

Module 5

Abbey's *Desert Solitaire*

Chs 1-4

Worksheet

Instructions:

Record responses in journal to the following:

1. Find a quote from Chs 1-4 that resonates with you, record and respond in a journal entry, to share with class.
2. Record an example or two of the definitive elements of Abbey's style from these chapters?
3. Write about a place in nature that moved you—or continues to move you. That you consider to be “the most beautiful place on earth.”

Choose one and record your response in your journal:

4. What in your opinion distinguishes Abbey's writing from the other nature writers we have read?
5. What machine first triggers his rebellious critique of “the machine age” and the excesses of the Industrial Order, driving him deep into the desert?
6. Cite other examples of his critique of civilization in these chapters?
7. Comparative analysis: Are there any similarities between Yeats, Lane Deer, Muir, and Abbey in the respective critiques of civilization, elements of style, fusion of spiritual and natural etc?
8. Cite two or more examples of Abbey's eye as a Naturalist in Chs 1-3?
9. Cite an example of his subjective voice reacting to nature (the desert).
10. Record an example of Abbey's effective use of sensory detail to evoke the desert?

11. What aspects of the desert is he particularly moved by?
12. What does Abbey's adoption of the gopher snake in Ch 3 reveal about him?
13. What are the most striking elements of his description of the snakes' mating dance?
14. Record an example of Abbey's use of imagery in Ch 4, "Cliffrose and Bayonets."
15. Record an example of his use of sensory detail.
16. How does the section that begins "Inventory" evidence Abbey's credibility as a Naturalist?
17. Record an example of his "thick description" of a particular flora or fauna?
18. Record an example of a "symbiotic relationship" he observes.
19. Record an example of his ongoing critique of modernity and/or The Wildlife Service, Forest Service, National Parks etc?
20. What are some of the diverse habitats that make up this desert ecosystem?
21. Why is he critical of the "livestock interest"?
22. Record an example of Abbey's Neo-Pagan, Native American attitude/behavior toward nature
23. Defend or critique his killing of the rabbit. How does he defend his act?