

Second Quarter

English II (CP)

Text for Today:

The Language of Literature: American Literature, Day 23

Unit:

“The Spirit of Individualism”

Chapter:

“Celebrations of Self”

Objective:

The student will be able to identify important facts about Thoreau’s life, identify and fully explain many different quotes from *Walden*, experience a different point of view, define “Carpe Diem,” and explain what “Carpe Diem” has to do with Transcendentalism.

Procedure:

1. Begin the class by reading a short selection from St. Francis’ “The Canticle of the Creatures.”
2. Give a quiz on the excerpts from *Walden*.
3. Give some notes on the life of Henry David Thoreau.
4. Show pictures of *Walden* Pond.
5. Go over all of the important parts from the excerpt of *Walden*.
6. Have a discussion about the meaning of each important quote, in turn.
7. End with a discussion about the “different drummer” quote.
8. Get up on the desk and ask the students why I’m standing up there. (Answer: To see things from a different point of view.)
9. Challenge the students to always try to look at life from a different point of view. Go to your next class a different way. Go to a different church on Sunday. Sit at a different table at lunch. Go and see a different kind of movie that you wouldn’t usually see.
10. Have every single student take the time to look at the class from a different point of view: the view from the top of the teacher’s desk.
11. Introduce a different concept, one that they just learned with gusto: Carpe Diem.
12. Ask the Latin scholars of the classroom what “Carpe Diem” means.
13. Have the students write down the meaning of carpe diem (seize the day) in their notebooks as another concept that is stressed in Transcendentalism.
14. Show a clip from *The Dead Poets’ Society* that shows Mr. Keating trying to explain the concept of carpe diem to his students.
15. Explain that when we YAWP in a few days, and when we read our poems, we will be taking the phrase carpe diem literally.

Assessment:

Students will be tested on all objectives. They may also choose to write their reactions on *Walden*.

Materials (in addition to usual AV equipment):

Pictures of Walden Pond, and the clip from *The Dead Poets’ Society* that exemplifies “Carpe Diem.”

Homework Due Today:

Read the excerpts from *Walden* on pages 382-391.