

Robin Williams: 'Dead Poets Society': Carpe Diem, 1989

In the 1989 movie [Dead Poets Society](#), the actor Robin Williams plays a teacher trying to energize his students through poetry. The Latin phrase "[Carpe Diem](#)" means 'seize the day' or make the most of the moment.

The full script for the movie can be found at [DailyScript.com](#).

KEATING Now, Mr... Pitts. That's a rather unfortunate name. Mr. Pitts, where are you?

KEATING Mr. Pitts, would you open your hymnal to page 542 and read the first stanza of the poem you find there?

PITTS "To the virgins, to make much of time"?

KEATING Yes, that's the one. Somewhat appropriate, isn't it.

PITTS "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may, old time is still a flying, and this same flower that smiles today, tomorrow will be dying."

KEATING Thank you Mr. Pitts. "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may." The Latin term for that sentiment is Carpe Diem. Now who knows what that means?

MEEKS Carpe Diem. That's "seize the day."

KEATING Very good, Mr.-

MEEKS Meeks.

KEATING Meeks. Another unusual name. Seize the day. Gather ye rosebuds while ye may. Why does the writer use these lines?

CHARLIE Because he's in a hurry.

KEATING No, ding!

KEATING Thank you for playing anyway. Because we are food for worms lads. Because, believe it or not, each and every one of us in this room is one day going to stop breathing, turn cold, and die.

KEATING Now I would like you to step forward over here and peruse some of the faces from the past. You've walked past them many times. I don't think you've really looked at them.

KEATING They're not that different from you, are they? Same haircuts. Full of hormones, just like you. Invincible, just like you feel. The world is their oyster. They believe they're destined for great things, just like many of you. Their eyes are full of hope, just like you. Did they wait until it was too late to make from their lives even one iota of what they were capable? Because you see gentlemen, these boys are now fertilizing daffodils. But if you listen real close, you can hear them whisper their legacy to you. Go on, lean in. Listen. Do you hear it?

KEATING [whispers] Carpe.

KEATING [whispers again] Carpe. Carpe Diem. Seize the day boys, make your lives extraordinary.