Comprehension

1. **Recall** What were Thoreau’s reasons for moving to the woods?

2. **Recall** What does Thoreau advise people to do to ensure their lives are not “frittered away by detail”?

3. **Summarize** What are Thoreau’s views on correspondence and the daily news?

Critical Analysis

4. **Make Inferences** Thoreau rejects many things as inessential or unimportant. List at least three things that were important to him, citing specific lines from the essay to support your answer.

5. **Analyze the Essay** Thoreau was a poet as well as an essayist, and in *Walden*, he uses **figurative language** to express abstract concepts. Complete the chart by finding examples of such language. Use your completed chart to describe what you think Thoreau’s use of figurative language adds to this essay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Figurative Language</th>
<th>Examples from <em>Walden</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>metaphor</td>
<td>“Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>simile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personification</td>
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</table>

6. **Analyze Transcendentalism** Thoreau practiced many of the transcendentalist ideals Emerson promoted. What connections do you see between the ideas Thoreau expresses in *Walden* and the ideas Ralph Waldo Emerson presents in “Self-Reliance” and *Nature*? Cite evidence to support your answer.

7. **Evaluate Ideas** Review the philosophical ideas you summarized as you read. Choose one idea—Thoreau’s view of the poor, for example, or the way he feels about civilized life. Explain whether or not you think the idea you chose has merit, citing reasons for your opinion.

8. **Compare Texts** In “Thoreau Still Beckons, if I Can Take My Laptop” on page 381, Cynthia G. La Ferle argues that “making choices is so much more difficult in a culture fueled by sheer busyness and commercialism. There are few places ... where one can escape.” Do you agree that it would be more challenging for a modern American to live as Thoreau did? Explain why or why not, using details from both texts to support your opinion.

Literary Criticism

9. **Critical Interpretations** According to Frank Stewart, author of *A Natural History of Nature Writing*, nature writers are “moved by the joyous, wild, and dazzling beauty in the world.” Do you think this comment applies to Thoreau? Cite examples from *Walden* to support your opinion.