

## **WALKING, WONDERING, WRITING: THOREAU'S PEDAGOGY IN PRACTICE**

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Today, the default humanities learning space remains the classroom or the Learning Management System, but writer, activist, and sometime teacher Henry David Thoreau (1817-62) famously lived and wrote for two years in a very different kind of space: a wooded pond “a mile from any neighbor.” He hoped to engage with that environment but his project evolved to additionally critique his society from a distance and reflect on his goals and practice. What happens if we try his method? Students in my Fall 2019 English and Humanities capstone read Thoreau’s *Walden: or Life in the Woods*, related works, and key criticism; performed a walk and free-write in the university Arboretum; and, finally, completed original research and editorial projects which they presented at a college-wide conference. Their submitted writing, editing, group presentation, and final self-reflection combine to reveal connections between field experience and development of transferable research and editorial skills.

