

# Unit 01: Transcendentalism (Walden)

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

## Standards

---

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

| ELA.L              | Language  |
|--------------------|---|
| ELA.L.SS.11–12.1   | Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.   |
| ELA.L.SS.11–12.1.A | Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and place, and is sometimes contested.  |
| ELA.L.SS.11–12.1.B | Observe hyphenation conventions.  |
| ELA.L.SS.11–12.1.C | Recognize spelling conventions.   |
| ELA.L.KL.11–12.2   | Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.   |
| ELA.L.KL.11–12.2.A | 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.  |
| ELA.L.KL.11–12.2.B | Vary syntax for effect, apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts.   |
| ELA.L.KL.11–12.2.C | Demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.  |
| ELA.L.VL.11–12.3   | Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.   |
| ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.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.  |
| ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.B | Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).  |
| ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.C | Analyze how an author or speaker uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text or discussion.   |
| ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.D | 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. |
| ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.E | 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).   |
| ELA.L.VI.11–12.4   | Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings, including connotative meanings.   |
| ELA.L.VI.11–12.4.A | Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.   |
| ELA.L.VI.11–12.4.B | Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.   |
| ELA.L.VI.11–12.4.C | Analyze how the meaning of a key term or terms develops or is refined over the course of  |

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
|                    | a text.   |
| ELA.L.VI.11–12.4.D | Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.   |
| ELA.R              | Reading   |
| ELA.RI.CR.11–12.1  | Accurately cite a range of thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to strongly support a comprehensive analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly and inferentially, as well as interpretations of the text.  |
| ELA.RI.IT.11–12.3  | Analyze the impact of an author's choices as they develop ideas throughout the text regarding a complex set of ideas or sequence of events, and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop.  |
| ELA.RI.PP.11–12.5  | Analyze an author's purpose in a text distinguishing what is directly stated in a text or through rhetoric, analyzing how style and content convey information and advance a point of view.   |
| ELA.RI.MF.11–12.6  | Synthesize complex information across multiple sources and formats to develop ideas, resolve conflicting information, or develop an interpretation that goes beyond explicit text information (e.g., express a personal point of view, new interpretation of the concept).  |
| ELA.RI.AA.11–12.7  | Describe and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. and global texts, and the premises, purposes, and arguments in these works.   |
| ELA.RI.CT.11–12.8  | Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and scientific significance for their purposes, including primary source documents relevant to U.S. and/or global history and texts proposing scientific or technical advancements.     |
| ELA.W              | Writing   |
| ELA.W.AW.11–12.1   | Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.  |
| ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.A | Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.  |
| ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.B | Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies and using sound reasoning and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. |
| ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.C | Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.  |
| ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.D | Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.   |
| ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.E | Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).  |
| ELA.W.NW.11–12.3   | Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.   |
| ELA.W.NW.11–12.3.A | Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.   |
| ELA.W.NW.11–12.3.B | Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.  |
| ELA.W.NW.11–12.3.C | Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of  |

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
|                     | mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).   |
| ELA.W.NW.11–12.3.D  | Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.   |
| ELA.W.NW.11–12.3.E  | Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.  |
| ELA.W.WP.11–12.4    | Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach; sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; tracking and reflecting on personal writing progress (e.g., using portfolios, journals, conferencing); or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. |
| ELA.SL              | Speaking and Listening   |
| ELA.SL.PE.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.   |
| ELA.SL.PE.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.  |
| ELA.SL.PE.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.  |
| ELA.SL.PE.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.  |
| ELA.SL.PE.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.   |
| ELA.SL.AS.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.  |

## **Enduring Understandings**

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

---

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

---

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

---

**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

---

**Transfer Goals**

Students will independently be able to apply concepts of life, death, sexuality, nature, gender, time, and history from the texts to their own lives.

Students will independently be able to evaluate the impact of nature on the human condition as seen in Transcendentalist works and apply that understanding of nature to their own lives.

---

**Assessment**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1\\_w12qVbVV7OTThe9VW43HSpZm3Czh9kegRwYqjMm7fQ/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_w12qVbVV7OTThe9VW43HSpZm3Czh9kegRwYqjMm7fQ/edit?usp=sharing)

---

**Modifications**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/17jJtNi1cFhRgM3667P67m3pGkj1sD-XarWejIWAANIg/edit?usp=sharing>