

## AP Language and Composition

Read two ESSAYS

i. Civil Disobedience by Henry David Thoreau ii.

Self-Reliance by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

(Note: These are often sold in books that are compilations of essays. There will be an assessment during the first week of school. Study guides were distributed during the last weeks of school and can be found below or picked up in the front office of NHS.)

**AP Language & Composition Summer Reading Study Sheet *Civil Disobedience & Self-Reliance*** (Note: This study guide represents the greater portion of knowledge that you will be asked to be fluent with on the test. It is not comprehensive. Some questions may be deleted from the actual test, and others may be added; however, students who can answer correctly the questions below will not have any trouble receiving a passing grade.)

### ***Civil Disobedience***

- 1) How does Thoreau feel about the motto – “That government is best which governs least”?
- 2) Which war was being waged when Thoreau composed this essay?
- 3) What, does Thoreau argue, is the real reason the majority is permitted to rule?
- 4) What virtue does humankind possess that provides the basis for Thoreau to assert, “The only obligation which I have a right to

assume is to do at any time what I think right”?

5) When Thoreau writes, “I cannot for an instant recognize that political organization as *my* government which is the *slave’s* government also”, what social institution is he rebelling against?

6) Thoreau claims that the causes of the “Revolution of 75” (The American Revolution) were taxes on foreign goods, and he claims that he would not have supported the revolution because he could have simply done without those goods. What cause does he think is important enough to have a revolution over?

7) Thoreau writes, “he that would save his life, in such a case, shall lose it”. The syntax in this sentence is an allusion to what?

8) What does Thoreau compare voting with?

9) What is Thoreau’s tone in his discussion of voting?

10) How does Thoreau think most men sustain the evil that exists in their own state?

11) Where does Thoreau think action should derive from?

12) Who does Thoreau blame for the crucifixion of Christ and the excommunication of Copernicus and Luther?

13) How does Thoreau feel about ‘majority rule’?

14) What is Thoreau most concerned with not allowing?

15) Where does Thoreau think the only true place for a just man is?

16) How did Thoreau get out of his first stay in jail?

17) What type of government, according to Thoreau, most respects the individual?

18) What does Thoreau think should be the highest power in a State?

19) What is the main idea of Thoreau's essay, *Civil-Disobedience*?

### ***Self-Reliance***

1) What does Emerson think genius is?

2) What does Emerson mean when he writes, "In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts"?

3) How, does Emerson argue, is a boy the master of society?

4) Emerson argues that the virtue society prefers the most is conformity. What does he say is its aversion?

5) Emerson writes that "the only right is what is after my constitution; the only wrong that which is against it". How does this comport with Thoreau's stance?

6) What does it take, in Emerson's opinion, to be a great man?

7) How does Emerson view consistency?

8) Who does Emerson allude to in order to make his point that greatness requires you to be misunderstood? (name two for full credit, 10 points extra credit will be given for providing all seven names)

9) What does Emerson mean when he argues that “the force of character is cumulative?”

10) How does Emerson define intuition?

11) When Emerson writes “power ceases in the instant of repose”, repose means what?

12) What does Emerson mean when he writes, “The populace think that your rejection of popular standards is a rejection of all standard, and mere antinomianism; and the bold sensualist will use the name of philosophy to gild his crimes”?

13) How does Emerson refute the above criticism of his argument?

14) Why is Emerson opposed to traveling for the purpose of amusement or education?

15) What point does Emerson attempt to make by juxtaposing a naked New Zealander with a white man?

16) When Emerson writes, “They [men] measure their esteem of each other by what each has, and not by what each is”, he is attacking what?

17) How does Emerson think men can find peace?

18) What is the main idea of Emerson's essay, *Self-Reliance*?