

# Sample Student Paper



## Loneliness Is Only In The Mind

*I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude. We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad among men than when we stay in our chambers. A man thinking or working is always alone, let him be where he will... The really diligent student in one of the crowded hives of Cambridge College is as solitary as a dervish in the desert. The farmer can work alone in the field or the woods all day, hoeing or chopping, and not feel lonesome because he is employed; but when he comes home at night he cannot sit down in a room alone at the mercy of his thoughts, but must be where he can... recreate, and, as he thinks, remunerate himself for his day's solitude; and hence he wonders how the student can sit alone in the house all night and most of the day without ennui and "the blues," but he does not realize that the student, though in the house, is still at work in his field... and in turn seeks the same recreation and society that the latter does, though it may be a more condensed form... (p. 95)*

Henry David Thoreau writes *Walden* to analyze how society interacts. In the chapter "Solitude," Thoreau **discussed** how he isolated himself. Now, he is discussing how one can be physically apart from others, yet not be alone because his or her mind is thinking. **The author** creates his argument with the use of the methods of appeal; pathos, an emotional appeal, ethos, an appeal based on **proving** credibility, and logos, an appeal to logic. Thoreau establishes his argument by using pathos most heavily, while using logos and ethos to support his position.

**Ethos is not used as often as pathos or logos.** Earlier in the chapter, Thoreau's ethos is accomplished by telling the reader that he is an expert on solitude because he lived on his property near Walden Pond for over a year, separated from society. **Thoreau revisits ethos** in the passage when he refers to "the crowded hives of Cambridge College," **thus showing his intelligence because he is familiar with institutions of higher learning.** Since Thoreau established much of his credibility in previous parts of the chapter, ethos is not shown very much in the passage.

**Although ethos is rarely used, logos makes a significant appearance** in the text. The first logical appeal is Thoreau's analogy of the isolation of a diligent student to that of a dervish in the

# Sample Student Paper



desert. The analogy gives the reader a clearer idea of the student's segregation because it is easier to imagine and understand one plant growing alone in desert instead of one person living amongst hundreds. Later, the analogy is followed by Thoreau's narration of a farmer and a student. In the narration, Thoreau juxtaposes the lives of a hard-working farmer and a diligent student. Thoreau states that the student is never alone because he is constantly thinking and using the mind, even when not at school. Meanwhile, Thoreau states that the farmer does get lonely because he only works during the day, and is not occupied by ponderings at night. The author leads the audience through this comparison to clarify his thesis. Thoreau applies polyptoton to "companion" and "companionable" to place emphasis on them. By this, Thoreau creates a paradox between acceptance and segregation with the sentence, "I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude," proving that the two can coexist. In order to explain his analogy, metaphor, and figurative language, Thoreau uses an appeal to logic.

Thoreau's logos is utilized as a method of appeal, yet pathos is the primary method of appeal. The emotional appeal is portrayed to the reader by the use of first person. Thoreau's use of first person in the lines, "I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude," allows the reader to recognize the author's passion for the argument. The ideas are more personal to the reader because they are that of the author, and not a third, random party. In addition, Thoreau supports the argument because he chooses to state it in first person. Thoreau appeals to the reader's serenity, and their desire for it. Through his narrative of the student's life, the author illustrates that the student possesses internal peace even though he is separated from society. The life of the student seems desirable since society covets serenity. However, serenity is not the only emotion that Thoreau intends the reader to feel. Thoreau

# Sample Student Paper



repeats the word “solitude” to create the effect of an amplified isolation. “Solitude” implies a physical and psychological isolation. The isolation of the student is shown by the analogy of him to a dervish in the desert. The analogy draws sympathy for the student from the audience. The student is a vehicle through which Thoreau emphasizes his enthusiasm for solitude. Thoreau employs pathos to allow the audience to understand the solitude of the text.

Solitude is a feeling. The best way to portray a feeling is through an emotional appeal. Therefore, it is more accurate to apply pathos instead of either ethos or logos. It is unnecessary for Thoreau to reprove his credibility because he has already done so earlier in the chapter. Also, the author utilizes logos, to clarify his literary devices, but not to the extent of pathos. Thoreau establishes his argument, that people who constantly engage their minds are never alone, by using pathos most heavily, while using logos and ethos for support.