

**Re-examining the "Desperate Country" and the "Desperate City":
A Look at the Parallels Between 19th Century Environmental and Transcendental
Thought and Human Impact on the Albuquerque Region**

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Basic Information

This unit has been designed to aid teachers in guiding students through an exploration of Transcendentalist thought and environmental consequences of human populations. The unifying topics of study will be the definition of Transcendentalism, Transcendentalist literature, and the relevancy of Transcendentalist thought regarding local environmental issues. Topics covered will include the literary and technical elements of Transcendentalist writings, common Transcendentalist themes, and social reform with an emphasis on utopian societies. Students will have the opportunity to display proficiency in areas of literacy, formal and creative writing, research, public speaking, and artistic dexterity in an original work.

In relation to the scope of an English course, this unit will introduce and/or reinforce the literary elements of main idea, purpose of writing and audience, figurative language, and writing styles, strengthen reading comprehension skills, increase proficiency in research and presentation of information, strengthen the ability to make relevant connections between literature and contemporary issues, and provide a strong base for future literary study.

The strategies and resources used for this unit are appropriate for American literature students at the high school junior level and can be modified to accommodate different learning levels.

The activities in this unit can be used individually or together to adequately cover the teacher's expectations of student learning. The suggested time frame for this unit is a maximum of three weeks of course work, based on daily fifty-minute class periods. However, this unit can easily be modified to meet the needs of any class schedule at the appropriate level. The estimated time for activities is as follows:

Introductory Activities: 1 to 3 days

Developmental Activities: 4 to 7 days

Concluding Activities: 4 to 7 days

Evaluation: Ongoing throughout the unit

Unit Objectives:

Upon completion of this unit the learner will be able to...

Cognitive

1. Identify five characteristics of Transcendentalism.
2. Identify literary techniques, including main idea, style, purpose of writing, and figurative

language.

3. Evaluate the similarities and differences between Transcendentalism and Puritanism and Romanticism.
4. Recognize recurrent themes and imagery.
5. Recognize gender stereotypes.
6. Recognize the influence of social events on literature.
7. Demonstrate the ability to read comprehensively independently.
8. Develop proficiency in the use of library facilities for research purposes.
9. Identify the changes to the Albuquerque environment caused by human impact.
10. Predict the outcomes of continued environmental stresses on the Albuquerque region.
11. Compose original poetry as discourse on a local environmental issue.
12. Debate the pros and cons of a local environmental issue.
13. Define "utopia" and related vocabulary.
14. Create their own utopian society based on Transcendentalist ideals.
15. Develop strengthened language usage in writing and speaking.
16. Identify important events and changes in mid-19th century life.
17. Identify necessities of modern life.
18. Recognize the influence of Transcendentalist thought in other literary works.

Affective

1. Engage in meaningful discussion about local environmental issues and ethics.
2. Compare and contrast modern values with values of other literary time periods.
3. Appreciate the importance of nature as inspiration in art and literature.
4. Develop a sense of empowerment regarding environmental change.
5. Work efficiently in cooperative settings.
6. Develop time management and organizational skills.
7. Accept responsibility for independent learning.
8. Respect the role of science and research in society.

Psychomotor

1. Design a visual representation of a simplified society.
2. Design and construct a visual representation of a modern utopia.
3. Construct a visual timeline of the industrial and technological advancements in American history.

Topic Outline

- I. Historical Background 1800-1850s
 - A. Shift from agricultural society to industrial society

1. Word "technology" coined in 1829
 2. Invention of cotton gin, sewing machine, telegraph, assembly line, steam engine, postage stamp
- A. Results
1. Farm laborers decreased, factory workers increased
 2. Contrasting levels of rich and poor
 3. Public aid societies form
 4. Political corruption spreads

I. Literary Response

- A. Reflects innovation and confidence of the nation
- B. No longer derivative- New England Renaissance
- C. Transcendentalism
1. Fundamental truths about life and death can be reached only by going beyond the world of the senses
 2. Characteristics of Transcendentalism
 - a. Nature
 - b. Individualism
 - c. Democratic
 - d. Moral enthusiasm
 - e. Reform society

I. Transcendental Authors

- A. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)
1. Expresses the main principles of Transcendental thought
 2. Develops concept of the "Over-soul" or "Universal Mind"
- A. Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)
1. Record of testing Transcendental ideals of individualism, self-reliance, and material economy for the sake of spiritual wealth
 2. Record of flora and fauna of the locality
- A. Margaret Fuller (1810-1850)
1. Accepted by Transcendentalists as intellectual equal
 2. First mature consideration of feminism by an American, touching on the intellectual, economic, political, and sexual aspects of the subject

I. Utopias

- A. Important part of Transcendental thought
- B. Defined as an imaginary ideal society or political state
- C. Brook Farm, 1841-1847

I. Transcendental ideals as a response to modern environmental issues in the Albuquerque

region

- A. Parallels between materialism in the 19th century and materialism today
- B. Specific environmental concerns
 - 1. Edith Escarpment
 - a. Allows for an understanding of creation and maintenance of the Albuquerque aquifer
 - b. Provides a shocking example of sources of pollution and devastation
 - 1. Abandoned South Yale Landfill
 - a. Introduces the idea of arid/semi-arid environments as ideal waste disposal sites
 - b. Reinforces the idea of past and continued human impact on the environment
 - 1. Coronado Pueblo
 - a. Allows for local study of communal living
 - b. Leads to ideas on the possibility of adopting utopian lifestyles

Narrative

"In the tranquil landscape, and especially in the distant line of the horizon, man beholds somewhat as beautiful as his own nature." In these lines from his influential essay *Walden*, Henry David Thoreau aptly expresses the harmony he felt between himself and nature and, ultimately, the basis of American Transcendental thought in the mid-19th century. Indeed, Transcendentalists such as Thoreau and his contemporaries, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, and Nathaniel Hawthorne, created a literature that explores the innate connection between the individual and nature and how awareness of this relationship could be heightened, therefore leading to the reformation of a society that the Transcendentalists viewed as materialistic and corrupt.

In comparison, the influences on society today parallel those the Transcendentalists sought to expose and destroy 150 years ago. The United States continues to advance technologically and capitalistically. The materialism that the Transcendentalists saw as the new defining characteristic of America has escalated. Accordingly, modern growth has perpetuated the environmental devastation that accompanied the industrious nature of 19th century America. Although environmental policies recently have received more attention, the effects of human impact on the land have continued the stress on fundamental resources begun by the Puritans and given witness to by the Transcendentalists in the mid-1800s.

Consequently, the parallels between environmental issues now and then afford an excellent opportunity for making Transcendentalist ideals and concerns relevant to Albuquerque high school students of American literature. The impacts of advanced human activity on the Albuquerque region mirror the catastrophic environmental changes that have shaped the landscape since its primary populations and especially since European settlement. Locally, students can study first hand how populations and technologies can irreparably alter an area and

lead to the loss of necessary precious resources. An understanding of the impacts human life has had on the environment will ultimately lead to generations willing to work to preserve resources and create a balance between nature and human society.

To begin this study, a general overview of the history of the first half of the 19th century provides the background information necessary to emphasize the vast cultural, social, and environmental changes the United States was experiencing. During this time, the United States began to change into an industrial and urban society. The word technology was coined in 1829. Many inventions that increased productivity and convenience came about, including the cotton gin, the sewing machine, the telegraph, the assembly line, the steam engine, and the postage stamp. As a consequence, the socio-economic landscape of America changed. In the first of the 19th century, the proportion of Americans who labored on farms declined as more and more men and women left the land to work in urban business and factories. In addition, rather than continuing as a republic of small landholders, the United States increasingly became a land of contrasting riches and poverty. As the number of American millionaires grew, the level of poverty in America increased as well. By mid-century, the bread lines and soup kitchens of public aid societies had become a permanent part of life in America's big cities. Moreover, an unprecedented amount of corruption began to characterize political life. For example, during Andrew Jackson's administration, the New York Collector of Customs, Samuel Startwout, became the first public servant known in American history to steal a million dollars.

Also, as a result of the growing trend of urbanization and expansion, the United States began to face new political and social challenges. During this time, a national coalition of abolitionists established the American Anti-Slavery Society. Additionally, women began to battle more and more for their property and voting rights, as well as play a major role in social reform. Notable women led movements to improve prisons and asylums, promote women's education, and reform dress standards. On the expansionist front, the United States fought the Mexican-American War (1846-1848). Politically, this war was criticized because it sought to acquire slave-holding territory. These issues, coupled with the turbulence and imbalance caused by the nation's unprecedented growth, prompted significant changes in the values and moods of the American people.

In relation, the literary response to the fast-paced years of 1840-1855 reflected the innovation and confidence that characterized the time period. Romantic literature departed from the didactic tradition of Puritan and Revolutionary literature, and the authors of Romanticism, although still derivative in style, began to displace American literature from English and European literatures. The gradual shift toward uniquely American styles in art and literature coalesced in the creative outburst known as the New England Renaissance. During this literary period, the nation's prosperity and confidence demanded a great literature to celebrate, as well as criticize, the new definition of America. For the first time, American authors experienced complete freedom from previous literary conventions and were able to discuss the people and culture of the United States from a new, uniquely American, standpoint.

Specifically, one of these uniquely American standpoints that blossomed during the New England Renaissance was Transcendentalism. Although Transcendentalism had its roots in the romantic literature of Europe, neo-Platonism, German ideology, and Oriental mysticism,

proponents of American Transcendentalist thought took pieces of each of these philosophical tendencies to form a conglomerate art form for American literary purposes. American Transcendentalism is based on the belief that the most fundamental truths about life and death can be reached only by going beyond the world of the senses. That is, there is something in human beings that transcends human nature-- a spark of divinity. This celebration of feeling over reason appealed to the masses who were feeling restricted by the harsh doctrines that held on to the remnants of Puritanism. Rather, Americans found in Transcendentalist literature the freedom to expand as individuals, just as their country was expanding as a nation. Through Transcendentalism, followers claimed that each and every individual, living as a true individual, free from restraining dogma and dull habits of thought, could rise above the material world. This cultural rejuvenation against the materialism of American society resulted from the transcendence of the "Oversoul," an all-pervading power for goodness from which all things come and of which all things are a part. This transcending power is emphasized in the five basic characteristics of transcendental tendency.

First, nature played an important role in the Transcendentalist view. Nature was divine and alive with spirit; indeed, the human mind could read the truths of life in nature. To live in harmony with nature and to allow one's deepest intuitive being to communicate with nature was a source of goodness and inspiration. In fact, writers not only celebrated America's great landscape, but also constructed the wilderness as a type of dramatic character that illustrated moral law. The desire for an escape from the evils of society and a return to nature became a permanent convention of American literature.

Second, Transcendentalist thought emphasized individualism. Only by rejecting the irrelevant dogmas in place and searching for inner truth could one experience the deep intuition of spiritual reality. In relation, Transcendentalism is also very democratic, asserting that the powers of the individual mind and soul are equally available to all people. These powers are not dependent on wealth, gender, background, or education, but on the individual's willingness to release their own imaginative power to realize his or her place in the Oversoul.

Next, the obvious results from Transcendentalist efforts are manifest in the intense moral enthusiasm that characterized Transcendental thinkers. Society, with its emphasis on material success, was often seen as a source of corruption. To combat this evil, many Transcendentalists were associated with such moralist groups as the anti-slavery group, the march for women's rights, and other aid societies. Ultimately, some Transcendentalists hoped to reform society by creating an American utopia with a perfect social and political system. Many followers worked toward this ideal by forming utopian communities, the most famous of which is Brook Farm.

As a result of its lofty aspirations, Transcendentalist literature is often intensely optimistic and suggests that the individual, in harmony with the divine universe, can transform the world. The best examples of this Transcendentalist zeal are found in the works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Margaret Fuller. These authors actively reinforced Transcendentalist ideals, with a special emphasis not only on nature and the individual's ability to divine truth from it, but also on taking that truth and using its power to make a difference in what Emerson, Thoreau, and Fuller saw as a corrupted, ruined, urban maze.

First, Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) is often known as the Father of American

Transcendentalism. Despite his training as a Unitarian minister, Emerson felt compelled to leave the ministry "for reasons of conscience" (*American Literature* 159). He traveled to Europe and was there introduced to the English writers William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Thomas Carlyle. Their ideas and influence prompted him to become a member of the Transcendentalist Club when he returned to the United States. It was in this club that Emerson met Henry David Thoreau and Margaret Fuller (159).

Upon his return, Emerson also began writing. He composed his first book, *Nature*, in 1836 and gave an inspirational address called *The American Scholar* in 1837 (159). More works followed, including his *Essays* in 1841, *Essays: Second Series* in 1844, *Representative Men* in 1849, and *The Conduct of Life* in 1860. Within these works readers found inspiration along the lines of Transcendentalist thought. Emerson's works were influential not only for future authors like Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, and Robert Frost, but also for the general public of his time. His beliefs and great optimism concerning the power of the individual mirrored the spirit of the growing nation. However, Emerson's works often served as a social criticism of the excesses of materialism and the impacts of urbanization he witnessed with the development of the nation.

Second, Henry David Thoreau lived "a deliberately unconventional life" (172). Despite his excellent education at Harvard, Thoreau refused to join a career field, and supported himself through odd jobs, thus affording him the freedom he desired. As a member of the Transcendentalist Club, Thoreau was quite close to Emerson; indeed, Thoreau lived and studied with Emerson for two years.

Thoreau's ideals relied heavily on the responsibility of the individual. That is, his plan to reform society emphasized change in the lives of individual men and women. His most influential works, *Civil Disobedience* (1848), *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849), and *Walden* (1854) focused on the rights and duties of the individual as they related to life in and out of the city. Indeed, Thoreau's writings were not so much about where one lives as they were "about living itself" (173).

Third, Margaret Fuller (1810-1850) was known as an American editor, essayist, poet, and social reformer (165). As one of the few female members of the Transcendentalist Club, Fuller openly rejected the role society had assigned to women in her time. She was not only active in the club, but also served as editor-in-chief of the club's magazine, *The Dial*, and wrote extensively based on the ideals of Transcendentalism, especially equality.

Sadly, though, Fuller's contributions to Transcendentalist thought and literature were not fully appreciated during her time. She was often viewed as "a would-be intellectual old maid, sex-starved for many years, then sex-crazed" (*The Norton Anthology of American Literature* 678), a definition based more on her personal life but that dominated her professional life. However, her influence on the growing Feminist movement of the time cannot be dismissed. She spoke out for a society that would recognize the fundamental beauty of all creatures and insisted that the individual could not discover fundamental truths nor experience transcendence until a respect for one another and the surrounding environment was achieved. Fuller was one of the first to speak out to an entire nation about the inequality that existed between the sexes, and her courage and extraordinary talent count her among the most influential in American

thought.

In relation to the social criticisms of Emerson, Thoreau, and Fuller, the accelerated urbanization and the too often devastating consequences that historically have accompanied an increased emphasis on materialism threaten the fragile Albuquerque environment today. More than one third of New Mexico's population lives in metropolitan Albuquerque (*Albuquerque Environmental Story*, "Air Quality" 1 of 5). Ironically, the area consistently chosen by settlers was and remains one of the most ecologically challenged regions in the Southwest. The high altitude and valley location of Albuquerque create a particularly environmentally sensitive area. Despite the environmental burdens, though, Albuquerque continues to experience rapid growth. Since the mid-1970s, the Albuquerque urban area has grown by more than 25 percent-- from about 427,000 to 537,500 (*AES*, "Air Quality" 1 of 5). Projection for the year 2015 put Albuquerque's population at 638,000, an average increase of 5,000 per year.

Accordingly, with this shift to and domination of prolific expansion in the Albuquerque region, the stresses on the local environment continue to multiply. This expansion is based on human exploitation of natural resources and is a direct result of society's response to materialism. Therefore, the ways that the current growth trends and the current policies concerning resource management effect the Albuquerque area merit a response similar to the 19th century American response to materialism in the form of Transcendentalism. To encourage this response, a study of the geologic framework of the Albuquerque environmental situation and an examination of some of the pertinent issues that result from human impact within this framework will offer students a greater understanding of the effects of urbanization on the region.

First, one of the most pressing issues for the Albuquerque area is the looming threat to the once abundant aquifer. Due primarily to overuse of water by capitalist ventures that have settled in the Albuquerque area, the underground aquifer that supplies the city's water is being depleted faster than it can be recharged. In relation, the existing water in the shallow aquifer is in peril due to the pollutants brought in by expansion and human impact. Geologically, the aquifer was created by the formation of the Rio Grande Rift. The Rift was formed by the down-dropping of a large block of the earth's crust, yielding an elongated trough bound on either side by mountains (*AES*, "Geology and Geological History" 1 of 3). As a result of this subsidence, most of Albuquerque is situated on top of material that has been eroded from the mountains surrounding the Rift zone and deposited within it. The unconsolidated material, or alluvium, is porous and therefore able to store the vast amount of water that makes up the aquifer.

However, despite the seeming perfection of the geologic formation of a natural underground storage tank, the porous quality of the alluvium yields a problem with accelerated urbanization. For example, the development that is occurring on top of the Edith Escarpment in Albuquerque demonstrates with shocking clarity the issue of pollution in relation to the aquifer. By examining the escarpment, it is possible to see an excellent example of the unconsolidated materials that make up the aquifer. It is easy to see the porous nature of the alluvium and to understand its place in the recharging of the aquifer. However, a quick hike to the top of the escarpment displays a scene of human impact at its greatest. There are piles of trash and old tires, as well as on-going development complete with oil- and gas-using tractors and other

heavy machinery. The pollution that these instruments of urbanization create remains in the earth and, with the rain, trickles through the unconsolidated material of the aquifer, thus contaminating the water supply.

Indeed, the aquifer that supplies the Albuquerque area's water is threatened more and more with acceleration of urbanization. However, the pollution has been occurring since very early in the development of the region. Abandoned landfill sites can be found all over the city. One of particular importance, though, is the abandoned South Yale Sanitary Landfill. Used during the years of 1946-1965, this landfill was recently uncovered with the construction of a new road from Interstate 25 to the Albuquerque Sunport. As this road was built, workers had to excavate and dispose of trash found in an area approximately 45 feet deep and 300,00 yards long. Like the waste collecting on top of the Edith Escarpment, beneath all this construction and trash is the aquifer.

Ironically, though, it is argued that semi-arid and arid environments like the Albuquerque region are ideal waste repository sites. According to the book *Deserts as Dumps? The Disposal of Hazardous Materials in Arid Ecosystems*, "The aridity of deserts means that less water is available, at least at the surface, to mobilize and transport hazardous substances. Further, fewer organisms are available to intrude upon a waste disposal site. Finally deserts tend to be scarcely populated and less intensely used for agriculture and other activities that might conflict with waste disposal" (Reith et. al. 5). Therefore, the urbanization that is occurring in other parts of the nation has a direct effect on regions like Albuquerque as their waste is transported to the more suitable dump site of the nation's deserts. Although science and technology continue to make great strides in understanding and regulating the waste that results from increased materialism, the issue of waste management will remain an ever-prevalent problem as capitalism and urbanism leave their mark on the land.

However, even in the absence of urbanization and the negative impacts of materialism, waste issues exist. Long before the population boom that has so greatly affected the Albuquerque environment, Native Americans impacted the land of the Southwest. Although the different tribes that inhabited New Mexico had considerably less effect on the region's environment than the industry of today, they were unable to leave the land in the pristine condition in which they found it. For example, the Pueblo Indians who inhabited the area at the Coronado Pueblo in Bernalillo, New Mexico, certainly left behind a record of the destructive effects to the land that resulted from their agrarian lifestyle. Indeed, the Pueblo faced issues concerning food, fuel, and waste. As a Pueblo, only so much land was available for their use in farming and gathering wood for fires. Also, the Pueblo required a location for the trash and waste they accumulated. These needs coupled with the limited resources within the Pueblo boundary eventually led to the overuse of the land. However, when the depletion of natural resources adversely affected the Pueblo way of life, the people could simply abandon the site and search out a new area that would suit their needs. Today, that option no longer exists. Expansion and industry have not only made it impossible to leave an impacted area so it may recover, but instead have made it possible to harvest and exploit resources from all over the world.

Although these sites provide an excellent, visual example of the impact urbanization has had on

the Albuquerque environment, they relate to just a few of the issues and challenges the region faces as it continues to experience growth. Human habitation has always had an effect on the land, and increased human habitation places resources and environments in danger of complete depletion. Therefore, many of the issues and challenges the Transcendentalists faced parallel the issues and challenges facing the Albuquerque area as it experiences the same sort of accelerated urbanization and technological advances that characterized the mid-19th century. Not only does development in the area persist and cause potentially irreversible damage to the Albuquerque environment, but the region also is in need of fresh ideas and new policies to replace the stale wisdom that promotes the societal emphasis on materialism. A study of Transcendentalism provides students with the opportunity to see their own connection with nature, understand the interconnectedness and cyclical patterns that define natural environments, recognize the materialism and excesses of modern society, predict future environmental and societal occurrences, and decide what response this information merits in their own lives.

Teaching Procedures and Strategies

Introductory Activities

Suggested activities for introducing the Transcendental world and its relationship to human impact on the environment include:

1. One week prior to beginning the unit, assign students to find one newspaper, magazine, or Internet article each on a local environmental issue. This assignment will be due on the first day of this unit. Have students share their findings with the class and draw on students' prior knowledge to discuss environmental challenges the Albuquerque region faces. These issues will become the topics of the unit's developmental and culminating activities. Relate the idea of human impact today to its beginnings. What was our area like 10 years ago? One hundred years ago? One thousand years ago? One million years ago? On day two of the unit, introduce students to historical background of the 19th century and Transcendentalism.
2. Divide the class into two halves. Assign the phrase "New England Renaissance" to one half; assign the word "Transcendentalism" to the other half. Without using external sources such as dictionaries or textbooks, ask the students to take 5 to 10 minutes to devise their own definition of these words based on prior knowledge. Have a spokesperson from each half report the definition. Discuss: What did these words mean during the 19th century? Do they mean the same things today? How are the two terms related to one another? Discuss the components of the New England Renaissance, historical influences, and Transcendentalism.
3. Show a video that deals with either the New England Renaissance, Transcendentalism, or the growth of industrialism in the United States and/or New Mexico. Discuss the ideas in the video as they relate to the New England Renaissance and Transcendentalism.
4. Decorate the classroom with maps and pictures that represent the passage of geological time and the changes in the landscapes caused by recent accelerated urbanization. A bulletin board may be provided for students to provide their own visualizations of the passage of time. These visualizations may be manifested in student drawings, poetry, or

other resources the students may wish to use, including periodicals, books, posters, pictures, and Internet information.

Developmental Activities

The following is a list of suggested activities to aid students in their understanding of Transcendentalism and its role as a response to environmental concerns. The activities may be used individually or together according to the students' needs and interests. The listed activities are designed to allow student choice and freedom in what and how the unit's components will be studied, yet also provide a firm structure to assist in material presentation and manageability. Teachers are encouraged to explore and define students' needs and interests and combine, modify, and employ the developmental activities accordingly.

1. Plan a debate in which students prepare to argue both sides of one local environmental issue. Expect students to research both sides of their topic and be able to present either side on the assigned day.
2. Ask: What events/ advances are occurring locally today that will generate the same sort of change as those of the early to middle 19th century? Based on students' responses, divide students into groups of 3 to 4 and have each group investigate the proposed events/ advances. Each group will present the information discovered.
3. Read Ralph Waldo Emerson's poetry. Specifically suggested are "The Rhodora," "Earth Song," and "Two Rivers." Discuss the themes and literary techniques found in these poems. Emphasize the Transcendental aspects of each poem.
4. Read excerpts from Ralph Waldo Emerson's essays *Nature* and/or "Self-Reliance." Discuss the themes and literary techniques found in these essays. Emphasize that these works include the basis for Transcendental thought.
5. Allow each student to select a local environmental issue in which he or she is interested. Based on research of the topic, have each student respond to the issue in prose (a reflective or persuasive essay is suggested), and/or in poetry (the poetic format of the limerick, cinquain, diamente, haiku, and concrete provide useful structures for this assignment).
6. Read excerpts from Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. Discuss the themes and literary techniques found in these excerpts. Emphasize the Transcendental aspects of the work.
7. Based on Thoreau's demand, "Simplify, simplify!", discuss with students the ideas of simplicity and excessiveness in modern life. How much is too much? Working with partners, have students think of five modern conveniences they could do without and the absence of which would have a positive effect environmentally. Students should complete a visual representation of what the world would look like/ be like without the five conveniences.
8. Read an excerpt from Margaret Fuller's *The Great Lawsuit*. Discuss gender roles and stereotypes and how Fuller's ideas on these topics relate to Transcendentalism.
9. Two at a time, introduce students to famous Americans, one male and one female, with similar accomplishments (for example, Amelia Earhart and Charles Lindbergh). Have students identify which person is "smarter" or whose accomplishments they think are

"better" and why. Discuss whether or not students' responses are stereotypical. How can we change these views? Do we need to change these views? Relate students' responses to Margaret Fuller and Transcendental thought.

10. Discuss the idea and origin of utopias and how the Transcendentalists used this idea in their quest for social reform. Provide examples of utopias, including Brook Farm.
11. Show a video on life in proposed utopias. Discuss the aspects common to utopian ideals and how those aspects complement Transcendental thinking.

Culminating Activities

Culminating activities for this resource unit may be based on the developmental activities, or may be related to, but independent of, assignments. This will allow the teacher to achieve closure of the unit while still making it meaningful to the students' experiences and achievements.

1. In groups of 3-5, have students devise their own "philosophy" of thought and life that would be accessible, although perhaps not popular with, society as a whole and that relates specifically to the needs of the Albuquerque region. Students should include their philosophical orientation on political structure, gender roles, education, labor, importance or unimportance of science and the arts, environmental policy, and may or may not include religion. As a group, students create a document, a "manifesto," that states their ideals and beliefs. Students should also be able to argue how their philosophy would benefit the Albuquerque region.
2. In groups of 3-5, have students create a Utopian model for improved life in the Albuquerque area. Student utopias should include solutions for division of labor, hierarchy of power (if any), access to education, solutions to poverty/wealth disparities and other social, political, and environmental aspects that the students see as important. Students should create a physical representation of their utopia and be prepared to present their ideas to the class and discuss how life would be improved (or at least defined as "utopian") based on their model.
3. Assign students the task of finding an example of how literature after 1855 has been influenced by Transcendental ideals. Examples may include poems, stories, novels, essays, media clips, magazine articles, or an element of the modern world that is based on or that originated from Transcendentalism. Allow students to share their findings with the class. Make sure a clear connection is made between the students' examples and the material.
4. Take students on a field trip to a site that will give them a first-hand look at the impact of human habitation in the Albuquerque region. Have students respond to this site using Transcendental ideology, either in prose or poetry. Ideas for field trip sites are listed in the **Materials and Resources** section.

Evaluation

The appropriate evaluation strategies will vary according to the developmental and culminating activities. Evaluation should occur continuously throughout the unit in terms of student understanding, and may occur at the conclusion of the unit in the form of a comprehensive

exam. The evaluation strategies for this curriculum unit encourage student involvement, but can be modified according to the students' learning styles and the instructor's teaching techniques.

1. Since the characteristics of Transcendentalism are important to this unit, students should be given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge on this subject:
 - A. Assign an essay of definition in which students define Transcendentalism and its characteristics, possibly providing examples from Transcendental works.
 - B. Select a short passage from a Transcendental work with which the students are not familiar. Have the students read the passage and find and explain the Transcendental characteristics within it.
 - C. Assign an essay in which students select a piece of Transcendental literature that has been studied and explore how its Transcendental characteristics lend support to the work's thematic content.
 - D. Assign an essay in which students may compare and contrast Transcendentalism and another literary time period (for example, Colonialism or Romanticism).
 1. As each Transcendental reading is assigned, have students select, copy, and explain their favorite line(s) from the work. Have students share with one another or with the class.
 2. Working in groups or individually, have students construct a timeline of American industrial growth from 1800 to present. This time period may be broken up for different groups/students to research and present. Provide butcher paper and markers for the groups/students to prepare a visual representation of the timeline.
 3. Students' presentations may be used as a means of unit evaluation. Be sure to set forth specific criteria for the projects.

Example: Working in groups of 3 to 5, create an Utopian model for improved life in the Albuquerque area. Include solutions for division of labor, hierarchy of power (if any), access to education, poverty/wealth disparities, and at least one other social issue, political issue, and environmental issue that you feel is important. Create a physical representation of your utopia and be prepared to discuss its benefits with the class.

Allow students to evaluate their classmates as well as themselves. This may include a rating system that students may use to judge how successful their utopian solutions are, as well as those of their classmates.

4. Assign students to respond to environmental issues through poetry and/or prose. Ask students to include specific characteristics and techniques in their original work.
5. This unit may be covered comprehensively in one exam. This exam should include: Identification of the characteristics of Transcendentalism, definitions of unit vocabulary, identification and discussion of Transcendental authors and works, and an essay question dealing with the relationship of Transcendental writing as a response to environmental issues in the mid-19th century and its usefulness as a response to environmental issues in the Albuquerque area today.

Materials and Resources

Films

Bigger, Better, Faster: A Science Odyssey- The Journey of a Century. PBS Home Video, 1998. Approximately 120 minutes.

The Century: America's Time with Peter Jennings, Volume I-VI. ABC Video, 1998. Approximately 11 hours, 40 minutes.

The Native Americans: The Natives of the Southwest, Volume VI. Turner Home Entertainment, 1994.

A Tour Of Santa Fe and the State of New Mexico. City Productions Home Video, Approximately 50 minutes.

Field Trip Sites

Coronado State Monument, Bernalillo, NM
Edith Escarpment, Edith and Paseo Del Norte
Elena Gallegos Open Space, Tramway Blvd.
Rio Grande Nature Center, Candelaria and Rio Grande
South Yale Landfill, University and Sunport

Other Materials

geologic maps

pictures of early Albuquerque

butcher paper

markers

art supplies for presentations/visuals

cardboard

poster board

rulers

glue

scissors

Suggested Readings for Students

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Earth Song." *Concise Anthology of American Literature.* Ed. George McMichael. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993. 614-615.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *Nature.* *American Literature.* Scribner Literature Series. Mission Hills, California: Glencoe Publishing Company, 1989. 161-162.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "The Rhodora." *Concise Anthology of American Literature.* Ed. George McMichael. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993. 606.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Self-Reliance." *American Literature.* Scribner Literature Series. Mission Hills, California: Glencoe Publishing Company, 1989. 163-164.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Two Rivers." *Concise Anthology of American Literature.* Ed. George McMichael. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993. 617-618.

Fuller, Margaret. *The Great Lawsuit. The Norton Anthology of American Literature. Ed. Nina Baym. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1989. 679-683.*

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden. American Literature. Scribner Literature Series.*

Mission Hills, California: Glencoe Publishing Company, 1989. 173-180.

Annotated Bibliography for Teachers

Books

American Literature. Scribner Literature Series. Mission Hills, California: Glencoe Publishing Company, 1989.

A comprehensive anthology of American literature especially designed for use in the high school Language Arts classroom.

Baym, Nina, Ed. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1989.*

A comprehensive anthology of American writers. Includes general overviews of literary time periods, author biographies, and the influences and contributions that have shaped American literature.

Branch, Michael P., Rochelle Johnson, Daniel Patterson, and Scott Slovic, Eds. *Reading the Earth: New Directions in the Study of Literature and Environment. Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho Press, 1998.*

A collection of critical essays that focus on the environment in literature, nature in literature, and ecology in literature. Of interest to this unit are the essays on theoretical perspectives on culture and environment, a study on "Misogyny in the American Eden: Abbey, Cather, and Maclean," and readings of 19th century environmental literature including Nathaniel Hawthorne and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Flew, Antony. *A Dictionary of Philosophy. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984.*

A comprehensive dictionary of classical to modern philosophies, including Transcendentalism and Utopianism.

Gangewere, Robert J., Ed. *The Exploited Eden: Literature on the American Environment. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1972.*

A collection of readings from American authors that focus on the importance of ecology and conservation. Includes such authors as Washington Irving, e.e. cummings, Benjamin Franklin, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Robert Frost, John Steinbeck, and William Faulkner. Provides a brief introduction to each selection. This collection is especially useful as it provides examples of how environmental thought influenced American writers.

Gonick, Larry, and Alice Outwater. *The Cartoon Guide to the Environment. New York: HarperPerennial, 1996.*

Covers the main topics of environmental science including chemical cycles, life communities, food webs, agriculture, human population growth, sources of energy and raw materials, waste disposal and recycling, cities, pollution, deforestation, ozone depletion, and

global warming.

Hart, James D., Ed. *The Oxford Companion to American Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.

An encyclopedia of American authors, works, characters, literary time periods, and literary terminology.

Kaplan, Nathaniel, and Thomas Kafsaros. *The Origins of American Transcendentalism in Philosophy and Mysticism*. New Haven: College and University Press, 1975.

An excellent overview of the different philosophies that combined to form American Transcendentalism. Also discusses Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau as "social critics."

Matthiessen, F.O. *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman*. London: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Discusses the five literary giants of the mid-19th century: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and Walt Whitman. Focuses on the authors' conceptions of the nature and function of literature and their relation to the literature that came before them and after them.

McMichael, George, Ed. *Concise Anthology of American Literature*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993.

A collection of American literature as well as complete discussions of American literary time periods and American authors' lives.

Merritts, Dorothy, Andrew De Wet, and Kirsten Menking. *Environmental Geology: An Earth System Science Approach*. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1998.

A comprehensive textbook that covers geologic concepts, earth systems, and environmental change.

Molles, Jr., Manuel C. *Ecology: Concepts and Applications*. Boston: WCB/McGraw-Hill, 1999.

A comprehensive textbook that covers the basic concepts of ecology.

Nash, Roderick Frazier. *American Environmentalism: Readings in Conservation History*. New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1990.

A collection of writings by American conservationists, including Black Elk, George Catlin, Henry David Thoreau, Theodore Roosevelt, Wallace Stegner, Ralph Nader, and Edward Abbey. Includes a useful American environmental chronology.

Reith, Charles C., and Bruce M. Thomson, Eds. *Deserts As Dumps? The Disposal Of Hazardous Material in Arid Ecosystems*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

A study of the issues and dilemmas that surround the theory that deserts provide the best haven for the disposal of waste.

Roseland, Mark, Ed. *Eco-City Dimensions*. Gabriola Island, British Columbia: New Society Publishers, 1997.

Essays on key features of ecological cities including economics, community design, collaborative housing, traffic restraint programs, governance and resource management, and

overcoming barriers to change.

Web Sites

www.cabq.gov/aes

An excellent resource for specifics of Albuquerque's geologic framework as well as environmental issues that affect Albuquerque.

www.cnle.org

The online National Library for the Environment. Includes reports on environmental issues as well as the latest in environmental news, environmental laws and treaties, and career help and job opportunities.