

#flo #ref #disorganized #incomplete

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## Thoreau: Walden

stranger to speech

listen for the waves/words with practice

only practiced ear can catch thoughts

breaths in the mist, breaths in the tranquility

breath in vs. discourse

pebbled lips?

thought = waves

stars come to catch blessing of our expression..?

sun exhibits himself as impartial?

narrow skylight?

blue vault that spans thy floud = sky?

gods of wind, dipped pens in mist -- thought?

sun tranfered and reprinted -> reflection on the ocean

winds wright clouds? made out of mist?

A) 2-page close reading of one or more poems from the eco-poetry unit. For a close reading, you want to

consesnene transcends

pond is a metaphor for conscuionsness

the

thoreue uses the metaphor of a pond to communicate transcendentalist beliefs

beliefs, communicated:

quite mind to

when the mind is quite it reflects -> the lake is like consuisness

water as mind is a common metaphor that transcendentalist poetry uses

transcends space and time

must have a trained mind to breath it in

## 0.1 | **Outline?**

Thoreau uses the metaphor of a pond to communicate transcendentalist truths about consciousness

- it's a pond! walden pond, pebbled lips
- quite mind is needed : reflection in a surface
- quite mind is needed to absorb truths : passive soul, mist
- trained mind to understand quite thoughts : practiced ear
- different way of thinking about understanding / gaining access to truth: breathing in not rigorous argument

- clouds are thoughts, collections of mist. are doubly beautiful when reflected upon : doubly beautiful – no exceptions!
- consciousness is infinite and interconnected,
  - transcends space : starts
  - transcends time : gods
- accepts own limitations, he cannot become truly one with nature?

## 0.2 | Writing. Time.

Throughout his poem *Walden*, Thoreau uses the metaphor of a pond to communicate transcendentalist truths about consciousness. He describes himself in conversation with the famous Walden Pond despite the fact that their “converse a stranger is to speech” (Thoreau). The pond is a stranger to speech — its thoughts instead “break and die upon thy pebbled lips,” the edges of the pond (Thoreau). Here, Thoreau communicates one of the most fundamental transcendentalist beliefs: nature, despite it not communicating with words, has thoughts to express. And thus, “only the practiced ear can catch the surging words” — with practice, one can learn to understand what nature is communicating (Thoreau). Thoreau continues, writing that “thy flow of thought is noiseless as the lapse of thy own waters” (Thoreau). Just like nature’s thoughts, one must have a practiced ear to hear their own thoughts, the “lapse of thy own waters.” Our thoughts, just like the ponds, are “wafted as is the morning mist up from thy surface.” Thoreau then communicates another fundamental transcendentalist belief: one must have a quiet mind. The pond can only reflect when it is still, and only the “passive Soul doth breathe it the mist in, and is infected with the truth thou wouldst express” (Thoreau). The passive Soul, the quiet mind, breathes in the truth. With a quiet mind, one becomes infected with the truth in their own thoughts, the ones they will express. Note that Soul is capitalized, as in transcendentalism, someone’s soul *is* them. Soul becomes a name, a title, an embodiment of the human. In this first stanza, Thoreau presents a very transcendentalist way of thinking about thought and consciousness. Finding truth is not done through rigorous argumentation and problem solving. Instead, truth is wafted up from a still pond and inhaled. One becomes infected with truth by being a passive Soul.

Thoreau goes on to describe the infinitude of consciousness. He writes at the start of his final stanza: “E’en the remotest stars have come in troops and stopped low to catch the benediction of thy countenance” (Thoreau). The remotest stars, that which span the infinitude of space, come “in troops” to be blessed by the pond’s face. Here, Thoreau demonstrates two transcendentalist truths. The first, being the expanse of consciousness; consciousness is infinite in space and everywhere. It transcends space. The second, being the scale of consciousness. The entire universe is reflected in but a single pond. Everything is contained within the small. Thoreau continues, “O! tell me what the winds have writ for the last thousand years” (Thoreau). Thoreau comments on consciousness’s infinitude over time — consciousness transcends time itself. He writes, “no cloud so rare but hitherward it stalked, and in thy face looked doubly beautiful.” (Thoreau). The clouds, collections of mist, represent thoughts. When reflected upon, in the face of the pond, they are doubly beautiful. Thoreau concludes, “surely there was much that would have thrilled the Soul, which human eye saw not. I would give much to read that first bright page” (Thoreau). Thoreau accepts his own limitations. He accepts that there is that which he doesn’t know, and that which he cannot know. Furthermore, he accepts that there is truth in what he cannot know; he ends, “when Eurus, Boreas ... first dipped their pens in mist” (Thoreau). The gods write thoughts — truth — which human eye saw not. Truth is not meant to be communicated or heard, it simply *is*. The passive Soul can breathe it in.