**Group Destiny Word Project**

As a group, create and present a paragraph and a poster that show how your destiny word expresses a theme in the book *Speak*. Everyone in your group should contribute to creating and presenting the project.

Steps:

**Paragraph**

1. As a group, decide on a theme (message) expressed by your destiny word. This is sentence #1.
2. Each member should pick one example to describe and explain (2–3 sentences apiece).
3. As a group, put your examples in order and add any nescessary transitions and a final concluding sentence.

**Poster**

1. Create a headline that communicates the theme you found.
2. Type up your paragraph and include it on the poster.
3. Include visuals (drawings, clipart, symbols) that represent the word and your group’s analysis of its importance in *Speak.*

**Instructions for Analysis Paragraph**

For each quote or paraphrase in your paragraph, include page numbers in parentheses at the end of the sentence.

Your analysis paragraph should follow TEXT format:

1. Topic sentence.
2. Example #1 & explanation
3. Example #2 & explanation
4. Example #3 & explanation
5. Example #4 & explanation
6. Example #5 & explanation
7. Tie-up/concluding sentence

**Example Paragraph**

**(a)** In the book *Speak,* Melinda’s trees express the theme that living things can overcome hardship and keep growing. **(b)** Early in the book, Melinda tries to draw a tree but she feels that it is “hopeless” at showing emotion (p. 32). This tree matches Melinda’s mood because she is afraid to show anyone her feelings. **(c)** Later on, Melinda is able to imagine drawing a “strong oak tree,” but everything she creates seems as “dead” as a bunch of “toothpicks” (p. 78). This is a nice symbol of how Melinda wants to be a strong person but she is struggling to feel any sort of life or happiness. **(d)** Things start to turn around a bit for Melinda when her lab partner, David Petrakis, helps her draw a tree that is better than any she has done so far (p. 110). The improvement shows that David’s friendliness is helping Melinda feel a bit of courage and hope. **(e)** Then one day Melinda’s art teacher, Mr. Freeman, tells Melinda, “Trees are flexible, so they don’t snap….Perfect trees don’t exist….Flaws are interesting” (p. 153). This advice gives Melinda permission to accept her bad experiences and move on. **(f)** When Spring comes, Melinda begins to work on “cleaning out all [the] rot” around the tree in her front yard (p. 166). But it’s not just the tree she works on. She says, “I rake the leaves out of my throat” (p. 168). This shows that Melinda is finally working on expressing her feelings. **(g)** As these examples show, Melinda’s experiences with trees symbolize that she can flourish once again if she keeps trying to overcome hardship and grow.