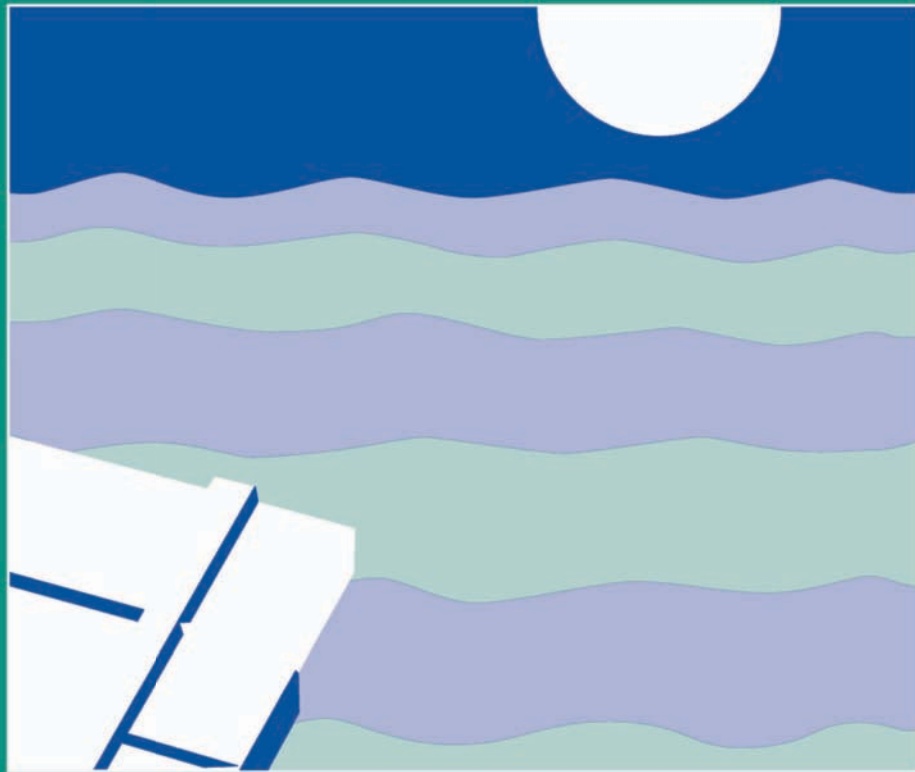


# *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

*Curriculum Unit*



The Center for Learning



# **The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**

Mark Twain

Curriculum Unit

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*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* curriculum unit is a revision of parts of *How to Read a Novel* and *Experiencing the Novel*. This is a new and expanded edition.

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# Introduction

From the moment of its publication in England in 1885, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been both lauded and censored. To many a reader, Mark Twain, a.k.a. Samuel Clemens, is the foremost American novelist. Yet his masterwork has been condemned as racist by some critics who have passionately sought to remove the book from library shelves and school curriculums.

Defenders of the novel as a satire of racism are supported by Mark Twain's own recorded thoughts and actions on the subject of black and white. In an 1885 authenticated letter, responding to a request to support the education of Warner T. McGuinn, one of the first black students to attend Yale Law School, Twain wrote: "I do not believe I would very cheerfully help a white student who would ask a benevolence of a stranger, but I do not feel so about the other color. We have ground the manhood out of them & the shame is ours, not theirs; & we should pay for it."

Clemens remained true to his word and paid for McGuinn's board until his 1887 graduation. McGuinn went on to become a mentor and idol of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall.

Despite the continuing controversy, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* remains one of the most loved books by readers of all ages. It touches the heart, earning it a place as worthy of careful study by every high school student as a step toward a deeper understanding of the American scene. In a CBS centennial segment on the classic, Charles Kuralt expressed the sentiments of millions of Huck's devotees: "If I had to say as much about America as I possibly could in only two words, I would say these two words: 'Huck Finn.'"

H. L. Mencken listed this novel as one of the ten most important in America's literary history. Ernest Hemingway declared it part of our American heritage, the source from which all American literature is derived. T. S. Eliot stated that *Huckleberry Finn* is "a far more convincing indictment of slavery than *Uncle Tom's Cabin*."

Reinforcing the importance of this novel as a "great book" was the issuance of an edition in which Mark Twain scholar Charles Neider restored the raft chapter which Twain himself deleted because it made the book longer than *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

Increasing the popular appeal of Huck's adventures and marking the centennial of the publication of the novel, the Broadway musical *Big River* was hailed in *Newsweek* as an "epic of American light and darkness a generation before the Civil War."

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is the story of a river and a boy. The Mississippi, the Father of Waters, provides a private universe, a raft, a life free from the chains of civilization, away from social conformity with its dangers of interrupting the struggle toward self-realization and

knowledge. Nature itself, the unchartable, unpredictable river, is the only dictator of adventures for this alienated, lonely boy in the search for a footloose, free world.

The novel excels in capturing reality. The author's remarkable skill in writing dialect—the natural speech of Huck, maintained throughout the book—is a historic achievement in both English and American literature.

In pure dialect, the story presents Huck, the boy with no career dream, no destination. In the very tragedy and comedy of his going with the whims of the river lies his victory of acquiring wisdom. His journey is an adventure in democracy, a way of living in which the ultimate triumph lies in how human beings treat each other. Huck learns, on his journey with Jim, on a raft where they live happily, that Jim is right, that what matters is the worth of human beings.

Mark Twain leaves the reader to moral reflection and judgments about slavery and about society's "sivilized" values.



# Teacher Notes

This unit provides sequential lessons to help students enjoy and understand *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Each lesson is planned for a single class period, with more or less time allotted at the discretion of the teacher.

The unit also provides supplementary materials, including a reading guide with review questions, quizzes, essay topics, a test, and suggestions for optional activities. Suggested responses for the reading guide questions are included in the lessons that deal with specific chapters.

The lessons offer a variety of activities and projects. Peer group interaction is an important factor in motivation and achievement. Many activities involve work with partners and small groups. The teacher is then free to give individual help and by frequent interaction facilitate learning in an atmosphere of mutual effort.

Assignments are intended to increase reading skills, to review concepts, to test understanding, to enjoy a critical viewpoint presented humorously, and to enrich cultural background. The unit is based on a step-by-step reading of the novel.

Chapter 1 during Lesson 1

Chapters 2–4 for Lesson 2

Chapters 5–7 for Lesson 3

Chapters 8–14 for Lesson 5

Chapters 15–18 for Lesson 7

Chapters 19–30 for Lesson 8

Chapter 31 for Lesson 9

Chapters 32–38 for Lesson 10

Chapters 39–43 for Lesson 11

Answers will vary unless otherwise indicated. Students may need additional paper to complete some handouts.



# Lesson 1

## Beginning the Novel

### Objectives

- To ease into the world of Huckleberry Finn
- To prepare for a careful reading of the novel by noting Mark Twain's style of writing and methods of humorous expression

### Notes to the Teacher

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is an enjoyable and humorous book, as well as a great American classic. It also a book that has excited a lot of controversy and even censorship, a subject that will be further investigated in Lesson 12. A major cause of groups' objections to the novel is Huck's frequent use of the despised "n-word." This lesson begins with a focus on language and the question of what makes specific word choices in a novel appropriate or inappropriate. It is important for students not to be so offended by the words Huck uses that they become unwilling to read his story.

The lesson then directs student attention to the engaging opening of the novel. **Handout 2** asks students to identify the "sivilized" and "unsivilized" things that Huck observes. **Handout 3** lists some of Huck's objective statements about situations and asks students for their subjective comments. As students complete these handouts, be sure to reinforce the humor that is presented. Promote laughter.

As students begin the study of this novel, you may want to assign topics for short research reports on the history and culture of nineteenth-century America. To enrich student understanding, these reports can be presented orally during the first week of study. Reports should be brief. Suggested topics are abolition, fugitive slave laws, Negro spirituals, riverboats, secession, slave auctions, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and the Underground Railroad.

Prior to this lesson you may want to prepare copies of the entire reading guide in the supplementary materials, so that students have all of the questions as they continue with their reading of the novel.

### Procedure

1. As students enter the classroom, write Mark Twain's "Notice" on the board or overhead.

#### NOTICE

Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot.

BY ORDER OF THE AUTHOR

PER G.G., CHIEF OF ORDNANCE

2. Explain that Mark Twain posted this warning at the beginning of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Ask students to brainstorm responses and interpretations. Lead them to hear the humorous tone of the notice and to recognize its hyperbole—obviously no one is going to be shot over this issue! Perhaps Twain just wanted readers to avoid overanalyzing the story; students can probably identify with the desire not to spend a lot of time and energy in in-depth analysis. On the other hand, perhaps the author was deviously pointing out that the novel needs to be examined for motives, morals, and plot lines!
3. State that it may surprise students to find that a novel that they are going to read and study together has been the subject of considerable controversy. Explain that you want to deal with this subject before they even begin reading so that, hopefully, it will not cause any discomfort in your learning community.
4. Ask students to brainstorm silently a list of words that they are not supposed to say aloud in polite society. Then ask them why these words are considered bad. What makes them evil, when other words are not? Lead them to see that some terms are merely vulgar or crude; others violate religious or ethical values; still others are deeply offensive to specific groups of people.
5. Distribute **Handout 1**, and have small groups complete the exercise. Then conduct a discussion based on responses.

**Suggested Responses:**

1. *She would probably have an advanced vocabulary and use correct sentence structures. Her word choices might be poetic, with a lot of images and metaphors.*
2. *His word choices might be violent and coarse, with terms offensive to polite society and especially to women.*
3. *Answers will vary and may include specific dialects and local attitudes.*
4. *While the personality of the principal—humorous, serious, etc.—will affect responses, it is at least likely that the principal's word choices and language in general will be inoffensive.*
5. *All of life is the arena of literature, so all of humanity are among suitable narrators. What matters is what the author does with the narrator. For example, it would be offensive for the author to seem to glorify the experiences and language of the man serving time for rape and murder.*
6. *One might expect Southern dialect and idioms, unschooled word choices and sentence structure, and attitudes formed by the people surrounding him. As a poor white boy in the South before the Civil War, Huck is bound to look down on the black people he sees in slavery around him. What he says and how he says it will be shaped by his attitudes.*
7. *If a book is not worth reading, there is no reason to persist through offensive language. On the other hand, if the book may be worth our time, we can adjust our perspective so that we are not being continually offended. Instead of becoming angry, we can feel sorry for Huck, that his view has been biased by the culture that surrounds him; we can hope that he will gain new and more accurate perspectives from experience.*
6. Read aloud the two opening paragraphs of the novel. Ask the following questions:
  - a. What do you know about the speaker/narrator? *(Student comments may include the following: He's a young boy. He doesn't seem very educated. He uses bad grammar. He's interesting! He appeared in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, another novel by Mark Twain.)*
  - b. After reading the first two paragraphs, what do you think of the author's style? *(Students may say that it is easy to read and sounds interesting, or that it is informal and amusing.)*
7. Point out to students that Mark Twain gives the reader another warning in the opening paragraph of chapter 1. Ask students the following questions.
  - a. What is that warning? *(that Mark Twain sometimes stretches the truth)*
  - b. What does the declaration, "I never seen anybody but lied one time or another," do for the reader's confidence in Huck as a narrator? *(The reader can see that Huck makes pretty accurate observations about people. The reader trusts Huck.)*
8. Direct students to complete the reading of chapter 1 and to watch for Twain's use of humor. For example, in paragraph two, Twain wrote, "But Tom Sawyer he hunted me up and said he was going to start a band of robbers, and I might join if I would go back to the widow and be respectable. So I went back." Huck can join a robber gang only if he goes back to being respectable.
9. Distribute the reading guide, and have students answer the questions about chapter 1 in small groups.

**Suggested Responses:**

1. *Huck is not well educated, but he is intelligent and independent.*
2. *A stretcher is a lie.*
3. *Twain links the two novels together. The narrator here was a character in the previous work.*

4. *To Huck, being “sivilized” is being uncomfortable and bored.*
  5. *We can only imagine the other names she used, and Huck takes a philosophical attitude toward her rather than becoming offended.*
  6. *The description of heaven seems completely dull and boring, especially to an active young boy.*
  7. *Huck is superstitious.*
10. Distribute **Handout 2**, and have students provide examples of Huck’s “sivilized” and “unsivilized” experiences.
- Suggested Responses:**
- Formal religion—*grace before meals; nightly Bible reading; talk about “the good place” and “the bad place”; prayers before bed*
- Formal manners—*no smoking; no scrunching up; no gapping and stretching new clothes; foods cooked separately*
- Phoniness—*complaining about smoking, but using snuff*
- Games and adventures—*climbs out window; secret code; adventures with Tom Sawyer; talks about “lighting out”*
- Romantic, sensitive side—*felt so lonesome; stars were shining; leaves rustle in the wind; heard an owl, away off who-whooing; whippoorwill and a dog crying about some body*
- Superstitions—*ghosts; spider crawling and flipped into flame; turned around three times and crossed his breast; tied up lock of hair; horseshoe*
11. Point out that Huck struggles against “sivilization” the entire chapter until the end when he squirms out of it through the window. His negative motivation for leaving the widow’s is his discomfort with the restraints of decorum; his positive motivation is his desire for adventure. The escape to freedom includes a dependency on the initiative of Tom Sawyer, as well as wanderlust, a clue to future events. That the Widow Douglas fails to “sivilize” Huck is also a portent for the final resolution of the book.
  12. Alert students to the humorous reflections Huck makes on this struggle. Distribute **Handout 3**, and have students complete the exercise. Help students to see that the context for the humor is Huck’s naivete, his limited experience. The method of the humor is a two-part structure: a set-up and a comment delivered in straight style.
  13. Direct students to read chapters 2, 3, and 4 for Lesson 2.

## When Is Offensive Language Not So Offensive?

**Directions:** Use the following questions to consider the limitations and ramifications of an author's word choices.

1. If the narrator of a story is a highly intelligent and sensitive teenage girl, what kind of language would you expect her to use? What kind of language would you not expect? Why?
2. If the narrator of a story is a prisoner serving time for murder and rape, what kind of language would you expect and not expect? Why? Might his language be offensive to some readers?
3. What if the narrator is a sixteen-year-old boy in your school?
4. What if the narrator is the principal of your school?
5. Would any of these people be an inappropriate choice for the narrator of a novel? Why, or why not?
6. Huck Finn, the narrator of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, is a boy in the South before the Civil War. He comes from a poor white family and has been raised mostly by an abusive and often drunk father. What language might you expect from him? Explain.
7. If Huck uses language that offends us, why should we continue reading his story? Is it possible to continue to read without continuing to be offended?

## **Huck's Experiences—Sivilized and Unsivilized**

**Directions:** Identify examples of Huck's experiences in each of the following areas.

### **Formal Religion**

### **Games and Adventures**

### **Formal Manners**

### **Romantic, Sensitive Side**

### **Phoniness**

### **Superstitions**

## Comic Reflections from Huck

**Directions:** We often find that Huck speaks in a pattern of first giving an observation, then commenting about it. He reports an event and follows with his own response to it. Record his responses to the following reports, and indicate what each shows about him. Then find two additional examples of the same pattern.

1. Reporting: "The widow she cried over me, and called me a poor lost lamb, and she called me a lot of other names, too. . . ."

Commenting:

2. Reporting: "She put me in them new clothes again. . . ."

Commenting:

3. Reporting: "When you got to the table you couldn't go right to eating, but you had to wait for the widow to tuck down her head and grumble a little over the victuals. . . ."

Commenting:

4. Reporting: "After supper she got out her book and learned me about Moses and the Bulrushers. . . ."

Commenting:

5. Reporting: "[B]ut by and by she let it out that Moses had been dead a considerable long time. . . ."

Commenting:

6. Reporting:

Commenting:

7. Reporting:

Commenting:



# Lesson 2

## Superstitions, Games, and Rituals

### Objectives

- To review events in chapters 2–4
- To become aware of the sources for the games, rituals, and superstitions that Mark Twain describes
- To appreciate and to become more aware of personal childhood and family traditions and experiences

### Notes to the Teacher

Many of the sources of Mark Twain's tales in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* are from oral tradition and folklore. In a sense, Twain is writing a type of Foxfire Book (originally a series of folklore anthologies published by *Foxfire Magazine*) based on fact and fiction, observation and experience, reminiscence and imagination, descriptions and commentary.

In this lesson, students review chapters 2–4. Then, in order to appreciate further the sources of Twain's tales and to become more conscious of counterparts in their own lives, students begin to create their own mini-Foxfire Books.

### Procedure

1. Point out that the very last section of chapter 4 sometimes causes difficulty for readers because it is written in heavy dialect. Read the last three paragraphs aloud to students, or have them listen to a recording, so that they can hear Huck's and Jim's voices.
2. Have students work in small groups to complete the reading guide questions for chapters 2–4.

### Suggested Responses:

#### Chapter 2

1. *By moving Tom's hat to a branch above his head, Tom causes Jim to believe ghosts have been around.*
2. *Huck is amused but not involved.*
3. *Tom is the real mischief-maker. Huck, despite his humorous comments, is more serious.*

4. *Jim believes ghosts have been around and becomes popular as a storyteller about the event.*
5. *The boys swear to secrecy and revenge in defense of each other.*
6. *Tom is a natural leader, but his ideas are not very original.*
7. *Ben Rogers is practical and literal. How can the boys demand a ransom if they do not know what a ransom is?*

#### Chapter 3

1. *He decides that, since prayer does not get him what he wants, it is not much use.*
2. *The Widow Douglas's Providence is much less harsh than the one Miss Watson describes.*
3. *Huck does not want to see his father, who has been abusive in the past.*
4. *Huck recognizes Tom Sawyer's make-believe.*
5. *Tom is always into make-believe and mischief; Huck is much more practical and serious.*

#### Chapter 4

1. *Huck wants to prevent his father from getting the money.*
2. *The hairball, like most fortunes, does not provide any useful or clear information. It seems to imply that Huck still has time, but his father is right there when he returns to his room.*
3. Students will recognize similarities to their own childhood games when they read chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 4, which deals with superstitions, will also remind them of their youthful fears and superstitious practices. Review chapters 2, 3, and 4 with students and help them relate Huck's experiences to their own. Ask the following questions:
  - Who gets the ideas for Huck and his gang's adventures? (Tom Sawyer)
  - Who was the leader of your own childhood gang?

- What books provide the ideas for Tom's gang's adventures? (*books about pirates and robbers, Don Quixote*)
  - What books did you and your friends read when you were young? Which influenced you the most?
  - What trick does Tom play on Jim? (*Slips Jim's hat off while he sleeps and hangs it on a limb.*)
  - What harmless pranks did you play on your friends? How did they react afterwards?
  - What kind of band do Huck's friends make? (*robbers*) How long does it last? (*about a month*)
  - What kind of clubs did you and your friends have? How long did they last?
  - What happens when Huck turns over the salt cellar? (*He tries to throw some salt over his left shoulder, but Miss Watson stops him.*)
  - What superstitions did you believe would bring you bad luck? How did you try to ward off evil?
4. Ask students to recall games and contests they played in their childhood. Where several have named the same game, let them recount the rules of play and compare differences where they exist. Point out that differences will exist in anything passed along through oral tradition.
  5. Ask students to describe any games which they themselves made up: games to pass the time traveling, backyard games, and games for rainy days. After relating several, students will agree that these are fun to share and that it would be a loss if they were never recorded and were thus forgotten.
  6. To record these childhood traditions and experiences, break the class into groups of eight to ten students. Distribute **Handout 4** to each student, and review directions with the class. In addition to their initial organizational meeting, students can interview their families and neighbors to uncover topics and incidents they can record. The entire project of making a mini-Foxfire Book will require extended time.
  7. Direct students to read chapters 5, 6, and 7 for Lesson 3.

## Creating a Foxfire Book

**Directions:** Read the following information about Foxfire publications. Then collaborate to present your own Foxfire Book about your childhood. Include some or all of the topics listed below, and devise ideas of your own. Give your book a creative title and cover illustration.

In the 1970s writers and researchers in Appalachia began to gather legends, songs, rituals, recipes, and other lore of the region. The goal was to document the information so that it would not become lost forever, as oral traditions sometimes are. The results were enormously popular and successful publications. Foxfire publications include the following types of information.

- Customs
- Rituals
- Celebrations
- Holidays
- Nicknames and their origins
- How-to information
- Recipes
- Cures
- Hobbies
- Games
- Secret places
- Descriptions of antique heirlooms
- Toys
- Pet stories
- Stories of family adventures
- Weather phenomena in the region
- Local superstitions
- Traditional stories



# Lesson 3

## The Author's Craft and Pap Finn

### Objectives

- To review events in chapters 5–7
- To look at how Mark Twain created Pap Finn through description and dialogue

### Notes to the Teacher

In this lesson, students examine events in chapters 5–7, which focus on Huck's stay with and escape from Pap. They then focus on the characterization of Pap. The supreme achievement of an author is the creation of a living, breathing human being. Mark Twain managed to do this when he presented Pap Finn. Twain based his characters in the novel on real people. As he explained in his autobiography:

"Huckleberry Finn" was Tom Blankenship. . . . Tom's father was at one time Town Drunkard, an exceedingly well-defined and unofficial office of those days. He succeeded General [Gaines] and for a time he was sole and only incumbent of the office; but afterward Jimmy Finn proved competency and disputed the place with him, so we had two town drunkards at one time—and it made as much trouble in that village as Christendom experienced in the fourteenth century, when there were two Popes at the same time.<sup>1</sup>

Students focus attention on the details that Twain uses to create Pap Finn. **Handout 5** directs students to examine Pap's description, words, and actions, as well as others' opinions of him. **Handout 6** asks students to point out the fallacies in Pap's thinking.

### Procedure

1. Have small groups review the reading guide questions on chapters 5–7.

#### Suggested Responses:

##### Chapter 5

1. *Pap is about fifty years old with long messy hair and beard. He is so pale he looks sick, and his clothes are rags.*
2. *Pap is an image of poverty and dereliction.*

3. *Pap thinks school is useless for Huck, above his station in life.*
4. *Pap makes a fool of the new judge.*

##### Chapter 6

1. *Huck wants to go to school just because Pap does not want him to go.*
2. *Huck enjoys the freedom of lazing around all day and not being "civilized."*
3. *Pap goes into a diatribe about both.*
4. *Pap has had way too much to drink.*

##### Chapter 7

1. *Huck uses the pig to create evidence that he himself was attacked and killed.*
  2. *Tom would have gotten deeply into fanciful make-believe; Huck creates a workable plan to escape.*
  3. *Huck just wants to escape Pap.*
  4. *Huck is headed for Jackson's Island.*
2. Discuss with students how a great author can take words and create a real human being. Distribute **Handout 5**, and direct students to list information that Twain provides in presenting Pap Finn.

#### Suggested Responses:

Description of Pap—See chapter 5, paragraph 2.

What Pap Says—See any of his comments about education, slaves, the government, or being respectable.

What Pap Does—"[A]nd your own father got to sleep with the hogs in the tanyard."  
". . . [H]e said he was going downtown to get some whisky."

What Others Think of Pap—"He [the judge] said he reckoned a body could reform the old man with a shotgun, maybe, but he didn't know no other way."

3. Summarize the activity by pointing out that all of these details work together to make Pap come alive for the reader.

<sup>1</sup>Albert Bigelow, ed., *Mark Twain's Autobiography* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1924), II, 174.

4. Distribute **Handout 6**, which is based on chapter 6. It features Pap's drunken tirade against government—local, state, and national—delivered after he disposes of everything and everyone else in one grand round of maledictions. Ask students how they would argue with Pap. Work together in class to “match wits with Pap” and identify the issues and fallacies. A general consensus can determine the best response to write in “The Fact Really Is” column.

### **Suggested Responses:**

#### Part A.

1. *get him money to buy liquor*
2. *Huck's reward*
3. *Pap wastes money with which he could buy clothes by spending it on alcohol.*
4. *Pap probably would not be missed.*
5. *Huck's money reward*
6. *It wouldn't hurt since he usually is too drunk to vote anyway.*
7. *Pap is the one who is uncouth.*
8. *The man was a college professor who could speak many languages; was dressed very well with the whitest shirt and the shiniest hat; had a gold watch and chain, and a silver-headed cane.*

#### Part B.

1. *The two punishments are never to vote again and to leave the country.*
2. *Pap never votes anyway, and nobody would care if he did leave. In his diatribe against the government, Pap becomes the butt of his own comments as everything he says reveals his own wretched faults and limitations. Mark Twain uses the drunken, ranting, and raving Pap to get in a few jibes at a government that is so inconsistent as to say that selling slaves is and is not permissible. Twain also seems to hit at the very institution of slavery when he records the absolute contradictions in a situation where a free Negro could be sold after he was in the state six months.*
5. Direct students to read chapters 8–14 for Lesson 5.

## Getting to Know Pap

**Directions:** Readers learn about a character by looking at the following: the author's description, the character's words, the character's actions, and the opinions of other characters. Select details from chapters 5–7 that contribute to the overall impression of Pap Finn.

<b>The Author's Description of Pap</b>	<b>What Pap Says</b>
<b>What Pap Does</b>	<b>What Other People Think of Pap</b>

## Matching Wits with Pap

### Part A.

**Directions:** Read Pap's comments; then indicate what the real situation is.

When Pap Says	The Fact Really Is
1. He raised his son to "go to work and do suthin' for him."	
2. Judge Thatcher "keeps me out o' my property."	
3. The law lets a man "go round in clothes that ain't fitten for a hog."	
4. "I've a mighty notion to just leave the country."	
5. I would be "one of the wealthiest men in this town if I could git my rights."	



When Pap Says	The Fact Really Is
6. "I'll never vote ag'in."	
7. "[W]hy, he wouldn't 'a' give me the road if I hadn't shoved him out o' the way."	
8. "prowling, thieving, infernal, white-shirted free nigger"	

**Part B.**

**Directions:** Answer the following questions.

1. What two punishments does Pap threaten to impose on the government?
2. Why do we laugh at Pap's threats?



# Lesson 4

## American, Regional, Unique, and Universal

### Objectives

- To understand the distinction between regional and universal elements in literature
- To practice finding the regional, unique, and universal aspects in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

### Notes to the Teacher

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is often regarded as the quintessential American novel. Huck himself embodies many key traditional American values—love of freedom, hatred of hypocrisy, emotional honesty, and reverence for the awesome beauty of nature. The novel also has many strong regional elements, evident in the dialect, superstitions, and many other details. In creating the novel, Mark Twain accomplished something original and unique. Finally, the work's strong universal aspects are evident in its depiction of relationships and themes.

In this lesson, students are challenged with the underlying question: What is American about *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*? They are led to discover the answer by focusing on the regional, unique, and universal aspects of some selected passages from the novel. They then consider one universal aspect, racial injustice, from the author's viewpoint and from their own. Students began examining this topic in Lesson 1, before they even started reading the novel. Because the characterization of Jim is often a cause for controversy about the novel, it is essential to pay close attention to this topic.

### Procedure

1. Write the word *regionalism* on the board or overhead, and ask students to brainstorm possible meanings. Lead them to the understanding that regionalism is an emphasis on details specific to a particular geographical/cultural setting.
2. Distribute **Handout 7**, and have small groups complete the activity. Then ask volunteers to place large webs on the

board or overhead, and pool results as a class.

### Suggested Responses:

Honolulu, Hawaii—*hula dancers, ukulele music, tropical flowers, grass skirts, surfing, mahi-mahi, luaus, poi, volcanic activity, ocean breezes*

Nome, Alaska—*Iditarod race, Siberian Huskies, cold and snow, Inuit culture, frontier background, details about fishing and hunting*

Lexington, Kentucky—*Southern dialect, references to horses and horse racing, emphasis on the area's bluegrass, typical Southern foods*

Santa Fe, New Mexico—*desert flora and fauna, Native American dances and jewelry, mountain activities, Spanish music and food*

3. Write the following terms on the board or overhead, and ask students to take notes as you explain them.

*American*—When we say a work is distinctly American, we mean it could not have taken place in a different culture. For example, a big Fourth of July celebration is an American event.

*Regional*—Regional works emphasize the culture of a specific area. The Foxfire activity introduced in Lesson 2 is a good example.

*Unique*—A work is unique when it is totally original, not in any way an imitation. Many writers can imitate, and many writings are imitations.

*Universal*—Universals span all times, places, and cultures. Among them are death, love, friendship, cruelty, and war.

4. State that *Huckleberry Finn* embraces all four characteristics. Ask students to suggest examples of each.

5. Distribute **Handout 8**, and have small groups complete part A.

**Suggested Responses:**

1. *Jim's language is highly regional. Mark Twain painstakingly presents his dialect. The meaning, however, is universal—friends treat each other right.*
2. *Again we have the regional language, but the situation is universal—racial injustice and the grief of a family torn apart.*
3. *The passage emphasizes a universal—the beauty of nature. Folklore is blended with the myths Jim and Huck invent.*
4. *Huck's language is regional, but we also hear Mark Twain's unique, offhanded style.*
6. Read aloud each of the passages on the handout, and ask students to voice their responses to each one. Some are likely to have problems with the first two, as they bring the racial injustice issue center stage. The third and fourth passages are more lighthearted and enjoyable.
7. Have students complete part B of the handout.

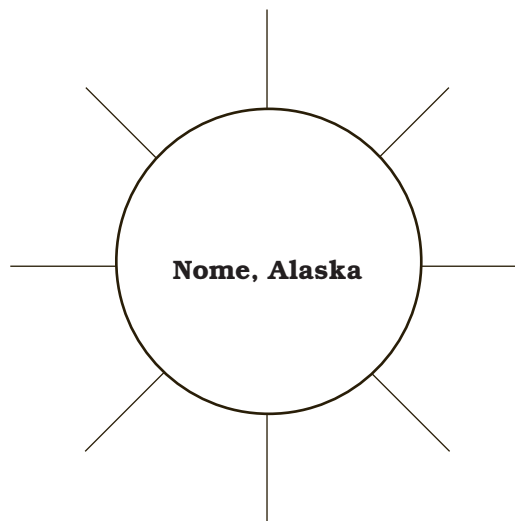
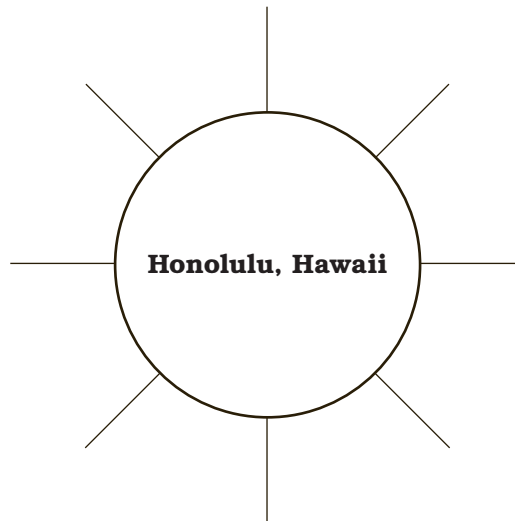
**Suggested Responses:**

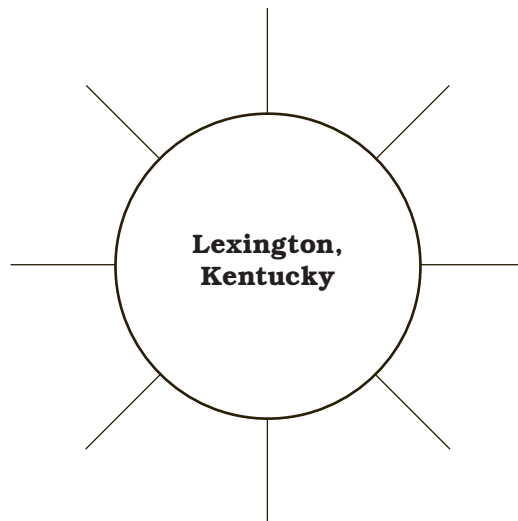
1. *Jim's language reflects his lack of education, and some readers feel that his dignity is diminished, that the language makes him sound like a buffoon. A closer reading shows that Jim is voicing keen insight, and he does so in an outspoken way. Jim understands that real friends do not play mean tricks on one another.*
2. *The n-word is repeated three times in close succession; Huck takes it for granted and sees nothing offensive about it. His attitude reflects the culture in which he was brought up, a culture in which slavery was taken for granted as an economic necessity. Huck seems to be about to learn something here about the humanity of the people, hence about the injustice of slavery.*

3. *The problem is not just the institution of slavery, but the broader one of racial injustice. The passage is clearly written in disapproval of bigotry. Some students may say that it reminds them of Uncle Tom's Cabin or other books they have read.*
4. *Racial equality is an ideal that has not yet been met in the United States. Around the world there are many examples that people continue to discriminate against one another based on race, religion, or culture. The extreme is sometimes referred to as ethnic cleansing.*
8. Remind students to continue reading chapters 8–14 for Lesson 5.

## A Look at Regionalism

**Directions:** Writers use regionalism when they include many details unique to a specific place. These details can relate to diverse aspects of life, including language, foods, beverages, music, legends, pastimes, and religious practices. Use the following graphic organizers to brainstorm details a regionalist might include in a story set in each of the following places. If you are unfamiliar with one or more of the sites, the Internet can help you to obtain some information.





## Regional, Unique, and Universal Elements

### Part A.

**Directions:** Everything about *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is American. Read the following passages, and decide whether they are regional, unique, or universal. Explain your choices.

1. "What do dey stan' for? I's gwyne to tell you. When I got all wore out wid work, en wid de callin' for you, en went to sleep, my heart wuz mos' broke bekase you wuz los', en I didn' k'yer no' mo' what become er me en de raf.' En when I wake up en find you back ag'in, all safe en soun', de tears come, en I could 'a' got down on my knees en kiss yo' foot, I's so thankful. En all you wuz thinkin' 'bout wuz how you could make a fool uv ole Jim wid a lie. Dat truck dah is *trash*; en trash is what people is dat puts dirt on de head er dey fren's en makes 'em ashamed.'" (chapter 15)
2. "A couple of nigger-traders come along, and the king sold them the niggers reasonable, for three-day drafts as they called it, and away they went, the two sons up the river to Memphis, and their mother down the river to Orleans. I thought them poor girls and them niggers would break their hearts for grief; they cried around each other, and took on so it most made me down sick to see it. The girls said they hadn't ever dreamed of seeing the family separated or sold away from the town." (chapter 27)
3. "It's lovely to live on a raft. We had the sky up there, all speckled with stars, and we used to lay on our backs and look up at them, and discuss about whether they was made or only just happened. Jim he allowed they was made, but I allowed they happened; I judged it would have took too long to *make* so many. Jim said the moon could 'a' *laid* them; well, that looked kind of reasonable, so I didn't say nothing against it, because I've seen a frog lay most as many, so of course it could be done. We used to watch the stars that fell, too, and see them streak down. Jim allowed they'd got spoiled and was hove out of the nest." (chapter 19)
4. "You don't know about me without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*; but that ain't no matter. That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth. That is nothing. I never seen anybody but lied one time or another, without it was Aunt Polly, or the widow, or maybe Mary. Aunt Polly—Tom's Aunt Polly, she is—and Mary, and the Widow Douglas is all told about in that book, which is mostly a true book, with some stretchers, as I said before." (chapter 1)

**Part B.**

**Directions:** Review the first two passages in part A. Then answer the following questions.

1. What is the problem in the first passage?
2. What is the problem in selection 2?
3. Identify Huck's, Mark Twain's, and your attitude toward the problem. Describe each person's stance as neutral, condemning, praising, reluctantly tolerant, or challenging.
4. Does this problem still exist in America and in other countries today?



# Lesson 5

## Dialogues and Dialects

### Objectives

- To review events in chapters 8–14
- To study the full meaning and effect of the dialects in the novel
- To understand the impact that dialogue has in illustrating the theme

### Notes to the Teacher

“In this book a number of dialects are used,” the author states in the explanatory note. The more accurately students are able to “translate” these dialects, the more meaning and humor they will derive.

Mark Twain criticized other authors’ use of dialect, so it is probable that he paid careful attention in his own writing. It is important to point out to students that there are many different levels of dialect in the novel, and that the dialects of those using folk speech do not necessarily follow the same grammatical rules or use the same vocabulary. On the surface, dialect functions as an instrument of humor, but Twain is addressing some very serious issues with this humor.

Through a careful examination of characters who use standard English and those who use folk speech, the hierarchy of social classes becomes apparent. While those characters who use proper grammar and elevated vocabulary would contend that they are superior to those who speak differently, Twain calls this attitude into question. Certainly characters’ dialect can indicate whether or not they are privileged, but it cannot allow for an assessment of their morals.

The rules of conversation have been illustrated quite explicitly. Twain’s concern for the discrepancy between the speaker’s intention and the listener’s understanding of the words is another source of humor, but this discrepancy also allows Twain to make some statements regarding class structure.

In this lesson, students review the reading guide questions for the chapters. They then focus on Twain’s skillful use of dialect by “translating,” listening, speaking, and analyzing the characters’ dialogue.

### Procedure

1. Have small groups review the reading guide questions for chapters 8–14.

### Suggested Responses:

#### Chapter 8

1. *The cannon is used to try to get Huck’s supposedly dead body to surface.*
2. *The bread is thought to be another way to locate the body.*
3. *Jim thinks Huck is dead, so he must be looking at a ghost.*
4. *Jim heard that he was going to be sold to New Orleans.*
5. *They both believe a variety of folk superstitions.*
6. *Civilization is based on quite uncivilized behavior.*
7. *Huck seems to like Jim, but he feels that he should turn him in to the authorities as an escaped slave.*

#### Chapter 9

1. *Very heavy rain has caused the river to flood.*
2. *They find a dead man.*

#### Chapter 10

1. *Huck put a dead snake there as a practical joke, and the snake’s mate crawled in, too.*
2. *Jim drinks a lot of Pap’s whisky, eats some snake meat, and ties the rattles around his wrist.*
3. *Huck does not want Jim to know his joke caused the snake bite.*
4. *Huck thinks that way no one will guess who he is.*

#### Chapter 11

1. *People think that Huck is dead, and many suspect Jim to be the murderer. There is a reward out for Jim.*
2. *Huck makes up a story about being an orphan and escaping from a mean farmer.*

3. *Huck betrays himself by the way he threads a needle, by the way he throws, and by the way he catches something in his lap.*
4. *People are going to look for Jim there.*

#### Chapter 12

1. *Jim builds a wigwam on the raft, so they have shelter when they need it. They travel at night and rest during the day. Everything is very peaceful.*
2. *Huck goes ashore and buys or steals food.*
3. *Huck wants an adventure.*
4. *Bill, Jake, and Turner are robbers who are having a dispute.*
5. *The raft has floated away.*

#### Chapter 13

1. *Huck feels guilty and worried.*
2. *Huck makes up a story to get a ferryman to rescue the robbers.*
3. *The murderers seem to have perished.*

#### Chapter 14

1. *Adventures are likely to lead to either Jim's capture or his death.*
  2. *Jim only understands part of the story of the two women quarreling over the baby, so he thinks Solomon was too willing to kill the baby.*
  3. *Huck cannot win the argument; he blames it on Jim's race.*
2. Ask students to attempt a written translation into standard English of a dialect passage such as Jim's narrative in chapter 8 (beginning with "I see a light a-comin' roun' de p'int bymeby, so I wade' in en shove' a log . . ."). Allow student comparison of written versions. Direct attention to additional passages for further practice. See, for example, Tom Sawyer's lines in chapter 2 (beginning, "Because it ain't in the books so—that's why.") or his lines in chapter 35 (beginning, "Well, if that ain't just like you, Huck Finn. You can get up the infant-schooliest ways . . .").

3. Explain to students that the complexity of Mark Twain's dialogue doesn't exist only because of the dialect, but because of the communication between characters. Define the following terms for students:

*locutionary act*—the act of speaking

*illocutionary act*—the intended message behind one's spoken message<sup>1</sup>

Explain that Twain uses the discrepancy between the locutionary and illocutionary acts of his characters to characterize them. Tell students that some people might say, "Is Sheila there?" when they call Sheila's house. Those words are the locutionary act. However, the illocutionary act is that the caller wants to speak with Sheila. Ask students to think of at least two examples of the discrepancy between our words and our true message behind those words.

4. Ask students to pay careful attention to what degree characters' conversations allow for true communication. Also, ask them to consider how characters' language contributes to the social relationships between characters. Distribute **Handout 9**, and ask students to complete it in small groups or for homework. (*Answers will vary, but students should note that the type of dialect and vocabulary of a character indicates his or her social class. There is also a discrepancy between what is stated and what is understood, thereby creating humor. Some characters have difficulty understanding the statements of others because they do not understand the word choices, whereas others do not understand because they do not follow the same rules of conversation.*)
5. As an application of their listening skills, have students in groups of three prepare a short dialogue using any passages with dialect from chapters 9–14. Tell them to read these to the class with as much expression as possible. Students can vote for the group that is the most authentic.

<sup>1</sup>David R. Sewell, *Mark Twain's Languages: Discourse, Dialogue, and Linguistic Variety* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 104.

## **The True Meanin'**

Choose two characters from *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Copy lines of a dialogue between them. Rewrite the lines in your own words, stating what you think the characters are trying to communicate. Evaluate if the characters' messages are received. Decide what impact the dialogue has on the theme of the novel.

1. Character: \_\_\_\_\_

Dialogue

Communicates

Message

Impact

2. Character: \_\_\_\_\_

Dialogue

Communicates

Message

Impact



# Lesson 6

## Floating Down the River with a Compass and a Map

### Objectives

- To provide basic geographic information for understanding the book
- To place the story within the context of the times

### Notes to the Teacher

This lesson gives students a geographical overview of Huck's and Jim's journey down the river as well as a way of recording it. In writing *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain drew from his personal boyhood experiences on the Mississippi River and his days as a riverboat pilot. People and events of the America of Twain's day were the target of his social criticism. Students will have a much fuller reading of the criticism, humor, and basic plot if they know the importance of the Mississippi River and some of the social conditions in the United States in the nineteenth century.

To supplement the lesson, consider showing portions of one of the movie adaptations of the novel to help students visualize the experience on the raft. Also include student oral reports on the topics mentioned in the Notes to the Teacher for Lesson 1. Note that a large wall map of the United States or an overhead transparency of **Handout 10** is needed for procedure 1.

### Procedure

1. Distribute **Handout 10**, and let students find their general location on the map. Help them get oriented by having volunteers point out the locations of some or all of the following: the Grand Canyon; Washington, D.C.; San Francisco. Then pinpoint the setting of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the Mississippi River. Trace the river on the wall map or transparency while students mark it on their maps. Also indicate the location of the Missouri and Ohio Rivers.

2. Tell students about the Mississippi River, using some of the following information.

#### Facts about the River

- Named the "great river" by Native Americans because of its size
- Length: approximately 2,300 miles (varies as the river changes its course)
- Width: one mile at some points
- Source: in northern Minnesota
- Flows southward and empties into the Gulf of Mexico

#### River's Importance

- Provides drainage for almost the entire central section of the United States
- Adjacent land very fertile, so excellent for agriculture
- Cuts the country in two from north to south
- Functions as the core of an entire network of waterways leading east and west, including the Ohio and Missouri Rivers
- Especially in the nineteenth century, vital for travel
- Pathway for U.S. trade and exchange of products between different sections of the country as well as for products imported from Central and South America (The great era of Mississippi trade, 1840 to 1880, was during Twain's lifetime.)
- Led to the growth of major river cities

#### River's Drawbacks

- Washes away large amounts of topsoil each year
- Floods cause loss of homes, farms, and lives
- Not as efficient as railroad transport, which lessened the river's importance for commerce

3. Ask students to locate the following river cities on their maps: Hannibal, Missouri; St. Louis, Missouri; Cairo, Illinois; Memphis,

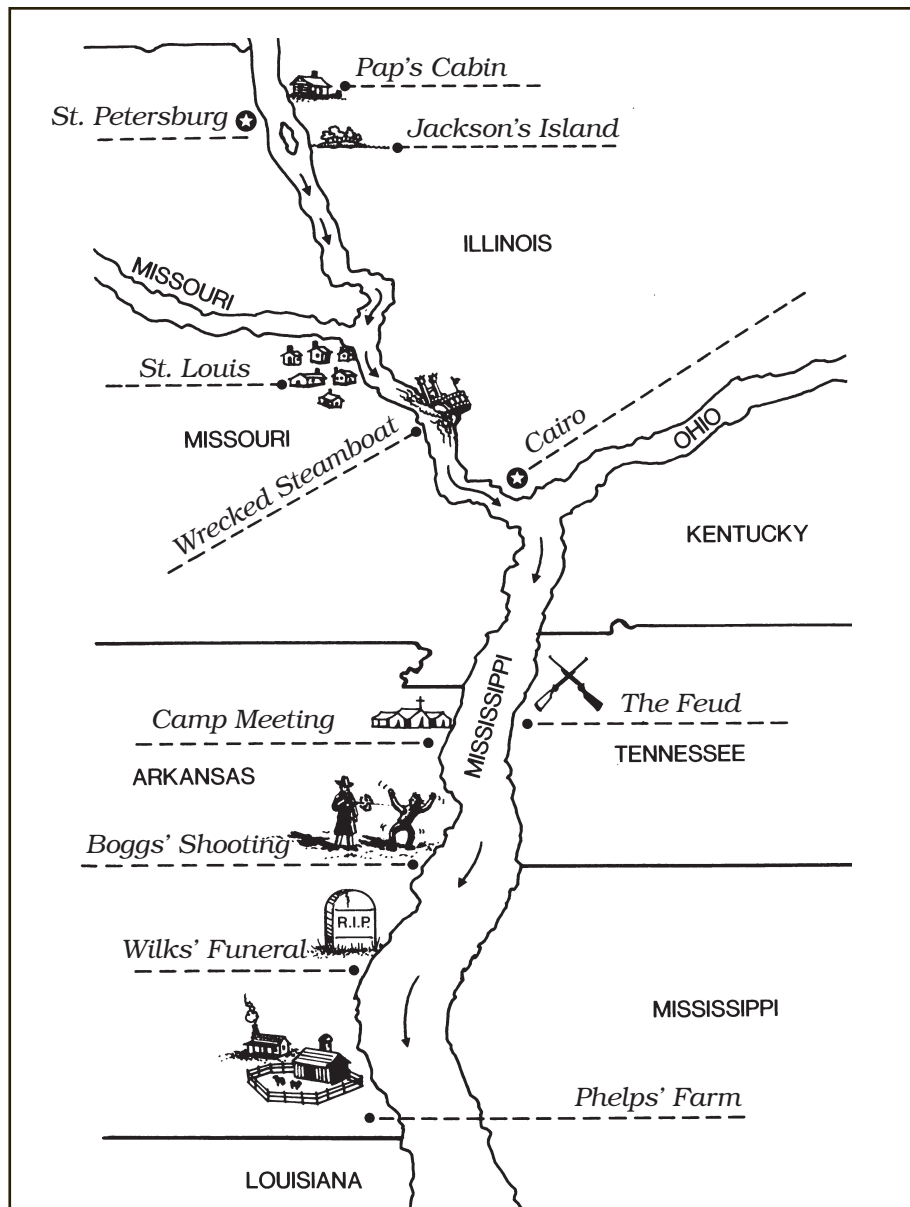
Tennessee; and New Orleans, Louisiana. In chapters 15 and 16, Jim and Huck have Cairo as their destination because that is the point where the Ohio River joins the Mississippi. They hope to sail up the Ohio into the free states, where Jim will be safe from slavery. If they miss Cairo, the current will carry them downstream, deeper into slave territory.

4. Distribute **Handout 11**. Help students get started by telling them which point on the map represents Hannibal, Missouri, where

Mark Twain grew up; this is the town known as St. Petersburg in the novel. Tell students to keep the map and continue completing it as they read the rest of the book.

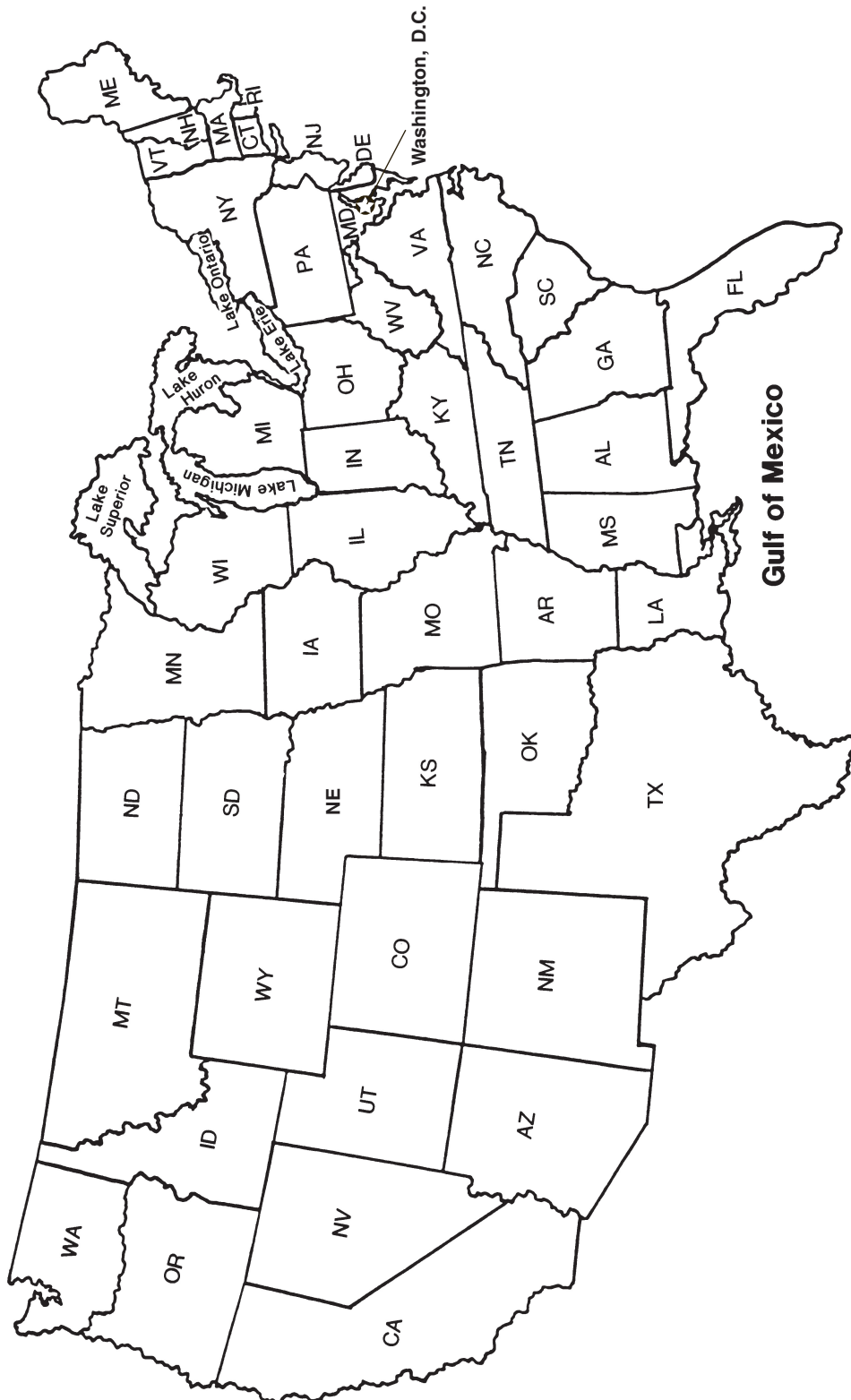
5. Conclude by showing a clip from one of the movie adaptations of the novel. Students might also present oral reports on nineteenth-century America.
6. Direct students to read chapters 15–18 for Lesson 7.

### Suggested Responses, Handout 11:



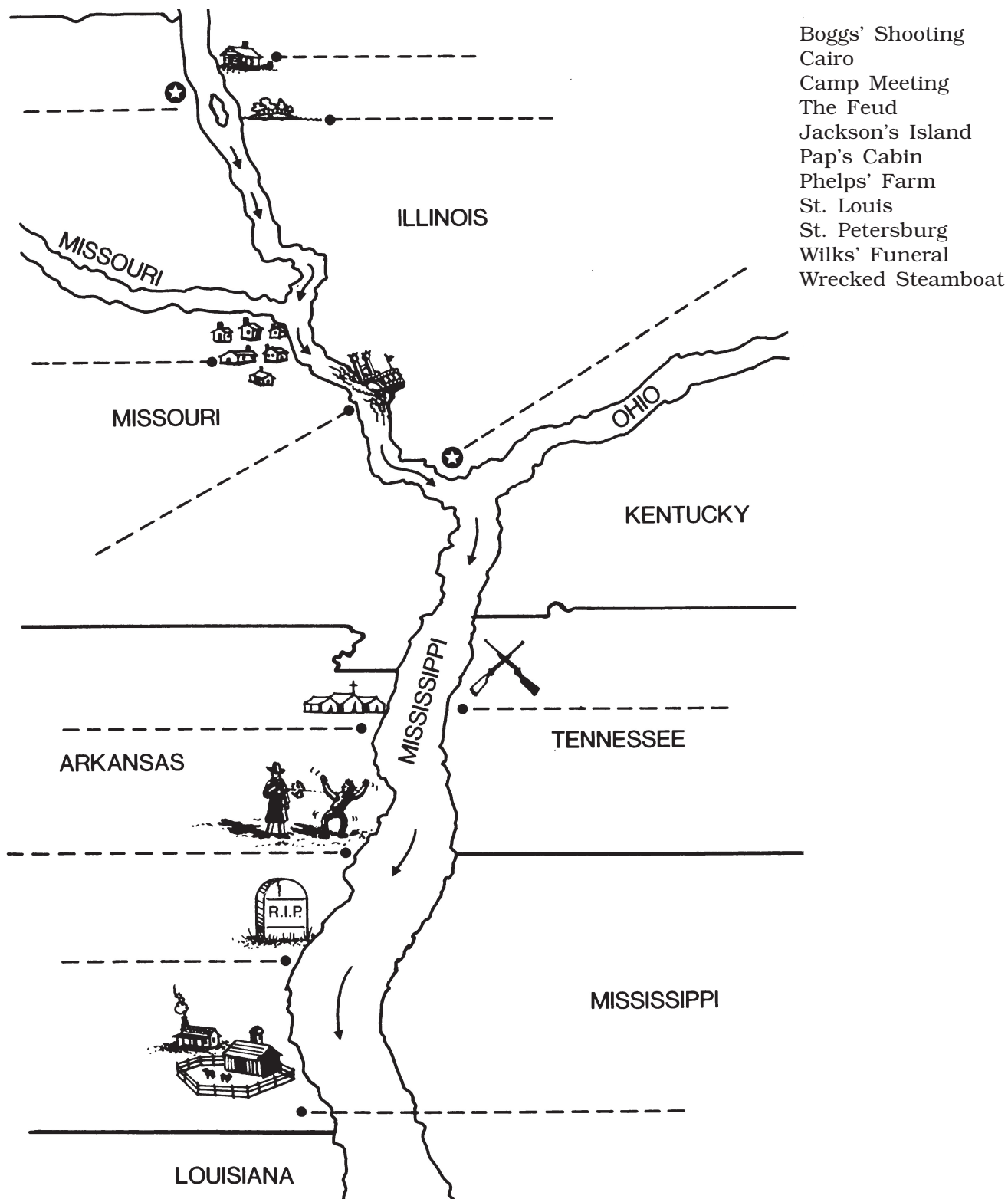
## Mapping It Out

**Directions:** Use the map below to trace Huck's and Jim's journey.



## Charting Huck's Trip

**Directions:** As you read, locate the following places and events. Record them on the diagram below.





# Lesson 7

## The Grangerfords and Shepherdsons

### Objectives

- To understand events in chapters 15–18
- To analyze the significance of Huck's encounter with the Grangerfords

### Notes to the Teacher

In chapters 15–18 Huck's and Jim's plan to stop at Cairo and escape to the North is foiled. They are caught in the mighty Mississippi, heading into the Deep South. When a steamboat hits the raft, the two are separated, and Huck, using the name George Jackson, stays for a time with the Grangerford family. The chapters end with Huck and Jim getting back on the river on the raft.

The novel presents a recurring contrast between the river and the land. For the most part, Huck and Jim find peace and friendship on the raft. The land seems to bring danger and constant evidence of people's brutality to one another. The senseless killing of Buck is an example that affects Huck deeply.

In this lesson, students review the reading guide questions for chapters 15–18. They then focus on the Grangerford family, on the feud, and on family conflicts in general.

### Procedure

1. Have small groups review the reading guide questions for chapters 15–18.

#### Suggested Responses:

##### Chapter 15

1. *Huck and Jim plan to sell the raft and take a steamboat up the Ohio into the free states.*
2. *Huck feels sick and scared.*
3. *Jim was seriously worried about Huck, so the trick seems very mean.*
4. *Huck's apology to Jim is a significant point in the development of his own conscience and sense of right and wrong.*

##### Chapter 16

1. *Cairo is not a big town. Huck and Jim are afraid they will miss the turn into the Ohio River. In that case, they would continue south—not a good idea for Jim.*
2. *To Huck at this point conscience means what the law tells him to do, not what he himself sees as right and wrong. Ironically, he thinks his conscience is telling him to do the thing that we know would have been morally wrong.*
3. *Huck says there is smallpox on the raft.*
4. *Huck decides not to worry about right and wrong, just to do what seems "handiest" in the circumstances.*
5. *Huck and Jim miss Cairo.*
6. *A steamship runs into the raft.*

##### Chapter 17

1. *Huck challenges Buck to spell his name.*
2. *Huck really admires the Grangerfords; we see his naivete at work here.*
3. *Huck is realistic and not very interested in dead people.*

##### Chapter 18

1. *Nobody remembers the actual cause of the feud; they just keep it going.*
  2. *That kind of courage is the sort of bravado that can lead to needless bloodshed.*
  3. *The topic of brotherly love contrasts sharply with the feud in the congregation.*
  4. *The Grangerfords' slaves took care of Jim.*
  5. *Miss Sophia elopes with a Shepherdson. The feud erupts and Buck is killed, as are his father and brothers.*
  6. *Huck and Jim leave on the raft.*
2. Point out that Huck has a painful experience in these chapters. Buck Grangerford becomes a friend, and Huck sees him shot and killed, all because of a family feud. Distribute **Handout 12**, and have students complete the exercise.

### **Suggested Responses:**

1. *The Grangerfords are a well-to-do family that Huck stays with after the steamship rams into the raft. Col. Grangerford is described in detail at the beginning of chapter 18; Huck stresses his dignity and kindness. Rachel, his wife, gets less attention and is referred to as “the old lady.” Tom and Bob are Buck’s older brothers. Huck stresses that both are good-looking, tall, and strong; to Huck, their clothes are impressive. Miss Charlotte and Miss Sophia are both beautiful, the first somewhat fierce, the second quite gentle. Sophia is important because of her elopement with Harney Shepherdson, the immediate cause of Buck’s death. Buck, the youngest, is just a little older than Huck; the two become good friends until Buck is killed in the outbreak of feud activities caused by the elopement. Emmeline is a sister who died; the family has examples of the poems she wrote for and about people who died.*
2. *To Huck the home seems wonderful; the reader recognizes it to be pretty tacky. See the middle of chapter 17.*
3. *The family lives a pretty genteel lifestyle; the atmosphere is friendly and polite; presumably the Shepherdsons live the same way. Both families attend the same church for Sunday services. The fine manners contrast with the coarse and meaningless feud. Mark Twain makes it clear that the feud is stupid behavior.*
4. *Huck is mystified by the whole concept of a feud, and he is sickened by the results. Col. Grangerford and his sons are among the dead. Huck wishes he never came ashore there, and he is eager to get away on the raft.*
5. *There is the contrast between the land and the river. On the river, Huck and Jim have space and are comfortable.*

3. Distribute **Handout 13**, and have students discuss the questions.

### **Suggested Responses:**

1. *A feud is a long-standing conflict between two groups, often two families. While quarrels often spring up and die away quickly, feuds are long lasting. Often no one even remembers the cause of a feud. Feuds usually involve patterns of revenge and retaliation.*
  2. *The Hatfields and McCoys are a famous example; William Shakespeare wrote about the Capulets and Montagues. In West Side Story we see rival street gangs.*
  3. *Col. Grangerford and his wonderful sons are all dead, along with others on both sides of the feud. Both Huck and the reader see that the deaths are needless waste.*
  4. *Opinions can go either way.*
  5. *A war is often a feud on a larger scale. Sometimes people get caught up in the conflict and forget the causes and the ultimate goals.*
  6. *Students may be aware of neighborhood disputes that have lasted over generations. Sometimes groups in schools develop long-lasting antipathies.*
  7. *The effort to stop a feud is usually a thankless task because people on both sides become passionate about keeping the conflict alive.*
  8. *The novel seems to suggest that the best thing to do is get on a raft and drift away.*
4. Direct students to read chapters 19–30 for Lesson 8. (Note: This is a fairly lengthy reading assignment, so extra time may be necessary for students to complete it.)

## Meet the Grangerfords

**Directions:** Review chapters 17 and 18 to find information about the members of the Grangerford family. Then answer the following questions.

1. Who are the Grangerfords? Record information about each of the following characters. Do we learn more about some than about others? Why?

Character	Information
Col. Saul Grangerford	
Rachel	
Tom	
Bob	
Charlotte	
Sophia	
Buck	
Emmeline	

5. Reread the closing paragraph of chapter 18. What contrast does Huck emphasize? What role does it play in the novel as a whole?

## **Family Feuds—War in Microcosm**

**Directions:** Use the following questions to reflect on the causes and consequences of feuds.

1. What is a feud? How does a feud differ from a quarrel?
2. What feuds have you encountered in other works of literature or in movies/television shows? How are they like and unlike the feud between the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons?
3. The consequences of the feud in chapter 18 shock both Huck and the reader. Why?
4. Is Sophia Grangerford responsible for the death of her father and brothers? Why, or why not?
5. What is the difference between a feud and a war? Do they have the same consequences?
6. What family feuds have you witnessed? What were their consequences?
7. How can one go about stopping a family feud? a war?
8. Does *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* make any suggestions?



# Lesson 8

## Humor and Satire

### Objectives

- To review events in chapters 19–30
- To observe Mark Twain’s technique of using incongruity to create humor
- To recognize Twain’s use of satire

### Notes to the Teacher

Mark Twain is considered one of America’s most famous humorists. One of his main techniques is incongruity, putting things together that do not belong together. In this lesson students simulate the process the duke employs, consciously or not, in composing the “To be, or not to be” speech in chapter 21. The duke puts random phrases together from William Shakespeare’s plays, *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, and from other sources. Part of the humor lies in the duke’s pseudo-knowledge; he appears to know Shakespeare but has so little understanding of the meaning of the words that he puts them together in nonsense verse. The king in turn “believes” the speech and rehearses it dramatically. In this section, Huck is not commenting on the absurdity of the scene. In fact, he admires the king’s and duke’s melodramatic renditions, much as he admired the Grangerfords’ home.

The reader derives some humor from the theatrics but can derive further humor from knowing the ridiculous misjoining of the Shakespearean lines. Twain assumes his readers have literary backgrounds. Even though students may not have read these plays, they can still experience the nature of this verbal humor through duplicating the process. **Handout 14** contains sets of well-known lines from a nursery rhyme, advertisements, and proverbs. Students select lines and combine them in random order. They will surprise themselves and others by the humor of mismatched ideas.

Twain’s use of humor is closely linked to his purpose of satire. He points out the ridiculous aspects of people, society, and customs. He gets away with his jibes at all types of society because he has an innocent, naive, nonthreatening spokesman, Huck Finn.

In this lesson, students review events in chapters 19–30. They then create original “fancy” speeches and analyze several satirical passages.

### Procedure

1. Have small groups review the study guide questions on chapters 19–30.

### Suggested Responses:

#### Chapter 19

1. *Huck’s recent experience with the feud makes life on the raft seem wonderful.*
2. *The dauphin is about seventy years old and bald, with whiskers; the duke is about thirty; both are wearing tattered clothing and running away from angry townspeople. The two are con men.*
3. *Huck wants to prevent quarrels.*

#### Chapter 20

1. *The king and the duke act as if Huck and Jim do not matter.*
2. *The king manages to collect money for his supposed missionary efforts.*
3. *A wanted poster advertising Jim is printed, so now they can travel in daylight and pretend they are returning an escaped slave.*

#### Chapter 21

1. *The king and the duke are preparing for their theatrical performance based on Shakespeare.*
2. *Bricksville is a tiny Arkansas town.*
3. *Boggs says he wants to kill Sherburn, but no one takes him seriously.*
4. *Sherburn shoots Boggs in cold blood.*
5. *The people decide to lynch Sherburn.*

#### Chapter 22

1. *Sherburn simply faces the lynch mob down. He scorns the men in the mob.*
2. *Huck is a naïve young boy who enjoys the show.*
3. *The show is a failure. The ad suggests that the comedy will be bawdy.*

#### Chapter 23

1. A full house on the first night is angry that the show is so short; the second night there is another full house. The king and duke anticipate the trick the people have planned, and escape before the retribution planned at the third performance.
2. Huck realizes that Jim loves his family just as much as white men love theirs.
3. Jim regrets striking his daughter; he was not always a gentle father.

#### Chapter 24

1. Jim is tired of being tied up when the others leave.
2. Huck is commenting about con men at work.

#### Chapter 25

1. Huck seems to be talking about the phoniness all around him.
2. This is part of the king's plan to get Mary Jane to trust him.

#### Chapter 26

1. Huck cannot stand seeing these women victimized, so he decides to steal their gold back.
2. The king and the duke plan to get all of the Wilks' property.

#### Chapter 27

1. Huck hides the money in the coffin with the dead man.
2. The undertaker is serious, smooth, and silent.
3. This is an ironic comment on the curiosity of human beings.

#### Chapter 28

1. Mary Jane is beautiful, trusting, and good.
2. Huck really likes her.

#### Chapter 29

1. With two pairs of men claiming to be the relatives, the men want to check the body for a tattoo.

2. Huck thinks he and Jim have gotten away, but then he sees the king and the duke coming again.

#### Chapter 30

1. Each blames the other for stealing the gold.
2. All the king and the duke have is each other. Whisky smooths the way.
2. Have students reread the initial descriptions of the duke and dauphin and their recent past in chapter 19. Remind students that we learn to know characters from description, dialogue, actions, and the opinions of others. Discuss what the duke and dauphin are like and Huck's reaction to them.
3. Ask students to summarize the duke's and dauphin's fabricated remote pasts and Huck's reactions to this information. Be sure students notice that, although Huck listens to the pathetic tale which the two imposters weave out of strands of imagination, he does not get caught in the web. Draw students' attention to the final paragraph in chapter 19, which presents Huck as seeing through their phony ancestry.
4. Ask students to describe the Shakespearean performance (chapter 21). Distribute **Handout 14**, and have students work in pairs to complete the exercise. When they have finished, have volunteers present results to the class.
5. Define *satire* for students. (*Satire pokes fun at what is ridiculous in society. It sometimes may have the underlying purpose of inspiring change.*)
6. Distribute **Handout 15**. Let students work individually on part A, using the text for the passages. Have a dictionary available for terms which they cannot define from the content of the passage.

#### Suggested Responses:

1. gullibility
2. feuding
3. religious hypocrisy
4. sentimentality and literary triteness
5. pseudo-intellectualism



6. *uncultured tastes*
  7. *fascination with ceremony and somber things*
  8. *people's curiosity*
  9. *greed*
7. Conduct a general discussion based on part B of the handout. (*Answers will vary, but the most destructive characteristics are feuding, greed, and hypocrisy.*)
  8. Direct students to read chapter 31 for Lesson 9.

### **Optional Activities**

1. Write a satirical article about something in school (announcements, cafeteria rules, restroom restrictions, registration problems). Share your work with the class.
2. Write a satirical article about something in your local community (streets, parking regulations, curfew). Share your work with the class.
3. Draw a satirical cartoon. Share your work with the class.

## Royal Doubletalk

**Directions:** Imitate the king and the duke, and create a dialogue between Jack and Jill, using some of the following phrases. Choose four from set A, three from set B, and two from set C. Mix them in any order, and write the results in the space below.

### Set A

And broke his crown  
To fetch  
Jack and Jill  
A pail of water  
And Jill came  
    tumbling after  
Jack fell down  
Went up the hill

### Set B

It's the real thing!  
The wings of man  
You're in good hands  
Say it with flowers  
The sign of the cat  
We're the company  
    without the blimp  
Things go better  
We're number two  
Let your fingers  
    do the walking  
Fly the friendly skies

### Set C

A stitch in time saves nine  
Early to bed, early to rise  
A bird in the hand  
    is worth two in the bush  
You can lead a horse  
    to water  
Do unto others  
An apple a day keeps the  
    doctor away  
But you can't make him  
    drink  
As you would have them  
    do unto you  
Makes a man healthy,  
    wealthy, and wise

## Taking Aim

### Part A.

**Directions:** In relating an episode, Mark Twain often uses satire to make comments on the failings of individuals and society. In the following passages, he exposes a number of these failings. Read each passage. Fill in each blank with a failing from the following list.

feuding	fascination with ceremony
greed	things
gullibility	religious hypocrisy
sentimentality and literary triteness	uncultured tastes
people's curiosity	pseudo-intellectualism

1. In chapter 23, starting with the paragraph that begins, "We never showed a light," Twain is satirizing \_\_\_\_\_.
2. In chapter 18, beginning with the phrase, "Soon as I could get Buck down by the corncribs," Twain is satirizing \_\_\_\_\_.
3. In chapter 18, beginning with the phrase, "Next Sunday we all went to church," Twain is satirizing \_\_\_\_\_.
4. In chapter 17, with the paragraph beginning, "If Emmeline Grangerford could make poetry like that," Twain is satirizing \_\_\_\_\_.
5. In chapter 25, the paragraph beginning, "—they bein' partickler friends o' the diseased," Twain is satirizing \_\_\_\_\_.
6. From the handbill to the last word in chapter 22, Twain is satirizing \_\_\_\_\_.
7. In chapter 27, beginning with the phrase, "When the place was packed full the undertaker he slid around," Twain is satirizing \_\_\_\_\_.
8. In chapter 27, the paragraph beginning, "They had borrowed a melodeum," satirizes \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Chapter 26, beginning "What! And not sell out the rest," satirizes \_\_\_\_\_.

**Part B.**

**Directions:** Review the list of people's failings in the first part of this handout. Then answer the following questions.

1. Which of the failings is the most harmful to others?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Which of the failings is the least harmful to others?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Which of these failings would Twain tolerate?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Which of them would he not tolerate?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Which would you tolerate?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Which would you not tolerate?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What types of people or conditions might a writer today choose to satirize?

# Lesson 9

## Head and Heart

### Objectives

- To understand what factors influence Huck Finn in making decisions
- To realize the innate goodness of Huck as opposed to the pretense of goodness in society

### Notes to the Teacher

For all the light-hearted play and nonsense, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a serious book with a serious message. Huck is confronted with important decisions that have grave consequences. His greatest dilemma is presented in chapter 31, “You Can’t Pray a Lie.” Huck does not know what to do about Jim’s situation. The reader sympathizes with Huck when he says, “I thought till I wore my head sore.”

In this lesson, students begin with the reading guide questions for chapter 31. They go on to sort out the background for Huck’s confused conscience. They are directed to take a look at Huck’s rather unusual upbringing, which may account for his having to wrestle with the topic of right and wrong.

### Procedure

1. Have small groups review the reading guide questions for chapter 31.

#### Suggested Responses:

1. *The king and duke sell Jim to a man named Silas Phelps.*
2. *Huck feels guilty and ashamed about breaking a law; he also thinks Jim would be better back with Miss Watson.*
3. *Huck decides he cannot turn Jim back into slavery.*
4. *Huck has made a serious moral decision with potentially grave consequences; this is no prank.*
5. *Huck is not at all sure that he has made the morally right decision.*
6. *Huck gets rid of the duke and the king at last. The duke tries to mislead him about Jim’s whereabouts.*

2. Remind students that although people possess a certain innate sense of good and evil, morality (knowing right from wrong) is also learned from parents, teachers, friends, and society and then applied to specific life situations. Distribute **Handout 16**, and let students work on part A with a partner. For those who have difficulty getting started, name Pap as an example.
3. After students complete part A, have them share conclusions and examples with the class. (*It is likely that they will find many negative learning experiences in Huck’s life. They may then conclude that with so many negative influences, Huck might be expected to have a poorly formed conscience. He has not had the same societal influences as Tom Sawyer, for example. Still, Huck has a natural and candid common sense that often comes to the rescue.*)
4. Refer students to chapter 31, and have volunteers read aloud from the paragraph that opens, “I didn’t have none, so he left,” to Huck’s conclusion, “I might as well go the whole hog.”
5. Have small groups complete part B of **Handout 16**.
6. When students have finished both sets of boxes, help them to draw some conclusions about Huck and about the book. Use some of the following questions as catalysts.
  - How do Huck’s two decisions differ from each other? (*The second has a much stronger basis than the first.*)
  - Which is the morally right decision? Why? (*The second is based on inner convictions and commitment to a friend.*)
  - Does Huck know it is right? (*No. He thinks he is making an evil choice.*)
  - Does Huck use his heart or his head or both to make the final decision? (*He uses his heart, which he has to depend on for a sense of innate goodness because his head is guided by a poorly formed conscience.*)
  - What makes Huck a moral person? (*In his heart, he knows right from wrong and chooses right more often than wrong.*)

- What makes *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* a moral book even though it describes such immorality as murder, stealing, and slavery, and it includes some vulgar language? (*Through satire, Mark Twain disapproves of immorality rather than glorifies it. He portrays Jim and Huck, the most moral characters in the novel, as heroes.*)

7. Direct students to read chapters 32–38 for Lesson 10.

## Wrestlin' with Right 'n' Wrong

### Part A.

**Directions:** For each category in the left-hand column, recall an example from Huck's life, and write it in the right-hand column. In the box next to each number in the right-hand column, put a plus sign (+) if you think it was a good learning experience for Huck. If it was a bad experience or if it did not exist, mark a minus sign (-). Briefly explain your choices.

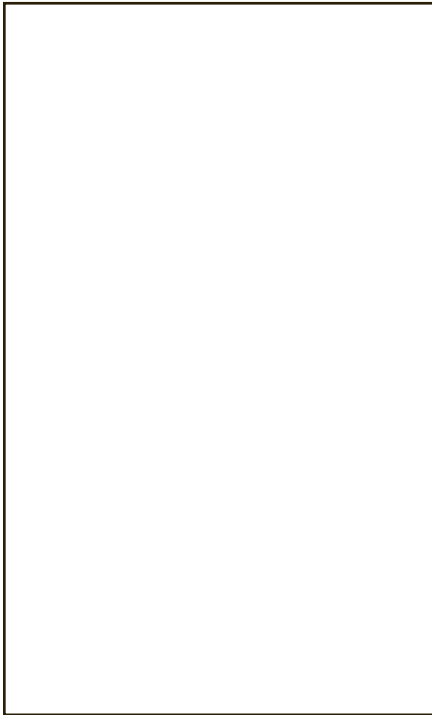
Children Learn Right from Wrong Through	Examples from Huck's Life
1. their parents as models to imitate	<input type="checkbox"/> 1.
2. promises or rewards for good actions	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.
3. threats or punishment for bad actions	<input type="checkbox"/> 3.
4. acceptance by others	<input type="checkbox"/> 4.
5. rejection by others	<input type="checkbox"/> 5.
6. experiences such as guilt and success	<input type="checkbox"/> 6.
7. teachers in school	<input type="checkbox"/> 7.
8. religious instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> 8.
9. society's laws	<input type="checkbox"/> 9.
10. social custom	<input type="checkbox"/> 10.
11. personal experiences	<input type="checkbox"/> 11.

Write a few sentences to describe Huck's moral education.

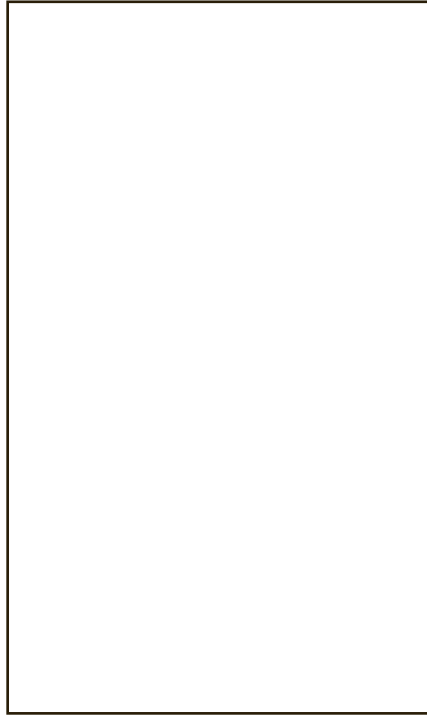
**Part B.**

**Directions:** Based on the passages in chapter 31, record all of the factors that lead Huck to his decisions.


**Feelings**



**Fears**




**Decision**

 to write the  
note to  
Miss Watson



**Decision**

 to tear up  
the note



# Lesson 10

## An Exercise in Close Reading

### Objectives

- To review events in chapters 32–38
- To appreciate the craftsmanship of the author
- To realize that books are written and can be read at different levels of meaning

### Notes to the Teacher

This lesson begins with a review of chapters 32–38. It then focuses on close analytical reading.

As students become more sophisticated readers, they can appreciate literature at more than one level of meaning. The activities in this lesson are designed to help students catch relationships, associations, and innuendoes in the text. Students record their observations and questions on pages of text as a type of reader's journal. These exercises in creative reading and subjective responding increase their awareness of the craftsmanship of Mark Twain. Once students have completed the exercises, what they have learned can carry over into future reading.

### Procedure

1. Have small groups review the reading guide questions for chapters 32–38.

#### Suggested Responses:

##### Chapter 32

1. *Huck finds himself at Tom Sawyer's Aunt Sally's home; he becomes Tom Sawyer.*
2. *The name is easy to remember.*

##### Chapter 33

1. *Rescuing Jim is against the law.*
2. *Tom will do almost anything for fun and adventure.*
3. *First Tom is William Thompson, then Sid Sawyer.*
4. *Huck feels sorry for the king and the duke and sad about how cruel people can be.*
5. *Huck decides that a conscience makes people feel guilty no matter what.*

##### Chapter 34

1. *Tom observed food being taken to the building where Jim is.*
2. *Huck wants a straightforward rescue; Tom complicates things with fancy details, which could be dangerous.*
3. *Huck does seem to forget a lot of what he has learned.*

##### Chapter 35

1. *The whole chapter is about machinations in the plan to free Jim.*

##### Chapter 36

1. *Tom is very particular about details.*
2. *Jim is patient, and he is in a vulnerable position.*
3. *Nat believes he is haunted.*

##### Chapter 37

1. *The subject is missing items—taken by Tom and Huck.*
2. *Tom keeps everything mixed up as he takes things.*
3. *See the end of the chapter.*

##### Chapter 38

1. *Huck recognizes Tom's talent for supervising while others work.*
2. *This is all part of Tom's rescue game—perhaps Jim would like to spend his time training the creatures.*
2. Define the term *close reading* (reading with attention focused on details and on reader responses.) Distribute **Handout 17**. Review all of the text and scratch notes in part A.
3. Have students read part B of the hand-out carefully and make their own scratch notes. Tell them to be as conscious as possible of the thoughts and associations that come to mind and to write down all ideas, feelings, reactions, and questions. When they have completed their scratch notes, have small groups compare them.
4. Tell students that readers sometimes use codes when doing close reading. The codes

speed up the close reading process. Distribute **Handout 18**, and have students examine part A, which presents a code sheet for recording reactions. Point out to students the logical correspondence of the symbols with what they express.

5. Have students complete part B of **Handout 18**. Then discuss with the class what students marked in common. Clarify any material that students found difficult.
6. Distribute **Handout 19**, and have students complete the exercise.

### **Suggested Responses:**

#### Passage A on Handout 17

1. *Tom is a total romantic. He wants to do things the way they're done in books. He insists that they dig Jim out with a case knife, and he makes it a possibility by pretending that a pickax is a case knife.*
2. *Huck is practical and realistic. He thinks they should do things in the easiest way and get them done.*
3. *Mark Twain is saying that sometimes romantics will compromise to get things done, but they might not admit it. Tom may be full of principle, but he's using a pickax, not a case knife, to dig Jim out.*

#### Passage B on Handout 17

1. *Tom is letting his imagination run away with him. He gets an idea that something has to be done in a certain way, and he insists no matter how crazy it gets.*
2. *Huck calls things as he sees them, but he does what Tom says.*
3. *Jim does what the white boys tell him, but he shares Huck's practical viewpoint.*
4. *Twain is continuing to poke fun at the romantic notions Tom has gleaned from books.*

#### The Passage on Handout 18

1. *Tom is very ingenious and creative.*
2. *Huck goes along with things but is nervous about getting caught.*
3. *Aunt Sally gets flustered easily.*
4. *Uncle Silas is slow and deliberate and tries to puzzle things out.*
5. *Twain is saying that life can get interesting. Huck's reactions, such as coughing hard corn crust into one of the children's eyes, are really funny.*
7. Ask several students to write their sentence completions for Tom in Passage A on one panel of the chalkboard. Have others write their completions for Tom in Passage B. Note a developing character interpretation of Tom; even a paragraph description of Tom might emerge. Have them do the same for Huck, noting similarities and differences. Call for some items about Jim and note any contradictions. Finally, have some students write their sentence completions for Twain in passage A and passage B. The statements will express Twain's tone and/or pinpoint thematic ideas with relative accuracy.
8. Direct students to read the remainder of the novel (chapters 39–43) for Lesson 11.

## Scratch Notes

### Part A.

**Directions:** Read the following example of a reader's use of scratch notes as a tool in interpreting a text.

**Passage A**

EXCITEMENT!

# "Now you're talking!" I says; "your head gets leveler and  
 # leveler all the time, Tom Sawyer," I says. "Picks is the thing,  
 #

morality  
double talk

moral or no moral and as for me, I don't care shucks for the  
 morality of it, nohow. When I start in to steal a nigger, or a watermelon,  
 or a Sunday-school book, I ain't no ways/particular how it's done so  
 strange combinations

emotion  
growing

or what I want is my nigger; or what I want is my watermelon;  
 or what I want is my Sunday-school book; and if a pick's the handiest  
 thing, that's the thing I'm a-going to dig that nigger or that watermelon  
 or that Sunday-school book out with; and I don't give a dead rat what  
 even more  
demanding this  
third time in  
mentioning

What's "picks"?

Last chapter:  
 Huck is incapable  
 of understanding  
 Tom's "logic" when  
 he says he can  
 steal a watermelon  
 only to smuggle a  
 saw into a prisoner  
 with it.

It isn't much to give.

Tom's a fool.  
 He makes me  
 mad.

"Well," he says, "there's excuse for picks and letting on in a case  
 like this; if it warn't so, I wouldn't approve of it, nor I wouldn't stand by  
 and see the rules broke—because right is right, and wrong is wrong,  
 and a body ain't got no business doing wrong when he ain't ignorant  
 and knows better. It might answer for you to dig Jim out with a pick,  
without any letting on, because you don't know no better; but it wouldn't  
 do for me, because I do know better. Gimme a case knife."

mocking Huck  
 when he should  
 be mocked

false dramatics

He had his own by him, but I handed him mine. He flung it down,  
 and says:

?

"Gimme a case knife."

What's a case knife?

shrewd Huck's  
 got Tom all  
 psyched out

I didn't know just what to do—but then I thought. I scratched around  
 amongst the old tools, and got a pickax and give it to him, and he took  
 it and went to work, and never said a word.

He was always just that particular. Full of principle. X!

Huck doesn't know  
 how ironic what he  
 says is!

**Part B.**

**Directions:** Record your own scratch notes about the following passage.

**Passage B**

Making them pens was a distressid tough job, and so was the saw; and Jim allowed the inscription was going to be the toughest of all. That's the one which the prisoner has to scribble on the wall. But he had to have it; Tom said he'd *got* to; there warn't no case of a state prisoner not scrabbling his inscription to leave behind, and his coat of arms.

"Look at Lady Jane Grey," he says; "look at Gilford Dudley; look at old Northumberland! Why, Huck, s'pose it *is* considerble trouble?—what you going to do?—how you going to get around it? Jim's *got* to do his inscription and coat of arms. They all do."

Jim says:

"Why, Mars Tom, I hain't got no coat o' arms; I hain't got nuffn but dish yere ole shirt, en you knows I got to keep de journal on dat."

"Oh, you don't understand, Jim; a coat of arms is very different."

"Well," I says, "Jim's right, anyway, when he says he ain't got no coat of arms, because he hain't."

"I reckon *I* knowed that," Tom says, "but you bet he'll have one before he goes out of this—because he's going out *right*, and there ain't going to be no flaws in his record."

So whilst me and Jim filed away at the pens on a brickbat apiece, Jim a-making his'n out of the brass and I making mine out of the spoon, Tom set to work to think out the coat of arms. By and by he said he'd struck so many good ones he didn't hardly know which to take, but there was one which he reckoned he'd decide on. He says:

"On the scutcheon we'll have a bend *or* in the dexter base, a saltire *murrey* in the fess, with a dog, couchant, for common charge, and under his foot a chain embattled, for slavery, with a chevron *vert* in a chief engrailed, and. . . ."

## Code Sheet

### Part A.

**Directions:** Try using the following symbols as tools to simplify your scratch notes.

- Circle words that have a special effect, perhaps because they have double meanings or are ironic.
- ✱ Star words that are just right.
- # Put a number sign over words that add humor because they are in dialect or are too pretentious for the speaker or are an incorrect choice.
- X Put an "X" after lines that are reporting ridiculous or absurd statements or actions.
- T Put a "T" for Twain by any lines you think reveal the author's attitudes or indirect comments.
- Underline words or phrases that ring a bell in your mind as referring to something that has already happened.
- ? Put a question mark over any word you do not understand.
- ! Place an exclamation mark after words or ideas that surprise you.
- ↑ Draw arrows connecting any repeated words, phrases, or ideas.

**Part B.**

**Directions:** Incorporate symbols as you record scratch notes on the following passage.

That was all fixed. So then we went away and went to the rubbage pile in the back yard, where they keep the old boots, and rags, and pieces of bottles, and wore-out tin things, and all such truck, and scratched around and found an old tin washpan, and stopped up the holes as well as we could, to bake the pie in, and took it down cellar and stole it full of flour and started for breakfast, and found a couple of shingle nails that Tom said would be handy for a prisoner to scabble his name and sorrows on the dungeon walls with, and dropped one of them in Aunt Sally's apron pocket which was hanging on a chair, and t'other we stuck in the band of Uncle Silas' hat, which was on the bureau, because we heard the children say their pa and ma was going to the runaway nigger's house this morning, and then went to breakfast, and Tom dropped the pewter spoon in Uncle Silas' coat pocket, and Aunt Sally wasn't come yet, so we had to wait a little while.

And when she come she was hot and red and cross, and couldn't hardly wait for the blessing; and then she went to sluicing out coffee with one hand and cracking the handiest child's head with her thimble with the other, and says:

"I've hunted high and I've hunted low, and it does beat all what *has* become of your other shirt."

My heart fell down amongst my lungs and livers and things, and a hard piece of corn crust started down my throat after it and got met on the road with a cough, and was shot across the table, and took one of the children in the eye and curled him up like a fishing worm, and let a cry out of him the size of a war whoop, and Tom he turned kinder blue around the gills, and it all amounted to a considerable state of things for about a quarter of a minute or as much as that, and I would 'a' sold out for half price if there was a bidder. But after that we was all right again—it was the sudden surprise of it that knocked us so kind of cold. Uncle Silas he says:

"It's most uncommon curious, I can't understand it. I know perfectly well I took it *off*, because—"

## Summing It Up

**Directions:** Refer to the passages on **Handout 17** and **Handout 18** as you summarize your insights.

### Passage A on Handout 17

1. Tom is the kind of person who \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

2. Huck is the kind of person who \_\_\_\_\_

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---

3. Mark Twain is saying that \_\_\_\_\_

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### Passage B on Handout 17

1. Tom is the kind of person who \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

2. Huck is the kind of person who \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

3. Jim is the kind of person who \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

4. Twain is saying that \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**The Passage on Handout 18**

1. Tom is the kind of person who \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

2. Huck is the kind of person who \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

3. Aunt Sally is the kind of person who \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

4. Uncle Silas is the kind of person who \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

5. Twain is saying that \_\_\_\_\_

---

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# Lesson 11

## The River and the Shore

### Objectives

- To review events in the closing chapters
- To examine the river and the shore as two of the dominant symbols in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
- To write an essay about why Huck rejects “sivilization” at the end of the book

### Notes to the Teacher

The Mississippi River is big, beautiful and awe-inspiring. It provides the setting for the novel, but it also does much more. In an introduction to the novel, Lionel Trilling wrote, “*Huckleberry Finn* is a great book because it is about a god [the river]—about, that is, a power which seems to have a mind and will of its own, and which to men of moral imagination appears to embody a great moral idea.”<sup>1</sup>

This great god of a river generally provides a place of refuge, peace, and sanity for Huck. As students read the book, they are just as relieved as Huck is when Huck makes his way back to the raft and away from the shore, for it is on the shore that Huck encounters what is wrong with “sivilization”—violence, fraud, greed, and cruelty.

The distinction between life on the river and life on the shore is not simple, however. There is goodness on the shore: the Widow Douglas, Mary Jane Wilks, the Phelps. There is corruption on the raft: the king and the duke. This lesson focuses student attention on the river and the shore as dominant symbols of the book. It provides a good overview as students list Huck’s experiences and write an essay in which they discuss the experiences which made Huck reject being “sivilized.”

### Procedure

1. Have small groups review the rest of the reading guide questions.

#### Suggested Responses:

##### Chapter 39

1. *Tom writes the letters to interfere with plans to advertise Jim as a runaway slave who has been captured.*

2. *Gangsters plan to attack the farm to steal Jim.*

##### Chapter 40

1. *A lot of neighboring farmers are armed to meet the gangsters.*
2. *Aunt Sally thinks Huck has brain fever.*
3. *Tom Sawyer gets shot in the leg.*

##### Chapter 41

1. *There is not enough room in the canoe.*
2. *Huck says he has been out looking for Jim.*
3. *She is sure Jim is crazy.*
4. *Aunt Sally asks Huck to stay home.*

##### Chapter 42

1. *They do not want to have to compensate his owner.*
2. *The doctor knows that Jim risked himself to take care of Tom.*
3. *Tom tells Aunt Sally the whole story.*
4. *Tom did all of this for the adventure.*
5. *Aunt Polly arrives.*

##### Chapter 43

1. *Tom was going to pay Jim and take him back home as a hero.*
  2. *Huck finds out that the dead man in the floating house in chapter 9 was his father.*
  3. *Huck plans to head west. He does not want to be “sivilized.”*
2. Distribute **Handout 20**, and have students complete part A. Check to be sure that they have selected the important episodes.

#### Suggested Responses:

##### The River

- *Good times with Jim on Jackson’s Island*
- *Peaceful life on the raft*
- *Being separated from Jim in the fog and apologizing to him*

<sup>1</sup>Lionel Trilling, “*Huckleberry Finn* (1948),” in *The Moral Obligation to Be Intelligent: Selected Essays*, ed. Leon Wieseltier (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 139.

- *Saving Jim from the slave hunters*
- *The invasion by the duke and the king from the shore*

#### The Shore

- *Problems with Pap Finn*
  - *The feuding of the Grangerfords and Shepherdsons*
  - *The killing of Boggs and the cynicism of Colonel Sherburn*
  - *The Royal Nonesuch*
  - *The whole affair to cheat the Wilks sisters*
  - *Tom's crazy scheme to free the already free Jim*
  - *The tarring and feathering of the duke and king*
3. Have small groups answer the questions in part B of the handout.

#### **Suggested Responses:**

1. *peaceful, comfortable, lazy*
2. *peace, a haven, escape, freedom*
3. *the duke and the king*
4. *shore/civilization—source of the duke and the king*
5. *violent, corrupt; people hurting one another; hypocritical*
6. *the shore*
7. *"sivilization," violence, stuffy manners*
8. *the same beauty, peace, and freedom he has known on the river*

4. Assign students to write an essay in which they discuss Huck's reasons for rejecting civilization. Direct them to make specific references to incidents and people that influence his decision and to use one or two carefully selected quotations. Suggest that they be specific about what Huck is choosing instead of civilization.

#### **Optional Activities**

1. Select quotations that reflect Huck's attitudes about the river and the shore. Find or create images that illustrate statements such as: "You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft" or "I was powerful glad to get away from the feuds." Design a poster with your quotations and illustrations, and share it with the class.
2. With a partner, create a bulletin board display. Use blue paper on one side for the river and brown paper on the other side for the shore. Find images and headlines that belong in each category. Present your work to the class.

## The River and the Shore

### Part A.

**Directions:** Huck Finn's final words in the book are: "But I reckon I got to light out for the territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she's going to adopt me and sivilize me, and I can't stand it. I been there before." Using two of the dominant symbols in the book, the river and the shore, list the experiences that Huck has had which led him to make his final statement.

The River	The Shore

**Part B.**

**Directions:** Answer the following questions.

1. What is life on the river generally like?
2. What does the river symbolize?
3. Who and what present problems on the raft?
4. What is the real source of those problems?
5. What is life on the shore generally like?
6. What place does Huck associate with being “sivilized”?
7. What does the shore symbolize?
8. When Huck says that he’s going “to light out for the territory,” what is he searching for?

# Lesson 12

## Controversy and Censorship

### Objectives

- To consider positive and negative aspects of censorship
- To identify reasons for controversy about *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
- To take a stand on the value of the novel in today's classrooms

### Notes to the Teacher

Students are often quick to declare that they think censorship is wrong, but the issue is not that simple. Most often they are simply reacting negatively to limits on their own purchasing, listening, or viewing rights. This lesson first engages the class in a discussion of the nature and purposes of censorship, which is usually an effort to protect the public from what seem to be harmful influences, and that effort is not totally blameworthy.

Students then look at controversy about Mark Twain's novel, which they have just spent a substantial amount of time reading and discussing. People who take issue with the novel usually do so over a cluster of subjects related to language and racial attitudes. Huck's language is not grammatically correct, and it certainly reflects a regional dialect. This topic also dominates some discussions of novels like *The Catcher in the Rye* and *The Color Purple*. At the heart of the matter here is characterization. To limit authors to literate and grammatically correct protagonists is to claim that only a certain type of person is a proper subject for a work of literature—a very elitist stance.

The setting of the novel is pre-Civil War, and Jim is a runaway slave whose way of talking reflects the limitations society placed on him. Huck often makes comments that reflect his acceptance of slavery as the social norm. Mark Twain, however, obviously sees the reality of the situation. Jim is the most noble character in the novel; to condemn the novel as racist is to fail to see beyond the limits of Huck's vision. On the other hand, Huck's repeated use of the pejorative n-word is offensive, sometimes profoundly offensive, particularly to African-American students and their parents.

Students conclude the lesson by taking a stand on the novel and supporting it through either essays or debates. Save some of the letters in case your use of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is ever challenged.

### Procedure

1. Ask students to define the word *controversy*. Lead them to see that controversy involves strong disagreement about the value or meaning of something. Ask them to brainstorm a list of controversial topics (*prayer in schools, involvement in war, home education, illegal drugs*).
2. Ask students to define the word *censorship*. Lead them to see that censorship involves legal restrictions to public access to media or to printed material. In the past censorship has sometimes been across the board, pertaining to all age groups and social divisions. Sometimes it has been very specific. Today's rating system for movies fits in with this form of censorship. Ask students to surface areas in which they have encountered censorship. (*Examples might include filters that limit their access to Web sites, movies they are not permitted to see, and CDs they are not allowed to buy.*)
3. Ask the class to brainstorm reasons why specific works might be censored (*sexually explicit material, violence, politically unpopular opinions, foul language*).
4. Distribute **Handout 21**, and have students complete it individually. When they have finished, draw a large continuum on the board or overhead projector. To the far left, write: "No—People should be able to see, read, and hear anything they want." To the far right, write: "Yes—The public needs to be protected from harmful influences." Invite students to place their initials at the places on the continuum that reflect what they think. Then conduct a general discussion based on responses to the handout, including whether students changed their minds between completing the first point on the handout and registering their views publicly. Expect a variety of responses

and a lively discussion. Aim to stimulate alternative views. For example:

- Tom's mother may have been motivated by the idea that the reading material presents women in a degrading way and could foster attitudes dangerous to healthy relationships.
  - Was Lindsey's father's reaction in itself violent?
  - Would the situation be different if Lindsey were eight years old? if she were eighteen?
  - What if the city had a large Hispanic population?
  - What if there were no Jews in the city?
5. Explain that in both the past and the present *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been a subject of controversy and censorship. Distribute **Handout 22**, and have small groups complete the activity.

#### **Suggested Responses:**

##### Part A.

1. *Several of these novels are very popular elements of many high schools' courses of study. Reasons for controversy vary. For Of Mice and Men the issues are often language and the ending. The Catcher in the Rye has been faulted both for language and for glamorizing an unhealthy set of choices. There is sensitive material in I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, but Angelou handles it superbly. Some Native Americans have resisted Lord of the Flies. A Separate Peace has been censored for language, The Color Purple for its language and depiction of sexuality. The Grapes of Wrath is sometimes criticized for language and for the final scene, The Pigman for inappropriate role models of adolescent life.*
2. *Allow free discussion and even some classroom jokes about this one.*
3. *From today's perspective the library's judgment seems stuffy and priggish. Even in 1885, it was widely ridiculed.*

4. *Most modern moves to censor the novel revolve around these racial issues. African-American students in your class can help others to see that the parents' view was not without merit. Certainly, in teaching the novel, it is important to deal with the n-word and other racial slurs in ways that support racial equality.*
5. *A genuine understanding of the novel involves realizing that Huck's language choices are essential to illuminate the character of the young narrator who is, at least at first, largely a product of the bigoted environment from which he came. It would be hard to dispute the fact that Jim is not a stereotypical slave, but rather the finest and least selfish character in the novel.*

##### Part B.

Reasons to ban *Huck Finn*—possible encouragement toward racial/ethnic prejudice; model of much incorrect English usage; might make running away from home an attractive option; negative attitude toward organized religion and good manners

Reasons to keep *Huck Finn*—good story; portrait of memorable characters; lovely symbol of the raft; strong positive themes; portrayal of a slice of pre-Civil War America

6. Ask students to write letters addressed to the school board, the PTA, or some other official group regarding why *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* should or should not be taught to today's students.

## Censorship

**Directions:** Censorship involves an official ban or limitation on access to specific written or recorded material. Use the following steps to process your thoughts.

1. Place your initials at the point on the following continuum that reflects your thoughts about this subject.

People of all ages should be able to read, listen to, and see anything they want.	Censorship is necessary to protect the public from dangerous media and print materials.

2. Explain the reasons behind your views on censorship.
3. Sixteen-year-old Tom purchased a magazine with sexually explicit pictures and hid it in the closet in his bedroom. His mother found it there when she was cleaning. When he arrived home from school that afternoon, the two had a furious argument. Tom insisted he was old enough to make his own decisions about what reading material was suitable for him. How might his mother have seen it differently? Who was right? Explain.
4. Thirteen-year-old Lindsey had an extensive collection of popular music and was seldom seen when she was not listening to one group or another. One day her father listened to a selection and was appalled at the amount of violent and vulgar language he heard. He listened to a second selection and heard the same thing. He tossed the entire collection into the trash, which was collected and hauled away a few minutes later. He explained his actions to Lindsey when she got home from basketball practice. She became angry and ran out of the room crying, saying he had no right to do that. Who was right? Explain?
5. A new movie came out, especially targeting teenage audiences. Throughout the film, the characters use terms that are highly offensive to various ethnic groups—Italian Americans, Chinese Americans, Hispanics, and Jews, among others. Officials ordered theater owners not to show this movie and forbade local video rental outlets from having it in their inventories. Do you think the local officials were correct in their decision? Why, or why not?
6. Identify two reasons why censorship can be good and two reasons why it can be bad.



## **Censorship and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

### **Part A.**

**Directions:** Censorship is not a new issue in America's schools and libraries. Use the following questions to think about academic censorship, and apply your thoughts to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

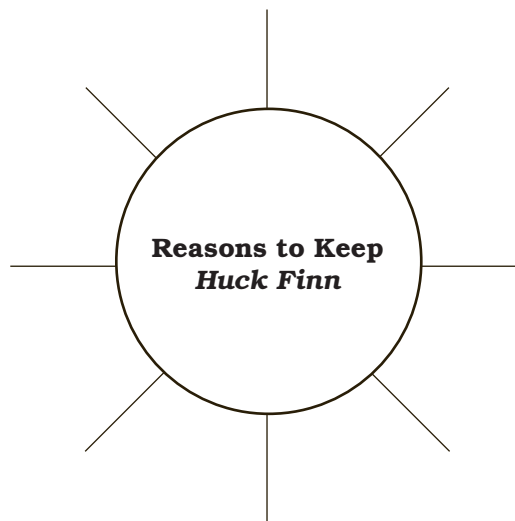
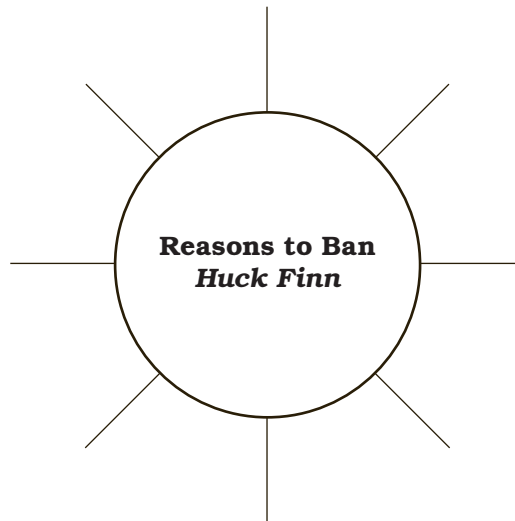
1. A list of the fifty most frequently banned books, according to *The New York Times*, includes the following titles: *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, *The Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou, *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles, *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker, *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck, and *The Pigman* by Paul Zindel. Are you acquainted with any of these novels? Why would they be censored? Do you think any of them should be banned in your school? Explain.
2. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is fourth on that list of fifty banned books. Does that surprise you? Why, or why not?
3. In 1885, not long after the novel was first published, the public library in Concord, Massachusetts, refused to keep *Huckleberry Finn* in its collection, claiming that the novel lacks humor, has poor grammar, and presents experiences that are not very elevating. The conclusion of the library committee was that it should not be tolerated in a public library! Assess the validity of the committee members' decision.
4. Modern censors usually react to different issues. For example, in 1995 a group of African-American parents in San Jose, California, united to demand that the novel be removed from the required reading list or expurgated. They objected strongly to the prolific use of the n-word and to other racial slurs in the novel, holding that these elements are profoundly damaging to young black readers. Does their objection have merit? Why, or why not?
5. Teacher Jim Neff tells his students, "Basically the people who want to ban *Huck Finn* have either not read the book or don't understand it."<sup>1</sup> Do you agree with him? Explain.

<sup>1</sup>Jim Neff, "Mark Twain and Huckleberry Finn," *NeffZone*, 17 October 1999, <<http://www.neffzone.com/huckfinn>> (6 August 2007).



**Part B.**

**Directions:** Use the following graphic organizers to brainstorm reasons to censor *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and reasons to keep it in the school curriculum.



## Reading Guide

“All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*.”  
—Ernest Hemingway, *The Green Hills of Africa*

**Directions:** Answer the following questions as you read the novel.

### Chapter 1

1. What do we know about Huck from the way he talks?
2. What is a “stretcher”?
3. Why does Mark Twain begin *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* with a reference to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*?
4. How does Huck feel about being “sivilized”?
5. “The widow she cried over me, and called me a poor lost lamb, and she called me a lot of other names, too, but she never meant no harm by it.” Exactly where does the humor of this sentence lie?
6. Why does Huck prefer “the ‘bad’ place” to “the ‘good’ place”?
7. What does Huck’s reaction to the burning of the spider show us about him?

### Chapter 2

1. What trick does Tom play on Jim?
2. How does Huck feel about it?
3. What difference between Tom and Huck does this suggest?
4. How does Jim react to the trick?
5. If you were going to join Tom Sawyer’s gang, what would you have to agree to do?
6. What do we learn about Tom as the head of the gang?
7. How does Ben Rogers react to the ransoming idea?

### Chapter 3

1. What does Huck think about praying?
2. Why does Huck decide that there must be two Providences?
3. What does Huck think of Pap?
4. Why does Huck resign from the gang?
5. Huck and Tom have very different outlooks on “A-rabs” and on “rubbing lamps.” What does this show about them?

### Chapter 4

1. Why does Huck “sell” his fortune to Judge Thatcher?
2. What does the “hairball” tell Jim about Huck’s future?

### **Chapter 5**

1. Describe Pap.
2. Is Pap believable?
3. How does Pap feel about Huck going to school?
4. How does the new judge find out how Pap really is?

### **Chapter 6**

1. Why is Huck going to school now?
2. Why does Huck at first enjoy living with Pap?
3. How does Pap feel about the “govment” and “educated niggers”?
4. Account for Pap’s unusual behavior.

### **Chapter 7**

1. Why does Huck kill the pig?
2. As Huck prepares to escape, he wishes Tom Sawyer were there. “I knowed he would take an interest in this kind of business, and throw in the fancy touches.” How are Huck’s preparations different from those Tom would make?
3. Describe Huck’s emotions when he first sets out on the river.
4. Where is Huck headed?

### **Chapter 8**

1. Why are people firing a cannon over the water?
2. What is the reason for floating bread down the river?
3. Why is Jim afraid of Huck?
4. Why has Jim run away?
5. Is there any difference between the superstition of Huck and the superstition of Jim?
6. What does the chapter suggest about civilization?
7. At this point, how would you describe Huck’s attitude toward Jim?

### **Chapter 9**

1. Why is there a house floating down the river?
2. What do Huck and Jim find in the house?

### **Chapter 10**

1. How does the snake come to be in Jim’s blanket?
2. What does Jim do for the snakebite?
3. What does Huck’s reaction show about him?

4. Why does Huck dress up like a girl?

### **Chapter 11**

1. What information does Huck get from Mrs. Judith Loftus?
2. What story does Huck tell Mrs. Loftus when she sees through his disguise?
3. What three things does Huck do that show that he is a boy?
4. Why do Huck and Jim leave Jackson's Island?

### **Chapter 12**

1. Describe the raft and the life Huck and Jim lead when alone on it.
2. How do Huck and Jim get food?
3. Why does Huck insist on boarding the wrecked steamboat?
4. Who are Bill, Jake, and Turner?
5. What terrible discovery does Jim make at the end of the chapter?

### **Chapter 13**

1. Huck and Jim escape from the *Walter Scott* in the lifeboat, leaving the murderers trapped on the wreck. How does Huck feel about leaving them?
2. How does Huck try to help the murderers?
3. What happens to the murderers?

### **Chapter 14**

1. Why does Jim decide that he doesn't want any more adventures?
2. Why does Jim "take no stock in . . . Sollermun bein de wises' man dat ever live"?
3. Why does Huck decide that it is useless to argue with him?

### **Chapter 15**

1. What do Huck and Jim plan to do when they reach Cairo?
2. Describe how Huck feels when he is alone in the fog.
3. Huck tells Jim that the separation in the fog was a dream. Why is Jim so hurt by Huck's trick?
4. Why is Huck's response to Jim's rebuke significant?

### **Chapter 16**

1. Why is Huck so uneasy about approaching Cairo?
2. Explain what Huck calls "conscience." How does it conflict with helping Jim escape?
3. How does Huck keep the men in the skiff from checking out the raft?
4. What decision does Huck make about doing right and wrong?

5. Why do Huck and Jim have to change their plans?
6. How do Huck and Jim get separated?

### **Chapter 17**

1. How does Huck solve the problem of forgetting his name?
2. What does Huck think of the Grangerfords? of their home?
3. Huck often makes interesting observations. His comment on Emmeline Grangerford is, "I reckoned that with her disposition she was having a better time in the graveyard." What does this show about Huck?

### **Chapter 18**

1. What is the cause of the feud between the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons?
2. Buck tells Huck, "There ain't a coward amongst them Shepherdsons—not a one. And there ain't no cowards amongst the Grangerfords either." What are the drawbacks to this sort of courage?
3. Why is the topic of the Sunday sermon ironic?
4. What has happened to Jim since the last time Huck has seen him?
5. What does Miss Sophie do? What happens to the various Grangerfords?
6. What does Huck do?

### **Chapter 19**

1. Read aloud Huck's description of river life that begins, "Two or three days and nights went by; I reckon I might say they swum by, they slid along so quiet and smooth and lovely." What causes Huck's new appreciation of life on the raft?
2. The peaceful interlude on the raft is disturbed by the arrival of the duke and the dauphin (the king). Describe these two rascallions.
3. Huck says, "It didn't take me long to make up my mind that these liars warn't no kings nor dukes at all, but just low-down humbugs and frauds." Why does he pretend to believe them?

### **Chapter 20**

1. How do the king and duke treat Huck and Jim?
2. What does the king do at the camp-meeting?
3. How does the duke arrange for them to travel in the daytime?

### **Chapter 21**

1. What are the king and the duke getting ready for?
2. What kind of a town is Bricksville?
3. Why has Boggs come to town? What do the loafers think of his threats?
4. Describe the murder of Boggs.
5. How do the townspeople react to the murder?

### **Chapter 22**

1. Why does the lynching fail? What does Sherburn think of the men in the mob?
2. Why does Huck enjoy the circus so much?
3. How successful is the Shakespearean Revival? How does the duke plan to get an audience for the low-comedy presentation?

### **Chapter 23**

1. Why doesn't the audience "take care of" the king and the duke after the first performance? What happens on the third night?
2. Why is Huck amazed at Jim's mourning his home and family?
3. What does the story of 'Lizabeth show about Jim?

### **Chapter 24**

1. Why is Jim dressed up like a sick Arab?
2. Huck's last statement in this chapter is, "It was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race." What is Huck talking about?

### **Chapter 25**

1. Huck describes the tearful scene at the Wilkses as the most disgusting thing he has ever seen. Does he mean only the king's performance?
2. Why does the king give the money to Mary Jane?

### **Chapter 26**

1. What decision does Huck make?
2. What are the plans of the king and the duke?

### **Chapter 27**

1. Where does Huck hide the gold?
2. Describe the undertaker.
3. Where is the humor in Huck's observation, "There warn't no more popular man in town than what that undertaker was"?

### **Chapter 28**

1. What is special about Mary Jane?
2. Why is she the only person to whom Huck tells the truth?

### **Chapter 29**

1. Why do the men decide to dig up the corpse?
2. Huck concludes the chapter by saying, "So I wilted right down onto the planks then, and give up; and it was all I could do to keep from crying." What is bothering Huck?

### **Chapter 30**

1. Why are the king and the duke fighting?
2. Why do they get back together?

### **Chapter 31**

1. What do the king and duke do to Jim?
2. Why does Huck write Miss Watson?
3. Why does he tear up the letter?
4. Huck has rebelled against civilization before. At Miss Watson's he smoked, played hooky, and left his room nights to sleep in the woods. What is different about this decision?
5. Discuss the implications of Huck's conclusion, "All right, then, I'll go to hell."
6. Huck again encounters the duke. What happens?

### **Chapter 32**

1. What is Huck's new name?
2. Why is that convenient for Huck?

### **Chapter 33**

1. Why is Huck surprised at Tom's willingness to rescue Jim?
2. Why is Tom willing to do it?
3. What new identity does Tom assume?
4. How does Huck feel when he sees the king and duke tarred and feathered? Do they deserve his pity?
5. Why is Huck so annoyed with his conscience?

### **Chapter 34**

1. How did Tom figure out where Jim was?
2. Compare Huck's plan for freeing Jim with Tom's. What does Huck think of Tom's fancy touches? What are the dangers of Tom's approach?
3. Some critics think that Jim's rescue is an inappropriate ending to the novel. They wonder how Huck, with his new maturity, can consent to Tom's foolish schemes. Do you agree with these critics? Why or why not?

### **Chapter 35**

1. What is the whole chapter, "Dark, Deep-Laid Plans," about?

### **Chapter 36**

1. Huck says, "When I start to steal . . . , I ain't no ways particular how it's done so it's done." How would Tom feel about this statement?

2. Why does Jim agree to go along with everything?
3. What is Nat's problem?

### **Chapter 37**

1. What is the topic of conversation at the breakfast table?
2. How does Tom manage to get the things he needs for the escape?
3. Describe the baking of the witch pie.

### **Chapter 38**

1. What is the irony involved in the fetching of the grindstone?
2. Why does Tom try to talk Jim into keeping a pet rattlesnake? rats?

### **Chapter 39**

1. Why does Tom write anonymous letters?
2. What does he say in them?

### **Chapter 40**

1. What does Huck find when he goes into the setting-room?
2. When the butter melts down Huck's face, what does Aunt Sally think it is?
3. What one thing really goes wrong in the escape?

### **Chapter 41**

1. Why doesn't Huck go with the doctor?
2. How does he explain his absence to Uncle Silas?
3. What is Old Mrs. Hotchkiss's theory?
4. Why doesn't Huck go check on Tom that night?

### **Chapter 42**

1. Why don't they hang Jim?
2. What does the doctor think of Jim?
3. What does Tom tell Aunt Sally?
4. Why did Tom work so hard to set Jim free when he was already free?
5. Who arrives on the scene to really straighten things out?

### **Chapter 43**

1. What were Tom's plans concerning Jim after he was free?
2. What does Huck find out about his father?
3. Where is Huck bound for at the end of the novel?



## Quiz: Chapters 1–10

**Directions:** Choose the best answer.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| _____ 1. <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> was written by                  | _____ 6. As part of his plan for running away, Huck kills a              |
| a. Nathaniel Hawthorne.  | a. calf.   |
| b. Mark Twain.   | b. chicken.  |
| c. Walt Whitman.   | c. pig.  |
| d. Arthur Miller.  | d. dog.  |
| _____ 2. At the beginning of the novel, Huck lives with a widow whose last name is | _____ 7. Huck heads for  |
| a. Miller.   | a. Jackson's Island.   |
| b. Phelps.   | b. No Man's Island.  |
| c. Wilks.  | c. St. Petersburg.   |
| d. Douglas.  | d. Arkansas.   |
| _____ 3. The leader of Huck's gang of friends is                                   | _____ 8. What do Huck and Jim find in the house floating down the river? |
| a. Huck himself.   | a. a box of gold   |
| b. Tom Sawyer.   | b. a pile of old books   |
| c. Ben Rogers.   | c. a beautiful young girl  |
| d. Sid Sawyer.   | d. a dead man  |
| _____ 4. What does Huck do with his fortune?                                       | _____ 9. As a joke, what does Huck put in Jim's basket?                  |
| a. He buries it.   | a. a dead snake  |
| b. He sells it.  | b. a live snake  |
| c. He spends it.   | c. a rat   |
| d. He gives it to Pap.   | d. a nest of baby spiders  |
| _____ 5. Huck swims out to get and then hides                                      | _____ 10. To hide his identity, Huck                                     |
| a. a watermelon.   | a. dresses like a girl.  |
| b. a canoe.  | b. pretends he is Tom Sawyer.  |
| c. a sailboat.   | c. disguises himself as a slave.   |
| d. a puppy.  | d. wears a cowboy hat and boots.   |

## Quiz: Chapters 11–18

**Directions:** Choose the best answer.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| _____ 1. "You do a girl tolerable poor, but you might fool men, maybe." The speaker is talking to<br>a. Jim.<br>b. Huck.<br>c. Buck.<br>d. Col. Grangerford.  | _____ 6. Huck and Jim get separated when their raft<br>a. capsizes in a storm.<br>b. is rammed by a steamboat.<br>c. is stolen by bandits.<br>d. is attacked by baby water moccasins. |
| _____ 2. "Oh, my lordy, lordy! Raf? Dey ain' no raf no mo'; she don' broke loose en gone!—en here we is!" The speaker is<br>a. Huck.<br>b. Harney Shepherdson.<br>c. Buck.<br>d. Jim.                           | _____ 7. What does Buck have to explain to Huck?<br>a. a feud<br>b. true love<br>c. the Bill of Rights<br>d. how to load a rifle  |
| _____ 3. "If you think it ain't dismal and lonesome out in a fog that way by yourself in the night, you try it once—you'll see." The speaker is<br>a. Judge Thatcher.<br>b. Miss Watson.<br>c. Huck.<br>d. Jim. | _____ 8. Huck almost forgets that his name is<br>a. Tom Jones.<br>b. George Jackson.<br>c. Edward Smith.<br>d. Buck Grangerford.  |
| _____ 4. Huck and Jim plan to get off the Mississippi when they reach<br>a. Cairo.<br>b. St. Petersburg.<br>c. Cincinnati.<br>d. St. Louis.   | _____ 9. Who runs away with Harney Shepherdson?<br>a. Miss Sophia<br>b. Miss Watson<br>c. Miss Claudia<br>d. Miss Emmeline  |
| _____ 5. Huck pretends that the raft is contaminated with<br>a. measles.<br>b. tuberculosis.<br>c. smallpox.<br>d. malaria.   | _____ 10. At the end of chapter 18, Buck<br>a. joins Jim and Huck on the raft.<br>b. joins the Shepherdsons.<br>c. is dead.<br>d. is in jail.   |

## Quiz: Chapters 19–29

**Directions:** Choose the best answer.

- |          |   |           |   |
|----------|---|-----------|---|
| _____ 1. | “One of these fellows was about seventy or upwards, and had a bald head and very gray whiskers.” This is<br>a. the duke.<br>b. the king.<br>c. Boggs.<br>d. Sherburn. | _____ 6.  | The king and the duke pretend to be<br>a. police officers.<br>b. missionaries.<br>c. brothers of Peter Wilks.<br>d. escaped convicts.   |
| _____ 2. | “The other fellow was about thirty, and dressed about as ornery.” This is<br>a. the duke.<br>b. the king.<br>c. Boggs.<br>d. Sherburn.                                | _____ 7.  | Huck hides the gold<br>a. at the bottom of a well.<br>b. in a cave.<br>c. in a coffin.<br>d. in a butter churn.   |
| _____ 3. | “Oh, she was plumb deaf and dumb . . . —en I’d ben a-treat’n her so!” Jim is talking about<br>a. his wife.<br>b. his daughter.<br>c. his mother.<br>d. his aunt.      | _____ 8.  | Huck is especially fond of<br>a. Susan.<br>b. Joanna.<br>c. Mary Jane.<br>d. Mary Louise.   |
| _____ 4. | The duke and king put on a show with a lot of quotations from<br>a. Shakespeare.<br>b. the U.S. Constitution.<br>c. a book of French grammar.<br>d. the Bible.        | _____ 9.  | What finally happens to the gold?<br>a. It gets buried with a dead body.<br>b. The king and duke run away with it.<br>c. Huck takes it on the raft.<br>d. The rightful owners get it. |
| _____ 5. | “There warn’t no more popular man in town than what [he] was.” Huck is talking about the<br>a. minister.<br>b. sheriff.<br>c. town drunk.<br>d. undertaker.           | _____ 10. | What almost makes Huck cry at the end of chapter 29?<br>a. The duke and king are back.<br>b. Jim is missing.<br>c. He misses Pap.<br>d. He is slicing onions.                         |

## Quiz: Chapters 30–43

**Directions:** Choose the best answer.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| _____ 1. Huck decides  | _____ 6. What does Huck hide under his hat?                |
| a. to return Jim to Miss Watson.   | a. butter  |
| b. to turn Jim in to the authorities.  | b. strawberry jam  |
| c. to help Jim go free.  | c. whisky  |
| d. to keep Jim as his own slave.   | d. apple pie   |
| _____ 2. Jim gets sold to a family named   | _____ 7. During the escape, who gets shot?                 |
| a. Wilks.  | a. Huck  |
| b. Phelps.   | b. Jim   |
| c. Jackson.  | c. Tom   |
| d. Watson.   | d. no one  |
| _____ 3. Huck finds himself playing the role of                                  | _____ 8. Jim finds out that                                |
| a. Tom Sawyer.   | a. he is a free man.                                       |
| b. Sid Sawyer.   | b. his wife and children have been sold to New Orleans.    |
| c. Buck Grangerford.   | c. his family has escaped to the free states in the North. |
| d. George Jackson.   | d. he has inherited a lot of money.                        |
| _____ 4. How does Huck feel when he sees the duke and king tarred and feathered? | _____ 9. Huck finds out that Pap                           |
| a. angry   | a. has reformed his life.                                  |
| b. happy   | b. is now in jail.   |
| c. sad   | c. is sick in a hospital.                                  |
| d. jealous   | d. died.   |
| _____ 5. The character who is most prone to elaborate, detailed plots is         | _____ 10. Huck decides to                                  |
| a. Tom Sawyer.   | a. settle with Aunt Sally's family.                        |
| b. Huck Finn.  | b. return to live with Widow Douglas.                      |
| c. Jim.  | c. go find Mary Jane Wilks.                                |
| d. Aunt Sally.   | d. head out west.  |

## Quiz Answer Keys

### Chapters 1–10

1. b
2. d
3. b
4. b
5. b
6. c
7. a
8. d
9. a
10. a

### Chapters 11–18

1. b
2. d
3. c
4. a
5. c
6. b
7. a
8. b
9. a
10. c

### Chapters 19–29

1. b
2. a
3. b
4. a
5. d
6. c
7. c
8. c
9. d
10. a

### Chapters 30–43

1. c
2. b
3. a
4. c
5. a
6. a
7. c
8. a
9. d
10. d

## Essay Topics

**Directions:** Choose the topic that you feel you can best develop. Write a coherent, well-structured essay.

1. Write a character description of Huckleberry Finn. Point out his weak and strong traits. Include his opinions and his relationships with different people.
2. Humor is an important element of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Discuss Mark Twain's use of humor in the novel, referring to at least three different incidents or comments that you consider particularly funny. Show how they are typical of the humor in the book.
3. Choose a minor character, such as Judith Loftus, Buck Grangerford, Aunt Sally, or Uncle Silas, and write a careful discussion of this person's favorable and unfavorable traits. Explain what this character adds to the novel as a whole.
4. Compare and contrast Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer. Some important ideas to consider that affect both characters are superstition, imagination, civilization, and family.
5. Is Huck Finn a rebel against civilization? In your essay, discuss his choice at the end of the novel.

## Test

### Part A.

**Directions:** Match the quotation with the speaker. One speaker is used twice.

- |           |   |                     |
|-----------|---|---------------------|
| _____ 1.  | "Don't scrunch up like that, Huckleberry—set up straight."  | a. Aunt Sally       |
| _____ 2.  | "It was 'lection day, and I was just about to go and vote myself if I warn't too drunk to get there; but when they told me that there was a state in this country where they'd let that nigger vote, I drawed out. I says I'll never vote ag'in."   | b. Buck Grangerford |
| _____ 3.  | "I reckoned he believed in the A-rabs and the elephants, but as for me I think different. It had all the marks of a Sunday school."   | c. Huck Finn        |
| _____ 4.  | "Well . . . a feud is this way: A man has a quarrel with another man, and kills him; then that other man's brother kills <i>him</i> ; then the other brothers on both sides, goes for one another; then the <i>cousins</i> chip in—and by and by everybody's killed off, and there ain't no more feud. But it's kind of slow, and takes a long time." | d. Jim              |
| _____ 5.  | "The idea of <i>you</i> lynching anybody! It's amusing. The idea of you thinking you had pluck enough to lynch a <i>man</i> !"  | e. Pap              |
| _____ 6.  | "Take this six thousand dollars, and invest for me and my sisters any way you want to, and don't give us no receipt for it."  | f. Sherburn         |
| _____ 7.  | "And the shirt ain't all that's gone, nuther. There's a spoon gone; and <i>that</i> ain't all."   | g. Tom Sawyer       |
| _____ 8.  | "Kill the women? No, nobody ever saw anything in the books like that. You fetch them to the cave, and you're always as polite as pie to them; and by and by they fall in love with you."  | h. Mary Jane Wilks  |
| _____ 9.  | "Yes; en I's rich now, come to look at it. I owns myself, en I's wuth eight hundred dollars."   | i. Miss Watson      |
| _____ 10. | "It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself . . . but I done it, and I warn't ever sorry for it afterward, neither."  |                     |

**Part B.**

**Directions:** Identify the character who is being described. Two characters are used twice.

- |           |  |                         |
|-----------|--|-------------------------|
| _____ 1.  | "He's the best naturedest old fool in Arkansas—never hurt nobody, drunk nor sober."  | a. Boggs                |
| _____ 2.  | "Sick Arab—but harmless when not out of his head."   | b. Buck Grangerford     |
| _____ 3.  | "She <i>was</i> the best girl I ever see, and had the most sand."  | c. Emmeline Grangerford |
| _____ 4.  | "[H]e looked about as old as me—thirteen or fourteen or along there, though he was a little bigger than me. He hadn't on anything but a shirt, and he was very frowzy-headed. He came in gaping and digging one fist in his eyes, and he was dragging a gun along with the other one." | d. Jim                  |
| _____ 5.  | "He was the softest, glidingest, stealthiest man I ever see; and there warn't no more smile to him than there is to a ham."  | e. Miss Sophia          |
| _____ 6.  | "She pulled me in and shut the door; then she looked in the Testament till she found the paper, and as soon as she read it she looked glad; and before a body could think she grabbed me and gave me a squeeze, and said I was the best boy in the world, and not to tell anybody."    | f. Judge Thatcher       |
| _____ 7.  | "He was saying how the first thing he would do when he got to a free state he would go to saving up money and never spend a single cent, and when he got enough he would buy his wife."  | g. the undertaker       |
| _____ 8.  | "Well, . . . he took it [Huck's reward money] and put it out at interest, and it fetched us a dollar a day apiece all the year round."   | h. Mary Jane Wilks      |
| _____ 9.  | "She run off in de night some time—nobody don't know jis' when; run off to get married to dat young Harney Shepherdson."   |                         |
| _____ 10. | "She warn't particular; she could write about anything you choose to give her to write about just so it was sadful."   |                         |



**Part C.**

**Directions:** Identify each statement as *true* or *false*.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Huck always uses the same disguise throughout the book.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Tom Sawyer kills one of the Grangerfords.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Sherburn calls Buck Harkness only half a man, and the rest of them cowards.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The people dig up Peter Wilks' grave to see if the money is there.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Hines lets go of Huck when they are digging up the grave because he feels sorry for him.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The people are pleased with the first performance of the Royal Nonesuch.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. At first the Grangerfords think Huck is a Shepherdson.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Aunt Polly goes along with Huck being Tom and Tom being Sid until they explain everything to Aunt Sally.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. One reason that Tom Sawyer helps free Jim is that he knows Jim is already free.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Huck is more superstitious than Tom Sawyer.

**Part D.**

**Directions:** Complete the sentences by filling in the blanks with the best answers.

- 1. Huck escapes Pap by \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 2. Huck keeps the slave hunters from the raft by \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 3. When they reach Cairo, Huck and Jim plan to \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 4. The climax of the Grangerford/Shepherdson feud is caused by \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 5. The king collects money at the camp-meeting by pretending \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 6. Jim's daughter disobeyed him because \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 7. The king sells Jim for \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 8. Huck writes a letter to \_\_\_\_\_ and then tears it up.
- 9. Aunt Sally thinks Huck has brain fever because \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 10. Jim's rescue is mixed up and complicated because \_\_\_\_\_ .

## Test Answer Key

### Part A.

1. i
2. e
3. c
4. b
5. f
6. h
7. a
8. g
9. d
10. c

### Part B.

1. a
2. d
3. h
4. b
5. g
6. e
7. d
8. f
9. e
10. c

### Part C.

1. false
2. false
3. true
4. false
5. false
6. false
7. true
8. false
9. true
10. true

### Part D.

1. killing a pig and making it look as if he himself has been killed
2. getting them to think someone on board has smallpox
3. leave the Mississippi River and go into the free states
4. the elopement of Harney Shepherdson and Miss Sophia
5. to have reformed and become a missionary
6. she was deaf and did not hear him
7. \$40
8. Miss Watson
9. the butter under his hat is melting down his face
10. Tom Sawyer makes everything into an elaborate game

# Audiovisuals

## **Audio Recordings of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain**

Read by Tim Behrens. Eight audiocassettes, 675 minutes. Spokane, Wash.: Books in Motion, 1990.

Read by Norman Dietz. Ten compact discs, 705 minutes. Prince Frederick, Md.: Recorded Books, 1991.

Read by Dick Hill. Nine compact discs, 600 minutes. Grand Haven, Mich.: Brilliance Audio, 2001.

Read by Michael Prichard. Ten compact discs, 630 minutes. Santa Ana, Calif.: Books on Tape, 2002.

## **Video**

*The Adventures of Huck Finn*. Starring Elijah Wood, Courtney B. Vance, Robbie Coltrane, Jason Robards, Ron Perlman, Dana Ivey, and Anne Heche. Walt Disney Pictures, 1993. 108 minutes, color. VHS videocassette and DVD.

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Starring Tony Randall, Patty McCormack, Neville Brand, and Archie Moore. MGM, 1960. 107 minutes, color. VHS videocassette and DVD.

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Starring Mickey Rooney, Walter Connolly, and William Frawley. MGM, 1939. 88 minutes, black and white. VHS videocassette and DVD.

*Huckleberry Finn*. Starring Ron Howard, Antonio Fargas, Donny Most, and Royal Dano. ABC Circle Films, 1975. 74 minutes, color. VHS videocassette and DVD.

*Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain*. Commentary written and spoken by Clifton Fadiman. Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, 1965. 3 parts: "What Does *Huckleberry Finn* Say?" (27 minutes); "The Art of *Huckleberry Finn*" (26 minutes); "*Huckleberry Finn* and the American Experience" (27 minutes). VHS videocassette.

Clifton Fadiman points out that *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* can be viewed from three angles: as an adventure story, as the picture of a world, and as a drama of moral conflict. Dealing with the novel as a work of literary art, a discussion of the novel's language and style turns on Twain's unique exploitation of the vernacular—a new thing in its time. Fadiman then prompts us to see the story of Huck Finn as a viable experience that spans time; a relevant whole with meanings that apply equally well to contemporary life. Excerpts are performed to illustrate his points.

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## The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

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### Entire Unit

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| RL.11-12.2 | Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.   |
| RL.11-12.3 | Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).   |
| RL.11-12.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.) |
| RL.11-12.5 | Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.   |
| RL.11-12.6 | Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).   |
| RL.11-12.7 | Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)  |
| RI.11-12.3 | Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.   |
| RI.11-12.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).   |
| RI.11-12.5 | Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.  |

- W.11-12.2a Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- W.11-12.2d Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
- W.11-12.2e Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- W.11-12.3b Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- W.11-12.3d Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
- W.11-12.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
- W.11-12.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- W.11-12.8 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
- SL.11-12.1a Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- SL.11-12.1b Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.
- SL.11-12.1c Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
- SL.11-12.1d Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
- L.11-12.1a Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.

- L.11-12.1b Resolve issues of complex or contested usage, consulting references (e.g., *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of English Usage*, *Garner's Modern American Usage*) as needed.
- L.11-12.2b Spell correctly.
- L.11-12.4a Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- L.11-12.4c Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.
- L.11-12.5a Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.

**Source**

*Common Core State Standards* (Washington, D.C.: National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010)







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