UNIT 4: HIDDEN GEMS ASSIGNMENTS
The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

*The Alchemist* is a story that explores all the major themes of the journey of life. It is a must read for all students that are in quest of mental and physical well being with its fundamental message that urges people to follow their dreams. It is a story that fills your heart with optimism and a belief that anything is possible. In the end, it echoes the fundamental ethos of this course; the treasure is the journey as well as what you discover about yourself along the way.

**NOTE: For these assignments, you will need to use excerpts from the novel to support your answers where appropriate.**

YOUR TASK: Discussion of Themes AND finding a “Hidden Gem” in the novel.

You are tasked with writing a 1-2 page assignment where you will engage with the novel in two ways. First, you will write about the following topics regarding themes in the novel. Second, you will engage in discussion of an original element in the novel that you have found interesting.

For our purposes, a “hidden gem” simply means: finding something in the novel that you noticed that not many people would. Make sure it is something original; it cannot be something you find online. Discuss this hidden gem and provide examples to further demonstrate it. Use quotations from the novel to thoroughly explain your ideas.

INSTRUCTIONS:

In a 2-page analytical text (500 words):

Paragraph 1: For each assignment *(there are FIVE in total)*, answer one of the following questions, discussing a theme from the novel, while engaging with the questions provided. You may use personal pronouns (I, we, me, us) **250 words.**

Paragraph 2: Then write about ONE “hidden gem” (something you noticed and enjoyed from the novel). This part of your assignment should focus on what important lesson you have learned from this part of the novel. Use quotations from the novel in order to articulate and defend your answers. **250 words.**

Be sure to use proper MLA Formatting when writing your assignments. These can either be written by hand (NEATLY) or typed and printed.
TOPICS

THEME: Love

Question: In *The Alchemist*, love is something that two people can fall into without even knowing each other very well. Do you think that the novel proposes everlasting love, or can the characters fall out of love just as easily? 250 words

Hidden Gem: What is something that you noticed and learned in the novel? 250 words

Question: Do you think it's fair that Fatima's treasure, or Personal Legend, is her true love coming out of the desert, while Santiago's is an actual, golden treasure? 250 words

Hidden Gem: What is something that you noticed and learned in the novel? 250 words

THEME: The Danger of Fear

Question: Fear seems to dominate *The Alchemist*’s weakest characters. The crystal merchant, in particular, represents someone who has allowed fear to rule his life. What are your views on fear and how it hampers or enhances the quest for a fulfilled life. 250 words

Hidden Gem: What is something that you noticed and learned in the novel? 250 words

Question: What is it about the desert that gives it special rules about fear and cowardice or bravery? Must people be especially brave in the desert? 250 words

Hidden Gem: What is something that you noticed and learned in the novel? 250 words

THEME: Omens and Dreams

Question: “...whoever you are, or whatever it is that you do, when you really want something, it's because that desire originated in the soul of the universe. It's your mission on earth." Explain this idea as it relates to Santiago. Do you agree with this? 250 words

Hidden Gem: What is something that you noticed in the novel? 250 words