

# Muir

## Worksheet

### *“Hetch Hetchy Valley”:* A Learning/ Writing Sequence

#### Free-Write: Journal Reading-Response

1. Describe a place in nature you love, free-writing on its right to exist and the need to preserve it. Experiment with sensory details (sights, sounds, smells, etc), dramatic verbs, and imagery.
2. Follow-up: post to your study group.

#### Possible Writing Themes, Midterm Paper 6-8p paper):

1. Style/ Rhetorical analysis: Analyze the elements of Muir’s style, citing examples from the text, organizing your analysis into several categories/criteria of evidence.
2. Polemic: With respect to our National Parks, which is more important, Preservation or Recreation: the need to conserve them in their natural state or to insure that they remain accessible for the public’s enjoyment?

**Questions/ Instructions:** in your journal, record and respond to the following to share in class discussion.

1. A quote that resonates with you;
2. A quote that evidences Muir’s critique of civilization, its machines, and their destructive impact on nature.
3. Examples of the definitive elements of Muir’s style (personification, sensory details, dramatic verbs, figurative devices et al)
4. Evidence of his expertise as a Naturalist and/or or his scientific discourse.
5. Comparison/contrast with Yeats or Lane Deer

**Additional prompts:** (Substitute for one of the above, except #1).

5. Record an example of Muir's appeals to *ethos, logos, or pathos*.
6. Record an example of his *counter-arguments* to draining Hetch Hetchy Valley to build a damn.
7. Why do you suppose Muir begins his argument with a *description* of the Valley?
8. Free -write on Muir's use of *comparison/contrast* (Hetch Hetchy = Yosemite Valley) Why is this effective? What is his logic here, his appeal
9. Cite some examples of Muir's *biblical references*, and free write on the significance/implications of this.
10. Free-write on the logic behind Muir detailed description of the *biological diversity* (flora and fauna) of Hetch Hetchy and of its *geologic features*. Which of Aristotle's appeals is relevant here?
11. Muir's writing balances objective and subjective detail. Record an example of his use *subjective* details? How is this rhetorical strategy effective in making his argument?
12. Free-write: Voice your own *opinion* on this critical debate, using some reasons of the opposing view as a springboard into an elaboration of your own perspective. Posit some *solutions*. Further prompts: Is "*decommissioning*" or taking down the damn and restoring Hetch Hetchy to its natural state a viable option in your view?
13. Free Write: Are we *loving our national Parks to death*? When it comes to our national Parks, which is more important: *Preservation or Recreation*? Should *automobiles* be banned from Yosemite, Zion? Should *snowmobiles* be banned from Yellowstone? Should *off-road vehicles* (ATVs) be banned from wilderness areas? Should *wave-runners* be banned from Lake Tahoe (clouding of water from aviation fuel)? Posit some *solutions* to this National Parks conflict.