

Looking for alaska essay sample

[Literature](#), [Fiction](#)



Summary: Looking for Alaska is the story of a young boy named Miles Halter who leaves his hometown in Florida in order to attend Culver Creek Preparatory High School in Alabama for his junior year. This boy loves reading biographies and especially memorizing last words of famous people. At Culver Creek, he meets new friends such as Chip his roommate also called Colonel, Takumi and Alaska a beautiful young girl with whom he will fall in love but cannot have since she already has a boyfriend named Jake. Unfortunately, under their influence, Miles starts smoking and drinking alcohol. One night after having drunk a lot of alcohol, Alaska and Miles start to kiss but do not go further because Alaska is too tired. The same night after passing a call to her boyfriend she comes into to her room sobbing and decides to leave school. Miles and the Colonel help her to flee. The next day, the director of the school announces Alaska's death due to an accident. Miles, Chip and Takumi try to find out how she died without obtaining any answer.

Theme quotes: The book looking for Alaska presents several themes such as friendship, love, smoking, alcohol or choices but today, I will be talking to you about the theme of death present all over the novel. The first time this theme appears in the book is at the beginning of the novel when the protagonist named Miles Halter announces his departure to Culver Creek preparatory high school in Alabama. He says that he " go[es] to seek a great perhaps." " I go to seek a great perhaps" are the last words of a French writer named François Rabelais before his death. In fact, last words are the words you say before you die so this idea expresses well mortality.

This theme is developed all over the novel by the use of a specific motif which is present all over the novel. The author chose to use last words as a motif which recurs through the novel. For example, he chose to include the last words of Simon Bolivar and Francois Rabelais as well as many other people and when Alaska dies, Miles the protagonist uses once again this idea by saying that he will never know Alaska's last words.

For example:

Page 70: The question he asks himself at last which is "What happens to us after we die?" shows us how he is obsessed with what happens after dying. This shows us that while thinking of death, people cannot stop thinking about what will happen to them after they die. Furthermore, this quote hints us about how responsible Miles will be of Alaska's death since he will always think of the fact she is dead and of what may have happened to her after it.

Page 119: The quote which refers to Alaska's mom's death shows how young Alaska had been faced to this situation when she was eight years old. For all this time she has felt the guilt about it because she didn't get the reflex of calling the emergency number 911 in order to save her mother. Moreover, this event in her life may have a link with her death since she dies on the night that her mother died which is a January 10th and on that night, Alaska was on her way to visit her mom's grave. This shows that the guilt she felt may have had a consequence on an eventual suicide in order to join her mom on the other side.

Page 151: The quote shows the consequence death may have on people, for here Chip or the Colonel is morally affected of Alaska Young's death.

Therefore, he is also physically attended since Miles says by using a simile that his eyes were green as a “ still-breathing ghost”. The colonel therefore looks dead because he is pale and his eyes are entered. This quote also shows that even though Alaska is dead, her soul is still present among Miles since he can still see her through the others. Death is also developed through the character of Alaska because she is a person who has faced the death of her mother as a young person.

She clearly expresses it all over the novel by saying that she does it purposely to smoke and drink as she says to her friends “ You smoke for fun. I smoke to die”. Moreover, the problems the characters deal with alcohol and smoking might have a connection with death since these two habits may sometimes lead to certain illnesses that also lead to death. In my opinion, the author chose to use the theme of death which is present through the entire novel in order to foreshadow Alaska young’s own death. This theme gives us clues about her own death because we can ask ourselves whether it is due to alcohol or due the guilt she felt about not going to see her mom’s grave that she might have died.