

# Coming of age speech: dragon keeper by carole wilkinson

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What defines one's personality? What moulds one's identity? Coming of age is a crucial phase in life. It's the time where our character is shaped through challenges we face and experiences we encounter. Coming of age is displayed throughout the novel, *Dragon Keeper* by Carole Wilkinson. There are three main stages of coming of age; changes, gaining independence and sense of belonging. All these ideas are depicted in the novel using various language techniques. Change is the initial and most noticeable stage of coming of age. It occurs both physically and mentally, and it plays a major role in the configuration of characters.

Change is displayed when Ping looks in the mirror for the first time in several months and thinks to herself " my rosy red cheeks have faded into a rich cream colour and my skin looks as soft as silk..." This combination of alliteration and a simile describes the physical changes that ping has undergone and it shows that as Ping began to face more challenges her rate of development increased as well as these physical changes ping was faced with many mental changes. Independence is a pivotal attribute in order for survival. Independence is one of the hardest characteristics to gain in the novel.

Ping gains independence at a relatively early stage. It is conspicuous that the idea of independence is expressed particularly in the scene where Ping meets her master. She makes it clear to him and I quote " im not that little girl anymore... ive learnt to defend myself". Belonging is a vital factor to ensure an exultant and joyful life. It's the time of realisation. Realising where you want to be and realising who you really need you and who you really

need. Ping gains that sense of belonging towards the end of her journey to Tai Shi Mountain she says, " I look back, I can't believe it.

Finally im here. I belong here. They need me here" There is a noticeable change in the length of the sentences in this quote. Coming of age is the most valuable and substantial stage in life. It is the time where personalities, characters and identifies are formed through challenges we encounter and experiences we face. Coming of age can be split into three main steps: the first is changes, the second being independence and the third sense of belonging. All these ideas are depicted throughout the novel as Ping faces a variety of events that configure her character as she comes of age.

THANKYOU ( ( It tells the story of a young slave girl named ping who was adopted at a very young age by her sinister master. He treats her like she's worthless and he takes advantage of her. Eventually, she gains the courage to flee from her master and sets out on a mystical, enlightening and dangerous journey. On this journey she comes across many challenges and experiences and her identity begins to form, all while she is going through the process of coming of age This represented by a mixture of juxtaposition and personification while ping is trapped in the dragons den.

I quote " As I sit there in the dark of my thoughts I see light beginning to creep in and suddenly I feel this jolt. I know ill be free once again". This quote describes pings spontaneous mental transformation. The ray of light represents that glimpse of hope that Ping gains. Both these physical and mental changes are key factors in order for Ping to come of age. These changes are climatical points in the definition of her character. These

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changes lead to Ping's ability to gain independence. This quote contains an ellipse at mid- sentence.

This allows the reader to stop and reflect on just how much Ping has changed. She metamorphosed from a helpless young youth to one independent young woman. Independence is an enormous milestone in the formation of identity and it is the primary step of coming of age before reaching a sense of belonging. They get significantly shorter and they're repetitive. This exaggerates Pings excitement, She is hysterical just knowing that someone actually needs her. This sense of belonging is the concluding moment in Pings process of coming of age. It is the final piece that assists on the configuration of character.