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### NEH Curriculum Unit

#### Living and Writing Deliberately: The Concord Landscapes and Legacy of Henry David Thoreau

**Background:** American literature at ABRHS is taught thematically. It is a tenth grade course, taught at four levels. Our class periods are 47 minutes long. This unit plan is designed with our college preparatory course in mind. Our core texts include *The Crucible*, *The Glass Castle*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Into the Wild*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, and short works from Poe, Emerson, Thoreau, and Dickinson, among others.

I incorporate elements of Thoreau's work and legacy throughout my curriculum. What follows are three different units where I plan to incorporate application to Thoreau. Thread 1 serves as an introduction to the grade 10 identity unit. Threads 2 and 3 are still about the identity unit, and both use Jeannette Walls' *The Glass Castle* as the core novel. The lessons for these two threads include the same two essential questions that we use as a department, but each thread also has additional essential questions that are specific to the thread in question. In addition, these two threads include excerpts from "Civil Disobedience" and short quotes from *Walden*. Finally, thread 4 uses *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and makes the transition from the identity unit to the freedom unit. This thread also includes excerpts from "Slavery in Massachusetts."

All strategies noted, including "Save the Last Word for Me," "Think-Pair-Share," etc. would have been taught, modeled, and practiced prior to these lesson sequences.

Year Long Essential Question:

- 1) What does it mean to be an American?

<b>Thread #1: Being Awake, Aware, and Alive</b>
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Lesson Background: This series of lessons builds on an introduction to Thoreau and his work. Students would already have some background knowledge on Thoreau, and some students have a strong sense of transcendentalism already, having previously studied *Being Henry David* as eighth graders.

These lessons would be taught as introduction to our Identity unit.

Course-Wide Essential Questions for the Identity Unit:

1. *How is identity formed?*
2. *How do societal expectations affect the development of our identities?*

Additional Essential Question for this Thread:

1. *What pieces of your identity contribute to you being "aware" of and "alive" in the world around you?*

Objectives:

At the end of this 3 day sequence, and after completing the writing assignment, students will be able to:

1. *Discuss their own understandings of what it means to be “awake, alive, and aware.”*
2. *Articulate how closely studying significant objects in our lives can deepen our understandings of ourselves and the world around us.*

Procedures/Materials:**Lesson 1:**

- 1) Students will be given two different excerpts from the *Walden* Chapter “Where I Lived and What I Lived For.” Independently, they will choose first the word and then the phrase that they believe are most significant in each excerpt. They will then annotate for their rationale.

## Excerpt 1:

*To be awake is to be alive. [...] We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. [...]*

## Excerpt 2:

*I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life [...]*

- 2) Students will then participate in a modified “Save the Last Word for Me” protocol discussion with two other classmates. The first student states which word he picked, but does not explain why. The other two participants each have 30 seconds to explain why they believe that chosen word could be important. Then the student who originally chose that word explains his rationale. This process will repeat until all three students have had the opportunity to have the “last word” on their chosen word and phrase in both excerpts.
- 3) As a whole class, we will discuss findings and patterns in the groups’ analyses.
- 4) Next, we will create a class list of all of the different activities and ways that we think contribute to us feeling “awake” and “aware” in our world.
- 5) Exit Ticket (formative assessment): What is the activity/experience in your life that makes you feel the most “alive” and “aware”? Explain.

**Lesson 2:**

- 1) Students will begin with a quick write:  
*Yesterday we discussed what it means to be “aware” and “alive.” What do you think is the relationship between being aware/awake and the development of your identity?*

- 2) Students will then discuss their responses with their “elbow partner.” Each pair will then share out one conclusion they came to regarding the relationship between being aware/awake and identity development.
- 3) By this point, students will have started to explore how it is our passions, family, friends, connections, etc. that help us feel aware/awake and contribute to our identities as we grow and mature. Discussing group responses from the think-pair-share of step 2 will continue during this step.
- 4) Next, I will display an A-B t-shirt. For ten minutes, students will write about the extent to which this object contributes to them feeling “awake”/”aware” and how it represents part of their identity.
- 5) Students will then be invited to share 1-2 sentences from their response. The goal is here is to show the diversity of experience: how they can all look at the same object but it leads each of them to feel “awake”/“aware” in different ways.
- 6) We will then engage in a whole class discussion about what can prevent us from feeling “awake” and “aware” in our world.
- 7) Exit ticket (formative assessment): Students will explain one object that they think best represents what makes them feel “aware” and “awake.”

### Lesson 3:

- 1) I will present the personal narrative assignment about Object Writing (summative assessment).

*Writing Prompt: We have discussed how being aware/awake contributes to the development of our identities. You will choose ONE (1) object that you believe best represents your identity and best demonstrates how you are “aware” and “awake.”*

*You will describe the object, but you will also develop your narrative so as to explain why this object is significant in your life and contributes to you feeling “aware” and “awake” in 2017. Your voice will be engaging and authentic.*

*You will have class-time to journal, brainstorm, and develop your narrative.*

*You will be assessed using the Personal/Creative writing rubric.*

- 2) Students would then have time to start brainstorming.
- 3) In the days that follow, students would participate in several prewriting and journaling activities to help them engage with the Object Writing assignment. In addition, we would also do several mini lessons about voice and style. Students would also spend class time drafting and revising their narrative.

**Thread #2: Hearing that Different Drummer**

Lesson Background: This series of lessons would occur after students read parts 1-2 in *The Glass Castle*. Students typically read 20-30 pages every two days. We would have discussed key plot and theme details every day, but these activities explained below are to be used as a synthesis of approximately the first half of the novel. This novel is read as part of our Identity Unit.

In addition, students would also have read excerpts from the following chapters in *Walden* prior to the activities outlined below: “Where I Lived & What I Lived For,” “Sounds,” and “Solitude.”

Course-Wide Essential Questions for the Identity Unit:

1. *How is identity formed?*
2. *How do societal expectations affect the development of our identities?*

Additional Essential Questions for this Thread:

1. *Why is it important for an individual to listen to his conscience and follow his own beliefs?*
2. *Under what circumstances can following one’s own beliefs be problematic?*

Objectives:

At the end of this lesson sequence, students will be able to:

1. *Explain the importance and challenges of following one’s conscience.*
2. *Explain key elements of Thoreau’s “Conclusion” in Walden through close reading.*
3. *Apply Thoreau’s understandings about identity and self to specific events and characters in The Glass Castle.*

Procedures/Materials:

**Lesson 1:**

- 1) Students would come to class having read paragraphs 4, 5, and 10 of the Conclusion of *Walden* (see attached). They also would have answered three questions for homework (formative assessment):
  - a. *Using paragraph 4, explain why you think Thoreau decided to leave his cabin in the woods.*
  - b. *What do you think is the most important lesson we can learn from paragraph 5? Explain.*
  - c. *Reread paragraph 10. We get a popular expression from this paragraph. What do you think it means to “march to the beat of your own drum”?*
- 2) Students will participate in a Gallery Walk exercise. Each of the questions listed above will be on a separate piece of large chart paper. Each piece of chart paper will be taped up around the room. Students will take their marker and silently “visit” each paper and record their thoughts, using their homework answers to guide their responses. They will also respond to their classmates’ ideas (thus, this becomes a “silent discussion”). In addition to the 3 questions listed above, there will also be a fourth question that students will respond to on the fly:
  - d. *Which characters that we have studied this year (or last year) do you think live their lives according to Thoreau’s advice to march to the beat of your own drum, no matter what anyone else thinks? Explain.*
- 3) We would then take 10-15 minutes to debrief the Gallery Walk and to discuss patterns and tensions that emerge.

- 4) Exit Ticket (**formative assessment**): Explain what Thoreau means in the following excerpt, and explain one character or real-life example that you believe lives his/her life according to Thoreau's advice: *"If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."*

### Lesson 2:

- 1) Students will be arranged in 5 groups. Each group will be assigned approximately 25 pages from *The Glass Castle*. On their large chart paper, each group will record 3 passages. The first passage should answer essential question 1, the second passage must answer essential question 2, and the third passages could answer either question:
- Why is it important for an individual to listen to his conscience and follow his own beliefs?*
  - Under what circumstances can following one's own beliefs be problematic?*

Underneath each passage, groups will take bulleted notes about how their chosen passage answers the essential question.

(Group 1: Pages 1-25; Group 2: Pages 26-50; Group 3: Pages 51-75; Group 4: Pages 76-101; Group 5: Pages 102-125).

- 2) On a second piece of chart paper, each group will also answer the following question: *Using what you know about Thoreau and his beliefs, how do you think he would respond to the Walls' family following their own beliefs? Explain.*
- 3) It will take the entire period for students to complete the above tasks.

### Lesson 3:

- Students will spend a few minutes in their groups wrapping up any tasks from yesterday and deciding how they will "teach" their conclusions to the class.
- Each group will then come to the front of the room and present their passages, explanations, and Thoreau Application Reflections to the class.
- As a whole class, we will discuss overall observations, patterns, and conclusions that the groups came to.
- Next, students will independently reflect on the following: *how does applying Thoreau's ideas confirm or challenge your understanding of Rosemary or Rex Walls? Explain.*
- Students will then share out their reflections. The teacher can also collect these reflections as a way to informally assess for understanding.

## Conclusion Excerpts from *Walden* ( Thread #2, Lesson 1)

[4] I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spare any more time for that one. It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route, and make a beaten track for ourselves. I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pond-side; and though it is five or six years since I trod it, it is still quite distinct. It is true, I fear, that others may have fallen into it, and so helped to keep it open. The surface of the earth is soft and impressible by the feet of men; and so with the paths which the mind travels. How worn and dusty, then, must be the highways of the world, how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity! I did not wish to take a cabin passage, but rather to go before the mast and on the deck of the world, for there I could best see the moonlight amid the mountains. I do not wish to go below now.

[5] I learned this, at least, by my experiment: that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will put some things behind, will pass an invisible boundary; new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish themselves around and within him; or the old laws be expanded, and interpreted in his favor in a more liberal sense, and he will live with the license of a higher order of beings. In proportion as he simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness. If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

[...]

[10] Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed and in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away. It is not important that he should mature as soon as an apple tree or an oak. Shall he turn his spring into summer? [...]

### Thread #3: Living in Society

Lesson Background: This series of lessons would occur after students had been introduced to Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience," and after they had read through part three in *The Glass Castle* (through page 241 out of 288 pages). We would have discussed key plot points and overarching themes. However, this thread represents a synthesis of parts one, two, and three of the novel.

Course-Wide Essential Questions for the Identity Unit:

1. *How is identity formed?*
2. *How do societal expectations affect the development of our identities?*

Additional Essential Questions for this Thread:

1. *What are the consequences of defying societal expectations?*
2. *How can non-conformity lead to a greater sense of self?*

Objectives:

At the end of this lesson sequence, students will be able to:

1. *Explain Thoreau's goals in writing "Civil Disobedience."*
2. *Apply Thoreau's objectives in "Civil Disobedience" to events of *The Glass Castle*.*

Procedures/Materials:

#### Lesson 1:

- 1) Students would have been given the "Civil Disobedience" Excerpt (see attached) previously. In addition, during that prior class period, we would have discussed background to the text, including why Thoreau spent a night in jail. We would have read the text two times the day before, discussing challenging vocabulary and phrases. Finally, we also would have talked about more recent examples of Civil Disobedience, including an article about parents protesting standardized tests and telling the school/state that their child would not sit for the exam.
- 2) For homework the previous night, students would have underlined and annotated one text-to-text connection they made between "Civil Disobedience" and any other text we read this year (or freshman year).
- 3) We will begin class by having a few students share their text-to-text connections.
- 4) Next, in groups of 3-4, students will apply the Three Big Questions strategy. The three questions are:

- a. **What Surprised Me?**
- b. **What did the Author Assume I Already Knew?**
- c. **What Challenged, Changed, or Confirmed What I Already Knew?**

As a group, students will take turns reading out loud the "Civil Disobedience" excerpt, stopping at the end of each paragraph. Each student will then annotate the paragraph for "surprises" using an **S**, for "assumptions" using a **A**, and for "challenged/changed/confirmed" using a **C**.

- 5) After reading out loud and then annotating independently, students will share out their surprises, assumptions, and challenges/changes/confirmations in their groups. These three types of annotations lead to students discussing the significance of the text in their small groups.
- 6) Finally, students will choose 1 of their surprises/assumptions/3 Cs to share in class tomorrow. They will highlight it and jot down briefly what they are thinking.

### Lesson 2:

- 1) Each student will share one of their surprises/assumptions/3 Cs from yesterday's small group discussion.
- 2) We will then take another 10 minutes to clarify any confusions or misconceptions from the "Civil Disobedience" excerpt.
- 3) For the next activity, students will work with a partner on shared Google Doc to apply Thoreau and "Civil Disobedience" to *The Glass Castle*.
- 4) Pairs of students will choose 1-2 sentences from "Civil Disobedience" that they think connect with *The Glass Castle* in order to develop a RAFT writing.
  - a. First they will complete a graphic organizer (see attached)
  - b. Next they will use the graphic organizer to type a letter in the persona of Rex or Rosemary Walls. They will include their chosen "Civil Disobedience" sentences and explain how a choice they (as their chosen character's voice) made in the novel connects with Thoreau's ideas in "Civil Disobedience."
  - c. Students will be assessed using the creative writing and literary analysis rubrics.
  - d. Students will have day 2 and day 3 to work on this response in class.



### Excerpt from “Civil Disobedience (for Thread #3, Lesson 1)

[1] I HEARTILY ACCEPT the motto, — "That government is best which governs least"; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe, — "That government is best which governs not at all"; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty, and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure.

[2] This American government — what is it but a tradition, though a recent one, endeavoring to transmit itself unimpaired to posterity, but each instant losing some of its integrity? It has not the vitality and force of a single living man; for a single man can bend it to his will. It is a sort of wooden gun to the people themselves. But it is not the less necessary for this; for the people must have some complicated machinery or other, and hear its din, to satisfy that idea of government which they have. Governments show thus how successfully men can be imposed on, even impose on themselves, for their own advantage. It is excellent, we must all allow. Yet this government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the alacrity with which it got out of its way. *It* does not keep the country free. *It* does not settle the West. *It* does not educate. The character inherent in the American people has done all that has been accomplished; and it would have done somewhat more, if the government had not sometimes got in its way. For government is an expedient by which men would fain succeed in letting one another alone; and, as has been said, when it is most expedient, the governed are most let alone by it. Trade and commerce, if they were not made of India rubber, would never manage to bounce over the obstacles which legislators are continually putting in their way; and, if one were to judge these men wholly by the effects of their actions, and not partly by their intentions, they would deserve to be classed and punished with those mischievous persons who put obstructions on the railroads.

[3] But, to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, I ask for, not at once no government, but *at once* a better government. Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it.

[4] After all, the practical reason why, when the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule, is not because they are most likely to be in the right, nor because this seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. But a government in which the majority rule in all cases cannot be based on justice, even as far as men understand it. Can there not be a government in which majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong, but conscience? — in which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable? Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation *with* a conscience.

Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is, that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, ay, against their common sense and consciences, which makes it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power?

### RAFT Writing Assignment (for Thread #3, Lesson 2)

Complete the following prewriting activities before you draft your letter.

Part I:

Our Chosen Sentence(s) from “Civil Disobedience”:	What we think these lines mean:	How we think this connects to the novel:

Part II (Developing your RAFT)

R	Role	Are you Rex or Rosemary?
A	Audience	Your children: are you writing to all of them? Just Jeannette? Etc.
F	Format	Letter
T	Topic	Connect “Civil Disobedience” to specific moments in the novel

**Thread #4: Examining Desperate and Deliberate Lives**

Lesson Background: This lesson sequence asks students to make connections between Thoreau and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. We read this text as part of the Freedom Unit, and it follows our reading of *The Glass Castle* and several other short works. As such, we continue to make connections in the Freedom unit to previous essential questions about non-conformity and following one's conscience.

These lessons require that students have read through chapter 31 in *Huck* and that they have been given background information on Thoreau's speech "Slavery in Massachusetts." Students would be provided with a timeline that merges events from *Huck* with "Slavery in Massachusetts: we would have discussed The Kansas-Nebraska Act, Anthony Burns and Edward Loring, The Fugitive Slave Act, as well as important background for *Huck Finn*. It's also important to remind students that Thoreau is writing about Massachusetts in 1854, while Twain is writing in 1876 about the 1840s. Students in this class do not read chapters 20-30 of *Huck* (The Duke and the King).

Course-Wide Essential Questions for the Freedom Unit:

1. *How does the definition of freedom vary according to the individual?*
2. *What obstacles must an individual overcome in order to achieve freedom?*

Additional Essential Questions for this Thread:

1. *What behaviors and choices are indicative of living a deliberate and desperate life?*
2. *How does non-conformity and following one's conscience contribute to leading a deliberate and desperate life?*

Objectives:

At the end of this lesson sequence, students will be able to:

1. *Demonstrate comprehension and analysis of Huck's decision to tear up the letter that would have sold Jim out.*
2. *Explain Thoreau's objectives in "Slavery in Massachusetts" and how understanding this text deepens our understanding of what's at stake in Huck and Jim's quest for freedom.*

Procedures/Materials:

**Lesson 1:**

- 1) As mentioned previously, students will have read through chapter 31 in the novel. They also will have completed the chapter 31 discussion handout (see attached).
- 2) On the first day of discussion, students will make meaning of Huck's choice to tear up his letter that sells Jim out as a slave, despite the potential consequences. Students will explore Huck's moral dilemma using their chosen words, phrases, sentences, and responses to questions on the handout.
- 3) Next, students will return to the following Thoreau quote from earlier in the year (thread #1): *"I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; [...] I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life."*

Students will be asked to explain independently the differences in how Huck and Jim are both living deliberate and desperate lives in the woods. While both are searching for freedom, the risks and consequences are radically different for both men.

This response will be collected for informal assessment.

### Lesson 2-3:

- 1) Students will be given a copy of the excerpts from Thoreau's "Slavery in Massachusetts." We will need to spend time discussing background information and unfamiliar references. We will read it through once together.
- 2) Next, students will work in pairs to do a close reading of the text. Students will take turns reading paragraphs. After student 1 reads paragraph 1, student 2 will summarize the paragraph. The roles then switch for paragraph 2, and so on and so forth. Students will continue making meaning of the text using this paired-reading strategy.
- 3) As a whole class, we will then discuss the following:
  - a. What are Thoreau's objectives in this lecture?
  - b. What is Thoreau's tone in this lecture?
  - c. How does this speech seem different from the excerpts of *Walden* we have read?
- 4) Exit ticket (formative assessment): What's one question you still have about our reading of "Slavery in Massachusetts"? (Students will complete this exit ticket even if we don't finish the discussion outlined in step 3).

### Lesson 3-4:

- 1) We will finish up any discussion from the previous day. We will also use students' exit tickets from the day before to clarify any confusions or misconceptions.
- 2) I will remind students that *Huck Finn* is written about the 1840s, Thoreau is writing "Slavery in Massachusetts" in 1854, and Twain writes *Huck Finn* in 1876.
- 3) Next, students will complete a think-pair-share-square activity. First, they will independently respond to the following: *how does reading "Slavery in Massachusetts" deepen your understanding of what is at stake for both Huck and Jim as they make their way further into slave territory seeking freedom? Use a direct quote from the novel to support your thoughts.*

After they respond independently, they will pair up and share their thoughts. Each pair will then meet with another pair ("square") to discuss all four members' responses.

- 4) As a whole class, we will discuss the groups' observations. In addition, we will also discuss what Thoreau is suggesting through his speech about living a "desperate and "deliberate" life.
- 5) Exit ticket (formative assessment): *Over the past few days, we have discussed Huck and Jim leading deliberate lives, and we have discussed what it means to live a deliberate life in "Slavery in Massachusetts." Do you think Huck will continue to live his*

*life in a “desperate and deliberate” way over the course of the novel? If yes, explain. If no, explain what you think will prevent him from doing so.*

**Conclusions:**

These threads do not feature lessons that follow one after the other over the course of several days. Instead, there would definitely be gaps in between these sequences: additional lessons would follow the activities outlined here for each of the threads. There would also certainly be other formative and summative assessments for both novels used here. In addition, I would continue to use Thoreau’s works throughout the remainder of the year.

### Chapter 31 Discussion (for Thread #4, Lesson 1)

*Directions:* Read this entire excerpt from chapter 31 as Huck wrestles with his conscience. Then, use a highlighter or pen to underline the WORD, the PHRASE (group of words), and the SENTENCE (all different) that you think are most important for understanding how Huck is feeling about his sense of morality and his conscience. Complete the two questions at the end as well.

It made me shiver. And I about made up my mind to pray, and see if I couldn't try to quit being the kind of a boy I was and be better. So I kneeled down. But the words wouldn't come. Why wouldn't they? It warn't no use to try and hide it from Him. Nor from ME, neither. I knowed very well why they wouldn't come. It was because my heart warn't right; it was because I warn't square; it was because I was playing double. I was letting ON to give up sin, but away inside of me I was holding on to the biggest one of all. I was trying to make my mouth SAY I would do the right thing and the clean thing, and go and write to that nigger's owner and tell where he was; but deep down in me I knowed it was a lie, and He knowed it. You can't pray a lie—I found that out.

So I was full of trouble, full as I could be; and didn't know what to do. At last I had an idea; and I says, I'll go and write the letter—and then see if I can pray. Why, it was astonishing, the way I felt as light as a feather right straight off, and my troubles all gone. So I got a piece of paper and a pencil, all glad and excited, and set down and wrote:

*Miss Watson, your runaway nigger Jim is down here two mile below Pikesville, and Mr. Phelps has got him and he will give him up for the reward if you send. - HUCK FINN*

I felt good and all washed clean of sin for the first time I had ever felt so in my life, and I knowed I could pray now. But I didn't do it straight off, but laid the paper down and set there thinking—thinking how good it was all this happened so, and how near I come to being lost and going to hell. And went on thinking. And got to thinking over our trip down the river; and I see Jim before me all the time: in the day and in the night-time, sometimes moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a-floating along, talking and singing and laughing. But somehow I couldn't seem to strike no places to harden me against him, but only the other kind. I'd see him standing my watch on top of his'n, 'stead of calling me, so I could go on sleeping; and see him how glad he was when I come back out of the fog; and when I come to him again in the swamp, up there where the feud was; and such-like times; and would always call me honey, and pet me and do everything he could think of for me, and how good he always was; and at last I struck the time I saved him by telling the men we had small-pox aboard, and he was so grateful, and said I was the best friend old Jim ever had in the world, and the ONLY one he's got now; and then I happened to look around and see that paper.

It was a close place. I took it up, and held it in my hand. I was a-trembling, because I'd got to decide, forever, betwixt two things, and I knowed it. I studied a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then says to myself:

"All right, then, I'll GO to hell"—and tore it up.

It was awful thoughts and awful words, but they was said. And I let them stay said; and never thought no more about reforming. I shoved the whole thing out of my head, and said I would take up wickedness again, which was in my line, being brung up to it, and the other warn't. And for a starter I would go to work and steal Jim out of slavery again; and if I could think up anything worse, I would do that, too; because as long as I was in, and in for good, I might as well go the whole hog.

**Questions:**

1) Explain Huck's internal conflict.

2) Why is it important that Huck is willing to "go to hell" for Jim? Think about his feelings in chapter 1:

*"Then [Miss Watson] told me all about the bad place, and I said I wished I was there. She got mad then, but I didn't mean no harm. All I wanted was to go somewheres; all I wanted was a change, I warn't particular. She said it was wicked to say what I said; said she wouldn't say it for the whole world; she was going to live so as to go to the good place. Well, I couldn't see no advantage in going where she was going, so I made up my mind I wouldn't try for it. But I never said so, because it would only make trouble, and wouldn't do no good" (2).*



## Slavery in Massachusetts Excerpt - Thoreau

[1] I LATELY ATTENDED a meeting of the citizens of Concord, expecting, as one among many, to speak on the subject of slavery in Massachusetts; but I was surprised and disappointed to find that what had called my townsmen together was the destiny of Nebraska,<sup>(1)</sup> and not of Massachusetts, and that what I had to say would be entirely out of order. I had thought that the house was on fire, and not the prairie; but though several of the citizens of Massachusetts are now in prison for attempting to rescue a slave from her own clutches,<sup>(2)</sup> not one of the speakers at that meeting expressed regret for it, not one even referred to it. It was only the disposition of some wild lands a thousand miles off which appeared to concern them. The inhabitants of Concord are not prepared to stand by one of their own bridges, but talk only of taking up a position on the highlands beyond the Yellowstone River.<sup>(3)</sup> Our Buttricks and Davises and Hosmers<sup>(4)</sup> are retreating thither, and I fear that they will leave no Lexington Common between them and the enemy. There is not one slave in Nebraska; there are perhaps a million slaves in Massachusetts.<sup>(5)</sup>

[4] Again it happens that the Boston Court-House is full of armed men, holding prisoner and trying a MAN, to find out if he is not really a SLAVE. Does any one think that justice or God awaits Mr. Loring's<sup>(7)</sup> decision? For him to sit there deciding still, when this question is already decided from eternity to eternity, and the unlettered slave himself and the multitude around have long since heard and assented to the decision, is simply to make himself ridiculous. We may be tempted to ask from whom he received his commission, and who he is that received it; what novel statutes he obeys, and what precedents are to him of authority. Such an arbiter's very existence is an impertinence. We do not ask him to make up his mind, but to make up his pack.

[8] I have read a recent law of this State, making it penal for any officer of the "Commonwealth" to "detain or aid in the... detention," anywhere within its limits, "of any person, for the reason that he is claimed as a fugitive slave." Also, it was a matter of notoriety that a writ of replevin<sup>(10)</sup> to take the fugitive out of the custody of the United States Marshal could not be served for want of sufficient force to aid the officer.

[10] The whole military force of the State is at the service of a Mr. Suttle, a slaveholder from Virginia, to enable him to catch a man whom he calls his property; but not a soldier is offered to save a citizen of Massachusetts from being kidnapped! Is this what all these soldiers, all this *training*, have been for these seventy-nine years past?<sup>(11)</sup> Have they been trained merely to rob Mexico and carry back fugitive slaves to their masters?

[12] Three years ago, also, just a week after the authorities of Boston assembled to carry back a perfectly innocent man, and one whom they knew to be innocent, into slavery,<sup>(12)</sup> the inhabitants of Concord caused the bells to be rung and the cannons to be fired, to celebrate their liberty — and the courage and love of liberty of their ancestors who fought at the bridge.<sup>(13)</sup> As if *those* three millions had fought for the right to be free themselves, but to hold in slavery three million others. Nowadays, men wear a fool's-cap, and call it a liberty-cap.<sup>(14)</sup> I do not know but there are some who, if they were tied to a whipping-post, and could but get one hand free, would use it to ring the bells and fire the cannons to celebrate *their* liberty. So some of my townsmen took the liberty to ring and fire. That was the extent of their freedom; and when the sound of the bells died away, their liberty died away also; when the powder was all expended, their liberty went off with the smoke.

[15] Every humane and intelligent inhabitant of Concord, when he or she heard those bells and those cannons, thought not with pride of the events of the 19th of April, 1775,[\(15\)](#) but with shame of the events of the 12th of April, 1851.[\(16\)](#) But now we have half buried that old shame under a new one.

[17] I wish my countrymen to consider, that whatever the human law may be, neither an individual nor a nation can ever commit the least act of injustice against the obscurest individual without having to pay the penalty for it. A government which deliberately enacts injustice, and persists in it, will at length even become the laughing-stock of the world.[\(17\)](#)

[18] Much has been said about American slavery, but I think that we do not even yet realize what slavery is. If I were seriously to propose to Congress to make mankind into sausages, I have no doubt that most of the members would smile at my proposition, and if any believed me to be in earnest, they would think that I proposed something much worse than Congress had ever done. But if any of them will tell me that to make a man into a sausage would be much worse — would be any worse — than to make him into a slave — than it was to enact the Fugitive Slave Law, I will accuse him of foolishness, of intellectual incapacity, of making a distinction without a difference. The one is just as sensible a proposition as the other.

[22] The law will never make men free; it is men who have got to make the law free. They are the lovers of law and order who observe the law when the government breaks it.

[39] What should concern Massachusetts is not the Nebraska Bill, nor the Fugitive Slave Bill, but her own slaveholding and servility. Let the State dissolve her union with the slaveholder.[\(27\)](#) She may wriggle and hesitate, and ask leave to read the Constitution once more; but she can find no respectable law or precedent which sanctions the continuance of such a union for an instant.

[42] Covered with disgrace, the State has sat down coolly to try for their lives and liberties the men who attempted to do its duty for it. And this is called *justice*! They who have shown that they can behave particularly well may perchance be put under bonds for *their good behavior*. They whom truth requires at present to plead guilty are, of all the inhabitants of the State, preeminently innocent. While the Governor, and the Mayor, and countless officers of the Commonwealth are at large, the champions of liberty are imprisoned.