

Day 3: "Solitude" from Walden

Begin lesson

Card 1 of 16

	Teaching notes
	Click the "Begin lesson" button to view this lesson. Teaching notes for each slide will appear in this box.

Before the Lesson

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Before the Lesson	Teaching notes

Anchor Text

Card 3 of 16

<p style="text-align: center;">Walden: Solitude By Henry David Thoreau Published 1854</p> <p>This is a delicious evening, when the whole body is one sense, and imbibes delight through every pore. I go and come with a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself. As I walk along the stony shore of the pond in my shirt-sleeves, though it is cool as well as cloudy and windy, and I see nothing special to attract me, all the elements are unusually congenial to me. The bullfrogs tramp to usher in the night, and the note of the whip-poor-will is borne on the rippling wind from over the water. Sympathy with the flattening alder and poplar leaves almost takes away my breath; yet, like the lake, my serenity is rippled but not ruffled. These small waves raised by the evening wind are as remote from storms as the smooth reflecting surface. Though it is now dark, the wind still blows and murmurs in the wood; the waves still dash, and some creatures halt the rest with their notes. The repose is never complete. The wildest animals do not repose, but seek their prey now; the fox, and skunk, and rabbit, now roam the fields and woods without fear. They are Nature's watchmen—links which connect the days of animated life.</p> <p>When I return to my house I find that visitors have been there and left their cards, either a bunch of flowers, or a wreath of evergreen, or a name in pencil on a yellow walnut leaf or a chip. They who come rarely to the woods take some little piece of the forest into their hands to play with by the way, which they leave, either intentionally or accidentally. One has peeled a willow wand, served it into a nice, and dropped it on my table. I could almost tell if visitors had called.</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Teaching notes</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Download and print copies of the anchor text for each student.</p>
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Student Notes Sheet

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<p style="text-align: center;"> LearnZillion</p> <p>Name: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Student notes for: Walden "Solitude"</p> <p>Day: 3</p> <p>1. What is the purpose of Thoreau's allusions to mythological characters?</p> <p>2. How effective is Thoreau's personification of Nature in paragraph 17?</p> <p>3. How does Thoreau's use of simile & metaphor contribute to the persuasiveness of the text?</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Teaching notes</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This guided notes sheet provides students with the text-dependent questions associated with this lesson, and relevant graphic organizers. You may modify these sheets as needed. ■ During class, students can use these sheets to record their responses, notes, or ideas. Use the back to
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record responses to the focus question.

- Following class, collect student notes to use as a formative assessment.

Getting Started

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<h1>Getting Started</h1>	Teaching notes

Introduction 1 of 2

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 <p style="color: green; font-style: italic;">Walden: "Solitude"</p> <p>Henry David Thoreau</p>	Teaching notes
	<p>Pacing: 5 minutes</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Distribute a copy of the Student Notes Sheet to each student. ■ Ensure that each student has their annotated copy of the text from previous days. If they have misplaced it, provide another. ■ Remind students of what was accomplished on Days 1-2.

Introduction 2 of 2

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 <p>As we explore the text we will be asking and answering questions.</p> <p>We will find and keep track of evidence from the text to support our ideas about each question.</p>	<h3>Teaching notes</h3> <p>Pacing: 5 minutes</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Distribute a copy of the Student Notes Sheet to each student.▪ Ensure that each student has their annotated copy of the text from previous days. If they have misplaced it, provide another. <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Remind students of what was accomplished on Days 1-2.
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Exploring the Text

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<h1>Exploring the Text</h1>	<h3>Teaching notes</h3>
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Supporting Question 1

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What is the purpose of Thoreau's allusions to mythological characters?

Teaching notes

Pacing: 5 minutes

Standard: RI.11-12.6

Purpose: This question draws students' attention to the mythological figures that they might not have thought about on their previous readings. This skill will help them analyze how Thoreau is

defining Nature in the text.

Answer: Thoreau alludes to mythological characters in "Solitude" in order to further his idea of communion with Nature. In Greek and Roman times, mythological beliefs connected man closely with nature and gave each aspect of nature a distinct personality. By using mythology, Thoreau is emphasizing his belief that Nature can be society to man as well as a healing force. He says that storms are "Æolian music to a healthy and innocent ear" and that his panacea is a "draught of undiluted morning air." He compares conventional medicines and remedies to "a mixture dipped from the Acheron" and does not worship Hygeia, the Greek goddess of health and daughter of "that old herb-doctor Æsculapius." Instead, Thoreau aligns himself with Hebe, the Greek goddess of youth, who was "the daughter of Juno and wild lettuce" and who, to Thoreau, "was probably the only thoroughly sound-conditioned, healthy, and robust young lady that ever walked the globe." This use of mythology serves the purposes of further personifying Nature, stressing the importance of communion with Nature for a sound mind, body, and soul, and emphasizing Thoreau's perspective that Nature is society for man which allows solitude to be separate from loneliness.

Look for students....

- Discussing the various references to Greek and Roman mythology
- Connecting the personification of natural elements in mythology to Thoreau's personification of Nature in "Solitude"
- Considering that Thoreau's love of Hebe rather than Hygeia mirrors his love of a natural life rather than one of human society and remedies
- Discussing Thoreau's belief in the importance of Nature to man's health

Guiding questions and prompts:

- What does Thoreau mean in paragraph 4 when he says, "there was never yet such a storm but it was Æolian music to a healthy and innocent ear"?
- What are the implications of Thoreau's chosen panacea in paragraph 18?
- Why does Thoreau "worship" Hebe rather than Hygeia? What does that mean?
- What is Thoreau comparing to a "quack vial of a mixture dipped from Acheron" in paragraph 18?

Additional Notes:

- This question will require some quick research by your students. If you assign each table/group/partner pair one mythological reference and have them share with the class, this will go more quickly and effectively. Alternatively, you can provide students with a reference sheet for the mythological allusions.
- This section will be difficult for students who have no previous knowledge regarding mythology, so it might be best to discuss answers thoroughly as a class.
- The following websites might be helpful for looking up mythological figures and references: (<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0197622.html>) (<http://www.greekmythology.com/>)

Supporting Question 2

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What is the effect of Thoreau's personification of Nature in paragraph 17?

Teaching notes

Pacing: 5 minutes

Standard: L.11-12.5.A

Purpose: Students will naturally understand that Thoreau is personifying Nature. This question takes it one step further and has students consider the effect of this personification on the reader.

Answer: In paragraph 17, Thoreau describes Nature as having an "indescribable innocence and beneficence," and says that each aspect of the natural world affords great health and cheer forever. He says that Nature offers such sympathy to the human race that "Nature would be affected, and the sun's brightness fade, and the winds would sigh humanely, and the clouds rain tears, and the woods shed their leaves and put on mourning in midsummer, if any man should ever for just cause grieve." These instances are a continuation of Thoreau's personification of Nature throughout "Solitude" and describe Nature as having a very distinct and strong personality. Thoreau's personification of nature literally shows that Nature is a companion for Thoreau and causes the reader to empathize with Nature and to feel as if they, too, could be content in solitude as long as they had Nature for company.

Look for students....

- Giving text evidence for Thoreau's personification in paragraph 17.
- Describing the effect of Thoreau's personification of Nature.
- Discussing the impact the personification of Nature has on the reader.

Guiding questions and prompts:

- How does Thoreau describe Nature in paragraph 17?
- What specific words does Thoreau use that imply that Nature has a personality?
- How does Thoreau's personification make you feel as a reader?
- Do you think this personification of Nature contributes to the persuasiveness of Thoreau's argument? How?

Additional Notes:

- If students are struggling with this concept, have them answer the same question about paragraph 4, which we have already begun to look at in previous days.

Supporting Question 3

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What idea does Thoreau communicate through his use of an extended metaphor in paragraph 11?

Teaching notes

Pacing: 5 minutes

Standard: L.11-12.5.A

Purpose: This question asks students to consider the doubleness of man, a concept which is difficult to grasp but is central to the question of solitude vs. loneliness.

Answer: In paragraph eleven, Thoreau uses an extended metaphor describing life as a play, and each day or aspect as a scene. While this is not an original idea, Thoreau's purpose in using such a metaphor is rather singular. With this metaphor, Thoreau reiterates the idea of the doubleness of man, that man can be company for himself. He begins by describing the strange occurrence of being affected by "a theatrical exhibition" while being unaffected "by an actual event which appears to concern [him] much more." He considers himself as "a human entity," or "the scene, so to speak, of thoughts and affections," and says that "however intense [his] experience", he still feels that part of him is "a spectator, sharing no experience, but taking note of it." When "the play, it may be the tragedy, of life is over," the spectator part of himself remains and moves on, while the part of him that lived and experienced the world is finished. This metaphor makes the concept of the doubleness of man much easier to digest for the reader.

Look for students....

- Picking out key words like "the play... of life," "spectator," "the scene... of thoughts" and using them to explain the metaphor.
- Considering how the metaphor contributes to the idea of the doubleness of man.
- Considering the effectiveness of Thoreau's use of metaphor here.

Guiding questions and prompts:

- What key words or images do you see that Thoreau is using here?
- How do these images describe or contribute to Thoreau's idea of the doubleness of man?
- Does this metaphor help you understand the concept of the doubleness of man? Why or why not?
- Why did Thoreau say that he is sometimes more affected by a theatrical exhibition than an actual event?

Additional Notes:

- This concept is difficult, but looking intensely at the metaphor should help struggling learners.
- Perhaps having students take turns describing the metaphor to one another in pairs would help each student explicate their own ideas.

Supporting Question 4

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How does Thoreau's use of simile & metaphor contribute to the persuasiveness of the text?

Teaching notes

Pacing: 5 minutes

Standard: RI.11-12.6

Purpose: Simile and metaphor are sprinkled throughout the text, and students will see examples quickly. This question requires them to take each example as evidence for an effective, cohesive text.

Answer: Thoreau uses simile and metaphor throughout the text to emphasize his main arguments and to strengthen his persuasiveness. Many of his similes and metaphors serve to align himself with Nature. In the first paragraph, Thoreau says that, "like the lake, my serenity is rippled but not ruffled," and in paragraph four he describes the "unaccountable friendliness all at once like an atmosphere" sustaining him. Another instance of aligning himself to Nature is in paragraph five, when he says that his "thoughts had time to take root and unfold themselves" because of his communion with Nature. When he says that his cabin in the woods "is as much Asia or Africa as New England," he clearly demonstrates his solitude and lack of communication with people nearby. Thoreau describes the dual purposes of his visitors with a metaphor in paragraph three, saying, "they plainly fished much more in the Walden Pond of their own natures, and baited their hooks with darkness--but they soon retreated, usually with light baskets." These visitors, through their communion with Nature, leave carrying a lighter emotional load than when they arrived in addition to rarely catching fish, which reveals that their true motivation was not as a means of providing physical sustenance, but of providing spiritual sustenance, which is Thoreau's motivation for living there as well. His use of metaphor also adds to the persuasiveness of his argument that man can be company for himself when he describes "the play... of life" and "the scene, so to speak, of thoughts and affections."

Look for students....

- Picking out and discussing incidents when Thoreau uses simile or metaphor.
- Using text evidence to support their answer.

- Discussing how Thoreau's use of simile and metaphor contribute to each of his central themes of solitude, communion with Nature, and the doubleness of man.

Guiding questions and prompts:

- Where do we see Thoreau using metaphor? Simile?
- What does each simile/metaphor mean literally? Figuratively?
- Why does Thoreau use metaphor/simile in this specific instance?
- Which of the central ideas does this metaphor connect to? How does it help to develop that theme?

Additional Notes:

- Because students have considered many of the similes and metaphors in the text on previous days, this shouldn't be too difficult of a question. The purpose of summarizing it all together in this way is to make student take their thinking to a deeper level and consider the impact of Thoreau's decisions.

Focus Question

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<h1>Focus Question</h1>	Teaching notes

Focus Question

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How does Thoreau use figurative language to advance his message that living in solitude in nature is not lonely?

Teaching notes

Pacing: 20 minutes

Standard: RI.11-12.6

Purpose: The purpose of this question is to have students consider Thoreau's craft when arguing his point. His use of literary devices such as simile, metaphor, and personification greatly contribute to

the meaning of the text as a whole as well as his importance as an author. Without properly studying and understanding the figurative language in this text, students will not fully understand Thoreau's purpose.

Answer: Thoreau is particularly adept at creating and enhancing meaning through his use of figurative language such as simile, metaphor, personification, and mythology. In this text, Thoreau uses each numerous times, creating a more complex understanding of solitude and nature. In particular, his allusions to mythological figures and stories serve to draw a parallel between Nature and man as well as to further his belief that the natural world provides him with security and physical and spiritual health. He compares conventional medicines and remedies to "a mixture dipped from the Acheron" and does not worship Hygeia, the Greek goddess of health and daughter of "that old herb-doctor Æsculapius." Instead, Thoreau aligns himself with Hebe, the Greek goddess of youth, who was "the daughter of Juno and wild lettuce" and who, to Thoreau, "was probably the only thoroughly sound-conditioned, healthy, and robust young lady that ever walked the globe." This use of mythology serves the purposes of further personifying Nature, stressing the importance of communion with Nature for a sound mind, body, and soul, and emphasizing Thoreau's perspective that Nature is society for man which allows solitude to be separate from loneliness. He also uses personification throughout the text to highlight the "sweet and beneficent society" and friendship that he feels with nature. In paragraph 17, Thoreau describes Nature as having an "indescribable innocence and beneficence," and says that each aspect of the natural world affords great health and cheer forever. He says that Nature offers such sympathy to the human race that "Nature would be affected, and the sun's brightness fade, and the winds would sign humanely, and the clouds rain tears, and the woods shed their leaves and put on mourning in midsummer, if any man should ever for just cause grieve." These instances are a continuation of Thoreau's personification of Nature throughout

"Solitude" and describe Nature as having a very distinct and strong personality. His use of metaphor in paragraph 11 ("the play...of life") reveals his feeling of doubleness, of being both "the driftwood in the stream [and] Indra in the sky." It is through this metaphor that he is able to communicate the complicated notion that man can be his own company. Additionally, Thoreau's use of simile (as in paragraph 1, when he compares his serenity to the lake) serves to align himself with Nature, blurring the line between humanity and his surroundings. In paragraph five he uses simile again when he says that his "thoughts had time to take root and unfold themselves" because of his communion with Nature. The combination of these literary devices serves to make Thoreau's meaning deeper and to reinforce his argument for the reader as well as contributing to his style and the beauty of the text.

Look for students....

- Rereading the text and annotating literary devices throughout.
- Considering simile, metaphor, mythology, and personification in their answer.
- Using specific instances of each literary device in their response.
- Discussing the idea that Nature is company for man and that man is company of himself.
- Discussing how Thoreau's use of literary devices deepens the meaning of the text.
- Using text evidence to support their claim.

After the Lesson

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<h1>After the Lesson</h1>	Teaching notes

Comprehension Skill Video

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Core Lesson	Ask yourself, "How does the author's use of figurative language contribute to the development of the text's central ideas?"	Teaching notes
Simile	"like the lake, my serenity is rippled," Nature's friendliness and atmosphere" sustaining Thoreau	
The first simile compares Thoreau's serenity to a lake's calm surface, and the second compares the atmosphere that sustains him to an atmosphere that sustains his spirituality and Nature.		Use this video as an intervention tool for students who struggle to answer the focus question. The video uses a metacognitive approach to model the targeted reading comprehension skills.
		
Visit https://haywood.lzill.co/r/44100		