

Who is ralph waldo  
emerson?



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What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think (Ralph Waldo Emerson). Ralph Waldo Emerson was an American philosopher and spokesman for the American Transcendentalists. The Transcendentalists movement consists of a group of New England romantic writers, who believed that intuition was the means to truth.

In other words, to be true to yourself. In 1841, Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote an essay, *Self-Reliance*, to introduce the American Transcendentalists. In his essay to the public regarding the Transcendentalists movement, Ralph Waldo Emerson is attempting to express the idea of being your own person instead of just copying others.

In the beginning of his essay, Emerson is expressing how one should value their true self instead of being someone they are not. To demonstrate, he uses various analogies to reveal, There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better for worse as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him till.. (Emerson). By comparing envy to ignorance, Emerson feels that those who have desire and jealousy to be someone else are ignorant to that person's problems. Therefore, they should not want to be someone else, for no one is perfect and have their own issues. He views imitation as suicide because imitating someone would mean killing your own voice, ideas, and creativity. Emerson continues by stating that the wide universe is filled with people imitating and relying on others, and people should use what they are given to build their own originality. Emerson's use of analogy and

repetition is to encourage readers to appreciate their true self and to feel confidence or powerful within themselves,

Later in his essay, Emerson writes in a candid tone to let readers know that not everyone would be accepting to their true self. For instance, using descriptive language, he divulges:

For nonconformity the world whips you with its displeasure. And therefore a man must know how to estimate a sour face. The bystanders look askance on him in the public street or in the friend's parlour. If this aversation had its origin in contempt and resistance like his own, he might well go home with a sad countenance; but the sour faces of the multitude, like their sweet faces, have no deep cause, but are put on and off as the wind blows and a newspaper directs. (Emmerson)

Emerson uses the word displeasure to show readers that the world will and will always judge those who decide to expose their true self instead of changing themselves in order to fit in with society. He then states that people should not let a sour face change who they really are. Emmerson expresses that these judgmental people are everywhere even among their own friends. Throughout the essay, Emerson uses descriptive language to help readers understand that people will keep criticizing them until they change to fit society's standards. He uses descriptive words hoping readers will continue to take what the universe gave them to mold themselves into the person who they really are because at the end of the day the judgmental stares fade away into nothing.

Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay, *Self-Reliance*, influences readers by advising them to find self-independence instead of obeying social expectations. He uses analogies, descriptive language, and repetition to teach the importance of self-reliance and the challenging obstacles that come with. Emerson believes that conformity kills individualism and encourages readers to avoid conformity in order to reach self-confidence. Also, Emerson desires every person to be self-confident and different. His essay will forever continue to affect readers by giving them not only hope, but the confidence to express themselves truly.