Basic Traits of Transcendentalism

American Transcendentalism is a system of thought, belief in essential unity of all creation.

1. God exists in all of us — no matter who you are; even sinners or murderers still contain the spark of godliness within themselves.

2. As a result, there is no need for guilt.

3. Personal insight is stronger than logic or experience: through insight and instinct a deeper inner truth can be found.

4. Transcendentalists encouraged humanity to **transcend** the material world of experience and facts, and become aware of the spirit of the universe.

5. Influenced by diverse philosophies:

   a. German Transcendentalist Immanuel Kant

   b. Platonic and Neo-Platonic beliefs

   c. Eastern Philosophies such as Zen and Buddhism

6. Participated in the United States Abolitionist Movement

7. Heavily involved in humanitarian causes, such as Women's Rights