

English III: American Literature

Name: _____

Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nature

OBJECTIVE

Read the following quotation which is often attributed to Emerson:

“To laugh often and much, to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children, to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends, to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others, to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child or a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition, to know that even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.”

(**Note:** There is some question as to whether the above quote in fact can be attributed to Emerson.)

- I. Rerword (or paraphrase) the above quote in your own words by listing the types of qualities Emerson provides in these phrases. Select the top five you find easiest to explain.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

- II. Name three people you know (not celebrities or politicians) who seem to fit these definitions of a successful person. They can be contemporary individuals or from past decades.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

- III. On the back of this sheet, write a short fan letter to a person on your list, explaining why you believe he or she is a success. Use three to five full sentences. Stay focused on the theme of success.

For example: Dear Ms. Goodall, I always thought of you as a major success because of your overall devotion for working with natural wildlife causes on a global scale. [...]