

Reading/prewriting guide for “Civil Disobedience” by Henry David Thoreau

Name: _____

PART 1: Define the following words as they are used in the text.

1. expedient
2. alacrity
3. conscience
4. pertinent
5. scourge
6. homage
7. abolitionist
8. parchment

PART 2: Answer the following questions in sentence form.

1. What was his position on the Mexican War?
2. Why did he feel this way?
3. Who does Thoreau hold responsible for the accomplishments of America?
4. List examples.
5. Thoreau states that, “no government would be best.” However, as a citizen what does in call for at once? Why?
6. What role should “majority rule” play in government?
7. If injustice is part of the necessary function of the machine of government, then what should one do before changing it?
8. If the law requires you to uphold an injustice to another, then what should you do?
9. Why was Thoreau jailed?
10. Why did he believe he was jailed?
11. How did Thoreau view his punishment?
12. When does he believe that a free and enlightened state will exist?
13. List examples of injustices that have existed or exist today.