

re:View Worldview Study
Topic 05x – Transcendentalism Extended Session

(To teach this session you will need: student handouts, this leader’s guide, and several “Mystery Bags” with various items in them. You may also wish to use “reView_05x_VerseSlide.ppt” for the verse.)

NOTE: If you’re teaching the abbreviated 7-session series, you will skip this session. If you’re teaching the extended 13-session series, this is Session 9.

Extended Session Overview

The whole point of this week is this: before looking at the last worldview (Theism), we want your students to take a week to examine how their lives demonstrate practical Naturalism or Transcendentalism. While they may not espouse these beliefs with their words, often their behavior says otherwise.

Suggested Session Layout

Introduction [3:00]

Activity [10:00]

Discussion [15:00]

Challenge [10:00]

Total session time [35-40 mins.]

Introduction [3:00]

Remind your students that so far they’ve learned about two of the three worldviews – Naturalism and Transcendentalism. See if they can remember how each of the worldviews answers the ultimate questions. You may want to distribute “reView_05x_Handout_Reference.pdf” as a reminder.

Activity [10:00]

“Mystery bag” is a small group activity in which students identify a person’s worldview based upon various objects they pull out of a bag. The goal of the activity is to review and reinforce the four ultimate questions of the first two worldviews: Naturalism and Transcendentalism.

Each small group gets a bag full of items that a different type of person may have. The groups are to look through the contents of the bag and describe the owner through the items that he or she has in the bag. Choose four (or more, depending upon size of group and time). Feel free to mix and match as you desire. You can gather these items from the Internet, take books out of the library, rip pages out of magazines, etc. The point of this exercise isn’t necessarily to exactly match the “identity” of the person we have described here as much as it is to get their creative juices flowing and to make connections between behaviors and activities and worldviews. If you have ideas for bags, please post your ideas on the re-films.com forums so that others can use them!

Activity (cont.)

Here are some example “mystery bag” ideas:

Person	Bag contents
“The teenage girl” (Transcendentalism)	- <i>Seventeen</i> Magazine with the horoscopes circled - A necklace with a crystal on it (New Age) - <i>Seven Years in Tibet</i> or similar movie
“The workaholic” (Naturalism)	- Briefcase - Checkbook - Online ad for a BMW or luxury car
“The person intrigued by Wicca” (Transcendentalism)	- <i>The Craft</i> or similar movie - A book of spells - Tarot cards or Ouija board
“The soccer mom” (Naturalism)	- Ad for mini-van - Self-help books - Pictures of kids
“The Worshiper” (Transcendentalism)	- Buddha figurine - Fruit to offer to the Buddha figurine - Candles or incense
“The teenage boy” (Naturalism)	- Varsity letter jacket - <i>Sports Illustrated</i> magazine - Beer ad in magazine for younger generation - <i>Rolling Stone</i> magazine

Mystery Bag Instructions:

1. Prepare the bags of items ahead of time (it may take some time, so plan ahead).
2. Divide class into groups and pass out the bags, asking them to describe the owner based on items within the bag. In the description, try to include the worldview of the person and how their activities might answer the ultimate questions of the worldview.
If you're sensing the students might need some help, you may need to review quickly the answers to the four questions from both Naturalism and Transcendentalism worldviews. In addition, you should be prepared to hand out "review_05x_Handout_Reference.pdf" for your students.
3. Have each group designate a spokesperson to share the description of their person with the whole group. The spokespersons may choose to share the description in a first person monologue, impersonating their character.

Discussion [15:00]

At this point, you want to turn the focus more inward (i.e., looking at their own lives and seeing where their behaviors might demonstrate a natural or transcendental worldview).

Ask the whole group these two questions:

1. If you were to make a mystery bag for a Christian teen, what would be the three to five key ingredients in it that would reflect his/her worldview?
2. If you were to make a mystery bag to reflect how you really live your life and worldview, what would be the three to five key ingredients? (Stress that this is not how they *think they should* but how they *actually do* spend their time and emotional energy/passions.)

Have students fill out “reView_05x_Handout_MyMysteryBag.pdf.”

Challenge [10:00]

Have your students open their Bibles to Hebrews 9:27, and read it for them. Ask them how does this passage argue against both Naturalism and Transcendentalism? From the transcendental perspective, it points out that we die but once. From the naturalistic perspective, it points out that there is an evaluation/judgment after we die.

Explain that neither of these worldviews should be evident in our lives as Christians.

At this point, you as the leader should share a personal example of an item that reflects a different worldview in you that you would like and what action step you are going to take in light of that. Remember, this is a moment to be transparent with your students, as you are about to ask them the same thing.

After you finish sharing your example, ask them to think of an item that reflects a different worldview than they would like. Follow this with individual silent prayer time contemplating individual lessons learned. Depending upon the makeup of your group (and time), you may want to do the next small group option.

Divide into small groups, and have the students share lessons they learned and action steps they individually plan to take. While all students should be required to participate, let your group leaders know that everyone may not want to share the lesson he/she learned (some may be very personal).

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