

12.2.1 Lesson 13

Introduction

In this lesson, students read and analyze part 3, paragraphs 1-8 of Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience," in which Thoreau describes his brief stay in Concord jail. Focusing in particular on paragraphs 4 and 6, students participate in an evidence-based discussion and explore how Thoreau's narrative develops central ideas in the text such as the relationship of the individual to the state. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How do two central ideas interact and build on one another in Thoreau's description of his night in jail (part 3, par. 1-8)?

For homework, students add ideas to their Central Ideas Tracking Tools. Additionally, students read and annotate part 3, paragraphs 9-16 of "Civil Disobedience" (from "I have never declined paying the highway tax" to "They have never received any encouragement from me, and they never will") and develop 2-3 discussion questions focused on how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text. Students also prepare possible answers to their questions for discussion.

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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 do two central ideas interact and build on one another in Thoreau's description of his night in jail (part 3, par. 1-8)?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify two central ideas (e.g., the relationship between the individual and the state; ethics).
- Demonstrate how Thoreau's description of his night in jail in part 3, paragraphs 1-8 develops these central ideas (e.g., In Thoreau's description of his night in jail, the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state and the central idea of ethics interact and build upon each other. Thoreau describes seeing Concord, its institutions, and its "inhabitants" (part 3, par. 4) "yet more distinctly" (part 3, par. 6) than he had from outside of prison. Although this new perspective gives him "a closer view of [his] native town," Thoreau states that seeing the town from inside prison was "like travelling into a far country" (part 3, par. 4). This suggests that he feels like an outsider who is somewhat disconnected or separate from the town and his "neighbors and friends," whom he comes to see as "a distinct race from [him] by their prejudices and superstitions" (part 3, par. 6). The experience of prison alters Thoreau's relationship with the people around him and thus alters his relationship with the state in which he lives. In this way, the shift in Thoreau's relationship to the state interacts with the central idea of ethics; as his view of the outside world changes from inside the prison, Thoreau begins to see a divide between himself as someone who acts based on his own ethics, and those around him who are "not so noble" (part 3, par. 6) and act only in accordance with the law rather than with their consciences. Thoreau distances himself from them, and thus from the state, because of their differing ethics.).

Vocabulary

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Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- novel (adj.) - new and different from what has been known before
- dispersed (v.) - went or moved in different directions
- domesticated (adj.) - accustomed to household life or affairs
- behold (v.) - look at; see
- burghers (n.) - inhabitants of a town, especially members of the middle class
- involuntary (adj.) - independent of one's will; not by one's own choice
- adjacent (adj.) - close or near; sharing a border, wall, or point
- huckleberry (n.) - blueberry
- tackled (adj.) - harnessed

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

- None.

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

- Middle Ages (n.) - the period of European history from about A.D. 500 to about 1500
- green (adj.) - not having training, knowledge, or experience

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 3, paragraphs 1-8 (http://thoreau.eserver.org/civil3.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)
- Copies of the Text-Focused Questions Handout for each student (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.
①	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 explore how the events that Thoreau narrates in part 3, paragraphs 1-8 of “Civil Disobedience” develop central ideas. Students engage in an evidence-based discussion and complete a brief writing assignment to close the lesson.

- Students look at the agenda.

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Activity 2: Homework Accountability

30%

Instruct students to take out their responses to the first part of the previous lesson's homework assignment. (Add at least two ideas to your Central Ideas Tracking Tools and identify at least one central idea.) Instruct students to form pairs and discuss the ideas they added to their tools.

- See the Model Central Ideas Tracking Tool for sample student responses.

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. (Preview part 3, paragraphs 1-8. Respond briefly in writing to the following questions.) Instruct students to share their responses to the homework assignment in pairs.

How does Thoreau describe his experience in the jail?

- Student responses may include:
 - Thoreau describes the jail as a fairly pleasant place. When he arrives, “[t]he prisoners in their shirt sleeves [are] enjoying a chat and the evening air in the doorway” (part 3, par. 1). He describes his room as “the whitest, most simply furnished, and probably the neatest apartment in the town”; his cellmate is “contented” and feels “well-treated” (part 3, par. 1).
 - Thoreau describes the jail as an interesting place with its own history. His night in prison is “novel and interesting enough” (part 3, par. 1). In paragraph 2, he describes how he entertains himself by looking out the window and learning the history of the prison: “I found that even here there was a history and a gossip which never circulated beyond the walls of the jail” (part 3, par. 2).

What effect does Thoreau create on the reader through his description of the jail?

- Thoreau creates an effect of surprise through his description of the jail as “novel and interesting” (part 3, par. 1), because the setting of a jail is usually an unpleasant and confining space.

What does Thoreau do when he is freed from jail? How do his actions develop a central idea?

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- Student responses may include:
 - When he is freed from jail, Thoreau continues the errand that he was running when he was arrested, and collects his shoe from the shoemaker (part 3, par. 7). After this, Thoreau joins a party picking huckleberries, and “in half an hour—for the horse was soon tackled—was in the midst of a huckleberry field” (part 3, par. 7).
 - Thoreau’s actions develop the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state by demonstrating how little real power the state has over the individual. Thoreau simply finishes the errand that he had started and is soon picking huckleberries, unconcerned with the state, which he describes as “nowhere to be seen” (part 3, par. 7).

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: *novel*, *dispersed*, *domesticated*, *behold*, *burghers*, *involuntary*, *adjacent*, *huckleberry*, and *tackled*.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Students may also identify the following words: *Middle Ages* and *green*.
- Definitions are provided in the Vocabulary box in this lesson.

Activity 3: Reading and Discussion

45%

Instruct students to remain in their pairs. 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 this lesson:

What ideas does Thoreau develop in paragraphs 4 and 6?

Instruct student pairs to read part 3, paragraph 4 (from “It was like travelling into a far country” to “I began to comprehend what its inhabitants were about”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

How does Thoreau use figurative language to describe the experience of spending a night in jail? (L.11-12.5.a)

- Student responses should include:
 - In the opening sentence of the paragraph, Thoreau uses a simile to describe his time in prison as “like travelling into a far country” (part 3, par. 4).
 - Later, Thoreau uses a metaphor to describe how his night in jail turned Concord into a German village from the Middle Ages: “[O]ur Concord was turned into a Rhine stream, and visions of knights and castles passed before me. They were the voices of old burghers that I heard in the streets” (part 3, par. 4).

How does Thoreau’s night in jail affect his perspective on his native town? How does this perspective relate to a central idea in the text?

- Student responses should include:
 - Thoreau’s night in jail completely changes his perspective on Concord. Thoreau feels that before his experience of imprisonment in his town, he had “never seen its institutions” (part 3, par. 4). But following his time in jail, he has “a closer view of [his] native town” (part 3, par. 4). He states that seeing the town from inside prison was “like travelling into a far country” (part 3, par. 4), which suggests that he feels like an outsider, even though his new “closer view” allowed him to see “fairly inside of it” (part 3, par. 4). Prison gives Thoreau “a wholly new and rare experience” that enables him to see the state, its institutions, and its “inhabitants” more clearly and in a new light (part 3, par. 4).
 - The change in Thoreau’s perspective in part 3, paragraph 4 relates to the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state, because Thoreau suggests that from within prison, he feels somewhat disconnected or separate from the town and its “inhabitants” (part 3, par. 4).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to read part 3, paragraph 6 (from “When I came out of prison” to “they have such an institution as the jail in their village”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

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How does Thoreau describe the changes he observes in his town?

- Thoreau notes that “a change had to [his] eyes come over the scene ... greater than any that mere time could effect” (part 3, par. 6), meaning that the changes that Thoreau notices are merely changes in his perspective, rather than actual changes in the town itself. The change in his perspective is more meaningful to Thoreau than changes brought about by time.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posing the following scaffolding question:

What kind of changes does Thoreau say he “did not perceive” (part 3, par. 6)?

- Thoreau does not observe the kind of changes that would take place over a long period of time. He remarks that he “did not perceive that great changes had taken place on the common, such as he observed who went in a youth and emerged a tottering and gray-headed man” (part 3, par. 6). Thoreau does not see changes in the way that someone would who went into jail a young man and was released in old age.

How does Thoreau further develop a central idea from part 3, paragraph 4 in part 3, paragraph 6?

- In part 3, paragraph 6, Thoreau further develops the central idea of the relationship between the individual and the state by describing how he “saw yet more distinctly the State in which [he] lived,” and expanding upon his statement in part 3, paragraph 4 that he “began to comprehend what its inhabitants were about.” Thoreau explains that those who he formerly saw as “good neighbors and friends” were actually “not so noble,” but rather “hoped ... to save their souls” with only “outward observance and a few prayers” instead of by their own consciences (part 3, par. 6). This new perspective on the “institutions” and his “neighbors and friends” in Concord has changed his relationship to the state (part 3, par. 6). Thoreau begins to distance himself not only from the state but also from those around him who follow the state and its “institutions” blindly, seeing them as “a distinct race from me by their prejudices and superstitions” (part 3, par. 6).
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posing the following optional extension questions:

How does the change in Thoreau’s perspective on the state relate to his description of the state as “a lone woman with her silver spoons” in part 2, paragraph 13?

- Thoreau remarks in part 2, paragraph 13 that after coming out of prison, he “saw yet more distinctly the State in which [he] lived” (part 3, par. 6), and became aware that “the State was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons” (part 2, par. 13). The state loses its power over Thoreau once he sees it

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clearly, and no longer carries the same weight of authority; during his time in jail, Thoreau “lost all [his] remaining respect for [the state] and pitied it” (part 2, par. 13).

How does Thoreau describe those around him after his experience in prison?

- Student responses may include:
 - Thoreau describes the people around him as being superficial and unreliable as friends, saying, “their friendship was for summer weather only” (part 3, par. 6).
 - Thoreau describes the people among whom he lives as lacking strong moral principles, as they “did not greatly propose to do right” and “were not so noble but they treated the thief as he had treated them, and hoped, by a certain outward observance and a few prayers, and by walking in a particular straight though useless path from time to time, to save their souls” (part 3, par. 6). In other words, these people did not act according to conscience, but rather sought to appear to be virtuous by conforming to certain conventions.
 - Thoreau describes his neighbors as being very different from him, as “a distinct race from me by their prejudices and superstitions” (part 3, par. 6). They do not have anything in common with Thoreau, because they lack strong moral convictions and do not act ethically, whereas Thoreau acts in accordance with his conscience even though it means going to jail.
 - Thoreau believes that many of those around him are ignorant of the state and its institutions, such that “many of them are not aware that they have such an institution as the jail in their village” (part 3, par. 6).

How does Thoreau’s description of those around him develop the central idea of ethics?

- Thoreau is able to see his friends and neighbors more clearly in the light of his experience in prison: “I saw to what extent the people among whom I lived could be trusted as good neighbors and friends” (part 3, par. 6). Thoreau’s description of those around him as unreliable and lacking in moral conviction develops the central idea of ethics. He refers to them as having “prejudices and superstitions” and remarks that they “did not greatly propose to do right” and “ran no risks” in “their sacrifices to humanity,” suggesting that they do not act ethically, but rather for the sake of expediency, and that they are willing to obey even unjust laws rather than act on their consciences (part 3, par. 6). Thoreau therefore distances himself from those around him, suggesting that they are of a “distinct race” from him (part 3, par. 6).

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 do two central ideas interact and build on one another in Thoreau’s description of his night in jail (part 3, par. 1-8)?

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 add at least two ideas to their Central Ideas Tracking Tools.

Additionally, instruct students to read and annotate part 3, paragraphs 9-16 of “Civil Disobedience” and develop 2-3 discussion questions focused on how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text. Instruct students to prepare possible answers to their questions for discussion.

- **Differentiation Consideration:** If students need additional support in developing their discussion questions, distribute and review the Text-Focused Questions Handout.
- Students follow along.

Homework

Add at least two ideas to your Central Ideas Tracking Tool.

Read and annotate part 3, paragraphs 9-16 of “Civil Disobedience” and develop 2-3 discussion questions focused on how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text. Prepare possible answers to your questions for discussion.

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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
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Part and Paragraph #	Central Ideas	Notes and Connections
Part 2, par. 13	Exercise of power	Thoreau's description of his time in jail demonstrates the ineffectiveness of the exercise of power through physical force alone. Although he is physically confined, the jail cannot "lock[] the door" on his "meditations" or thoughts, which are the most "dangerous" or powerful part of him.
Part 2, par. 13	The relationship between the individual and the state	Thoreau describes how his experience of the ineffectiveness of the state during his stay in prison changes his relationship to the state: "I saw that the State was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons, and that it did not know its friends from its foes, and I lost all my remaining respect for it, and pitied it."
Part 2, par. 14	The relationship between the individual and the state	Thoreau uses the metaphor of the acorn and the chestnut to describe the relationship between the state and the individual: "[B]oth obey their own laws, and spring and grow and flourish as best they can, till one, perchance, overshadows and destroys the other." In the same way, Thoreau suggests, neither the individual nor the state should attempt to govern one another, but they should coexist, according to their own laws: "If a plant cannot live according to its nature, it dies; and so a man."

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Text-Focused Questions Handout

Name :		Class :		Date :	
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Building effective focus questions:

- The goal of text-focused questions is to develop a thorough understanding of the text through careful examination. A well-developed text-focused question should do the following:
 - Identify a crucial component of the text that is valuable for comprehension.
 - Facilitate an answer that is more in depth than yes or no.
 - Require textual evidence to answer.

Example:

Why is Thoreau released from prison?

- Thoreau is released from prison because somebody pays the tax on his behalf: “[S]ome one interfered, and paid that tax” (part 3, par. 6).

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