**Simplify Your Life - The Thoreau Project**

In *Walden*, Henry David Thoreau shares his thoughts on living a simple and meaningful life.  One of the main themes in Thoreau’s *Walden* is to rid your life of superfluous goods in order to live simply. Your goal for this project is to see how many excessive and unnecessary goods you have cluttering up your life, and to figure out exactly what you really need in order to live a meaningful life.

**Step 1** - Go through and catalogue **ALL** of your belongings - anything that you personally own.  Make a list of every single one of your possessions from your socks to your school supplies - everything in your room and your car.  Categorize your list - Clothes, School Supplies, Sports Equipment, Bedroom Furniture, Bathroom Supplies, ect.

**Step 2** - Rate each one of your possessions from 1 - 4.  1 = absolutely don’t need at all, 2 = enjoy, but can live without, 3 = really really really like, 4 = absolutely can’t live without.

**Step 3** - Count all of your possessions and total how many possessions you have under each rating… how many possessions do you have that you “absolutely don’t need at all?” How many possessions do you have that you “absolutely can’t live without?” What is your total number of possessions?  **- 30 points**

**Step 4** - **Simple Living Analysis** - Pretend you are going to live in Thoreau’s cabin at Walden Pond for the next year by yourself. Pick at least 10 of the possessions from your list that you want to take with you (no more than 10) for the trip. Write an explanation for each one of your 10 possessions.  Each explanation should be a minimum of 5 sentences explaining why you would take that possession with you.  **- 30 points**

**Step 5** - **Transcendentalism Analysis** - Write a minimum 3 paragraph analysis explaining Transcendentalism in your own words and anything that you found interesting about Transcendentalism. Describe what you learned about yourself through cataloguing all of your possessions. Do you feel that you live a simple life or do you feel you need to simplify your life? Be sure to use specific details to support your point.  **- 50 points**

**Step 6** - Present your possession totals, Simple Living Analysis, and your Transcendentalism Analysis to the class on the day of the Final. *Extra Credit* - You can earn extra credit on your presentation if you make a visual aide capturing the essence of Transcendentalism (like a poster or collage) or a chart showing your catalogue findings. **- 20 points**

Give your presentation early for extra credit on Tuesday, December 16th – All other presentations will be given the day of the final.