

12.2.1 Lesson 11

Introduction

In this lesson, students read part 2, paragraphs 1-9 of “Civil Disobedience” (from “The broadest and most prevalent error requires” to “I see this blood flowing now”), in which Thoreau explains how “[a]ction from principle” will bring about a peaceful revolution (part 2, par. 2). Students analyze how Thoreau develops a central idea over the course of this passage, and then specifically consider the development of this idea in paragraphs 2 and 9. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How does Thoreau develop and refine a central idea of the text in part 2, paragraphs 2 and 9?

For homework, students read part 2, paragraphs 10-12 of “Civil Disobedience,” box unfamiliar words, and look up their definitions. Additionally, students respond briefly in writing to a series of questions.

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Standards

Assessed 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.
Addressed Standard(s)	
W. 11-12.9.b	<p>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>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]”).</p>
L. 11-12.4.c	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
L. 11-12.5.a	<p>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text</p>

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 develop and refine a central idea of the text in part 2, paragraphs 2 and 9?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify a central idea in paragraph 2 (e.g., the relationship between the individual and the state).
- Analyze how Thoreau refines this central idea in paragraph 9 (e.g., In paragraph 2, Thoreau addresses the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state through his assertion that individual actions based on morality, or “principle,” have the power to radically “change[]” the state (part 2, par. 2). In paragraph 9, Thoreau refines this idea through his description of going to prison as a means by which the individual can enact this change. Rather than a space of confinement, Thoreau frames prison as a “more free and honorable ground” than life within an unjust government (part 2, par. 9). Thoreau’s opinion is that imprisonment is a way to create a “peaceable revolution” (part 2, par. 9). This refines the idea of the relationship between the individual and the state by suggesting that when the moral actions of the individual are in opposition to unjust laws, the individual can enact greater change by choosing to remain outside of the state rather than work within it.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- aggrieved (adj.) - having suffered from unfair treatment
- desponding (adj.) - feeling depressed by loss of hope, confidence, or courage
- influence (n.) - the power to change or affect someone or something

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

- None.

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

- petitioning (v.) - asking (a person, group, or organization) for something in a formal way
- entertain (v.) - to have (a thought, idea, etc.) in one's mind
- effectual (adj.) - producing a desired result or effect
- diabolical (adj.) - extremely evil
- fugitive (adj.) - running away to avoid being captured
- immortality (n.) - the quality or state of someone or something that will never die or be forgotten

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards: RI.11-12.2, W.11-12.9.b, L.11-12.4.c, L.11-12.5.a • Text: "Civil Disobedience" by Henry David Thoreau, Part 2, paragraphs 1-9 (http://thoreau.eserver.org/civil2.html) • The link provided includes explanatory notes, which may support student analysis of "Civil Disobedience." 	
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. 30% 3. 45% 4. 15% 5. 5%

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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)

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: RI.11-12.2. In this lesson, students read part 2, paragraphs 1-9 of “Civil Disobedience” (from “The broadest and most prevalent error requires” to “I see this blood flowing now”) and analyze how Thoreau develops a central idea over the course of this passage.

- Students look at the agenda.
- The close reading analysis in this lesson focuses primarily on part 2, paragraphs 2 and 9, although students should be familiar with paragraphs 1-9 from their homework reading.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

30%

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Instruct students to take out their responses to the first part of the previous lesson's homework assignment. (Add ideas to your Central Ideas Tracking Tool.) Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk in pairs about the additions they made to their Central Ideas Tracking Tools.

- See Model Central Ideas Tracking Tool at the end of this lesson.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct students to take out their responses to the second part of the previous lesson's homework assignment. (Additionally, read part 2, paragraphs 1-9 of "Civil Disobedience." 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. Then respond briefly in writing to the following questions.) Instruct student pairs to share their responses to the homework assignment.

What does Thoreau argue citizens should do instead of "petitioning the state to dissolve the Union" (part 2, par. 1)? How does his description of the "tax-gatherer" in part 2, paragraph 8 support this point?

- Student responses should include:
 - Thoreau argues that rather than "petitioning the state to dissolve the Union" citizens should "dissolve ... the union between themselves and the State" by refusing to pay their taxes (part 2, par. 1).
 - In part 2, paragraph 8, Thoreau describes the "tax-gatherer" as a direct representative of "this American government," and describes interactions with the tax-gatherer as the "only mode" in which a person usually "meets" the government face to face (part 2, par. 8). Therefore, refusing to pay the tax-gatherer is a way in which the individual can refuse to "[r]ecognize" or "deny" (part 2, par. 8) the authority of the state, and so "dissolve the union" (part 2, par. 1) between themselves and the government.

How does Thoreau develop the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state in part 2, paragraph 3?

- In part 2, paragraph 3, Thoreau advocates "transgress[ing]" or breaking "[u]njust laws," rather than attempting to "amend" them by "persuad[ing] the majority to alter them" (part 2, par. 3). This develops the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state because it suggests that if an individual wants to reform the

state, he or she should not work within the democratic process. Rather, he or she should directly deny the authority of the state by breaking the law.

How does Thoreau refine a metaphor from part 1, paragraph 8 in part 2, paragraph 5? (L. 11-12.5.a)

- In part 2, paragraph 5, Thoreau refines the metaphor of the government as a “machine” originally introduced in part 1, paragraph 8. He states that if the machine of government is producing “injustice,” it is the duty of the individual to “stop” the machine by being a “counter-friction” (part 2, par. 5). This refinement develops the idea that in order to reform the government, an individual needs to “break the law,” or resist the government, to change unjust laws (part 2, par. 5).

What examples does Thoreau provide of how to be a “counter-friction” (part 2, par. 5) in paragraphs 2-9?

- Student responses may include:
 - Thoreau advocates for people to “transgress” or break “[u]njust laws” in part 2, paragraph 3. He also suggests in part 2, paragraph 5 that if a law allows for injustice, then one should “break the law.”
 - Thoreau criticizes the government for not allowing its citizens to “point out its faults” (part 2, par. 3), indicating that this type of criticism provides a “counter-friction,” or resistance, to the government (part 2, par. 5).
 - Thoreau advocates for “a deliberate and practical denial” of the “authority” of the government, or a refusal to obey the laws of the government (part 2, par. 4).
 - Thoreau urges Abolitionists to “effectually withdraw their support, both in person and property, from the government of Massachusetts” (part 2, par. 7).
 - Thoreau advocates that people should “deny” to “[r]ecognize” the authority of the state government by refusing to pay taxes to the “tax-gatherer” (part 2, par. 8). Then, in part 2, par. 9, Thoreau states, “If a thousand men were not to pay their tax-bills this year ... This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution” (part 2, par. 9).
 - Thoreau advises the “State’s ambassador” to “sit down the prisoner of Massachusetts” or go to jail (part 2, par. 8).

How does Thoreau’s opinion of “the ways which the State has provided for remedying ... evil” further develop the relationship between the individual and the state (part 2, par. 6)?

- Thoreau believes that “the ways which the State has provided for remedying ... evil,” like “petitioning the Governor or the Legislature” or attempting to persuade the majority in order to change unjust laws, are slow and ineffective (part 2, par. 6). Thoreau believes that reform does not work when it is done from within the state’s structures or by using its political processes. This belief develops the idea that individuals cannot work within the state if they wish to reform it.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

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

- Students may identify the following words: *aggrieved*, *desponding*, and *influence*.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Students may also identify the following words: *petitioning*, *entertain*, *effectual*, *diabolical*, *fugitive*, and *immortality*.
- Definitions are provided in the Vocabulary box in this lesson.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 3: Reading and Discussion

45%

Instruct students to form small groups. Post or project each set of questions below 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:

What is Thoreau’s “definition of a peaceable revolution” (part 2, par. 9)?

Instruct student groups to read part 2, paragraph 2 (from “How can a man be satisfied to entertain an opinion merely” to “separating the diabolical in him from the divine”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

What does Thoreau believe is necessary for “change[.]” (part 2, par. 2)?

- Thoreau believes that “[a]ction from principle—the perception and the performance of right—changes things” (part 2, par. 2). Therefore, he believes that in order to enact change, the individual must understand what is right and then act on this understanding to do what is right.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing the following optional extension question to deepen students’ understanding:

How does the example of being cheated by a neighbor strengthen Thoreau’s claim?

- Thoreau uses the example of being “cheated out of a single dollar” by a neighbor to strengthen his claim that direct action should be taken in response to injustice (part 2, par. 2). Thoreau’s reasoning is that a person would not settle for simply knowing they had been cheated in the context of a robbery, which supports his point that it is not enough to have an “opinion” that something is wrong (part 2, par. 2). The individual must also act upon what they believe is right in order to change things.

What is “revolutionary” about “[a]ction from principle” (part 2, par. 2)?

- Student responses may include:
 - According to Thoreau, “[a]ction from principle” is revolutionary because it creates change. When an individual understands what is right and acts on this understanding, these actions have the power to transform circumstances from what they are into something entirely new that does not “consist wholly with anything which was” (part 2, par. 2).
 - According to Thoreau, “[a]ction from principle” is revolutionary because it creates “change[]” at all levels of society (part 2, par. 2). When an individual understands what is right and acts on this understanding, this action changes the individual for the better because it separates or “divides” the good, or “divine,” from the bad, or “diabolical” (part 2, par. 2). This change in the individual sets into motion a similar change, or division, in all levels of society, from communities and families to institutions like the church, and eventually even the government itself.

How does Thoreau’s concept of revolution develop the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state?

- Student responses may include:
 - Thoreau’s concept of revolution develops the idea that the actions of the individual have the power to radically change the state.

- Thoreau's concept of revolution develops the idea that the individual's morality and "principle[s]" have the power to change the state (part 2, par. 2).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to read part 2, paragraph 9 (from "Under a government which imprisons any unjustly" to "I see this blood flowing now") and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Why does Thoreau claim that the "true place for a just man is also a prison" (part 2, par. 9)?

- Thoreau claims that the "true place for a just man is also a prison" because the government unjustly "imprisons" people like "the fugitive slave ... the Mexican prisoner ... and the Indian" (part 2, par. 9). Because those who are in prison unjustly are "locked out of the State," the prison becomes a space free from the tyranny of an unjust government, and therefore the only "true place" for a "just man" (part 2, par. 9).
- **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider posing the following scaffolding question:

How does Thoreau's description of "the fugitive slave ... the Mexican prisoner ... and the Indian" support his statement that the prison is "that separate, but more free and honorable ground" (part 2, par. 9)?

- Thoreau believes that the "fugitive slave," the "Mexican prisoner on parole," and the American Indian have been imprisoned unjustly for defying the American government (part 2, par. 9). Therefore, the only "true place" for a "just man" to be free and live with honor is in prison, away from the government that unjustly imprisons them or forces them to act against their principles.

What role does prison play in Thoreau's "peaceable revolution" (part 2, par. 9)?

- Thoreau's idea of a "peaceable revolution" requires that people act on their "principle[s]" (part 2, par. 2) and break the law. Once they resist the government's unjust laws and "put themselves out" of the state, people must then accept the punishment for breaking these laws, and allow the state to "put" them "out" by imprisoning them (part 2, par. 9). When individuals intentionally disobey the government and willingly go to prison, the government is forced to consider whether or not it is prepared to imprison "all just men" in order to preserve "war and

slavery” (part 2, par. 9). Thoreau predicts that if a government is given the choice between keeping a large number of just men in prison, or changing unjust laws, the state will choose to change the law, and “peaceable revolution” will be accomplished (part 2, par. 9).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to reread part 2, paragraph 9 (from “Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely” to “I see this blood flowing now”) and answer the following question before sharing out with the class.

How does Thoreau use figurative language to reinforce his idea of “[a]ction from principle” (part 2, par. 2) in this passage? (L.11-12.5.a)

- Student responses may include:
 - Thoreau reinforces his idea of “[a]ction from principle” by describing the minority as “irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight” (part 2, par. 9) or powerful enough to stop the “machine of government” (part 2, par. 5). This emphasizes the strength and power of the individual, or the few, to disrupt the state and create change (part 2, par. 2).
 - Thoreau uses the metaphor of a “conscience” bleeding out to “an everlasting death” to describe how the harm that comes to the individual from going against his or her conscience is greater than any physical harm that the protestor might face during a revolution (part 2, par. 9). This metaphor reinforces Thoreau’s idea of action from principle by emphasizing the devastating effects of choosing to act in ways that go against one’s conscience.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider providing the following scaffolding questions:

How does Thoreau describe the “sort of blood shed when the conscience is wounded” (part 2, par. 9)? How does this description clarify what Thoreau means by “I see this blood flowing now” (part 2, par. 9)?

- Student responses should include:
 - Thoreau describes the “sort of blood shed when the conscience is wounded” as a sense of self or humanity, or a man’s “real manhood” and “immortality” (part 2, par. 9).

- Thoreau's statement "I see this blood flowing now" expresses his belief that many people are currently acting against their consciences, and in so doing, losing the essence of who they are (part 2, par. 9).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

- Consider asking students which passages they found difficult or problematic. 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 develop and refine a central idea of the text in part 2, paragraphs 2 and 9?

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 2, paragraphs 10-12 of "Civil Disobedience" (from "I have contemplated the imprisonment of the offender" to "I did not know where to find a complete list"). 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).

Additionally, instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following questions:

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What relationship does Thoreau establish between wealth and morality in part 2, paragraph 10?

What advice does Thoreau offer those who are afraid to “deny the authority of the State” (part 2, par. 11)?

How does Thoreau develop the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state in part 2, paragraphs 10-12?

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

- Students follow along.

Homework

Read part 2, paragraphs 10-12 of “Civil Disobedience” (from “I have contemplated the imprisonment of the offender” to “I did not know where to find a complete list”). 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.

Additionally, respond briefly in writing to the following questions:

What relationship does Thoreau establish between wealth and morality in part 2, paragraph 10?

What advice does Thoreau offer those who are afraid to “deny the authority of the State” (part 2, par. 11)?

How does Thoreau develop the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state in part 2, paragraphs 10-12?

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

Model Central Ideas Tracking Tool

Name :		Class:		Date:	
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Directions: Identify the 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

Part and Paragraph #	Central Ideas	Notes and Connections
Part 1, par. 10	Ethics	Thoreau develops the idea of ethics by clarifying that it is not enough to recognize injustice. To be ethical, the individual must act on one’s conscience to fight injustice “cost what it may.”
Part 1, par. 11	The relationship between the individual and the state	Thoreau’s opinion of voting develops the idea of the relationship between the individual and the state because it suggests that individual action against the state is more meaningful and effective than voting.
Part 1, par. 12	The relationship between the individual and the state	“Independent, intelligent, and respectable” individuals should not allow the state to select candidates for them through conventions. The state must recognize the “wisdom and honesty” of individuals who do not attend conventions and offer “independent votes.”
Part 1, par. 13	Ethics	Thoreau further develops the central idea of ethics by explaining that an individual does not have to actively fight against the evils or “wrong[s]” that the government is responsible for. Rather, in order to behave ethically, an individual must only refuse to “practically ... support” these “sin[s].”

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Part 1, par. 13	The relationship between the individual and the state	Thoreau's distinction between what is and is not a man's duty develops the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state because it suggests that an individual's right to pursue his or her own interests and values, or "concerns," is as important as improving government and society through righting wrongs or fighting for a cause that will benefit others.
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