

James Thurber Quotes

*Men, Dog, Writing, Humor, Years, Comedy, Funny, Laughter, Fun, Love,
Thinking, Women, Two, Animal, Death, Witty, Art, Long, Life, Expression*

It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers.

~James Thurber

There are two kinds of light - the glow that illuminates, and the glare that obscures.

~James Thurber

But what is all this fear of and opposition to Oblivion? What is the matter with the soft Darkness, the Dreamless Sleep?

~James Thurber

Women are wiser than men because they know less and understand more.

~James Thurber

Time is for dragonflies and angels. The former live too little and the latter live too long.

~James Thurber

All men should strive to learn before they die, what they are running from, and to, and why.

~James Thurber

Humor is emotional chaos remembered in tranquility.

~James Thurber

Let us not look back in anger, nor forward in fear, but around in awareness.

~James Thurber

I used to wake up at 4 A.M. and start sneezing, sometimes for five hours. I tried to find out what sort of allergy I had but finally came to the conclusion that it must be an allergy to consciousness.

~James Thurber

The most dangerous food is wedding cake.

~James Thurber

The unicorn is a mythical beast.

~James Thurber

Man has gone long enough, or even too long, without being man enough to face the simple truth that the trouble with man is man.

~James Thurber

Art - the one achievement of man which has made the long trip up from all fours seem well advised

~James Thurber

A false or misunderstood word may create as much disaster as a sudden thoughtless act.

~James Thurber

The nation that complacently and fearfully allows its artists and writers to become suspected rather than respected is no longer regarded as a nation possessed with humor or depth.

~James Thurber

I think that maybe if women and children were in charge we would get somewhere.

~James Thurber

The dog has seldom been successful in pulling man up to its level of sagacity, but man has frequently dragged the dog down to his.

~James Thurber

Two is company, four is a party, three is a crowd. One is a wanderer.

~James Thurber

I am not a cat man, but a dog man, and all felines can tell this at a glance - a sharp, vindictive glance.

~James Thurber

If I have any beliefs about immortality, it is that certain dogs I have known will go to heaven, and very, very few persons.

~James Thurber

There is no exception to the rule that every rule has an exception.

~James Thurber

One martini is all right. Two are too many, and three are not enough.

~James Thurber

It's a naive domestic Burgundy without any breeding, but I think you'll be amused by its presumption.

~James Thurber

A burden in the bush is worth two on your hands.

~James Thurber

Love is what you've been through with somebody.

~James Thurber

The act of writing is either something the writer dreads or actually likes, and I actually like it. Even re-writing's fun. You're getting somewhere, whether it seems to move or not.

~James Thurber

You can fool too many of the people too much of the time.

~James Thurber

The things we laugh at are awful while they are going on, but get funny when we look back. And other people laugh because they've been

through it too. The closest thing to humor is tragedy.

~James Thurber

Beautiful things don't ask for attention.

~James Thurber

Why do you have to be a nonconformist like everybody else?

~James Thurber

The past is an old armchair in the attic, the present an ominous ticking sound, and the future is anybody's guess.

~James Thurber

Sixty minutes of thinking of any kind is bound to lead to confusion and unhappiness.

~James Thurber

I myself have known some profoundly thoughtful dogs.

~James Thurber

A lady of 47 who has been married 27 years and has six children knows what love really is and once described it for me like this: 'Love is what you've been through with somebody'.

~James Thurber

Well, if I called the wrong number, why did you answer the phone?

~James Thurber

I do not have a psychiatrist and I do not want one, for the simple reason that if he listened to me long enough, he might become disturbed.

~James Thurber

Humor and pathos, tears and laughter are, in the highest expression of human character and achievement, inseparable.

~James Thurber

Writers of comedy have outlook, whereas writers of tragedy have, according to them, insight.

~James Thurber

Boys are beyond the range of anybody's sure understanding, at least when they are between the ages of 18 months and 90 years.

~James Thurber

The wit makes fun of other persons; the satirist makes fun of the world; the humorist makes fun of himself.

~James Thurber

The laughter of man is more terrible than his tears, and takes more forms -hollow, heartless, mirthless, maniacal.

~James Thurber

I don't believe the writer should know too much where he's going. If he does, he runs into old man blueprint—old man propaganda.

~James Thurber

The dog has got more fun out of Man than Man has got out of the dog, for the clearly demonstrable reason that Man is the more laughable of the two animals

~James Thurber

A pinch of probability is worth a pound of perhaps.

~James Thurber

Don't count your boobies until they are hatched.

~James Thurber

Reason is 6/7 of treason.

~James Thurber

He who hesitates is sometimes saved.

~James Thurber

Progress was all right. Only it went on too long.

~James Thurber

Nowadays men lead lives of noisy desperation.

~James Thurber

She wasn't much to look at but she was something to think about.

~James Thurber

Americans want to go to heaven without dying.

~James Thurber

All men kill the thing they hate, too, unless, of course, it kills them first.

~James Thurber

Comedy has to be done en clair. You can't blunt the edge of wit or the point of satire with obscurity. Try to imagine a famous witty saying that is not immediately clear.

~James Thurber

You might as well fall flat on your face as lean over too far backward.

~James Thurber

Man is flying too fast for a world that is round. Soon he will catch up with himself in a great rear end collision.

~James Thurber

The trouble with the lost generation is that it didn't get lost enough.

~James Thurber

Don't get it right, just get it written.

~James Thurber

When all things are equal, translucence in writing is more effective than transparency, just as glow is more revealing than glare.

~James Thurber

Comedy has ceased to be a challenge to the mental processes. It has become a therapy of relaxation, a kind of tranquilizing drug.

~James Thurber

I never quite know when I'm not writing. Sometimes my wife comes up to me at a party and says, "Dammit, Thurber, stop writing." She usually catches me in the middle of a paragraph.

~James Thurber

Discussion in America means dissent.

~James Thurber

There is no safety in numbers, or in anything else.

~James Thurber

This is the posture of fortunes slave: one foot in the gravy, one foot in the grave.

~James Thurber

Remember laughter. You'll need it even in the blessed isles of Ever After.

~James Thurber

Ours is a precarious language, as every writer knows, in which the merest shadow line often separates affirmation from negation, sense from nonsense, and one sex from the other

~James Thurber

Love is blind, but desire just doesn't give a good goddamn

~James Thurber

Speed is scarcely the noblest virtue of graphic composition, but it has its curious rewards. There is a sense of getting somewhere fast, which satisfies a native American urge.

~James Thurber

With sixty staring me in the face, I have developed inflammation of the sentence structure and definite hardening of the paragraphs.

~James Thurber

The difference between our decadence and the Russians is that while theirs is brutal, ours is apathetic.

~James Thurber

I always begin at the left with the opening word of the sentence and read toward the right and I recommend this method.

~James Thurber

Quick, name some towns in New Jersey

~James Thurber

Humor is a serious thing. I like to think of it as one of our greatest earliest natural resources, which must be preserved at all cost.

~James Thurber

The Old Man ain't afraid of hell

~James Thurber

Some American writers who have known each other for years have never met in the daytime or when both were sober.

~James Thurber

Last night I dreamed of a small consolation enjoyed only by the blind:
Nobody knows the trouble I've not seen!

~James Thurber

The sanity of the average banquet speaker lasts about two and a half months; at the end of that time he begins to mutter to himself, and calls out in his sleep.

~James Thurber

God bless... God damn.

~James Thurber

My opposition to Interviews lies in the fact that offhand answers have little value or grace of expression, and that such oral give and take helps to perpetuate the decline of the English language.

~James Thurber

A word to the wise is not sufficient if it doesn't make sense.

~James Thurber

Human Dignity has gleamed only now and then and here and there, in lonely splendor, throughout the ages, a hope of the better men, never an achievement of the majority.

~James Thurber

Dogs are obsessed with being happy.

~James Thurber

It takes that je ne sais quoi which we call sophistication for a woman to be magnificent in a drawing-room when her faculties have departed but she herself has not yet gone home.

~James Thurber

Things have dropped from me. I have outlived certain desires; I have

lost friends, some by death... others through sheer inability to cross the street.

~James Thurber

I'm sixty-five and I guess that puts me in with the geriatrics, but if there were fifteen months in every year, I'd only be forty-eight.

~James Thurber

Unless artists can remember what it was to be a little boy, they are only half complete as artist and as man.

~James Thurber

Man is troubled by what might be called the Dog Wish, a strange and involved compulsion to be as happy and carefree as a dog

~James Thurber

Mutual suspicions of mental inadequacy are common during the first year of any marriage.

~James Thurber

Muggs was always sorry, Mother said, when he bit someone, but we could never understand how she figured this out. He didn't act sorry.

~James Thurber

I was seized by the stern hand of Compulsion, that dark, unreasonable Urge that impels women to clean house in the middle of the night.

~James Thurber

A drawing is always dragged down to the level of its caption.

~James Thurber

The whole of Paris is a vast university of Art, Literature and Music... it is worth anyone's while to dally here for years. Paris is a seminar, a post-graduate course in everything.

~James Thurber

The only rules comedy can tolerate are those of taste, and the only limitations those of libel.

~James Thurber

Laughter need not be cut out of anything, since it improves everything.

~James Thurber

There is something about a poet which leads us to believe that he died, in many cases, as long as 20 years before his birth.

~James Thurber

I can feel a thing I cannot touch and touch a thing I cannot feel. The first is sad and sorry, the second is your heart.

~James Thurber

For one thing, she pronounced flowers 'flars' and I couldn't let it slide.

~James Thurber

If you are a police dog, where's your badge?

~James Thurber

The paths of glory at least lead to the Grave, but the paths of duty may not get you Anywhere.

~James Thurber

A wet dog is lovingest.

~James Thurber

You are all a lost generation," Gertrude Stein said to Hemingway. We weren't lost. We knew where we were, all right, but we wouldn't go home. Ours was the generation that stayed up all night.

~James Thurber

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