

# Unit 01: Transcendentalism (Walden)

Content Area: **Language Arts**  
Course(s): **English 3A**  
Time Period: **Semester 1 & 2**  
Length: **2 weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Standards

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Please see list of standards for more details under the anchor standards. Please note that additional standards can be applied to any unit.

LA.L.11-12	Language
LA.L.11-12.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.11-12.1.A	Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.
LA.L.11-12.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.11-12.4.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
LA.L.11-12.4.B	Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).
LA.L.11-12.4.C	Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.
LA.L.11-12.4.D	Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
LA.L.11-12.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LA.L.11-12.5.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
LA.L.11-12.5.B	Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.
LA.L.11-12.6	Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
LA.W.11-12.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
LA.W.11-12.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
LA.W.11-12.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.11-12.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

LA.W.11-12.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
LA.W.11-12.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes.
LA.RI.11-12.1	Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written response, etc.), to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.RI.11-12.2	Determine two or more central ideas of a text, and analyze their development and how they interact to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.RI.11-12.3	Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
LA.RI.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).
LA.RI.11-12.5	Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
LA.RI.11-12.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.
LA.RI.11-12.7	Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
LA.RI.11-12.8	Describe and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. and global texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., The Federalist, presidential addresses).
LA.RI.11-12.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes and rhetorical features, including primary source documents relevant to U.S. and/or global history.
LA.RI.11-12.10a	By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed.
LA.RL.11-12.3	Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
LA.RL.11-12.5	Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
LA.SL.11-12	Speaking and Listening
LA.SL.11-12.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
LA.SL.11-12.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas.
LA.SL.11-12.1.B	Collaborate with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and assessments (e.g., student developed rubrics), and establish individual roles as needed.

LA.SL.11-12.1.C	Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
LA.SL.11-12.1.D	Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
LA.SL.11-12.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, qualitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
LA.SL.11-12.4	Present information, findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically. The content, organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
LA.SL.11-12.5	Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
LA.SL.11-12.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.3	Identify transferable career skills and design alternate career plans.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.4	Analyze how economic conditions and societal changes influence employment trends and future education.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.5	Research career opportunities in the United States and abroad that require knowledge of world languages and diverse cultures.
TECH.8.1.12.D.1	Demonstrate appropriate application of copyright, fair use and/or Creative Commons to an original work.
TECH.8.1.12.F	Critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making: Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources.
TECH.8.1.12.F.CS1	Identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation. Conventions of Standard English Vocabulary Acquisition and Use Conventions of Standard English Comprehension and Collaboration Comprehension and Collaboration Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

## **Enduring Understandings**

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Students will understand the following:

Transcendentalism, an American philosophy, connects nature with spirituality and promotes simplicity.

Authors of the period explored the themes of self-reliance, civil disobedience, nature, and individuality.

Writing of the Transcendentalist period reflects on the condition of the human experience and life experiences.

Transcendentalism values individuality and creativity above social acceptance, as well as personal vision and

truth above external reality.

## Essential Questions

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Where is the individual closest to the Divine?

How much of one's values must one compromise to live in society?

What roles do gender, sexuality, and morality play in the development of one's identity and individuality?

Who determines right and wrong for the individual?

## Knowledge and Skills

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Students will understand the traits, philosophies, and themes of the Transcendentalist movement in American literature.

Students will compare and contrast works of these literary movements with each other and with works of previously studied movements such as Romanticism and Puritanism.

Students will analyze the concept of social justice and reform through the poetry and prose of the Transcendentalist authors.

Students will analyze and discuss the elements of Transcendentalism, as well as the authors that have inspired controversy.

Students will evaluate the ideas of the Transcendentalist authors with current societal issues and analyze why their works remain relevant.

Students will analyze the relationship between non-conformity and participation in a democracy.

Students will explore the authors' discussion of the development of a person's individuality through gender roles, sexuality, and morality in society.

## Additional Resources

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**Core Text:** *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau

**Core Poem:** "Song of Myself" by Walt Whitman

**Non-fiction:**

"Self Reliance" by Henry David Thoreau

"Civil Disobedience" by Henry David Thoreau

"Nature" by Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Education" by Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Poetry:**

"O Captain! My Captain!" by Walt Whitman

"The Wound Dresser" by Walt Whitman

“I Hear America Singing” by Walt Whitman  
“When Lilacs last in the Dooryard Bloom’d” by Walt Whitman  
“When I Heard the Learn’d Astronomer” by Walt Whitman  
“A Noiseless, Patient Spider” by Walt Whitman  
“To a Waterfowl” by William Cullen Bryant  
“Shiloh” by Herman Melville  
“I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” William Wordsworth  
“Because I Could Not Stop for Death” Emily Dickinson  
“Wild Geese” Mary Oliver

**Supplemental Texts:**

*Hunting for Hope* Scott Sanders

*Bartleby the Scrivener* by Herman Melville