

Transcendentalism reflectiveassignment assignment

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Prior to reading their works I analyzed situations much differently than I do now. Now, I have a significantly improved outlook on my life and the things that happen around me. In Walden's opening chapter, "Economy," Thoreau examines the tradeoffs we make in life, and asks himself, what are life's real necessities. In this chapter, Thoreau noted only four necessities: food, shelter, clothing, and energy. After reading this chapter, I thought back to when I had gone camping years ago, leaving behind everything but the bare necessities of life.

At the time, it felt like I would not survive, not having electricity or my own bathroom. I looked at things from a one point perspective, thinking my world was crashing down. After analyzing this chapter, now I am able to see I could not have been farther from the truth. I was too caught up in everyday human experiences and did not look at the "Vital facts of life" (Thoreau 214) that were right in front of me. In reality, I had everything that was essential for living right in front of me but could not see it.

Having read I am able to see this situation with a more optimistic perspective of a transcendentalist. Through Emerson's Self-Reliance he urges readers to trust their own intuition, rather than being a conformist. In his essay he states, "Trust thyself: Every heart bears witness to that iron string." (Emerson 210). For me, the most relevant situation in my life I could equate this to is what I have observed watching the children in my neighborhood. A child will get a new toy, and their friends will follow suit, wanting to fit in.

Emerson taught every person should be nonconformists in their society.

Much like the children, many current day people follow suit to the majority,

out of fear of being rejected. I was able to look back on this ex. ample after reading Emerson essay and came to the conclusion many of those children would be happier if they had toys they individually enjoyed. Having read Thoreau and Emerson I learned there is more than one way to 10 k at different situations. After reading more in depth about the transcendentalists I now think about things in a broader aspect.

It is not enough to kick at something in one way. Much like Emerson and Thoreau, I now see the importance of going beyond your everyday human n experience to see things in different ways. Most importantly, I have learned the writings of the transcendentalists can still be applied to modern day. Believe if more modern day people read t heir works, they would be able to see certain situations in a more optimistic outlook. This know welled could be useful to many people today because so many things are looked at one sided' y.