Dead Poets Society Viewing Guide

Part One: Characters
Write a brief description of each character. Note the character’s defining characteristics and phrases. Also, look for any connection between the character’s name and his characteristics.

1. Mr. John Keating

2. Neil Perry

3. Todd Anderson

4. Charlie Dalton (“Nuwanda”)

5. Knox Overstreet

6. Stephen Meeks

7. Cameron

Part Two: Symbolism
Look for the following symbols in the movie. Identify what each could represent.

8. The passing of the candle from one student to another

9. Crown of thorns (worn by Puck during A Midsummer Night’s Dream)

10. Snow

11. Open window
Part 3: Plot

12. What is the time period? ____________ What type of school do the boys attend?

13. How is Mr. Keating different from the boys’ other teachers?
   a.
   b.
   c.

14. What is the Dead Poets’ Society?

   Who started it originally?

   Why do the boys start it again?

15. How does Neil Perry rebel against his father?

16. How does Mr. Keating get Todd Anderson to come out of his shell?

17. What point does Mr. Keating make by having the boys walk in the courtyard?

18. What prank does Charlie Dalton play?

   How does Mr. Keating respond?

19. What is Mr. Keating’s advice to Neil Perry?

   Does Neil follow it?

20. What does Knox do to express his feelings to Chris?

   Is he successful in the end?

21. What happens to Neil after the play when his parents take him home?

   Who takes the blame and why?

22. Why do the boys stand on their desks at the end of the film?