

WALDEN QUESTIONS: FIRST THREE SECTIONS

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS THOUGHTFULLY AND THOROUGHLY IN SEVERAL COMPLETE SENTENCES EACH.

A. "ECONOMY"

1. Explain how Thoreau goes about building his cabin from start to finish.
2. Why do you think he goes into such detail about how he built his cabin and the expense of building it? What point is he trying to make about the way it is possible to live?
3. What does Thoreau do to earn a bit of extra money, and comparatively speaking, how hard is the work relative to working an actual job?

B. "WHERE I LIVED AND WHAT I LIVED FOR"

1. What is his stated purpose for going to the woods? Give the exact quote and then explain what he means by it.
2. What does Thoreau say we "fritter" our lives away on? What does he mean by this?
3. According to Thoreau, how must we change our lives in order to quit "frittering" it away?
4. Based on your answers to the last two questions, what do you think Thoreau would think of the way we live today?
5. Think back to question #2 on "Economy" now. Answer the question again keeping in mind your answers to #3 and #4 in this section.
6. He says a lot about what we should NOT be doing with our lives. What can you imply, then, knowing what you do about the Transcendentalists, that Thoreau thinks we SHOULD be doing with our lives instead?
7. What does Thoreau think about the building of the railroad and its affect on people's lives?
8. What does he compare the "sleepers" in the railroad tracks to?
9. How is the influence of the railroad in Thoreau's day similar to the influence of other technologies today such as computers and cell phones?

C. "SOLITUDE"

1. What is the difference between being alone and being lonely, between loneliness and solitude?
2. Why does Thoreau say he is not lonely ever though he is living by himself?
3. What does Thoreau desire to be closest to?
4. What do you think he means when he says that "no exertion of the legs can bring two minds nearer"? What does this imply about the nature of loneliness?

WALDEN KEY PASSAGES: LAST THREE SECTIONS

REREAD EACH QUOTE BELOW. IN A MINIMUM OF THREE COMPLETE SENTENCES EACH, SUMMARIZE THE CONTENT OF EACH QUOTE. THEN, IN SEVERAL MORE SENTENCES EACH, EXPLAIN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EACH QUOTE. LABEL THE SUMMARIES WITH "A" AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EACH WITH "B".

1. p. 240-41: One day when I went out to my woodpile . . . Battle of Bunker Hill at least.
2. p. 241: I took up the chip . . . human battle before my door.
3. 242-43: How surprised must the fishes been . . . disappearing far away on the tumultuous surface.
4. p. 243: I left the woods for as good a reason . . . I do not wish to go below now.
5. p. 243: I learned this, at least, by my experiment . . . Now put foundations under them.
6. p. 243-44: Why should we be in such desperate haste . . . as if the former were not.
7. p. 244: Everyone has heard the story which has gone the rounds . . . to enjoy its perfect summer life at last.