

Unit: Lowell and the Industrial Revolution

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Lesson Topic: Literary and Artistic Responses to Industrialization

Lesson Title: Understanding Thoreau

Grade Level: High School

State Standards:

Class Time: 45-60 minutes

Objectives:

- Students will understand the concept of transcendentalism.
- Students will understand some basic philosophies of Henry David Thoreau.
- Students will understand that events may have influenced Thoreau's philosophies and opinions

Prerequisite knowledge/Background Information:

Materials:

- Dover Thrift Edition: THOREAU: A BOOK OF QUOTATIONS, General Editor: Paul Negri, 2000.
- Paper and pen

Procedure:

1. Prepare, before class, cooperative groups of four per group.
2. Get students at the door and have them go directly to their numbered group.
3. After bell: Have each group choose a leader, writer 1 and writer 2, and a messenger for the group while you take roll. These names are recorded on a piece of paper and given to you to indicate they have completed this task.
4. Then give the directions to all the groups. This book has a select number of quotations on various themes. Each group will choose two different themes and read the quotations from that section out loud. After they have read the quotes out loud, they will choose one quote from each theme. These themes will be listed on the board, and the group will send their messenger to the board and list their group number after it. Once a group has chosen a topic, no other group can use it. (Topics to choose from include: Contemplation and Reflection, Day and Night, Education, Freedom and Individualism, Friendship and Love, Himself, Human Nature, Law and Government, Literature and Writing, Money and Business, Morality and Conduct, Nature, Religion, Seasons, Solitude, Travel, Work and Leisure.)
5. Next each group will have their writer 1 write the first quote on their paper. Then as a group they will explain the meaning, why they chose it, and how it applies to their life today. Writer 1 will record it.
6. Then the messenger will bring that quote to the teacher.

7. Next, the group will do quote 2 in the same way, but writer 2 will record for the group.
8. Next, the messenger will bring that quote's explanation to the teacher.
9. Each group will then read the first quote from each of the other sections to get an overview of the book.
10. As soon as the teacher has the two journals from each group, they will have the groups stop. The leader of each group will choose one of that group's journals to share aloud.

Assessment

Students can be assessed in a variety of ways; teacher discretion.