

**Summer Reading Assignment**  
**AP Literature / Language**  
**Timothy Christian School**

**Read:**

- **Confessions by St. Augustine (preferred tr. Henry Chadwick)**
- **Self-Reliance by Ralph Waldo Emerson**

**Background:** As two of the towering influences of Western thought, St. Augustine and Ralph Waldo Emerson held distinct ideas about the source of truth, the heart of man, and the purpose of life. From the publisher's background of each work:

**Confessions:** In his own day the dominant personality of the Western Church, Augustine of Hippo today stands as perhaps the greatest thinker of Christian antiquity, and his *Confessions* is one of the great works of Western literature. In this intensely personal narrative, Augustine relates his rare ascent from a humble Algerian farm to the edge of the corridors of power at the imperial court in Milan, his struggle against the domination of his sexual nature, his renunciation of secular ambition and marriage, and the recovery of the faith his mother Monica had taught him during his childhood.

**Self-Reliance:**

Do not seek outside yourself (*translated*).  
*Man is his own star; and the soul that can*  
*Render an honest and a perfect man,*  
*Commands all light, all influence, all fate;*  
*Nothing to him falls early or too late.*  
*Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,*  
*Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.*

Published first in 1841 in *Essays* and then in the 1847 revised edition of *Essays*, "Self-Reliance" took shape over a long period of time. Throughout his life, Emerson kept detailed journals of his thoughts and actions, and he returned to them as a source for many of his essays. Such is the case with "Self-Reliance," which includes materials from journal entries dating as far back as 1832. In addition to his journals, Emerson drew on various lectures he delivered between 1836 and 1839.

**Directions:** Complete Task #1 (Double Entry Journals) and Task #2 (Expository Essay)

**TASK #1:** Complete **two double entry journals** (one for each work). Type each double entry journal featuring ten quotations and analyses from each work. You may also mention how literary elements (such as repetition, syntax, diction, allusion, irony, foreshadowing, motif, tone, etc.) are used to support each author's point. Use a two-column table with a separate row for each entry. For example:

Quotation	Analysis
<p>“You recover what you find, yet have never lost. Never in any need, you rejoice in your gains (Luke 15:7); you are never avaricious, yet you require interest (Matt. 25:27). We pay you more than you require so as to make you our debtor, yet who has anything which does not belong to you? (1 Cor. 4:7). You pay off debts, though owing nothing to anyone; you cancel debts and incur no loss. But in these words what have I said, my God, my life, my holy sweetness? What has anyone achieved in words when he speaks about you? Yet woe to those who are silent about you because, though loquacious with verbosity, they have nothing to say” (5).</p>	<p>In his opening, Augustine contemplates on the nature of God as both transcendent and immanent. By using the direct second-person “you,” he personalizes the account as a meditation or prayer to God rather than simply writing in a speculative sense about God. Still, Augustine does understand his limitations—referencing firmly held scriptural truths, he alludes to verse upon verse to construct a context that exudes a sense of awe.</p>

**Tips:** In your analysis, avoid saying “In this quotation...”; rather, follow the example above which follows my ATP method (Author, Text, Purpose) by mentioning the **author**, identifying short details or words from the **text**, and suggesting the **purpose** of the author’s choices in the text (What meaning might he be conveying? How is a theme or idea being developed?)

**TASK #2:** In a well-developed essay of not less than five pages following MLA conventions, write an essay in which you compare and contrast how Augustine and Emerson approach one or more of the following topics: heart of man, the source of truth, and the purpose of life. Be sure to include a thesis statement, topic sentences for each body paragraph that offer a claim, textual evidence in each body paragraph for support, and careful analysis of each passage.

**The essay is due the first week of school.**

**Please feel free to contact me with questions.**

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