

Resistance to Civil Government: Says - Means - Matters

THESIS: In the essay, “Resistance to Civil Government,” Henry David Thoreau uses **figurative language** and **paradox** to argue/communicate/express _____

	What does the text... SAY?	What does the author... MEAN?	Why does it... MATTER?
Paradox/Main Argument	The author states: <u>“I heartily accept the motto—‘That government is best which governs least’; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically”</u> (p. 212)	The paradox means <u>that governments should trust their citizens to make their own decisions or that, in an ideal world, people would not need government at all. He is asking for an immediate call to action.</u>	This is important <u>because the statement introduces Thoreau’s usage of paradox. He is challenging readers to think logically and really question whether there can be government and no government at the same time.</u>
On Slavery and War	When Thoreau states: <u>“I should like to have them order me out to help put down an insurrection of the slaves, or to march to Mexico—see if I would go”; and yet these very men have each, directly by their allegiance, and so indirectly, at least, by their money, furnished a substitute”</u> (213), he helps develop a _____ tone.	This helps the reader <u>understand that although people disapprove of slavery and of America’s war with Mexico, they still purchase cotton and tobacco products.</u>	An examination of this line reveals _____ _____ _____ _____.
In Prison	Thoreau states <u>“I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar”</u> (214).	In this statement, the author describes _____ _____ _____ _____ _____.	This description makes the reader think _____ _____ _____ _____.
View on Government/Role of the	At the end of the essay, Thoreau states, “_____” _____ _____ _____ (p.).	In this statement, the narrator shows that _____ _____ _____ _____ _____.	This resolution reminds one that _____ _____ _____ _____.

REFLECTION: According to the essay, “Resistance to Civil Government”, who is ultimately more important: the individual, the citizens as a whole, or the government? What role should we (as a citizen) play in society? Why?
