

Assignment – Response paper for a first-year seminar to compare two authors read for class: Lewis Thomas and Stephen Jay Gould. The two-page paper was to follow an essay format of thesis-support.

25 they differed in this aspect as well. Lewis Thomas wrote of deep aesthetic issues such as
26 the will to live, the acceptance of death, and mankind's impossible drive to control
27 Mother Nature herself. He also speculated about the existence of a planet-sized
28 organism. Gould addressed issues not found in a science textbook in his essays as well,
29 but his were more domestic than Thomas'. Gould argued for more education in our
30 country, and revealed some facts about the scientific community that few of us know
31 about, such as the big deal about naming dinosaurs and why some hypotheses are
32 indisputable and worthless at the same time.

33 It was a pleasant surprise to me that both Gould's essays and Thomas' *The Lives*
34 of a Cell were interesting and informative without being dry and simply a list of facts and
35 big words. However, I found them interesting in different ways. Thomas made me think
36 with some of his deep speculation and "twisting" writing style that has to be read
37 carefully to catch completely. Gould captivated my attention with his behind the scenes,
38 earthy essays. Although their styles are quite different, they both managed to make
39 "science writing" entertaining in a different way.