

12.2.1 Lesson 8

Introduction

In this lesson, students continue their reading and analysis of Henry David Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience.” Students read part 1, paragraph 8 (from “All men recognize the right to revolution” to “but ours is the invading army”), in which Thoreau describes the individual’s responsibility to challenge the state. Students analyze how Thoreau uses figurative language to develop a central idea in this passage. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How does Thoreau’s use of metaphor in part 1, paragraph 8 develop a central idea?

For homework, students read part 1, paragraph 9 of “Civil Disobedience” and write a paragraph in response to the following prompt: How does this paragraph develop Thoreau’s point of view about conscience? Additionally, students read part 1, paragraphs 10-11 (from “In their practice, nations agree with Paley” to “who asserts his own freedom by his vote”) and box unfamiliar words, look up their definitions, and respond briefly to a series of questions.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
L. 11-12.5.a	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
Addressed Standard(s)	
RI.11-12.2	Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
W. 11-12.9.b	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. b. Apply <i>grades 11-12 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., <i>The Federalist</i> , presidential addresses]”).
L. 11-12.4.a, c	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 11-12 reading and content</i> , choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. 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. 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.

Assessment

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Assessment(s)

Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text:

- How does Thoreau's use of metaphor in part 1, paragraph 8 develop a central idea?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify the metaphor Thoreau uses in part 1, paragraph 8 (e.g., Thoreau uses a metaphor to compare the government to a machine).
- Analyze how this metaphor develops a central idea (e.g., Thoreau uses the metaphor of a machine in part 1, paragraph 8 to develop the central idea of ethics. Thoreau compares government to a “machine” in which “friction” or tension is inevitable. Thoreau suggests that this friction is not ordinarily sufficient cause for a revolution because “[a]ll machines have their friction” and “it is a great evil to make a stir about it” (part 1, par. 8). However, in some cases “the friction comes to have its machine,” meaning that the friction becomes so great that the machine no longer works as intended, and “oppression and robbery are organized” as those in power take advantage of the machine (part 1, par. 8). In this situation, Thoreau suggests that the government must be reformed: “let us not have such a machine any longer” (part 1, par. 8). Thoreau suggests that “it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize” (part 1, par. 8), pointing out that in the United States, “a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves” and that “a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army, and subjected to military law in the Mexican war.” In the following sentence, Thoreau goes on to suggest that rebellion in such a situation is a “duty” (part 1, par. 8). In this way, Thoreau develops a central idea of ethics by suggesting that people have not only a right but an obligation to act against an unjust government, and that ethical behavior is more important than loyalty to the government.).

Vocabulary

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Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- ado (n.) - foolish or unnecessary talk
- undertaken (v.) - promised, agreed

Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- friction (n.) - the force that causes a moving object to slow down when it is touching another object; disagreement or tension between people or groups of people

Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- commodities (n.) - things that are bought and sold
- ports (n.) - towns or cities where ships stop to load and unload cargo
- counterbalance (v.) - have an effect that is opposite but equal to (something)

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards: L.11-12.5.a, RI.11-12.2, W.11-12.9.b, L.11-12.4.a, c • Text: “Civil Disobedience” by Henry David Thoreau, Part 1, paragraph 8 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 2. Homework Accountability 3. Reading and Discussion 4. Quick Write 5. Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5% 2. 15% 3. 60% 4. 15% 5. 5%

Materials

- Student copies of the Central Ideas Tracking Tool (refer to 12.2.1 Lesson 4)—students may need additional blank copies
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 12.2.1 Lesson 1) (optional)

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Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
►	Indicates student action(s).
☞	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
ⓘ	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standard for this lesson: L.11-12.5.a. In this lesson, students read part 1, paragraph 8 (from “All men recognize the right of revolution” to “but ours is the invading army”). Students analyze how Thoreau uses figurative language to develop a central idea in this passage.

- Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

15%

Instruct students to take out their responses to the first part of the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Read part 1, paragraph 7 of “Civil Disobedience” and write a paragraph in response to the following prompt: How does this paragraph develop Thoreau’s point of view on the relationship between the individual and the state?) Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk in pairs about their responses to the homework prompt.

- Part 1, paragraph 7 develops Thoreau’s point of view on conscience, by showing how he believes one cannot “without disgrace,” or in good conscience, ally oneself with the American government. This is because the American government still allows slavery—a great injustice Thoreau feels the need to rebel against because of his conscience. This shows that Thoreau values the individual’s conscience over loyalty to

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the government—if the state engages in unjust behavior like slavery, then the individual “cannot for an instant recognize” the state in good conscience (part 1, par. 7).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct students to share and discuss two of the vocabulary words they identified for homework (L.11-12.4.c).

- Students may identify the following words: *ado*, *friction*, and *undertaken*.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Students may also identify the following words: *commodities*, *ports*, and *counterbalance*.
- Definitions are provided in the Vocabulary box in this lesson.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to discuss their responses to the second part of the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Respond briefly to the following questions.)

What does Thoreau’s metaphor of the “machine” describe (part 1, par. 8)? (L.11-12.5.a)

- The metaphor of the “machine” describes the government.

What is the “right of revolution” and when should people exercise that right (part 1, par. 8)?

- Thoreau defines the “right of revolution” as the right to “refuse allegiance to, and to resist” (part 1, par. 8) the government when it ceases to operate as it was intended. Thoreau believes that people should “rebel and revolutionize” when the government’s “tyranny or its inefficiency” become extreme, or when it begins to allow unethical practices like “oppression and robbery” (part 1, par. 8).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 3: Reading and Discussion

60%

Instruct students to form small groups. Post or project the following questions for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate the text as they read and discuss (W.11-12.9.b).

- If necessary to support comprehension and fluency, consider using a masterful reading of the focus excerpt for the lesson.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout the lesson:

When does Thoreau believe people should revolt?

Instruct student groups to read part 1, paragraph 8 of “Civil Disobedience” (from “All men recognize the right of revolution” to “but ours is the invading army”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

How does the first sentence of part 1, paragraph 8 develop a central idea in the text?

- This sentence clarifies the relationship between the individual and the state: If the state’s “tyranny or its inefficiency” are too great, then the individual has the right to resist the state, which Thoreau calls “the right of revolution” (part 1, par. 8).

How does Thoreau’s reference to the “Revolution of ’75” develop his ideas about revolution (part 1, par. 8)?

- Thoreau states that men recognized and exercised their right to overthrow their government in the Revolution of ’75, “but almost all say that such is not the case now” (part 1, par. 8). In other words, men now do not see the present government as tyrannical or inefficient despite the Mexican-American War and slavery, which Thoreau sees as greater crimes than the taxation by the former government. Thoreau’s reference to the “Revolution of ’75” (part 1, par. 8) shows that revolutions have occurred over issues he considers far less serious than the issues facing America in his time.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

What does Thoreau mean by “friction” (part 1, par. 8)? (L.11-12.4.a)

- Thoreau uses the term *friction* to describe the tensions and opposing forces within government that slow down the “machine,” or limit its ability to work properly (part 1, par. 8).
- If students struggle to explain Thoreau’s use of *friction*, consider providing the following definitions: *friction* can mean “the force that causes a moving object to slow down when it is touching another object” or “disagreement or tension between people or groups of people.”

What does Thoreau mean by “when the friction comes to have its machine” (part 1, par. 8)?

- Thoreau is referring to a situation in which the “friction” of the machine becomes so great that the machine no longer functions properly, such that the machine or the government can be exploited or misused.

How do “oppression and robbery” become “organized” (part 1, par. 8)?

- Too much “friction” makes the “machine” vulnerable to misuse or corruption by those in power, resulting in “organized,” or deliberate or calculated, “oppression and robbery” (part 1, par. 8).
- **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider posing the following scaffolding question:

What examples of “oppression and robbery” does Thoreau cite in part 1, paragraph 8?

- Thoreau cites two examples of “oppression and robbery” that result when the negative effects of the “friction” within the “machine” of government become widespread and organized (part 1, par. 8). He cites the injustices of slavery, saying, “a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves” (part 1, par. 8). He also cites the Mexican War, in which “a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army, and subjected to military law” (part 1, par. 8).

What does Thoreau believe should be done when “oppression and robbery are organized” (part 1, par. 8)? How does Thoreau’s solution develop the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state?

- Student responses should include:
 - Thoreau believes that when “oppression and robbery are organized,” or when the “machine” of government allows injustices in society, the people should “not have

such a machine any longer” and should “rebel” to reform the government (part 1, par. 8).

- Thoreau’s solution to reform the government develops the idea of the relationship between the individual and the state, by suggesting that people are not bound to obey the government. If a government allows injustice, the individual can and should resist it.

How do Thoreau’s examples of “oppression and robbery” develop the central idea of ethics (part 1, par. 8)?

- The examples of slavery and the Mexican-American War develop the central idea of ethics by demonstrating that there are times when one must necessarily “resist” the state (part 1, par. 8). Thoreau specifically refers to the American government in his use of these examples: “What makes this duty the more urgent is the fact that the country so overrun is not our own, but ours is the invading army” (part 1, par. 8). He implies that “honest men” should act on their consciences and “rebel and revolutionize” (part 1, par. 8).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to reread part 1, paragraphs 5 and 8 of “Civil Disobedience” (from “The mass of men serve the state thus” to “To any sovereign state throughout the world “ and from “All men recognize the right of revolution “ to “but ours is the invading army”) and answer the following question before sharing out with the class.

How does Thoreau use the metaphor of the machine differently in part 1, paragraph 5 compared to part 1, paragraph 8?

- Student responses should include:
 - At first, Thoreau uses the machine metaphor to describe the way in which a “mass of men serve the state” as non-thinking, non-questioning machines who use their bodies to protect the state (part 1, par. 5).
 - In part 1, paragraph 8, the metaphor changes. Instead of describing people as the state’s servants, Thoreau uses the metaphor to describe how “friction” inevitably slows and affects the workings of the machine of government. When those in power manipulate the weakened machine to “organize[]” injustices, people have not only the right but also the “duty” to “rebel and revolutionize” (part 1, par. 8). In this way, Thoreau offers a model for how people should act in relation to the

state: instead of acting as machines themselves, they should be willing to think and rebel against the state, which is itself nothing more than an unthinking machine.

- Remind students to keep track of central ideas in the text using the Central Ideas Tracking Tool.
- Consider asking students which passages they found difficult or problematic. Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 4: Quick Write

15%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

How does Thoreau's use of metaphor in part 1, paragraph 8 develop a central idea?

Instruct students to look at their annotations to find evidence. Ask students to use this lesson's vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses.

- Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.
- Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition to the independent Quick Write.

- Students independently answer the prompt using evidence from the text.
- See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.
- Consider using the Short Response Rubric to assess students' writing. Students may use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

Activity 5: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to read part 1, paragraph 9 of "Civil Disobedience" (from "Paley, a common authority with many on moral questions" to "though it cost them their existence as a people") and write a paragraph in response to the following prompt:

How does this paragraph develop Thoreau's point of view about conscience?

Ask students to use this lesson's vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses.

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Additionally, instruct students to read part 1, paragraphs 10-11 (from “In their practice, nations agree with Paley” to “who asserts his own freedom by his vote”) in preparation for the following lesson. Direct students to box any unfamiliar words and look up their definitions. Instruct them to choose the definition that makes the most sense in context and write a brief definition above or near the word in the text (L.11-12.4.c). To support comprehension, instruct students to respond briefly to the following questions:

What reasons does Thoreau give for why the “merchants and farmers” are “opponents to a reform” (part 1, par. 10)?

What does Thoreau mean when he says those “near at home ... do the bidding of those far away” (part 1, par. 10)?

What does Thoreau mean by his description of “patron[s] of virtue” (part 1, par. 10)?

- Students follow along.

Homework

Read part 1, paragraph 9 of “Civil Disobedience” (from “Paley, a common authority with many on moral questions” to “though it cost them their existence as a people”) and write a paragraph in response to the following prompt:

How does this paragraph develop Thoreau’s point of view about conscience?

Use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in your written responses.

Also, read part 1, paragraphs 10-11 (from “In their practice, nations agree with Paley” to “who asserts his own freedom by his vote”). Box any unfamiliar words and look up their definitions. Choose the definition that makes the most sense in context and write a brief definition above or near the word in the text. Respond briefly to the following questions:

What reasons does Thoreau give for why the “merchants and farmers” are “opponents to a reform” (part 1, par. 10)?

What does Thoreau mean when he says those “near at home ... do the bidding of those far away” (part 1, par. 10)?

What does Thoreau mean by his description of “patron[s] of virtue” (part 1, par. 10)?

Model Central Ideas Tracking Tool

Name :		Class :		Date :	
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Directions: Identify the central ideas that you encounter throughout the text. Trace the development of those ideas by noting how the author introduces, develops, or refines these ideas in the text. Cite textual evidence to support your work.

Text :	“Civil Disobedience” by Henry David Thoreau
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Part and Paragraph #	Central Ideas	Notes and Connections
Part 1, par. 8	The relationship between the individual and the state	Thoreau clarifies the relationship between the individual and the state by stating that if the state’s “tyranny or its inefficiency” are too great, then the individual has the right to resist the state.
Part 1, par. 8	Ethics	Thoreau states that all individuals “recognize,” or are aware of, their right to resist the government when it becomes too tyrannical or inefficient.
Part 1, par. 8	Ethics	Thoreau’s examples of the Mexican-American War and that “a sixth of the population ... are slaves” show that Thoreau believes that the American government must be overthrown because these issues are against his conscience and the consciences of “honest men.”

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