

# Part i. ralph waldo emerson

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Part I. Ralph Waldo Emerson In an essay published in 1841, Emerson addressed one of the central characteristics of the American sensibility: individualism. Before you read, take a moment to think about the term " self-reliance" and what it means to you as a teenager and a student. As you read, determine what " self-reliance" meant to Emerson and how your meaning and his overlap. - Read " Self Reliance." - Open and complete the questions on the Emerson Questions page. - Then, continue to Part II. Part II Henry David Thoreau " Civil Disobedience" was inspired by a night in jail, which Thoreau had to serve for not paying his poll tax. His refusal to pay a tax to the state stemmed from his opposition to slavery. The state supported it, and to show his disdain towards the state's position, he refused to pay this tax. Some people have suggested the essay shows that Thoreau merely wanted to withdraw from life and all its hard questions. Others see Thoreau's position as the only one he could take to justify his stand. Upon completion of this assignment, Part II, you will have to decide for yourself how this essay affects you. - Read " Civil Disobedience." - Write a letter to the editor either in support of, or in opposition to this statement from the excerpt above, " That government is best which governs not at all." - Thoreau - Before you begin writing, continue to the Report page, where you will receive further instruction on how to formulate this letter. - You will be adding this letter (Part II) to your Part I assignment to submit as your assessment for this lesson