

Procedure: Days 8-18 “Economy” *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau

1. Review background information about Henry David Thoreau. (As indicated previously, students should have some knowledge of who he was, what he did, and his philosophy,
2. Some possible DVD’s to show students:

Walden Discovery Channel School Discovery Communications 2003

Thoreau’s Walden Photovision 2012

Marbles with Thoreau Handwritten Pictures and Southern Adventist University 2009

3. Students read “Economy” with study guide questions. Teacher may decide to read some sections with the students as a large group or use an audio book of *Walden*.
4. Discuss the study guide questions as a large group.
5. Group work on “Economy”
6. “Economy” quotes group work
7. Photo group work on “Economy”
8. Share with large group the findings of small group work.
9. Use of time chart and evaluation of time/activity paper

Evaluation

1. Small group work
2. Large group discussion
3. Individual photo assignment
4. Time chart and written response

Extensions after completion of either “Economy” or *Walden*.

Read *The Little Prince* by Antoine Saint Exupery and compare and contrast it to Thoreau’s theme in “Economy. Use quotes from *The Little Prince* and Thoreau and write an essay that explains their similarity and meaning.

13. How did Henry earn some extra money?

14. How did Henry make his bread?

15. Describe Henry's furniture.

16. How did Henry survive financially? What kind of labor did he do?

17. What did Henry say he valued? How did he not wish to spend his time?

18. What does Henry mean when he writes: "In short, I am convinced, both by faith and experience, that to maintain one's self on this earth is not a hardship but a pastime, if we will live simply and wisely..."

19. What are Henry's views on philanthropy?

20. Read the complementary verses and in two sentences explain the title: "The Pretensions of Poverty".

GROUP WORK (FIRST “ECONOMY” ACTIVITY)

Discuss the following questions and be prepared to present your findings to the large group setting. Use extra paper if you need it.

What are some of the ways Henry suggests to retain “child-like” behavior in Economy”? Be sure to support your responses with quotes from the chapter and be prepared to explain them.

How does Henry view “time”? Be prepared to support your responses with quotes from the chapter and be able to explain them.

GROUP WORK (SECOND “ECONOMY” ACTIVITY)

Using the quotes from “Economy”, match at least five of them to each of the preliminary pieces that we read and discussed (“House on Pooh Corner”, “Fern Hill”, and “Sic Vita”). Write the lines in the appropriate columns. Explain in at least a paragraph for each piece, what the similarities or dissimilarities are.

Quotes from "Economy"

"Moreover, I, on my side, require every writer, first or last, a simple and sincere account of his own life, and not merely what he has heard of other men's lives..."

"I have traveled a good deal in Concord; and everywhere, in shops, and offices, and fields, the inhabitants have appeared to me to be doing penance in a thousand remarkable ways."

"I see young men, my townsmen, whose misfortune it is to have inherited farms, houses, barns, cattle, and farming tools; for these are more easily acquired than got rid of... Why should they begin digging their graves as soon as they are born?"

"But men labor under a mistake. The better part of the man is soon plowed into the soil for compost. By a seeming fate, commonly called necessity, they are employed, as it says in an old book, laying up treasures which moth and rust will corrupt and thieves break through and steal."

"Most men, even in this comparatively free country, through mere ignorance and mistake, are so occupied with factitious cares and superfluously coarse labors of life that its finer fruits cannot be plucked by them."

"Actually, the laboring man has not leisure for a true integrity day by day; he cannot afford to sustain the manliest relations to men; his labor would be depreciated in the market. He has no time to be anything but a machine."

"It is hard to have a Southern overseer; it is worse to have a Northern one; but worst of all when you are the slave-driver of yourself."

"What a man thinks of himself, that is which determines, or rather indicates his fate."

"As if you could kill time without injuring eternity."

"The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation. What is called resignation is confirmed desperation."

“When we consider what, to use the words of the catechism, is the chief end of man, and what are the true necessities and means of life, it appears as if men had deliberately chosen the common mode of living because they preferred it to any other. Yet they honestly think there is no choice left. But alert and healthy natures remember that the sun rose clear. It is never too late to give up our prejudices.”

“What old people say you cannot do, you, try and find that you can.”

“I have lived some thirty years on this planet, and I have yet to hear the first syllable of valuable or even earnest advice from my seniors.”

“Who shall say what prospect life offers to another? Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look into each other’s eyes for an instant?”

“The incessant anxiety and strain of some is a well-nigh incurable form of disease. We are made to exaggerate the importance of what work we do; and yet how much is not done by us!”

“It would be some advantage to live a primitive and frontier life, though in the midst of an outward civilization, if only to learn what are the gross necessities of life and what methods have been taken to obtain them...”

“In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to toe that line”

“How many mornings, summer and winter, before yet any neighbor was stirring about his business, have I been about mine...It is true, I never assisted the sun materially in his rising but, it was of the last importance only to be present at it.”

“So many autumn, ay, and winter days, spent outside the town, trying to hear what was in the wind, to hear, and carry it express!”

“At other times watching from the observatory of some cliff or tree, to telegraph any new arrival; or waiting at evening on the hilltops for the sky to fall, that I might catch something, though I never caught much, and that, manna-wise, would dissolve again in the sun.”

“For many years, I was self-appointed inspector of snow-storms and rain-storms, and did my duty faithfully; surveyor, if not of highways, then of forest paths and all across-lot routes, keeping them open, and ravines bridged and passable at all seasons, where public heel had testified to their utility.”

“I have looked after the wild stock of the town, which give a faithful herdsman a good deal of trouble by leaping fences; and I have had an eye to the unfrequented nooks and corners of the farm...”

the red huckleberry, the sand cherry and the nettle tree, the red pine and the black ash, the white grape and the yellow violet, which might have withered else in dry seasons.”

“Every child begins the world again, to some extent, and loves to stay outdoors, even in wet and cold. It plays house, as well as horse, having an instinct for it.”

“For many years, I was self-appointed inspector of snow-storms and rain-storms, and did my duty faithfully; surveyor, if not of highways, then of forest paths and all across-lot routes, keeping them open, and ravines bridged and passable at all seasons, where public heel had testified to their utility.”

“I have looked after the wild stock of the town, which give a faithful herdsman a good deal of trouble by leaping fences; and I have had an eye to the unfrequented nooks and corners of the farm...”

“I have watered the red huckleberry, the sand cherry and the nettle tree, the red pine and the black ash, the white grape and the yellow violet, which might have withered else in dry seasons.”

“...for my greatest skill has been to want but little.”

“I would not have anyone adopt *my* mode of living on any account; for beside that before he has fairly learned it I may have found out another for myself, I desire that there may be as many different persons in the world as possible; but I would have each one be very careful to find out and pursue *his own* way, and not his father’s or mother’s or his neighbor’s instead.”

“House on Pooh Corner”

“Economy”

“Fern Hill”

“Economy”

“Sic Vita”

“Economy”

GROUP WORK PHOTOGRAPHS

Each photograph is of a place in Concord, MA that was special to Henry. As a group, choose one photo and explain why Henry may have liked that place. Consider the following—would there be any child-like qualities he could experience there? If so, what?

How would Henry make use of his time in this place?

In your opinion, would it be a use of time well spent? Why or why not?

ASSIGNMENT: Take a photograph of a place that makes you feel child-like. In a written response, explain what is special about this place and the child-like characteristics that you exhibit there.

When you are there, how do you make use of your time? Is it time well spent in your opinion?

DUE DATE:

FINAL ASSIGNMENT

Write a composition that explains how Henry David Thoreau reflected child-like behavior in “Economy” and ways that he spent his time well.

Consider the following:

In what ways was he aware, awake, and alive?

How did he propose to live a deliberate life? What choices did he make?

Be sure to include at least five quotes from “Economy” to support your statements and cite them properly.

Conclude your paper by reflecting on the ways that you can you can retain child-like qualities in your life being aware, awake, and alive. How will you make good use of your time?

Be sure to include a bibliography.

DUE DATE:

TIME	SATURDAY ACTIVITIES	SUNDAY ACTIVITIES
12:00 A.M.		
1:00 A.M.		
2:00 A.M.		
3:00 A.M.		
4:00 A.M.		
5:00 A.M.		
6:00 A.M.		
7:00 A.M.		
8:00 A.M.		
9:00 A.M.		
10:00 A.M.		
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