

The transcendentalism movement with reference to thoreau



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Although the transcendentalism movement was an extremely long time ago the ideas are still pertinent today. When Henry David Thoreau said, “ 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”(247), that he would be telling people to be themselves many generations later. The transcendentalism movement took place during the early 1800’s when America was developing its own writing style. The authors of the time all thought in the same wavelength. Some of them, such as Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson belonged to a transcendentalism club in which they shared their ideas. Thoreau had ideas that he firmly believed in and tried to act upon his ideas. He wanted to live in solitude and be one with nature, so he went to Walden Pond and was semi-secluded from society. Except for a couple of times when he went to the nearby town for things he needed he was on his own. He did well with it, but wanted to move on with his life so he left Walden. After his experience, he decided to write about it in his book, Walden Pond. Thoreau tried to live his life based on his ideas no matter how extreme they may have been. These transcendentalists had many ideas that seemed to others to be extremely impractical. The authors thought that they could transform the world through their ideas. One of their main ideas was that we are all true individuals and should not conform to whatever the “ norm” is. Thoreau tells us to live our own life, whether it be good or bad, it is ours. “ However mean your life is, meet it and live it; do not shun it or call it hard names”(247). Also, we should do the morally right thing. We should do what our heart says is right and not always listen to our heads. They also wrote in an optimistic view and their writings were very inspiring. All of their ideas are relevant today on some level. People are reading Emerson and <https://assignbuster.com/the-transcendentalism-movement-with-reference-to-thoreau/>

Thoreau as though they were on the current best sellers list. Not everybody reads the material because they are assigned it, but rather they are using it as a tool to find out how to live their lives. All of our lives we are told to be ourselves and not to go along with the crowd, and that is the same thing Thoreau said over a century ago. Furthermore, we are told to do the right thing, however, today we use more our heads than our hearts to make decisions. As we read their writings we are inspired to change our lives, but most of us find it too hard to change. As a society we like to choose the easy way out, and in this case it is a lot easier to go along with the crowd than it is to stand out. We care so much about fitting in that we don't want to be different because we fear that nobody will like our true personalities. Henry David Thoreau was trying to inspire his generation to lead their own lives, but he must have had a loud voice because we hear him loud and clear many years later. Unfortunately, we don't have the courage that he had to act on his ideas. It is almost as if we are not born individually anymore, now societies are born as a whole and they do not contain any individuals. We need to spend more time stepping to the beat of our own drummer.