

## *The Alchemist's Letter*

My father told me the story of an alchemist who built a machine that could turn any metal into pure gold. But to power it, he had to feed it his own memories.

He had a family, but in his quest for gold, he abandoned them.

After he died, the alchemist's son returned to the home he had once known as a child.

As he entered the house, he recalled the letter his father had left him.

*Dear son,*

*I have crafted a magnificent device. It burns my memories as fuel. The more precious my memories, the more powerful the machine. Now – I have left here for you my most precious memories: they are memories of the place I fell in love with your mother. They are memories of you.*

*I remember your mother, she died alone, because of the creature I was becoming.*

*I understand why you ran away. I have seen that you now have a daughter, but I fear, you may abandon her – just as I abandoned you.*

*My son, now I understand what matters the most: love.*

*Your father,*

*Nicholas.*

And so, rumours of a miraculous device remained just that: only rumours.

That night, my father gave me a golden watch, and told me what he had read in the *Alchemist's letter*.

**Questions based on the text and also inference from scenes in the film.**

- 1) What must an 'alchemist' do? Look carefully at the word for a clue!
- 2) What was the 'quest for gold' in other words?
- 3) Write a synonym for the word 'crafted'.
- 4) What was the 'magnificent device'?
- 5) How is the machine powered?
- 6) What makes the machine more powerful?
- 7) What do you think "the creature" was that the alchemist was becoming? (Clue: this is a metaphor!)
- 8) What are the alchemist's most 'precious memories'?
- 9) The alchemist fears that his son might abandon his daughter – why? What is he worried his son will do with the machine?
- 10) What happened to the machine in the end and why?
- 11) What – according to the alchemist – matters the most in life?
- 12) The golden watch is given to the little girl in the end. Who was she?
- 13) What do you think happens next? Explain your thinking clearly.

