

Reading Guide for Randy Pausch's *The Last Lecture*

This work is an optional ungraded assignment that students can use to gauge their understanding of the text and prepare for the start of the year project and discussion.

During Reading:

- Take Notes: Keep a notebook handy while reading. Jot down key points, memorable quotes, and personal reflections as you progress through the book.
- Reflect on the Lessons: Pause periodically to reflect on the life lessons Randy Pausch shares. Consider how they apply to your own life and experiences.
- Engage Emotionally: Allow yourself to connect emotionally with the content. Pausch's story is deeply moving, and allowing yourself to feel the emotions it evokes can enhance your understanding and appreciation of his message.
- Consider the Audience: Remember that Pausch's primary audience for this lecture was his children. Consider how his advice and wisdom might differ if he were speaking to a different audience.

Reading Questions:

1. Discuss Pausch's use of voice in his book. What makes it distinctive and unique?
2. Discuss the use of tone in the book. What is the primary tone he uses throughout the work? When and how does his tone change?
3. How does he develop his ethos and pathos? Prove these. How does he get his readers to relate to him?
4. Discuss his use of imagery in his anecdotes. Analyze an anecdote where imagery was used effectively.
5. What are three allusions he makes in his book? Explain them.
6. Discuss why you think this book has become so popular with people worldwide. Why does his message resonate with so many, yet diverse, people?

You can watch the full video of the Last Lecture [here](#). (This does not replace reading, because the book hits on why he gave this lecture and more about his life.)