

MIT OpenCourseWare
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

STS.036 Technology and Nature in American History
Spring 2008

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.

STS.036

Reading questions for Thoreau, *Walden*

**Selected chapters: “Where I Lived and What I Lived For,” “Sounds,” “Solitude,”
“Spring,” “Conclusion”**

- What is Thoreau’s conception of Nature? Is it different from his conception of nature?
- How does Thoreau think about his own relationship to his natural environment? The relationship between human and non-human nature more generally?
- What is Thoreau’s attitude toward commerce, industrialization, “progress”?
- How does Thoreau feel about changes in the land in Concord?
- How does Thoreau describe the railroad? Does he describe the tracks and the engine in the same way?
- What kinds of figurative language (e.g., imagery, metaphor, simile, personification, etc.) does Thoreau use to describe the railroad?
- What does Thoreau have to say about the sensory experience of nature? Of the railroad?
- What kind of value and meaning does Thoreau ascribe to Nature and the nature of Walden Pond?