), Switzerland. In 1986 at the age of 39 he walked the 500 plus mile [Road of Santiago de Compostela](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Way_of_St._James) in north-western Spain. On the path, he had a spiritual awakening, which he described autobiographically in [The Pilgrimage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Pilgrimage). When he was very happy in the things what he was doing. He was doing something that gave him food and water. To use the metaphor in ‘[The Alchemist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Alchemist_(novel))’, he was working, he had a person whom he loved, he had money. But it was not fulfilling his dream. His dream was and still is, to be a writer. So, he quit his other jobs and devoted himself full-time to the craft of writing.

“[The Alchemist](https://www.gradesaver.com/the-alchemist-coelho/study-guide/character-list#the-alchemist)” tells the story of a young shepherd. Whose name was ‘Santiago’. Who lives in Andalusia, Spain. He loves freedom. He always keeps moving from here to there. He is headed to a beautiful girl whom he met the year before at Tarifa and is pretty ramped up about it. One day he was sleeping near a sycamore tree in the sacristy of an abandoned church while travelling to Tarifa to meet her. He saw a dream what he had many times before. During the dream, a child tells him that he will find a hidden treasure if he travels to the Egyptian pyramids. After Awaking up he got confused. He started to think why he keep dreaming that? Is it true? He eagerly wants to know the meaning of this dream. So he went to a famous [Gypsy old woman](http://romaministries.com/who-are-the-roma/) who tells people about their dreams meaning. He told her everything about his dream. She said that this dream is prophetic and that he must follow its instructions. But when will he get the treasure he must have to share it with her. He agreed to her because he thinks she deserves and decided to go Egypt to try his luck. After he sets out, he meets an old king [Melchizedek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melchizedek), or the king of Salem. Who tells him to sell his sheep so as to travel to Egypt and accomplish his 'Personal Legend'. Early on his arrival in Africa, a man who claims to be able to take him to the pyramids instead robs him of the money he had made from his flock. So then he has to work for a [crystal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lead_glass) merchant so to earn enough to get to the pyramids and he earned a lot of money. Then he got to know that a caravan crossing the Sahara Desert toward Egypt. He joined that and meets an Englishman. Who is studying to become an Alchemist. He learns a lot from [the Englishman](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/the-alchemist/character/the-englishman/) during the journey. For one, he learns that the secret of alchemy is written on a stone called the Emerald Tablet. The ultimate creation of alchemy is the Master Work. Which consists of a solid called the Philosophers' Stone that can turn lead to gold and a liquid called the Elixir of Life that can cure all ills. He learns the Englishman is traveling with the caravan to the Saharan oasis of Al-Fayoum, where a powerful, 200-year-old [alchemist](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/the-alchemist/character/the-alchemist/) resides. The Englishman plans to ask the alchemist the secret of his trade. As it turns out, the caravan must make an extended stop in Al-Fayoum in order to avoid increasingly violent tribal wars taking place in the desert. There, he falls in love with [Fatima](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/the-alchemist/character/fatima/). Who lives at the Oasis. During a walk in the desert, he witnesses an omen that portends an attack on the historically neutral oasis. He warns the tribal chieftains of the attack, and as a result, Al-Fayoum successfully defends itself against the assault. The alchemist gets word of his vision and invites him on a trip into the desert, during which he teaches Santiago about the importance of listening to his heart and pursuing his Personal Legend. He convinces Santiago to leave Fatima and the caravan for the time to finish his journey to the pyramids, and he offers to accompany Santiago on the next leg of his trip. While the alchemist and Santiago continue through the desert, the alchemist shares much of his wisdom about the Soul of the World. They are mere days away from the pyramids when a tribe of Arab soldiers captures them. In exchange for his life and the life of Santiago, the alchemist hands over to the tribe all of Santiago’s money and tells the soldiers that Santiago is a powerful alchemist who will turn into wind within three days. Santiago feels alarmed because he has no idea how to turn into the wind, and over the next three days he contemplates the desert. On the third day, he communicates with the wind and the sun and coaxes them to help him create a tremendous sandstorm. He prays to the Hand That Wrote All, and at the height of the storm he disappears. He reappears on the other side of the camp, and the tribesmen, awed by the power of the storm and by Santiago’s ability, let him and the alchemist go free. The alchemist continues to travel with Santiago as far as a Coptic monastery several hours from the pyramids. There, he demonstrates to Santiago his ability to turn lead into gold using the Philosopher’s Stone. He gives Santiago gold and sends him off. Santiago begins digging for the treasure at the foot of the pyramids. But two men accost him and beat him. When Santiago speaks to them about his dream vision, they decide he must have no money and let him live. Before leaving, one of the men tries to illustrate the worthlessness of dreams by telling Santiago about his own dream. It concerns a treasure buried in an abandoned church in Spain where a sycamore tree grows. The church is the same one in which Santiago had his original dream and he finally understands where his treasure is. He returns to Spain to find a chest of jewels and gold buried under the tree and plans to return with it to Al-Fayoum. Where he will reunite with Fatima. Who awaits him.

Here we can see Santiago’s quest for personal legend. A quest is a journey toward a specific mission or a goal. It’s all about seeking something important and it often involves a journey. The word serves as a [plot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plot_(narrative)) device in [mythology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mythology) and [fiction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiction), a difficult [journey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Travel) towards a goal, often [symbolic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbol) or [allegorical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegory). Tales of quests figure prominently in the [folklore](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folklore) of every nation and [ethnic culture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_group). In [literature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literature), the object of a quest requires great exertion on the part of the [hero](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hero), who must overcome many obstacles, typically including much travel. The aspect of travel allows the storyteller to showcase exotic locations and cultures. It’s an objective of the narrative, not of the character. The object of a quest may also have [supernatural](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supernatural) properties, often leading the protagonist into other worlds and dimensions. The [moral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral) of a quest tale often centers on the changed [character](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_character) of the hero. It’s a phenomenon of human nature. Which helps one to search for something. The popular proverb, ‘life is a journey not a destination’ assumes that human beings are in perennial search to find out something. And there are different destinies that one arrives at the course of this search. It concerned with the journey for the sake of a long-cherished dream. The protagonist is in search of his identity the search comes to an end in a Self- Realization which reveals that he is part of the universal soul. Journey towards Personal Legend is an attempt to realize one’s own Self, understanding the dreams and desires hidden beneath the shades of the true Self of the individual. Identifying and materializing the dreams and wishes one’s heart truly desires is the real way to be in harmony with the Self. For the proper understanding of one’s own Self, the individual must undertake an inner journey, an exploration into the unexplored areas of one’s own psyche. To explore the unknown reality we must venture within our own psyche, travel inward through invisible roads as we journey outward on physical ones. The destiny can only be realized by discovering the contents of the personal unconscious, that is, by discovering the fears and desires that motivate the individual and the conflicts that endanger the decision making process and destroy the energies and ruin the creativity of the individual. For the realization of one’s true Self what has to be achieved is to expand the personal consciousness into that of the Self, to unite the lower with the higher Self. The philosophy of life in The Alchemist is that everyone has a personal legend. When Coelho was asked what was the secret behind the huge victory of his novel, he replied, that all he knew was that, like Santiago the shepherd boy, we all need to be awake of our personal calling. In the preface to 58th impression of The Alchemist published in 2011 and translated by Margaret Jull Costa, he defines what a personal calling is. He writes: “It is God’s calling, it is the path that God choose for us here on world. Whenever we do something that fills us with passion, we are following our legend”.

In this novel Coelho seems to say that if the aspirant hunts for the Divine sincerely within his own body, instead of seeking Him outside himself, he will realize the self soon and then view the body as the indwelling place of God. Through such knowledge the seeker attains deification. He experiences the uniqueness of all things. In the novel Santiago realizes the oneness of God and Man. “The boy reached through to the Soul of the World, and saw that it was a part of the Soul of God”, Santiago urges the alchemist to teach him alchemy, the art of transmutation. The alchemist tells him that it comprises of simple truth that everything in the world had a soul and they would evolve when they became perfect. He further tells him to listen to his heart. The conversation between the boy and his mentor highlights this thing: “Why do we have to listen to our hearts?” the boy asked, when they had made camp that day. ‘Because, wherever your heart is, that is where you’ll find your treasure.’ “But my heart is agitated,” the boy said. “It has its dreams, it gets emotional, and it’s become passionate over a woman of the desert. It asks things of me and it keeps me sleepless at many nights, when I’m thinking about her.” ‘Well, that’s good. Your heart is alive. Keep listening to what it has to say’. At the end of the novel, Santiago reaches the place of his dreams and feels stunned. In order to show the contrast between the one who chases the dreams and wins it and the one who leaves it thinking it impossible. Coelho has deliberately portrayed the character of the leader of the refugees from the tribal war as a person who has missed an opportunity to attain his treasure. The courage of Santiago opens all the door of his inner self. In his dream he clearly sees the exact location of the treasure. But his ‘self-love’ makes him reluctant to take up any action to achieve it because his heart does not want him to suffer in his pursuit of the treasure. That’s why he says to Santiago that, “I’m not so stupid as to cross an entire desert just because of a recurrent dream”. But, Santiago has the strong and deep desire to follow his dream. He is willing to accept the pain involved in achieving the treasure and attains the treasure at the end. He knows that one should listen to one’s heart, “Remember that wherever your heart is, there you will find your treasure”. Santiago eventually discovers the hidden treasure and achieves selfhood. His immersion in the soul of the World or the collective unconscious makes him understand the nature of life and the value of love. Though the father of Santiago tries to stop him but he pays no heed. “A world traveler is like an arrow shot, never meant to stop. Likewise, Santiago too feels that once he has decided to set on his journey there is no turning back. Deliberately, Coelho has put Santiago at the centre or as a subject and he preaches how to live life and how one can alter one’s life by altering his attitudes. The Alchemist brings home the biblical message that God made man in his own image and hence whatever is possible to God is possible for the children of God. Transformation is the key of life. Things transform and eventually have to become one with the Supreme Self.

This is how Paulo Coelho represents Santiago’s quest for personal legend in his novel “The Alchemist”.