

**Teacher:** Elaine Phipps

**Subject:** Fifth Grade – Class Meeting / Reading

**Unit Thread:** Choosing Life with Principle –Students will be learning how focused class meetings will be held once a week. The first week of school students will have class meeting daily to develop structure and routine of reflection of precepts and discussion. Students will also be studying a variety of literature throughout the year. This skill will be tied into reading particularly with the book Wonder. They will learn to decode the text’s theme or message and to find underlying precepts stated or not stated (but inferred) in the passages. They will list key precepts found in the text that have meaning to them. They will analyze the precept and explain their connection to the text and then to themselves. **Focus Question:** How can we do routine tasks or walk old routes in a more mindful, conscious way?

**Pennsylvania Academic Standard:**

1. Community well-being is dependent upon a balance of personal and social responsibility.
2. An expanded vocabulary enhances one’s ability to express ideas and information.
3. Effective readers use appropriate strategies to construct meaning.
4. Critical thinkers effectively and skillfully interpret, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information.

**LESSON ONE:**

**Objective/ Learning Targets:**

1. Students will define the term “precept” and record the definition in their class meeting journal.
  - a. Precepts are like rules or mottos or famous quotes. (Oxford Dictionary: a general rule intended to regulate behavior or thought.)
  - b. Precepts can help motivate us or guide us when we have to make important decisions.
2. Students will identify that writers often have a message or lesson in their writings. Students will look for the precepts while walking around the classroom and understand that they can walk around their reading looking for precepts too.
3. Students will copy down a Thoreau quote in their Class Meeting Journal. They will record what they think it means and what it means to them or the connection to the world that they can make with it.

**\*\*\*Focus Question: How can we do routine tasks or walk old routes in a more mindful, conscious way?\*\*\***

## **Materials:**

Video clip of "Choose Kind" from Wonder - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Df8ymFH\\_smg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Df8ymFH_smg) , graphic organizer (see end of Lesson one), poster or bulletin board with phrase "Choose kind.", bulletin board area for class Thoreau precepts, other motivational posters around the room, Thoreau quote taped under the desks of students – *"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams! Live the life you've imagined."* Henry David Thoreau; students will have class meeting journals

## **Anticipatory Set:** ( 2 -3 minutes)

- Write the word: "Precept" on the board. Explain that we will be focusing our class meetings around precepts - starting with those of one of your favorite writers: Henry David Thoreau. We will then study other writers, including authors of our read-aloud books such as Wonder and Save Me a Seat and Rules.
- State: I believe words are one of our most powerful tools – both the spoken and written – and we should choose them wisely before speaking. We will be discussing precepts in the classroom. Watch this video clip and listen for the word precept. Find out what it means. Listen for an example of one too.
- Movie clip: Wonder - Precept scene – 54 seconds

## **Instructional Input: (Total: 10 - 15 minutes)**

- Introducing the New Learning
  - 1. After watching the movie, discuss the meaning of the word precept. Discuss the precept shared in the movie. Point out the bulletin board that will hold our weekly precepts. Explain that we will study precepts and learn from them and make a connection to ourselves or our world.
  - 2. Explain that just like we watched the movie twice to appreciate the message or precept – that we often stop as a reader – to revisit or reread twice or more times something that an author has written. This helps us decode what the author is trying to say to us.

- 3. Model how to study a precept.
  - ❖ On chart paper or board record the precept and the source in the first box of the graphic organizer: “When given the choice between being right or being kind, choose kind. “ Dr. Wayne Dyer
  - ❖ Record down in the second box what first stands out to you about the precept and explain what it MEANS. Example: For me the part that says “Choose kind” stands out. I think this means that if everyone practiced this it would lead to a very respectful, caring world. People would practice being kind by giving, sharing, listening, and compromising.
  - ❖ Now let me look at the whole quote and reread and get another impression and tie it into or CONNECT to my world or myself. Record in the third box your new thoughts. I really struggled with the line “when given a choice between being right and being kind.” Then I made a connection. People do argue over being right: voting for the right team, the right candidate, the right way to do math,...For example, if both another person and I were arguing that we were next in line for going through the supermarket checkout, this precept says, that even if I was right and I was next, I should be kind, and give them that place in line. This could be hard to do. I would have to make sure my actions were done respectfully too. Another example might be having a strong opinion about having a favorite football team but I can be kind and listen to the opposing view of a fellow friend.
  - ❖ Tell the students: Through the week I will be giving you a quote from the author Henry David Thoreau. We will be studying this author every day this week as we will be doing class meetings everyday for the first week of school and then one precept one day a week.

➤ **Student Guided Practice (10-15 minutes):**

- ❖ Tell the students: Let me tell you a little about Thoreau. He was an author, a lover of nature, and a fighter for others’ rights. He also loved to be out in nature, and he loved to walk around. I am going to ask you to meet with your partner and to walk around... or “saunter” as Thoreau would say....the classroom and look at and read all the different posters.

- ❖ Find one that you both like and record on your sheet. Then write down what you each think it means. Then share it with each other. Together write a connection you made with it or how you could see it being used by use or others in the world.
  - ❖ Have students share their choices and their writing.
- **Student Independent Practice (10 minutes):**
- ❖ Find the Thoreau precept taped under your desk and record on one page of your journal or tape it onto the page of your class meeting journal.
  - ❖ Write down what you think it means.
  - ❖ If time allows, finally write down the connection you have with the precept in your life or in the world around you.
- **Checking for understanding** ( 5 minutes) Ask: What was the precept? What did it mean? How can we bring this precept into the classroom?
- **Closure:** ( 2 minutes) State that on our precept board we are placing today's focused idea from Thoreau. *Go confidently in the direction of your dreams! Live the life you've imagined.*
- Tell students to finish the assignment for homework and that you will be reading their class journals and respond back to them too – by reading 5 daily.
  - Ask: How can we do routine tasks in a more mindful way? (Have students suggest keeping dreams in our sights, learning precepts to apply to our selves and our actions, choosing kind,....etc....) Accept answers that tie to the ideas discussed in class that day.



THOREAU QUOTES THAT COULD BE USED WEEKLY CLASS MEETINGS FOR THE MONTHS OF SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER:

*"I think that I cannot preserve my health and spirits, unless I spend four hours a day at least—and it is commonly more than that—sauntering through the woods and over the hills and fields, absolutely free from all worldly engagements.*

*You must **live** in the present, launch yourself on every wave, find your eternity in each moment. Fools stand on their island of opportunities and look toward another land. There is no other land; there is no other **life** but this. Go confidently in the direction of your dreams!*

*If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.*

*The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what I thought, and attended to my answer.*

*Go confidently in the direction of your dreams! Live the life you've imagined.*

*I would rather sit on a pumpkin, and have it all to myself, than be crowded on a velvet cushion.*

*Books are the treasured wealth of the world and the fit inheritance of generations and nations.*

*What lies behind us and lies ahead of us are tiny matters compared to what lives within us.*

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**LESSON 2:**

**Objective/ Learning Targets:**

1. Students will identify who was Henry David Thoreau and why he went to Walden Pond.
2. Students will use skills of rereading and connecting the passage to their world to choose a precept to record in their journals and define and to make a connection.

**Materials:** Wonder clip of Auggie upset and escaping from a problem he faced: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=COKLb\\_v50-k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=COKLb_v50-k), Thoreau at Walden by John Porcellino, various quotes from this book as seen in purple, Class Meeting Journal

**Anticipatory Set:** ( 5 minutes)

- Ask: Have you ever wanted to get away from something? Where did you go? Why there? Discuss. List places where students go to “get away” on the board.
- Watch this Wonder Movie clip: - (FYI - Auggie hides from family and friends after being hurt by friend’s words scene – 2 minutes 55seconds)

## Instructional Input: (Total: 10 - 15 minutes)

### ➤ Introducing the New Learning

- 1. After watching the movie, discuss what Auggie did to get away from a problem. (hid in room, yelled, talked with sister) Discuss how getting away and later talking with others may help you deal with your feelings.
  
- 2. Explain that today we will learn more about Henry David Thoreau and his special place of Walden Pond. Explain that we will be reading aloud a graphic novel by John Porcellino that uses Thoreau's writing. I will stop and think aloud about the meaning of Thoreau's words. Listen to why he went to Walden Pond
  
- 3. Read aloud Thoreau at Walden Pond
  - ❖ Start with the introduction on pages v – vi to set the scene.
  - ❖ Discuss why Thoreau went to Walden Pond to live in a small cabin.
  - ❖ Explain that now we are going to read aloud part of Thoreau's writings with the graphic novel. Read pages 1-7 showing illustrations.
  - ❖ Record on the chart paper:
    - "I see young men, my townsmen, whose misfortune it is to have inherited farms, houses, barns, cattle and farming tools...for these are more easily acquired than got rid of ..."
      - Think aloud: I know that misfortune means bad fortune or bad luck. I see Thoreau is talking about people inheriting or getting a lot of possessions. He sees this as a bad thing.
    - "Shall we always study to obtain more of these things....and not sometimes be content with less?"
      - Think aloud: I know that the word obtain means to get. Thoreau seems to think that people always push to get more things.
      - Think aloud: I know the word content means happy. Thoreau seems to think that people might be happy having less things.
      - Discuss: What do you think?
  - "I hear an irresistible voice...which invites me away from all that..."
    - Think aloud: From this I know that Thoreau wants to leave the world that pushes to get a lot of Possessions



and to move to a simpler place and that place is Walden Pond. Let's read pages 10 – 26.

- ❖ Read aloud pages 10 -26.
- ❖ Then pass out slips of paper with various Thoreau quotes. Reread pages 10 – 26 and have students with their given quotes listen to THE story again determine what the quote meant.
  - THOREAU QUOTES:
  - “To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even found a school, but to so love wisdom as to live according to its dictates... a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust. It is to solve some problems of life – not only theoretically but practically...”
  - “My purpose in going to Walden Pond was not to live cheaply, nor to live dearly there, but to transact some private business with the fewest obstacles....
  - “However mean your life is, meet it and live it... I am convinced, both by faith and experience, that to maintain one’s self on this earth is not a hardship but a pastime, if we will live simply and wisely...”
  - “There may be as many different persons in the world as possible, but I would have each one be very careful to find out and pursue his own way...”
  - “If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer....let him step to the music which he hears...”
- **Student Guided Practice (10- 12 minutes)**
  - ❖ Have students with similar quotes meet. Define underlined words in the quote and discuss the quote’s meaning.
  - ❖ Have each group share their findings and record on to chart paper the meaning of each. Give guidance if misconceptions need to be cleared.
- **Independent Practice (10-15 minutes):**
  - ❖ Ask: Which quote on this chart paper do you feel best represents why Thoreau left to go to Walden?
  - ❖ Take from the pile the quote which you best feels answer this.
  - ❖ Glue into your journal. Record its meaning and then tell how this quote connects to you and or your world.

➤ **Checking for understanding** ( 5 minutes)

- Ask: What was a new word you learned today? What was something you learned about Thoreau that you didn't know about before? Would anyone like to share a response that they have written in their journal?
- Finish your journal entry for tomorrow. I will choose five to read and respond to tomorrow.

➤ **Closure:** ( 2 minutes) State that on our precept board we are placing today's focused idea from Thoreau. *I hear an irresistible voice...which invites me away from all that...*

- Auggie in our movie clip felt an urge to get away from all that hurt so he went first to his safe haven of the bedroom and then into the conversation with his sister to help think things out...so Thoreau went to Walden to think things out. Where is your Walden? Are there any new places you would add to our first list on the board?
- OR ASK: What did Thoreau do to make his routine tasks become completed in a more mindful, conscious way? What can we do to make our homework and writing be completed in a more mindful and conscious way?
- If time allows, share a response in class journal from previous day's prompt.

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**LESSON 3:**

**Objective/ Learning Targets:**

1. Students will identify how words can be used to build friendships or be put-downs.
2. Students will define friendly and respectful behavior as speaking politely and accepting differences.

**Materials:**

Pieces of blank copy paper – one per student, post-its, Video clip from Wonder <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceWNY5eNSWY> , one piece of construction paper per person, chart paper

### **Anticipatory Set:** ( 5 minutes)

- On the blank sheet I have passed out to you, sketch a picture of what a good friend looks like and does with you. Add labels.
- Now add some things you like to hear your friend say to you.
- Share with a partner. Let's list some things a good friend might say to you on this chart paper.
- Watch in this video clip from the book Wonder and see how words are used to by the students Julian and Jack Will toward Auggie. Do the words seem friendly toward Auggie?
- Movie clip: Wonder - School Tour Scene – 2 minutes 23 seconds

### **Instructional Input:** (Total: 10 minutes)

- Introducing the New Learning
- 1. Here is the Thoreau quote for today: *“My friend is one whom I meet, who takes me for what I am. A stranger takes me for something else than what I am.”*
- 2. Take a few minutes to draw a picture of what friend looks like to you. Add labels. Now add things your friend might say to you. Share.
- Set purpose for the movie and show the clip.
  - State: I have said this before and you will hear me say this many times through the school year. I believe words are one of our most powerful tools – both the spoken and written. We should use our words to build friendships and to show respect to others.
  - Watch in this video clip from the book Wonder and see how words are used by the students Julian and Jack Will toward Auggie. Do the words seem friendly toward Auggie? Have students record first impressions on the a post-it of who seemed friendliest toward Auggie: Julian, Jack Will, other.
- 3.Re-watch, record again answering how they “heard” the friendly behavior.
- 4. Discuss student observations on the post-its and also discuss the questions below.

- ❖ Julian was a character who tried to “tear down” Auggie and did not talk in a friendly or respectful manner to him . Let’s look at Thoreau’s quote. What did Julian assume about Auggie? and in doing so did not act as a friend but as a stranger? *Point to the quote by Thoreau: “My friend is one whom I meet, who takes me for what I am. A stranger takes me for something else that what I am.”*
- ❖ Julian attacked Auggie yet he didn’t push, shove or punch. How did he try to do this? What things did he say? What words did he use? How did he show he didn’t accept Auggie as an equal? That he took Auggie as being something else?
- ❖ Jack Will appeared somewhat friendly to Auggie. How?
- ❖ Did Jack Will or Auggie try to befriend any one? Try to tear down anyone? (Julian) How? (Saying “shut up”)(Correcting his English and use of supposed and supposedly)

**Student Guided Practice:** (10- 15 minutes)

- 1. Take 3 – 5 minutes to brainstorm with your table group and list on this construction paper what friend behavior will look like in this classroom and in our school at lunch, recess and specials.
  - 2. Now on the opposite side of the construction paper list what friendly dialogue should sound like.
  - 3. The teacher will have a spokes person from each group share first what friendly behavior looks like and record on the first column of the chart paper. Then group spokesperson will share what friendly behavior sounds like and record on the chart paper.
- **Independent Practice** (10 minutes)
- ❖ Read the Thoreau quotes on friendship to yourself.
    - The language of friends is not words but meanings.
    - A Friend is one who incessantly pays us the compliments of expecting from us all the virtues, and who can appreciate them in us.
    - I would that I were worth to be any man’s Friend.

- My friend is one whom I meet, who takes me for what I am. A stranger takes me for something else than what I am.
- A man cannot be said to succeed in this life who does not satisfy one friend.

❖ Choose one .

❖ Glue the picture of your friend drawing into your notebook. Copy into your journals your Thoreau friendship quote

❖ . Decide the quote's meaning and record. Finally make a connection on what this quote means to you and behavior toward others or make a connection to the world. Record this too in your journal. Finish for homework.

➤ **Checking for understanding** ( 2 minutes)

- Ask: How has your idea of friendship changed since today's discussion?
- Finish your journal entry for tomorrow. I will choose five to read and respond to tomorrow.

➤ **Closure:** ( 2 -3minutes) State that on our precept board we are placing today's focused idea from Thoreau. *My friend is one whom I meet, who takes me for what I am. A stranger takes me for something else than what I am.*

- How can we do our routine tasks and fun activities with friends in a more supportive mindful, conscious way? Record ideas on bulletin board under the quote.
- If time allows, share a response in class journal from previous day's prompt.

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3. Develop descriptions based on models.
4. Critical thinkers effectively and skillfully interpret, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information.

**LESSON 4:**

**Objective/ Learning Targets:**

1. Students will identify how Thoreau observed nature at Walden Pond and acted as a scientist by making detailed observations.
2. Students will learn to make detailed observations: size, color, location, shape, comparative details, etc.
3. Student pairs will make detailed observations on a leaf (or other object from nature such as apple or acorn or seashells) and then turn in their object into the pile of the other students same item.
4. Student pairs will read aloud their description and have another pair find their leaf from the pile of leaves. They will confirm the final selection from the choice.

## **Materials:**

Chart paper, pile of leaves so that there is one leaf for every pair of students, two pictures of ice on lake, Pages 32 and 33 and 55 of the graphic novel Thoreau at Walden by John Porcellino, pages 13- 19 of Into the Deep Forest by Jim Murphy, One leaf per pair, a Lost Poster per pair of students, quote about ice from Thoreau: “In spring the sun not only exerts an influence through the increased temperature of the air and earth, but its heat passes through ice a foot or more thick, and is reflected from the bottom in shallow water, and so also warms the water and melts the under side of the ice, at the same time that it is melting it more directly above, making it uneven, and causing the air bubbles which it contains to extend themselves upward and downward until it is completely honeycombed, and at last disappears suddenly in a single spring rain. Ice has its grain as well as wood, and when a cake begins to rot or ‘comb,’ that is, assume the appearance of honeycomb, whatever may be its position, the air cells are at right angles with what was the water surface.”



## **Anticipatory Set:** ( 2-3 minutes)

- Look at the two pictures of the ice on a lake, one is far away and one is a close-up
- Write a few words and phrases to describe the ice on a lake on your post-it.

## **Instructional Input:** (Total: 10 minutes)

### **Introducing the New Learning**

- 1. Here is the Thoreau quote for today: “*Nature will bear the closest inspection; she invites us to lay our eye level with the smallest leaf, and take an insect view of its plain.*”
- 2. I gave you a couple of minutes to study lake ice and to describe it. Let’s hear a few of your descriptions.



- 3. Thoreau loved to be out in nature and he loved to write descriptions of what he experienced. Listen to the details in the following books.
  - The teacher will read aloud page 32 – 33 of graphic novel: Thoreau **used precise words** of his description of Walden Lake. I know there were pine and oak trees. (Teacher draws these on the board.) I know grapevines covered some of these and made a bower or arch. I know the shore was steep and I know it looked like a stadium does that raises up like a bowl. (Teacher draws this out on the board too.) Thoreau was good in **comparing** one thing to another – the lake area to a stadium.
  - The teacher will read aloud page 55 and discuss how Thoreau used all of his senses. What sense did he use here? (sound) What are the five senses?
  - Teacher will show the quote and read aloud the passage about ice on a lake. The teacher will reread it and ask students to raise their hand when they hear a detail that refers to the sense of touch or feel. Discuss it.
  - Teacher will reread and ask students to cross their arms when hear a detail that refers to sense of sight and compares how one thing looks like another.
  - Teacher will ask students to find precise words or precise math words.

**Student Guided Practice:** (15- 20 minutes)

- 1. Teacher will pair students up together. The teacher will tell students that they will have a few minutes to study an item from nature and to get to know that item very well. They cannot mark it, deface it, or change it in any way.
- 2. Next pass out The Lost Posters. Have students sketch and add colorful details where appropriate. Then students should add a description and fill out the form. Explain to the class that they must be very detailed as their leaf will be lost in a pile with the others and written details not visual will be used to find it.
- 3. Collect the leaves and place on a table. Mix.
- 4. The teacher will call a pair of students to stand at the front by the pile of leaves. Another pair of students will be asked to READ the description of their leaf aloud so the pair at the front can look for the LOST leaf. The description may be read twice.

- 5. When the table pair believes they have the Lost leaf, they call forward the owners and ask to see the sketched picture of the missing leaf. The owners can confirm or deny if it is their leaf.
- 6. Repeat with the other students for a few more leaves.

**Independent Practice** (10 minutes)

- Teacher will state: Henry traveled to wilderness areas. Here is a piece I will share about his travels to Maine. Teacher will read pages 13 and 15 of Into the Deep Forest
- Now I am passing out to you a photocopy of pages 17 and 19 of this book. Read it silently. Then go back and reread it pulling out Thoreau's details. Record on the given handout.
- **Checking for understanding** ( 2 minutes)
  - Collect the handout Thoreau's details.
- **Closure:** ( 2 -3minutes) State that on our precept board we are placing today's focused idea from Thoreau : "Nature will bear the closest inspection; she invites us to lay our eye level with the smallest leaf, and take an insect view of its plain."
  - *Ask: How can we do our routine science procedures in a more mindful, conscious manner?*
  - *Record response on chart paper to post in the classroom.*



REWARD for

# Lost Leaf



Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Date Missing: \_\_\_\_\_

Last seen: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Description:


If found please contact the owners: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_