

Socratic Seminar Questions: **GROUP B**

DIRECTIONS

ANSWER EACH OF THE QUESTIONS BELOW THOROUGHLY (ABOUT 5 SENTENCES). YOU MAY TYPE YOUR RESPONSES DIRECTLY INTO THIS DOCUMENT, FOLLOWING THE FORMAT IN THE EXAMPLE BELOW, BUT YOU WILL HAVE TO PRINT THEM OUT AND BRING THEM TO CLASS WITH YOU ON THE DAY OF SEMINAR TO SUBMIT. YOU MAY ALSO HAND WRITE YOUR RESPONSES IF YOU WISH TO DO SO.

EXAMPLE/FORMAT:

1. HOW HAS TRANSCENDENTALISM IMPACTED YOUR LIFE?

RESPONSE: Transcendentalism has helped me become more self-aware. Prior to this unit I felt like I was merely coasting through life, without really taking the time for self-reflection, much less taking time to change the things I realized I needed to change because of my time spent engaged in self-reflection. This unit has taught me about the importance of taking time for solitude, and how that's really the only way we can come to discover who we truly are. We are so heavily influenced by things that are not reflections of who we are, yet we follow along because of societal pressure. I've made a commitment to embark on the journey to greater self-discovery by deliberately and regularly spending time alone in nature.

EVIDENCE: "Standing on the bare ground, —my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space— all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all..." *Nature*, Emerson

QUESTIONS

1. WHO IS ULTIMATELY MORE IMPORTANT: THE INDIVIDUAL, THE LARGER COMMUNITY, OR THE GOVERNING BODY?
2. HOW DOES TRANSCENDENTALISM COMPARE TO ANARCHISM AND HOW DOES IT CONTRAST?
3. SHOULD WE BE FORCED TO PAY TAXES FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S NEEDS? WHY OR WHY NOT?
4. HOW DO MATERIAL POSSESSIONS AFFECT OUR WELL-BEING?
5. "NEVER LOOK BACK UNLESS YOU ARE PLANNING TO GO THAT WAY." IS LOOKING BACK REALLY A DETRIMENT OR STUMBLING BLOCK TO AN INDIVIDUAL? WHAT WOULD THOREAU SAY ABOUT THE MERIT OF LEARNING FROM OUR PAST EXPERIENCES BASED ON THIS QUOTE?
6. IS IT POSSIBLE TO EMBRACE SIMPLICITY AND STILL ENJOY THE MODERN-DAY LUXURIES OF LIFE?
7. "IT IS EASY IN THE WORLD TO LIVE AFTER THE WORLD'S OPINION; IT IS EASY IN SOLITUDE TO LIVE AFTER OUR OWN; BUT THE GREAT MAN IS HE WHO IN THE MIDST OF THE CROWD KEEPS WITH PERFECT SWEETNESS THE INDEPENDENCE OF SOLITUDE." WHAT IS EMERSON SAYING IN THIS QUOTE? IS IT POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE WHAT HE IS SUGGESTING?
8. THOREAU BELIEVED THAT "THE MASS OF MEN LEAD LIVES OF QUIET DESPERATION." DO YOU THINK HE IS CORRECT? EXPLAIN.
9. HOW IS TRANSCENDENTALISM STILL RELEVANT TODAY? DOES IT APPLY EVEN MORE TO US NOW THAN IT DID 200 YEARS AGO? HOW SO?

10. DO YOU LIKE THE TRANSCENDENTALISTS AND THEIR IDEAS? WHY OR WHY NOT?

11. HOW HAS THIS UNIT IMPACTED YOU PERSONALLY?