

Name: _____

Walden Vocabulary

L.N.1.2.4: Draw conclusions about connotations of words.

1. Stealthily (adv.): secretly or slyly

Sentence from text: ...like ghosts, were **stealthily** withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle.

Your sentence:

Connotation? _____

2. Meanly (adv.): in a small-minded manner

Sentence from the text: Still we live **meanly**, like ants, though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes...

Your sentence:

Connotation? _____

3. Superfluous (adj.): more than is needed

Sentence from text: ... it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a **superfluous** and evitable wretchedness.

Your sentence:

Connotation? _____

4. **Enterprise (noun): any undertaking, project, or venture**

Sentence from text: Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed, and in such desperate enterprises?

Your sentence:

Connotation? _____

5. **Dissipation (noun): a scattering in different directions**

Sentence from text: Do not seek so anxiously to be developed, to subject yourself to many influences to be played on; it is all **dissipation**.

Your sentence:

Connotation? _____

6. **Obsequious (adj.): polite or obedient from hope of gain; submissive or compliant**

Sentence from text: I sat at a table where were rich food and wine in abundance, and **obsequious** attendance, but sincerity and truth were not; and I went away hungry from the inhospitable board.

Your sentence:

Connotation? _____

REVIEW the terms below using examples from *Walden*:

1. **Allusion-** An allusion is a reference to a work of literature or to a person, place, or event outside of the piece of literature. Thoreau was a learned classical scholar, as shown by his many allusions to Greek and Roman literature. Use your prior knowledge and the footnotes to list and describe as many allusions as you can find:

What effect do the allusions produce in *Walden*? Do you think that they are appropriate in a book of this kind?

2. **Aphorism-** An aphorism is a brief statement that expresses a truth about life. An aphorism is usually one sentence long, and it is often humorous, pointed, or ironic. Thoreau writes in an aphoristic style. *Walden* is full of aphorisms such as, "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." Locate additional (**at least two**) aphorisms that especially appeal to you and **explain why you find them meaningful**.

3. **Figurative Language-** *Walden* is written in **prose (written or spoken language in its ordinary form)** that is characterized by rich poetic language. Find **at least one example of simile, metaphor, and personification**. Include the direct quote below:

Metaphor:

Simile:

Personification (when you assign the qualities of a person to something that is not human or, in some cases, to something not even alive):

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Henry David Thoreau- *Walden*

Where I Lived and What I Lived For

1. What does Thoreau give as reasons for going to live at Walden Pond? What does he believe is the virtue of simplicity?

Quote to support with citation:

2. What is Thoreau's complaint about the news? How does he feel about letters?

Quote to support with citation:

3. Thoreau urges people to commune with nature. Why?

Quote to support with citation:

Solitude

4. Reread Thoreau's description of the evening and explain the effect that nature has on him.

Quote to support with citation:

5. What does Thoreau say about his visitors?

Quote to support with citation:

6. Why was Thoreau never lonely at the pond?

Quote to support with citation:

Ponds

7. What are the physical characteristics of Walden Pond? Why does Thoreau describe the pond so precisely?

Quote to support with citation:

8. According to Thoreau, what is remarkable about the pond?

Quote to support with citation:

9. **Hyperbole.** Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which the truth is exaggerated for effect. When Thoreau says, "And I am sure that I never read any memorable news in a newspaper," his statement should not be taken too literally. He is exaggerating to make a point.

Find **at least one** other hyperbolic statement in the excerpts from *Walden*. Include the point that Thoreau is trying to make in your example.

Example(s):

Explanation(s):

Brute Neighbors

10. What does Thoreau quickly realize about the two ants he observes? Why is he so fascinated by the battle?

Quote to support with citation:

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-
-
11. Explain Thoreau's statement: "I was myself excited somewhat even as if they had been men. The more you think of it, the less the difference."

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-
-
12. What is the emotional effect of the ant battle on Thoreau?

Quote to support with citation:

The Pond in Winter

13. What does Thoreau mean when he says, "Heaven is under our feet as well as over our head..."? What leads Thoreau to this conclusion?

Spring

14. What subtle changes in the pond reveal the approach of spring? What does Thoreau notice about the birds?

Quote to support with citation:

15. How does Thoreau describe the coming of spring?

Quote to support with citation:

Conclusion

16. What reasons does Thoreau give for leaving Walden Pond?

Quote to support with citation:

17. What does Thoreau say he learned from his experience at Walden Pond? What advice does he give?

Quote to support with citation:

18. In the final two paragraphs of *Walden*, Thoreau describes a remarkable story about an insect. What are the details of the story? What do you think Thoreau closes his book in this way?
