

Question

Agree with author

Connect thought with other thoughts

Disagree with author

Predictions

Clarify

Groups of three students

Every two minutes –after each student writes comments—

Catherine, Called Birdy: FINAL EXAMINATION

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF?

Page 17:

“Little Bird, in the world to come, you will not be asked ‘Why were you not George?’ or ‘Why were you not Perkin?’ but ‘Why were you not Catherine?’”

In this paragraph Catherine is not being herself. She is being addressed by one of the King's relatives, Madame Joanna, to make sure that she is told she is not George or Perkin.

I think this quote means that she needs to be herself and not someone else.

Who is Catherine?

She is not George because George gave up on his love for Aelis. She is not Perkin because Perkin tries to repeat everything she says.

Catherine is not a wandering minstrel because when she sings she sounds like a pig whose tail is caught in a slamming door. She is not a monk because she is a girl. She is not a wart charmer. She

could not be a Crusader because she does not like to walk over dead bodies. She could not be like Odd William who writes about dead people and is not involved, like Catherine, with people who are alive. She cannot be Ethelfritha who often forgets who she is! She cannot be a saint because she does not like the things that saint have to do to become saints. She could not be a Jew because she could not be wandering from place to place. She cannot be “a lady” with “lady manners” because she prefers spitting, tumbling, setting suitors on fire, throwing food during brawls. Catherine does not like to be married by force.

Page 104-105 / 106:

“You are lucky, Little Bird, for you have wings. But you must learn to master them. Look at the baron’s hawk there on her perch. Just because she doesn’t flap her wings all the time doesn’t mean she can’t fly.”

“But, my dear,” she went on, “I flap my wings at times, choose my fights carefully, get things done, understand my limitations, trust in God and a few people, and here I am. I survive, and sometimes even enjoy.”

In this paragraph it says that everyone has a special talent, so for Catherine, she has to learn how to put her talent to work.

Catherine has to know herself and her body –Catherine needs to know who she is and know what she wants to do with her life.

Catherine needs to know what she can and cannot do – her limitations and her talents.

What exactly is it that Catherine wants to do?

She may wish to sponsor Perkin as he becomes a scholar. She already shared half of her dowry with him. She may also sponsor her younger siblings.

Catherine loves to compose songs. She could hire minstrels to write songs and poems.

She could write books. At her brother Edward's monastery, Catherine could financially

support 50 monks to write, copy, recopy and illuminate books.

She could teach languages –Latin and English, she could teach drawing and painting, reading and writing. She could teach remedies and how to cure certain ailments. She could become a nurse and a doctor for her villages and her tenants.

Catherine could become veterinarian, caring for birds, dogs and puppies, bears and all other animals in the abbey's menagerie. Catherine could provide financial support for the abbey to care for more animals in the menagerie.

Page 108:

When I was little, I used to try to capture the colored light. I thought I could hold it in my hand and carry it home. Now I know it is like happiness--It is there or it is not, you cannot hold it or keep it.

What does it mean?

(Page 17) (Page 202)

I think it means that one must try to be oneself and not try to be anyone else.

Catherine cannot be:

A writer or an illuminator who copies books and embellishes them with drawings and paintings.

She cannot be a Crusader because (1) she is a girl and (2) she cannot walk over or past the dead bodies of strangers whom she is supposed to hate. She cannot be like Odd William because she is concerned with the people who are alive, not those who are dead, or died long ago. She cannot be like Ethelfritha because she forgets who she really is and imagines she is someone else. Catherine cannot be a monk. Catherine cannot be a wandering minstrel because her singing, according to Perkin, sounds like a pig when his tail is caught in a slamming door. She cannot be a boy because she is a girl and only boys have

adventures. Finally, she cannot be a wart charmer.

Catherine cannot be:

Catherine cannot be Perkin, George or Ethelfritha who forgets who she is very often.

She cannot be a monk, or a Crusader; she cannot be a wandering minstrel, or she cannot be like Odd William who only involved himself with dead people as he wrote the History of the World. She cannot be a puppeteer at fairs, she also hates making soap, sewing, and embroidering. She hates her father and her oldest brother Robert and cannot be like them. She also hates

Shaggy Beard because he has no manners. She definitely cannot be like any of these men, especially Shaggy Beard because he is a 'pig' making his beard dirty and his teeth dirty as he eats his food.

What does it mean?

(Pages 104, 105, 106)

We need to know how to use our skills at the right moment. We need to know ourselves, what our strengths are and why we want to get to where we are going. We need to know what obstacles we may find and what limitations may we encounter. Everyone has potential but we ALL need to know how to use our talents, skills, knowledge, strengths and how to

deal with our weaknesses and limitations.

Catherine is now a very rich Lady, very wealthy, owner of lots of land, castles, manors, farms, etc. What can Catherine do with ALL these opportunities, with these ways of becoming what she wants to be?

Catherine can now go to many mysterious places and travel to many exotic lands. Catherine read about all these interesting places in the Book of Saints that her brother Edward shared with her mother.

Catherine loves to draw and paint. Catherine could paint herself many pictures in her properties, and also could sponsor painters to decorate and draw and paint

murals in her many walls in her many properties.

Catherine loves animals and knows many things about animal behavior. Catherine could become a veterinarian because she knows about remedies and about animals. The bear that Catherine rescued is at an abbey by the sea where the nuns have a menagerie. She can support financially the abbey so they can rescue more animals and add them to their menagerie.

Catherine loves to read and her brother Edward is a monk at a monastery where they copy and illuminate books. Catherine can financially support the monastery so that 20 or 30 monks can spend

their lives copying and illuminating books.

Catherine loves to write songs and poems. Catherine could support other minstrels and song writers who will then write songs and poems for her.

Catherine could become a teacher, she knows how to read and write in English and Latin.

Catherine will become a very good mother and wife, raising many good children.

The metaphor of “wings she must master” refers to escaping from her misery, doing what she really

wants to do, “if she learns to master her impulses.”

At the end of the story, by marrying Stephen, Shaggy Beard’s son, she becomes extremely wealthy. What are Catherine’s opportunities to be happy, to do what she really wants to do?

Catherine wanted to be a singer and an explorer. Catherine could pay for singing lessons, sponsor great singers to come to her castle to sing, have parties and invite great minstrels. She could also learn about Geography and travel to the many mysterious places she read about in the book of saints.

Catherine likes plays, and now she could have a theater at her castle

and have wandering minstrels and actors doing plays in her castle for the enjoyment of all the children. Catherine loves to write and to draw and paint. Catherine could write books, including her diary, and have her brother Edward, a monk, copy this book many times over. She could financially support the abbey where Brother Edward is a monk. She could support the illuminating work of many monks.

Catherine could become an artist, decorating her many castles or manors.

Catherine loves animals. She had 19 birds in her room, she loved her puppies, she rescued a poor bear that was sent to an abbey by the sea where the nuns kept a

menagerie, she loved Peppercorn and prevented her father from killing her when Peppercorn had a candied fig stuck in her ear.

Catherine could build an animal park in her enormous land, in the forest, she could have her own menagerie, and she could sponsor the abbey where her bear lives.