

# Thoreau experiences



Thoreau experiences and shares with his readers, and how the symbolism depicted and the elements of the setting contribute to his belief that humans can commune directly with the divine in nature. *Walden*, by Henry David Thoreau, is a novel about the natural world. Thoreau attempts to explain the purpose of life and the key to utmost happiness. He gives much advice to his readers, appearing to have figured everything out, however his own character rapidly changes and grows throughout his work. Thoreau often refers to communing with nature as the solution to a peaceful life. Through nature, Thoreau finds many problems can be fixed and if observations are made, life will take on a completely different meaning. Nature will bear the closest inspection. She invites us to lay our eye level with her smallest leaf, and take an insect view of its plain. (Thoreau, *The Journal of Henry David Thoreau* Vol. 1, October 22, 1839) Anne Frank noted in her diary, "The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature." (Frank, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, February 23, 1944) This description of the happiness found in nature fits directly with the idea of transcendentalist Henry David Thoreau. He believed that God could be found through becoming one with nature and observing the natural world. Nature became all things necessary when Thoreau moved to Walden Pond. Nature was his provider and his companion. It was his source of living and his confidant. Nature became everything simple and everything good in the world. In *Walden*, Thoreau states, "Let us first be as simple and well as Nature ourselves, dispel the clouds which hang over our brows, and take up a little

life into our pores. Do not stay to be an overseer of the poor, but endeavor to become one of the worthies of the world. (Thoreau, Walden, Chapter: Economy, page: paragraph: line: ) In the first chapter of Walden, Henry David Thoreau introduces his reasons for moving to Walden and writing his novel. He explains to his readers the value of simplicity and nature and the way life should truly be lived. Thoreau states, " Finding that my fellow- citizens were not likely to offer me any room in the court house, or any curacy or living anywhere else, but I must shift for myself, I turned my face more exclusively than ever to the woods, where I was better known. I determined to go into business at once, and not wait to acquire the usual capital, using such slender means as I had already got. My purpose in going to Walden Pond was not to live cheaply nor to live dearly there, but to transact some private business with the fewest obstacles; to be hindered from accomplishing which for want of a little common sense, a little enterprise and business talent, appeared not so sad as foolish." (Thoreau, Walden, Chapter: Economy, page: paragraph: line: ) After explaining his reasons for going to Walden, Thoreau invites his readers to become one with nature so they may commune directly with the Divine in nature.