

Advanced Placement in
English Literature and Composition

Individual Learning Packet

Teaching Unit

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

by Mark Twain

by Rita Truschel

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The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. identify the conventions of satire.
2. examine theories of humor.
3. analyze the narrative arc including character development, setting, plot, conflict, exposition, narrative persona, and point of view.
4. identify and analyze the literary techniques of pace, in *medias res*, suspense, antagonist, dialect, internal monologue, aside, allusion, hyperbole, irony, parody, pathos, and sarcasm.
5. analyze the effect of word choice and sentence structure to express meaning, tone, and theme.
6. analyze themes of independence, education, lying, religion, social outcasts, and death.
7. offer a close reading of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and support interpretations and assertions using evidence from the text and knowledge of Mark Twain's biography and period history.
8. respond to multiple-choice questions similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition Exam.
9. respond to writing prompts similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition Exam.

Introductory Lecture

I. SATIRE

Satire is a literary form that uses wit, ridicule, contempt, and insult to expose human errors, foolishness, hypocrisy, and evil. The purpose of satire is social criticism. But satirical authors do not explicitly prescribe morals or solutions. Their subjects and style might be humorous, or not funny at all. Techniques such as caricature, comparison, exaggeration, irony, sarcasm, and parody lace these texts.

Famous examples of satire in English include Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) and *A Modest Proposal* (1729), and Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* (1961). Satire and parody are combined in the television cartoons *The Simpsons* and *Family Guy*, and the faux news of *The Onion*, *The Daily Show*, and *The Colbert Report*.

II. THEORIES OF HUMOR

One obvious definition of humor is what causes laughter. But it is also obvious that not all people consider the same things funny, or laugh only from happiness. Comedians and philosophers have identified other elements in humor as well. The Greek philosopher Plato detected pleasure, pain, and malice in the impulse to laugh.

Four principal theories are summarized by Aaron Smuts for the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, hosted by the University of Tennessee at Martin (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/humor/>):

Superiority theory attributes laughter to the laugher's seeing others as ridiculous or inferior. Thomas Hobbes called laughter "sudden glory."

Relief theory suggests that laughter releases energy and tension, including repressed hostile and sexual feelings. Herbert Spencer and Sigmund Freud developed these ideas.

Incongruity theory argues that laughter responds to an expectation transformed into a surprise. Such humor arises from confusion, illogic, irrelevance, and inappropriateness. Immanuel Kant wrote that laughter is excited by the absurd.

Play theory sees humor as an evolutionary adaptation of animal instinct. This instinct shows itself as pleasure, disinterest in potentially serious situations, mock aggression, social bonding, and empathy.

III. ORAL STORYTELLING

Oral storytelling is an ancient and universal human experience. Stories preserve history, share experiences, explain society and values, and teach children. Unlike written narrative, storytelling is shared immediately.

Across cultures, storytellers use common techniques to engage an audience. Storytellers rely on memory, so they repeat familiar characters, phrases and other story elements. They exaggerate. They suggest mental images with words. They find local connections to be relevant.

Storytellers vary voice, facial expressions, and gestures in order to distinguish exposition from dialogue, give personality to characters, and change the mood and pace. They can adjust their stories to an audience's reaction.

Mark Twain was famous for humorous stories, both as a lecturer and author. Twain analyzed the art of storytelling, and used its ingredients in his writing. He detected a unique American style of storytelling, which was separate from inherently comic material.

Twain said that an American storyteller talked seriously, as if unaware that his story was funny (what we call a deadpan delivery). The narrator might play a simple-minded or ignorant character. He might wander off on tangents, adding details and absurdities. He made his points casually, as if he didn't realize what he had said. Most important, the storyteller manipulated pauses to create silent tension. Then he dropped a surprise punch line.

IV. CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

According to the American Antiquarian Society, most early American children's books were reprints of English tales, novels, and instructional texts. Tom Sawyer's reading of the Robin Hood tales is representative of this trend.

After 1820, American writers and publishers began producing their own children's works reflective of this country's values and experiences. They emphasized Christian morals, good behavior, hard work, democratic citizenship, American geography and inhabitants, and adventure.

Horace Mann (1796-1859) was a reformer who campaigned for better public schools available to all children. Through the early 19th century, most students attended classes for a few weeks in winter with poorly trained teachers.

Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888) wrote *Little Women* in 1868. She was a feminist and wrote other popular books for girls.

Horatio Alger (1832-1899) wrote novels in which poor boys worked hard to become wealthy and respected men. The so-called "Horatio Alger story" still reflects a central ideal in American life.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich (1836 to 1907) was a poet, novelist, editor, and a friend of Mark Twain. Aldrich wrote *The Story of a Bad Boy* (1870) recalling his boyhood mischief growing up in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The book was praised for its realism, though the narration seems stilted. Twain didn't admire it, but it did serve as a model for Twain's writing.

Mark Twain considered taking *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* through Tom's adulthood but decided the story suited the children's market. *Tom Sawyer* was published in 1876, and cited for its authentic depictions of the Western frontier and of children's behavior. Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* followed in 1884.

V. MARK TWAIN'S BIOGRAPHY

Mark Twain was already a popular author of humorous tales of the West and American foibles by the time he wrote *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. The novel recalls his childhood in Hannibal, Missouri. Many of Tom's experiences were actual incidents in the young Samuel Clemens's life: roaming the hills, caves, and river, painting the fence, drugging the cat. As a boy, Twain was a liar and prankster, and feared God's punishment during thunderstorms. Like Tom, Twain hated school and church. But he was a good speller and loved stories like *Robin Hood*.

Aunt Polly was based on his mother's kind and forgiving nature. Huckleberry Finn was based on Tom Blankenship, the abandoned son of an alcoholic who nonetheless grew up to be a justice of the peace. Becky Thatcher was Laura Wright, an unrequited love who became a school teacher. There was a drunken Injun Joe who got lost in the cave, though he didn't die.

Mark Twain was the pen name of Samuel Langhorne Clemens (1835-1910). As a young man before the Civil War, Clemens was a Mississippi River steamboat pilot. "Mark twain" was a pilot's measurement of water two fathoms, or twelve feet, deep—safe for a boat to pass through.

Clemens's father moved the family west from Tennessee, hoping to prosper on cheap land and business ventures, but he faced repeated financial setbacks. The Clemenses owned slaves that were sold as the family became poorer. John Clemens failed as a lawyer and storekeeper, but was elected justice of the peace and court clerk. He died when Sam was 11, after getting pneumonia from traveling in a sleet storm.

Clemens's mother let him quit school to become a newspaper apprentice. While still in his teens, he began writing spoofs of news stories that he signed with silly bylines. He took newspaper jobs from St. Louis to New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., before tiring of the long hours and poor pay.

In 1857, at age 21, Clemens apprenticed himself as a riverboat pilot. He was responsible for learning every feature of the Mississippi River between St. Louis and New Orleans to navigate safely. He loved this prestigious job.

Tragically, Clemens's younger brother, Henry, also worked on a steamboat and was fatally burned in an explosion in 1858. Henry's horrible death ended Samuel Clemens's religious faith.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Union blockades on the river stopped commercial steamboat traffic. Clemens went home to Missouri and spent a few weeks with a Confederate militia. He didn't like soldiering. His older brother, Orion, had campaigned for Abraham Lincoln for president and got appointed secretary of the Nevada territory. Clemens went to Nevada with his brother and avoided the war.

Samuel Clemens became a newspaper reporter in Nevada and California. He wrote mock articles about the Wild West, capturing the local dialect and rough humor. In 1863, he began signing articles as Mark Twain. Newspapers and magazines across the country reprinted them for Americans eager to learn what the West was like. Twain's story "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" was his first big hit.

In 1863, Twain met Artemus Ward, a popular humor writer who was on a lecture tour. Ward's success encouraged Twain to pursue a similar career. Twain also met Bret Harte and Ambrose Bierce, fellow journalists and writers of realistic Western fiction.

After a reporting assignment to the Hawaiian islands, Twain retooled his articles into a lecture series he delivered throughout California and Nevada. He eventually traveled to New York and Boston to meet Eastern publishers. In 1867, Twain joined a ship full of American tourists bound for Europe and the Holy Land. His accounts became the satirical travel book *The Innocents Abroad*. He'd made his transition from journalism.

Twain married Olivia Langdon of Elmira, N.Y., in 1870. She was a serious, well-educated woman from a wealthy family. They had four children. Their son, Langdon, died in infancy. They raised their daughters, Susy, Jean, and Clara in a mansion in Hartford, Conn. Their next-door neighbor was Harriett Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Both the Twain and Stowe houses are now museums.

Twain's wife would edit his manuscripts for the rest of their life together, removing profanity and judging any rough content by Victorian standards. Nonetheless, Twain was a prolific and careful writer. His advice to others has endured:

"The difference between the right word and the almost right word is really a large matter—it's the difference between a lightning bug and lightning."

"I notice that you use plain, simple language, short words and brief sentences. That is the way to write English—it is the modern way and the best way. Stick to it; don't let fluff and flowers and verbosity creep in. When you catch an adjective, kill it."

Twain rose to international celebrity, but he lost his wealth through bad business investments. To repay debts, he undertook a round-the-world lecture tour in 1895, accompanied by his wife and daughter Clara.

Daughter Susy died of meningitis at age 24, in 1896, just before the Clemens returned to the United States. Twain's beloved wife died in 1904. Jean died of epilepsy at age 29 in 1909. Those losses depressed and embittered Twain in the last years of his life.

VI. MISSOURI AND THE WEST

In 1803, the United States acquired the Louisiana Purchase from France. This doubled the size of the country, and gained control of the Mississippi River and the port of New Orleans. The Missouri and Mississippi rivers were the way west for explorers, fur traders, and then settlers. The first steamboat came down the Mississippi in 1811.

Congress opened Missouri to white settlers in 1818. The Santa Fe, Oregon, and California Trails and the Pony Express also departed from Missouri. Planters from the South brought slaves into the new territory. This inflamed the national debate over containment and abolition of slavery.

In 1820, Congress enacted the Missouri Compromise as settlement expanded across the continent. Maine became a free state without slavery. Missouri became a slave-holding state. Other territory in the Louisiana Purchase north of Missouri's southern border would ban slavery. Residents in territory to the south could decide the slavery issue for themselves.

There were then 12 free states and 12 slave states. Any new states were to maintain a balance of free and slave-holding territory. But the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 allowed residents of those states to decide whether to allow slavery. Pro-slavery Missourians incited turmoil in neighboring Kansas, causing a guerrilla war along the border.

Although Missouri remained a Union state during the Civil War (1861-1865), the population's loyalties were divided, and lawlessness was rampant. Confederate guerrillas Cole Younger, William Quantrill, and Frank and Jesse James became outlaws after the war.

Indians were also uprooted by Western settlement. Government treaties designating tribal lands were rewritten. Tribes that had relocated from Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois were removed yet again—from Missouri to Oklahoma.

VII. RELIGIOUS REVIVAL

There have been several periods of religious revival in America, spread from Britain and Europe. The First Great Awakening was from 1730 to 1770, when evangelical Protestant preachers emphasized personal belief and biblical truth over intellectual reasoning, perfunctory participation in worship, social hierarchy, and stability. This led to the formation of new religious denominations and a spirit of equality and rebellion against authority. To some believers, slavery violated this spirit.

In the early 19th century, the Second Great Awakening inspired revival and camp meetings as the United States expanded to the West. Besides bringing Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist clergy and congregations to frontier states, it emphasized personal and social reform.

Religious conversion meant admitting sinfulness, fear of damnation, accepting God's salvation, and doing God's will. The abolition, women's suffrage, temperance, and prison reform movements were offshoots of religious revival.

Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. What distinguishes oral storytelling from written narrative?
2. Tom Sawyer's childhood adventures are predominantly a series of episodes. How does the author sustain interest and unify the story?
3. What does children's literature reveal about the social values of the society in which it was written? of societies in which it is read?
4. Mark Twain originally intended the novel to follow Tom Sawyer into adulthood. How might that have altered the story and its appeal to readers?

Practice Free Response Questions

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE ITEM 1

The following passage from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* describes Tom's emotions and actions immediately after his quarrel with Becky Thatcher over her discovery of his previous "engagement" to another girl. In a well-organized essay, analyze how the passage develops the tension Tom feels between the "masculine" world of freedom and the "feminine" world of confinement.

Tom dodged hither and thither through lanes until he was well out of the track of returning scholars,¹ and then fell into a moody jog. He crossed a small "branch" two or three times, because of a prevailing juvenile superstition that to cross water baffled pursuit. Half an hour later he was disappearing behind the Douglas mansion on the summit of Cardiff Hill, and the school-house was hardly distinguishable away off in the valley behind him. He entered a dense wood, picked his pathless way to the centre of it, and sat down on a mossy spot under a spreading oak. There was not even a zephyr² stirring; the dead noonday heat had even stilled the songs of the birds; nature lay in a trance that was broken by no sound but the occasional far-off hammering of a woodpecker, and this seemed to render the pervading silence and sense of loneliness the more profound. The boy's soul was steeped in melancholy; his feelings were in happy accord with his surroundings. He sat long with his elbows on his knees and his chin in his hands, meditating. It seemed to him that life was but a trouble, at best, and he more than half envied Jimmy Hodges, so lately released;³ it must be very peaceful, he thought, to lie and slumber and dream forever and ever, with the wind whispering through the trees and caressing the grass and the flowers over the grave, and nothing to bother and grieve about, ever any more. If he only had a clean Sunday-school record he could be willing to go, and be done with it all. Now as to this girl. What had he done? Nothing. He had meant the best in the world, and been treated like a dog—like a very dog. She would be sorry some day—maybe when it was too late. Ah, if he could only die *temporarily*!

But the elastic heart of youth cannot be compressed into one constrained shape long at a time. Tom presently began to drift insensibly back into the concerns of this life again. What if he turned his back, now, and disappeared mysteriously? What if he went away—ever so far away, into unknown countries beyond the seas—and never came back any more! How would she feel then! The idea of being a clown recurred to him now, only to fill him with disgust.⁴ For frivolity and jokes and spotted tights were an offense, when they intruded themselves upon a spirit that was exalted into the vague august realm of the romantic. No, he would be a soldier, and return after long years, all war-worn and illustrious. No—better still, he would join the Indians, and hunt buffaloes and go on the warpath in the mountain ranges and the trackless great plains of the Far West, and

¹ **returning scholars:** Tom is playing hooky, having run off from school during the lunchtime recess, after his quarrel with Becky.

² **zephyr:** a gentle breeze (the west wind in Greek mythology)

³ **released:** dead (in other words, released from life)

⁴ **clown . . . disgust:** In the previous chapter, before their quarrel, Tom tells Becky that he intends to be a circus clown when he grows up.

away in the future come back a great chief, bristling with feathers, hideous with paint, and prance into Sunday-school, some drowsy summer morning, with a blood-curdling war-whoop, and sear the eyeballs of all his companions with unappeasable envy. But no, there was something gaudier even than this. He would be a pirate! That was it! *Now* his future lay plain before him, and glowing with unimaginable splendor. How his name would fill the world, and make people shudder! How gloriously he would go plowing the dancing seas, in his long, low, black-hulled racer, the Spirit of the Storm, with his grisly flag flying at the fore! And at the zenith of his fame, how he would suddenly appear at the old village and stalk into church, brown and weather-beaten, in his black velvet doublet and trunks, his great jack-boots, his crimson sash, his belt bristling with horse-pistols, his crime-rusted cutlass at his side, his slouch hat with waving plumes, his black flag unfurled, with the skull and crossbones on it, and hear with swelling ecstasy the whisperings, “It’s Tom Sawyer the Pirate!—the Black Avenger of the Spanish Main!”¹

Yes, it was settled; his career was determined. He would run away from home and enter upon it. He would start the very next morning. Therefore he must now begin to get ready. He would collect his resources together. He went to a rotten log near at hand and began to dig under one end of it with his Barlow knife.² He soon struck wood that sounded hollow. He put his hand there and uttered this incantation impressively:

“What hasn’t come here, come! What’s here, stay here!”

Then he scraped away the dirt, and exposed a pine shingle. He took it up and disclosed a shapely little treasure-house whose bottom and sides were of shingles. In it lay a marble. Tom’s astonishment was boundless! He scratched his head with a perplexed air, and said:

“Well, that beats anything!”

Then he tossed the marble away pettishly, and stood cogitating. The truth was, that a superstition of his had failed, here, which he and all his comrades had always looked upon as infallible. If you buried a marble with certain necessary incantations, and left it alone a fortnight, and then opened the place with the incantation he had just used, you would find that all the marbles you had ever lost had gathered themselves together there, meantime, no matter how widely they had been separated. But now, this thing had actually and unquestionably failed. Tom’s whole structure of faith was shaken to its foundations. He had many a time heard of this thing succeeding but never of its failing before. It did not occur to him that he had tried it several times before, himself, but could never find the hiding-places afterward. He puzzled over the matter some time, and finally decided that some witch had interfered and broken the charm. He thought he would satisfy himself on that point; so he searched around till he found a small sandy spot with a little funnel-shaped depression in it. He laid himself down and put his mouth close to this depression and called—

¹ **Black Avenger of the Spanish Main:** title character of a popular boys’ book, *The Black Avenger of the Spanish Main, or the Fiend of Blood*. The Spanish Main was a region plagued by pirates: the Spanish colonies along the northern coast of South America, especially around the Caribbean Sea.

² **Barlow knife:** a folding pocket knife

“Doodle-bug, doodle-bug, tell me what I want to know! Doodle-bug, doodle-bug, tell me what I want to know!”

The sand began to work, and presently a small black bug appeared for a second and then darted under again in a fright.

“He dasn’t tell! So it was a witch that done it. I just knowed it.”

He well knew the futility of trying to contend against witches, so he gave up discouraged. But it occurred to him that he might as well have the marble he had just thrown away, and therefore he went and made a patient search for it. But he could not find it. Now he went back to his treasure-house and carefully placed himself just as he had been standing when he tossed the marble away; then he took another marble from his pocket and tossed it in the same way, saying:

“Brother, go find your brother!”

He watched where it stopped, and went there and looked. But it must have fallen short or gone too far; so he tried twice more. The last repetition was successful. The two marbles lay within a foot of each other.

Just here the blast of a toy tin trumpet came faintly down the green aisles of the forest. Tom flung off his jacket and trousers, turned a suspender into a belt, raked away some brush behind the rotten log, disclosing a rude bow and arrow, a lath sword and a tin trumpet, and in a moment had seized these things and bounded away, barelegged, with fluttering shirt. He presently halted under a great elm, blew an answering blast, and then began to tiptoe and look warily out, this way and that. He said cautiously—to an imaginary company:

“Hold, my merry men! Keep hid till I blow.”

Now appeared Joe Harper, as airily clad and elaborately armed as Tom. Tom called:

“Hold! Who comes here into Sherwood Forest without my pass?”

“Guy of Guisborne wants no man’s pass. Who art thou that—that—”

“Dares to hold such language,” said Tom, prompting—for they talked “by the book,” from memory.

“Who art thou that dares to hold such language?”

“I, indeed! I am Robin Hood, as thy caitiff¹ carcass soon shall know.”

“Then art thou indeed that famous outlaw? Right gladly will I dispute with thee the passes of the merry wood. Have at thee!”

¹ caitiff: cowardly, despicable

They took their lath¹ swords, dumped their other traps on the ground, struck a fencing attitude, foot to foot, and began a grave, careful combat, “two up and two down.” Presently Tom said:

“Now, if you’ve got the hang, go it lively!”

So they “went it lively,” panting and perspiring with the work. By and by Tom shouted:

“Fall! fall! Why don’t you fall?”

“I sha’n’t! Why don’t you fall yourself? You’re getting the worst of it.”

“Why, that ain’t anything. I can’t fall; that ain’t the way it is in the book. The book says, ‘Then with one back-handed stroke he slew poor Guy of Guisborne.’ You’re to turn around and let me hit you in the back.”

There was no getting around the authorities, so Joe turned, received the whack and fell.

“Now,” said Joe, getting up, “you got to let me kill *you*. That’s fair.”

“Why, I can’t do that, it ain’t in the book.”

“Well, it’s blamed mean—that’s all.”

“Well, say, Joe, you can be Friar Tuck or Much the miller’s son, and lam me with a quarter-staff; or I’ll be the Sheriff of Nottingham and you be Robin Hood a little while and kill me.”

This was satisfactory, and so these adventures were carried out. Then Tom became Robin Hood again, and was allowed by the treacherous nun to bleed his strength away through his neglected wound. And at last Joe, representing a whole tribe of weeping outlaws, dragged him sadly forth, gave his bow into his feeble hands, and Tom said, “Where this arrow falls, there bury poor Robin Hood under the greenwood tree.” Then he shot the arrow and fell back and would have died, but he lit on a nettle and sprang up too gaily for a corpse.

The boys dressed themselves, hid their accoutrements, and went off grieving that there were no outlaws any more, and wondering what modern civilization could claim to have done to compensate for their loss. They said they would rather be outlaws a year in Sherwood Forest than President of the United States forever.

¹ lath: thin wooden

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE ITEM 2

Read the following passage from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. In a well-organized essay, analyze the techniques Twain uses to characterize Tom and the role he plays in the small-town community of St. Petersburg, Missouri. Consider such literary and rhetorical devices as point of view, tone, irony, satire, hyperbole, understatement, diction, and parallelism.

About half-past ten the cracked bell of the small church began to ring, and presently the people began to gather for the morning sermon. The Sunday-school children distributed themselves about the house and occupied pews with their parents, so as to be under supervision. Aunt Polly came, and Tom and Sid and Mary sat with her—Tom being placed next the aisle, in order that he might be as far away from the open window and the seductive outside summer scenes as possible. The crowd filed up the aisles: the aged and needy postmaster, who had seen better days; the mayor and his wife—for they had a mayor there, among other unnecessaries; the justice of the peace; the widow Douglass, fair, smart, and forty, a generous, good-hearted soul and well-to-do, her hill mansion the only palace in the town, and the most hospitable and much the most lavish in the matter of festivities that St. Petersburg could boast; the bent and venerable Major and Mrs. Ward; lawyer Riverson, the new notable from a distance; next the belle of the village, followed by a troop of lawn-clad¹ and ribbon-decked young heart-breakers; then all the young clerks in town in a body—for they had stood in the vestibule sucking their cane-heads,² a circling wall of oiled and simpering admirers, till the last girl had run their gantlet,³ and last of all came the Model Boy, Willie Mufferson, taking as heedful care of his mother as if she were cut glass. He always brought his mother to church, and was the pride of all the matrons. The boys all hated him, he was so good. And besides, he had been “thrown up to them” so much. His white handkerchief was hanging out of his pocket behind, as usual on Sundays—accidentally. Tom had no handkerchief, and he looked upon boys who had as snobs.

The congregation being fully assembled, now, the bell rang once more, to warn laggards and stragglers, and then a solemn hush fell upon the church which was only broken by the tittering and whispering of the choir in the gallery. The choir always tittered and whispered all through service. There was once a church choir that was not ill-bred, but I have forgotten where it was, now. It was a great many years ago, and I can scarcely remember anything about it, but I think it was in some foreign country.

The minister gave out the hymn, and read it through with a relish, in a peculiar style which was much admired in that part of the country. His voice began on a medium key and climbed steadily up till it reached a certain point, where it bore with strong emphasis upon the topmost word and then plunged down as if from a spring-board:

¹ lawn-clad: wearing clothing made of lightweight linen or cotton fabric

² cane-heads: handles of walking canes, often decorative

³ gantlet: variant of *gauntlet*. “To run the gauntlet” is a form of punishment in which someone is forced to run between two rows of people who hit the offender with sticks or other weapons.

*Shall I be car-ri-ed toe the skies, on flow'ry beds of ease,
Whilst others fight to win the prize, and sail thro' blood-y seas?*

He was regarded as a wonderful reader. At church “sociables” he was always called upon to read poetry; and when he was through, the ladies would lift up their hands and let them fall helplessly in their laps, and “wall” their eyes, and shake their heads, as much as to say, “Words cannot express it; it is too beautiful, *too* beautiful for this mortal earth.”

After the hymn had been sung, the Rev. Mr. Sprague turned himself into a bulletin-board, and read off “notices” of meetings and societies and things till it seemed that the list would stretch out to the crack of doom—a queer custom which is still kept up in America, even in cities, away here in this age of abundant newspapers. Often, the less there is to justify a traditional custom, the harder it is to get rid of it.

And now the minister prayed. A good, generous prayer it was, and went into details: it pleaded for the church, and the little children of the church; for the other churches of the village; for the village itself; for the county; for the State; for the State officers; for the United States; for the churches of the United States; for Congress; for the President; for the officers of the Government; for poor sailors, tossed by stormy seas; for the oppressed millions groaning under the heel of European monarchies and Oriental despotisms; for such as have the light and the good tidings, and yet have not eyes to see nor ears to hear withal; for the heathen in the far islands of the sea; and closed with a supplication that the words he was about to speak might find grace and favor, and be as seed sown in fertile ground, yielding in time a grateful harvest of good. Amen.

There was a rustling of dresses, and the standing congregation sat down. The boy whose history this book relates did not enjoy the prayer, he only endured it—if he even did that much. He was restive all through it; he kept tally of the details of the prayer, unconsciously—for he was not listening, but he knew the ground of old, and the clergyman’s regular route over it—and when a little trifle of new matter was interlarded, his ear detected it and his whole nature resented it; he considered additions unfair, and scoundrelly. In the midst of the prayer a fly had lit on the back of the pew in front of him and tortured his spirit by calmly rubbing its hands together, embracing its head with its arms, and polishing it so vigorously that it seemed to almost part company with the body, and the slender thread of a neck was exposed to view; scraping its wings with its hind legs and smoothing them to its body as if they had been coat-tails; going through its whole toilet as tranquilly as if it knew it was perfectly safe. As indeed it was; for as sorely as Tom’s hands itched to grab for it they did not dare—he believed his soul would be instantly destroyed if he did such a thing while the prayer was going on. But with the closing sentence his hand began to curve and steal forward; and the instant the “Amen” was out the fly was a prisoner of war. His aunt detected the act and made him let it go.

The minister gave out his text and droned along monotonously through an argument that was so prosy that many a head by and by began to nod—and yet it was an argument that dealt in limitless fire and brimstone and thinned the predestined elect down to a company so small as to be hardly worth the saving. Tom counted the pages of the sermon; after church he always knew how many pages there had been, but he seldom

knew anything else about the discourse. However, this time he was really interested for a little while. The minister made a grand and moving picture of the assembling together of the world's hosts at the millennium when the lion and the lamb should lie down together and a little child should lead them. But the pathos, the lesson, the moral of the great spectacle were lost upon the boy; he only thought of the conspicuousness of the principal character before the on-looking nations; his face lit with the thought, and he said to himself that he wished he could be that child, if it was a tame lion.

Now he lapsed into suffering again, as the dry argument was resumed. Presently he bethought him of a treasure he had and got it out. It was a large black beetle with formidable jaws—a “pinchbug,” he called it. It was in a percussion-cap¹ box. The first thing the beetle did was to take him by the finger. A natural fillip² followed, the beetle went floundering into the aisle and lit on its back, and the hurt finger went into the boy's mouth. The beetle lay there working its helpless legs, unable to turn over. Tom eyed it, and longed for it; but it was safe out of his reach. Other people uninterested in the sermon found relief in the beetle, and they eyed it too. Presently a vagrant poodle dog came idling along, sad at heart, lazy with the summer softness and the quiet, weary of captivity, sighing for change. He spied the beetle; the drooping tail lifted and wagged. He surveyed the prize; walked around it; smelt at it from a safe distance; walked around it again; grew bolder, and took a closer smell; then lifted his lip and made a gingerly snatch at it, just missing it; made another, and another; began to enjoy the diversion; subsided to his stomach with the beetle between his paws, and continued his experiments; grew weary at last, and then indifferent and absent-minded. His head nodded, and little by little his chin descended and touched the enemy, who seized it. There was a sharp yelp, a flirt of the poodle's head, and the beetle fell a couple of yards away, and lit on its back once more. The neighboring spectators shook with a gentle inward joy, several faces went behind fans and handkerchiefs, and Tom was entirely happy. The dog looked foolish, and probably felt so; but there was resentment in his heart, too, and a craving for revenge. So he went to the beetle and began a wary attack on it again; jumping at it from every point of a circle, lighting with his fore-paws within an inch of the creature, making even closer snatches at it with his teeth, and jerking his head till his ears flapped again. But he grew tired once more, after a while; tried to amuse himself with a fly but found no relief; followed an ant around, with his nose close to the floor, and quickly wearied of that; yawned, sighed, forgot the beetle entirely, and sat down on it. Then there was a wild yelp of agony and the poodle went sailing up the aisle; the yelps continued, and so did the dog; he crossed the house in front of the altar; he flew down the other aisle; he crossed before the doors; he clamored up the home-stretch; his anguish grew with his progress, till presently he was but a woolly comet moving in its orbit with the gleam and the speed of light. At last the frantic sufferer sheered from its course, and sprang into its master's lap; he flung it out of the window, and the voice of distress quickly thinned away and died in the distance.

¹ **percussion-cap:** a small metal cup filled with powder that explodes when struck. Percussion caps are used in guns to ignite the main powder charge and in toy pistols (cap guns) to imitate the sound of a real pistol.

² **fillip:** excitement

By this time the whole church was red-faced and suffocating with suppressed laughter, and the sermon had come to a dead standstill. The discourse was resumed presently, but it went lame and halting, all possibility of impressiveness being at an end; for even the gravest sentiments were constantly being received with a smothered burst of unholy mirth, under cover of some remote pew-back, as if the poor parson had said a rarely facetious thing. It was a genuine relief to the whole congregation when the ordeal was over and the benediction pronounced.

Tom Sawyer went home quite cheerful, thinking to himself that there was some satisfaction about divine service when there was a bit of variety in it. He had but one marring thought; he was willing that the dog should play with his pinchbug, but he did not think it was upright in him to carry it off.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE ITEM 3

Humor is an elusive quality that nonetheless has been mastered by comedians. Read the following passage carefully. Then write a well-supported essay that identifies the elements that make it humorous, and analyze their function and effect in conjunction with narrative structure and literary techniques such as pace, tone, diction, irony, and foreshadowing.

But there was no hilarity in the little town that same tranquil Saturday afternoon. The Harpers, and Aunt Polly's family, were being put into mourning, with great grief and many tears. An unusual quiet possessed the village, although it was ordinarily quiet enough, in all conscience. The villagers conducted their concerns with an absent air, and talked little; but they sighed often. The Saturday holiday seemed a burden to the children. They had no heart in their sports, and gradually gave them up.

In the afternoon Becky Thatcher found herself moping about the deserted schoolhouse yard, and feeling very melancholy. But she found nothing there to comfort her. She soliloquized:

"Oh, if I only had a brass andiron-knob again! But I haven't got anything now to remember him by." And she choked back a little sob.

Presently she stopped, and said to herself:

"It was right here. Oh, if it was to do over again, I wouldn't say that—I wouldn't say it for the whole world. But he's gone now; I'll never, never, never see him any more."

This thought broke her down, and she wandered away, with tears rolling down her cheeks. Then quite a group of boys and girls—playmates of Tom's and Joe's—came by, and stood looking over the paling fence and talking in reverent tones of how Tom did so-and-so the last time they saw him, and how Joe said this and that small trifle (pregnant with awful prophecy, as they could easily see now!)—and each speaker pointed out the exact spot where the lost lads stood at the time, and then added something like "and I was a-standing just so—just as I am now, and as if you was him—I was as close as that—and he smiled, just this way—and then something seemed to go all over me, like—awful, you know—and I never thought what it meant, of course, but I can see now!"

Then there was a dispute about who saw the dead boys last in life, and many claimed that dismal distinction, and offered evidences, more or less tampered with by the witness; and when it was ultimately decided who did see the departed last, and exchanged the last words with them, the lucky parties took upon themselves a sort of sacred importance, and were gaped at and envied by all the rest. One poor chap, who had no other grandeur to offer, said with tolerably manifest pride in the remembrance:

"Well, Tom Sawyer he licked me once."

But that bid for glory was a failure. Most of the boys could say that, and so that cheapened the distinction too much. The group loitered away, still recalling memories of the lost heroes, in awed voices.

When the Sunday-school hour was finished, the next morning, the bell began to toll, instead of ringing in the usual way. It was a very still Sabbath, and the mournful sound seemed in keeping with the musing hush that lay upon nature. The villagers began to gather, loitering a moment in the vestibule to converse in whispers about the sad event. But there was no whispering in the house; only the funereal rustling of dresses as the women gathered to their seats disturbed the silence there. None could remember when the little church had been so full before. There was finally a waiting pause, an expectant dumbness, and then Aunt Polly entered, followed by Sid and Mary, and they by the Harper family, all in deep black, and the whole congregation, the old minister as well, rose reverently and stood until the mourners were seated in the front pew. There was another communing silence, broken at intervals by muffled sobs, and then the minister spread his hands abroad and prayed. A moving hymn was sung, and the text followed: "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

As the service proceeded, the clergyman drew such pictures of the graces, the winning ways, and the rare promise of the lost lads that every soul there, thinking he recognized these pictures, felt a pang in remembering that he had persistently blinded himself to them always before, and had as persistently seen only faults and flaws in the poor boys. The minister related many a touching incident in the lives of the departed, too, which illustrated their sweet, generous natures, and the people could easily see, now, how noble and beautiful those episodes were, and remembered with grief that at the time they occurred they had seemed rank rascalities, well deserving of the cowhide. The congregation became more and more moved, as the pathetic tale went on, till at last the whole company broke down and joined the weeping mourners in a chorus of anguished sobs, the preacher himself giving way to his feelings, and crying in the pulpit.

There was a rustle in the gallery, which nobody noticed; a moment later the church door creaked; the minister raised his streaming eyes above his handkerchief, and stood transfixed! First one and then another pair of eyes followed the minister's, and then almost with one impulse the congregation rose and stared while the three dead boys came marching up the aisle, Tom in the lead, Joe next, and Huck, a ruin of drooping rags, sneaking sheepishly in the rear! They had been hid in the unused gallery listening to their own funeral sermon!

Aunt Polly, Mary, and the Harpers threw themselves upon their restored ones, smothered them with kisses and poured out thanksgivings, while poor Huck stood abashed and uncomfortable, not knowing exactly what to do or where to hide from so many unwelcoming eyes. He wavered, and started to slink away, but Tom seized him and said:

"Aunt Polly, it ain't fair. Somebody's got to be glad to see Huck."

“And so they shall. I’m glad to see him, poor motherless thing!”

And the loving attentions Aunt Polly lavished upon him were the one thing capable of making him more uncomfortable than he was before.

Suddenly the minister shouted at the top of his voice:

“Praise God from whom all blessings flow—SING!—and put your hearts in it!”

And they did. Old Hundred swelled up with a triumphant burst, and while it shook the rafters Tom Sawyer the Pirate looked around upon the envying juveniles about him and confessed in his heart that this was the proudest moment of his life.

As the “sold” congregation trooped out they said they would almost be willing to be made ridiculous again to hear Old Hundred sung like that once more.

Tom got more cuffs and kisses that day—according to Aunt Polly’s varying moods—than he had earned before in a year; and he hardly knew which expressed the most gratefulness to God and affection for himself.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE ITEM 4

Parody contradicts the adage that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Read the passage carefully. Then write a well-supported essay to interpret the narrator's opinion of the school program, and explain how the examples cited relate to that perspective.

In the fulness of time the interesting occasion arrived. At eight in the evening the schoolhouse was brilliantly lighted, and adorned with wreaths and festoons of foliage and flowers. The master sat throned in his great chair upon a raised platform, with his blackboard behind him. He was looking tolerably mellow. Three rows of benches on each side and six rows in front of him were occupied by the dignitaries of the town and by the parents of the pupils. To his left, back of the rows of citizens, was a spacious temporary platform upon which were seated the scholars who were to take part in the exercises of the evening; rows of small boys, washed and dressed to an intolerable state of discomfort; rows of gawky big boys; snowbanks of girls and young ladies clad in lawn and muslin and conspicuously conscious of their bare arms, their grandmothers' ancient trinkets, their bits of pink and blue ribbon and the flowers in their hair. All the rest of the house was filled with non-participating scholars.

The exercises began. A very little boy stood up and sheepishly recited, "You'd scarce expect one of my age to speak in public on the stage," etc.—accompanying himself with the painfully exact and spasmodic gestures which a machine might have used—supposing the machine to be a trifle out of order. But he got through safely, though cruelly scared, and got a fine round of applause when he made his manufactured bow and retired.

A little shamefaced girl lisped, "Mary had a little lamb," etc., performed a compassion-inspiring curtsy, got her meed of applause, and sat down flushed and happy.

Tom Sawyer stepped forward with conceited confidence and soared into the unquenchable and indestructible "Give me liberty or give me death" speech, with fine fury and frantic gesticulation, and broke down in the middle of it. A ghastly stage-fright seized him, his legs quaked under him and he was like to choke. True, he had the manifest sympathy of the house but he had the house's silence, too, which was even worse than its sympathy. The master frowned, and this completed the disaster. Tom struggled awhile and then retired, utterly defeated. There was a weak attempt at applause, but it died early.

"The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck" followed; also "The Assyrian Came Down," and other declamatory gems. Then there were reading exercises, and a spelling fight. The meagre Latin class recited with honor. The prime feature of the evening was in order, now—original "compositions" by the young ladies. Each in her turn stepped forward to the edge of the platform, cleared her throat, held up her manuscript (tied with dainty ribbon), and proceeded to read, with labored attention to "expression" and punctuation. The themes were the same that had been illuminated upon similar occasions by their mothers before them, their grandmothers, and doubtless all their ancestors in the female line clear back to the Crusades. "Friendship" was one; "Memories of Other Days"; "Religion in History"; "Dream Land"; "The Advantages of Culture"; "Forms of Political Government Compared and Contrasted"; "Melancholy"; "Filial Love"; "Heart Longings," etc., etc.

A prevalent feature in these compositions was a nursed and petted melancholy; another was a wasteful and opulent gush of “fine language”; another was a tendency to lug in by the ears particularly prized words and phrases until they were worn entirely out; and a peculiarity that conspicuously marked and marred them was the inveterate and intolerable sermon that wagged its crippled tail at the end of each and every one of them. No matter what the subject might be, a brain-racking effort was made to squirm it into some aspect or other that the moral and religious mind could contemplate with edification. The glaring insincerity of these sermons was not sufficient to compass the banishment of the fashion from the schools, and it is not sufficient to-day; it never will be sufficient while the world stands, perhaps. There is no school in all our land where the young ladies do not feel obliged to close their compositions with a sermon; and you will find that the sermon of the most frivolous and the least religious girl in the school is always the longest and the most relentlessly pious. But enough of this. Homely truth is unpalatable.

Let us return to the “Examination.” The first composition that was read was one entitled “Is this, then, Life?” Perhaps the reader can endure an extract from it:

“In the common walks of life, with what delightful emotions does the youthful mind look forward to some anticipated scene of festivity! Imagination is busy sketching rose-tinted pictures of joy. In fancy, the voluptuous votary of fashion sees herself amid the festive throng, ‘the observed of all observers.’ Her graceful form, arrayed in snowy robes, is whirling through the mazes of the joyous dance; her eye is brightest, her step is lightest in the gay assembly.

“In such delicious fancies time quickly glides by, and the welcome hour arrives for her entrance into the Elysian world, of which she has had such bright dreams. How fairy-like does everything appear to her enchanted vision! Each new scene is more charming than the last. But after a while she finds that beneath this goodly exterior, all is vanity, the flattery which once charmed her soul, now grates harshly upon her ear; the ball-room has lost its charms; and with wasted health and embittered heart, she turns away with the conviction that earthly pleasures cannot satisfy the longings of the soul!”

And so forth and so on. There was a buzz of gratification from time to time during the reading, accompanied by whispered ejaculations of “How sweet!” “How eloquent!” “So true!” etc., and after the thing had closed with a peculiarly afflicting sermon the applause was enthusiastic.

Then arose a slim, melancholy girl, whose face had the “interesting” paleness that comes of pills and indigestion, and read a “poem.” Two stanzas of it will do:

A MISSOURI MAIDEN'S FAREWELL TO ALABAMA

“Alabama, good-bye! I love thee well!
But yet for a while do I leave thee now!
Sad, yes, sad thoughts of thee my heart doth swell,
And burning recollections throng my brow!
For I have wandered through thy flowery woods;

Have roamed and read near Tallapoosa's stream;
Have listened to Tallassee's warring floods,
And wooed on Coosa's side Aurora's beam.

“Yet shame I not to bear an o'er-full heart,
Nor blush to turn behind my tearful eyes;
'Tis from no stranger land I now must part,
'Tis to no strangers left I yield these sighs.
Welcome and home were mine within this State,
Whose vales I leave—whose spires fade fast from me
And cold must be mine eyes, and heart, and tête,
When, dear Alabama! they turn cold on thee!”

There were very few there who knew what “tête” meant, but the poem was very satisfactory, nevertheless.

Next appeared a dark-complexioned, black-eyed, black-haired young lady, who paused an impressive moment, assumed a tragic expression, and began to read in a measured, solemn tone:

A VISION

Dark and tempestuous was night. Around the throne on high not a single star quivered; but the deep intonations of the heavy thunder constantly vibrated upon the ear; whilst the terrific lightning revelled in angry mood through the cloudy chambers of heaven, seeming to scorn the power exerted over its terror by the illustrious Franklin! Even the boisterous winds unanimously came forth from their mystic homes, and blustered about as if to enhance by their aid the wildness of the scene.

At such a time, so dark, so dreary, for human sympathy my very spirit sighed; but instead thereof,

“My dearest friend, my counsellor, my comforter and guide—
My joy in grief, my second bliss in joy,” came to my side.

She moved like one of those bright beings pictured in the sunny walks of fancy's Eden by the romantic and young, a queen of beauty unadorned save by her own transcendent loveliness. So soft was her step, it failed to make even a sound, and but for the magical thrill imparted by her genial touch, as other unobtrusive beauties, she would have glided away un-perceived—unsought. A strange sadness rested upon her features, like icy tears upon the robe of December, as she pointed to the contending elements without, and bade me contemplate the two beings presented.

This nightmare occupied some ten pages of manuscript and wound up with a sermon so destructive of all hope to non-Presbyterians that it took the first prize. This composition was considered to be the very finest effort of the evening. The mayor of the village, in delivering the prize to the author of it, made a warm speech in which he said that it was by far the most “eloquent” thing he had ever listened to, and that Daniel Webster himself might well be proud of it.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE ITEM 5

The clever, mischievous, often heroic character of the trickster is a familiar motif in literature, folklore, and mythology throughout the world. Famous tricksters include Coyote in Native American folktales, Anansi the spider in West African folktales, and the god Hermes in Greek mythology. In a well-organized essay, analyze Tom’s role as a trickster in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Explain how this character motif contributes to the overall meaning of the novel—particularly the novel’s resolution. Do not merely summarize Tom’s pranks, misadventures, and deceptions.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE ITEM 6

Death is a profound subject usually treated as tragedy. In a well-organized essay, analyze how death is represented in “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.” Be sure to consider narrative elements, literary techniques, and genre.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE ITEM 7

Satire is a literary approach that ridicules the faults and follies of individuals, institutions, or even humanity in general. In a well-organized essay, analyze the role of satire in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. What aspects of society or human nature does Twain satirize? Is his satire primarily gently mocking or savagely biting in tone? Cite specific examples and details from the novel to support your analysis, and discuss how these satirical elements contribute to the overall meaning of the novel.

Practice Multiple-Choice Questions

PRACTICE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS 1-5

Carefully read the following passage from the beginning of Mark Twain's *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* before selecting the best answers to the multiple-choice questions that follow.

5 Saturday morning was come, and all the summer world was bright and fresh, and brimming with life. There was a song in every heart; and if the heart was young the music issued at the lips. There was cheer in every face and a spring in every step. The locust-trees were in bloom and the fragrance of the blossoms filled the air. Cardiff Hill, beyond the village and above it, was green with vegetation and it lay just far enough away to seem a Delectable Land, dreamy, reposeful, and inviting.

10 Tom appeared on the sidewalk with a bucket of whitewash and a long-handled brush. He surveyed the fence, and all gladness left him and a deep melancholy settled down upon his spirit. Thirty yards of board fence nine feet high. Life to him seemed hollow, and existence but a burden. Sighing, he dipped his brush and passed it along the topmost plank; repeated the operation; did it again; compared the insignificant whitewashed streak with the far-reaching continent of unwhitewashed fence, and sat down on a tree-box¹ discouraged. Jim² came skipping out at the gate with a tin pail, and singing Buffalo Gals. Bringing water from the town pump had always been hateful work in Tom's eyes, 15 before, but now it did not strike him so. He remembered that there was company at the pump. White, mulatto, and negro boys and girls were always there waiting their turns, resting, trading playthings, quarrelling, fighting, skylarking. And he remembered that although the pump was only a hundred and fifty yards off, Jim never got back with a bucket of water under an hour—and even then somebody generally had to go after him. 20 Tom said:

“Say, Jim, I'll fetch the water if you'll whitewash some.”

Jim shook his head and said:

25 “Can't, Mars Tom. Ole missis,³ she tole me I got to go an' git dis water an' not stop foolin' roun' wid anybody. She say she spec' Mars Tom gwine to ax me to whitewash, an' so she tole me go 'long an' 'tend to my own business—she 'lowed *she'd* 'tend to de whitewashin'.”

“Oh, never you mind what she said, Jim. That's the way she always talks. Gimme the bucket—I won't be gone only a a minute. *She* won't ever know.”

¹ **tree-box:** a wooden frame built around the trunk of a tree to protect it

² **Jim:** a young slave owned by Tom's Aunt Polly

³ **Ole missis:** Tom's Aunt Polly.

“Oh, I dasn’t, Mars Tom. Ole missis she’d take an’ tar de head off’n me. ‘Deed she would.”

- 30 “She! She never licks anybody—whacks ‘em over the head with her thimble—and who cares for that, I’d like to know. She talks awful, but talk don’t hurt—anyways it don’t if she don’t cry. Jim, I’ll give you a marvel.¹ I’ll give you a white alley²!”

Jim began to waver.

“White alley, Jim! And it’s a bully taw.³”

- 35 “My! Dat’s a mighty gay marvel, I tell you! But Mars Tom I’s powerful ‘fraid ole missis—”

“And besides, if you will I’ll show you my sore toe.”

- 40 Jim was only human—this attraction was too much for him. He put down his pail, took the white alley, and bent over the toe with absorbing interest while the bandage was being unwound. In another moment he was flying down the street with his pail and a tingling rear, Tom was whitewashing with vigor, and Aunt Polly was retiring from the field with a slipper in her hand and triumph in her eye.

- 45 But Tom’s energy did not last. He began to think of the fun he had planned for this day, and his sorrows multiplied. Soon the free boys would come tripping along on all sorts of delicious expeditions, and they would make a world of fun of him for having to work—the very thought of it burnt him like fire. He got out his worldly wealth and examined it—bits of toys, marbles, and trash; enough to buy an exchange of *work*, maybe, but not half enough to buy so much as half an hour of pure freedom. So he returned his straitened means to his pocket, and gave up the idea of trying to buy the boys. At this
- 50 dark and hopeless moment an inspiration burst upon him! Nothing less than a great, magnificent inspiration.

- 55 He took up his brush and went tranquilly to work. Ben Rogers hove in sight presently—the very boy, of all boys, whose ridicule he had been dreading. Ben’s gait was the hop-skip-and-jump—proof enough that his heart was light and his anticipations high. He was eating an apple, and giving a long, melodious whoop, at intervals, followed by a deep-toned ding-dong-dong, ding-dong-dong, for he was personating a steamboat. As he drew near, he slackened speed, took the middle of the street, leaned far over to starboard and rounded to ponderously and with laborious pomp and circumstance—for he was personating the “Big Missouri,” and considered himself to be drawing nine feet
- 60 of water.⁴ He was boat and captain and engine-bells combined, so he had to imagine himself standing on his own hurricane-deck giving the orders and executing them:

¹ **marvel**: marble

² **white alley**: a type of marble used in a popular game

³ **bully taw**: a marble used to shoot at other marbles

⁴ “**Big Missouri**” . . . **water**: Ben is pretending to be a steamboat (named the *Big Missouri*) whose deck is submerged under nine feet of water.

“Stop her, sir! Ting-a-ling-ling!” The headway ran almost out, and he drew up slowly toward the sidewalk.

65 “Ship up to back! Ting-a-ling-ling!” His arms straightened and stiffened down his sides.

“Set her back on the stabboard! Ting-a-ling-ling! Chow! ch-chow-wow! Chow!” His right hand, meantime, describing stately circles—for it was representing a forty-foot wheel.

70 “Let her go back on the labboard! Ting-a-ling-ling! Chow-ch-chow-chow!” The left hand began to describe circles.

“Stop the stabboard! Ting-a-ling-ling! Stop the labboard! Come ahead on the stabboard! Stop her! Let your outside turn over slow! Ting-a-ling-ling! Chow-ow-ow! Get out that head-line! *Lively* now! Come—out with your spring-line—what’re you about there! Take a turn round that stump with the bight of it! Stand by that stage, now—let her go! Done with the engines, sir! Ting-a-ling-ling! *Sh’t! S’h’t! Sh’t!*” (trying the gauge-cocks).

Tom went on whitewashing—paid no attention to the steamboat. Ben stared a moment and then said: “Hi-yi! *You’re* up a stump, ain’t you!”

80 No answer. Tom surveyed his last touch with the eye of an artist, then he gave his brush another gentle sweep and surveyed the result, as before. Ben ranged up alongside of him. Tom’s mouth watered for the apple, but he stuck to his work. Ben said:

“Hello, old chap, you got to work, hey?”

Tom wheeled suddenly and said:

“Why, it’s you, Ben! I warn’t noticing.”

85 “Say—I’m going in a-swimming, I am. Don’t you wish you could? But of course you’d druther *work*—wouldn’t you? Course you would!”

Tom contemplated the boy a bit, and said:

“What do you call work?”

“Why, ain’t *that* work?”

Tom resumed his whitewashing, and answered carelessly:

90 “Well, maybe it is, and maybe it ain’t. All I know, is, it suits Tom Sawyer.”

“Oh come, now, you don’t mean to let on that you *like* it?”

The brush continued to move.

“Like it? Well, I don’t see why I oughtn’t to like it. Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?”

95 That put the thing in a new light. Ben stopped nibbling his apple. Tom swept his brush daintily back and forth—stepped back to note the effect—added a touch here and there—criticised the effect again—Ben watching every move and getting more and more interested, more and more absorbed. Presently he said:

“Say, Tom, let *me* whitewash a little.”

100 Tom considered, was about to consent; but he altered his mind:

“No—no—I reckon it wouldn’t hardly do, Ben. You see, Aunt Polly’s awful particular about this fence—right here on the street, you know—but if it was the back fence I wouldn’t mind and *she* wouldn’t. Yes, she’s awful particular about this fence; it’s got to be done very careful; I reckon there ain’t one boy in a thousand, maybe two thousand, that can do it the way it’s got to be done.”

105

“No—is that so? Oh come, now—lemme just try. Only just a little—I’d let *you*, if you was me, Tom.”

“Ben, I’d like to, honest injun; but Aunt Polly—well, Jim wanted to do it, but she wouldn’t let him; Sid wanted to do it, and she wouldn’t let Sid. Now don’t you see how I’m fixed? If you was to tackle this fence and anything was to happen to it --”

110

“Oh, shucks, I’ll be just as careful. Now lemme try. Say—I’ll give you the core of my apple.”

“Well, here—No, Ben, now don’t. I’m afeard --”

“I’ll give you *all* of it!”

115 Tom gave up the brush with reluctance in his face, but alacrity in his heart. And while the late steamer “Big Missouri” worked and sweated in the sun, the retired artist sat on a barrel in the shade close by, dangled his legs, munched his apple, and planned the slaughter of more innocents. There was no lack of material; boys happened along every little while; they came to jeer, but remained to whitewash. By the time Ben was fagged out, Tom had traded the next chance to Billy Fisher for a kite, in good repair; and when

120 he played out, Johnny Miller bought in for a dead rat and a string to swing it with—and so on, and so on, hour after hour. And when the middle of the afternoon came, from being a poor poverty-stricken boy in the morning, Tom was literally rolling in wealth. He had besides the things before mentioned, twelve marbles, part of a jews-harp¹, a piece of blue bottle-glass to look through, a spool cannon, a key that wouldn’t unlock anything, a fragment of chalk, a glass stopper of a decanter, a tin soldier, a couple of tadpoles, six fire-crackers, a kitten with only one eye, a brass doorknob, a dog-collar—but no dog—the handle of a knife, four pieces of orange-peel, and a dilapidated old window sash.

125

¹ **jew’s harp**: a small, metal musical instrument that is held between the teeth and plucked to produce a twanging sound

130 He had had a nice, good, idle time all the while—plenty of company—and the fence had three coats of whitewash on it! If he hadn't run out of whitewash he would have bankrupted every boy in the village.

135 Tom said to himself that it was not such a hollow world, after all. He had discovered a great law of human action, without knowing it—namely, that in order to make a man or a boy covet a thing, it is only necessary to make the thing difficult to attain. If he had been a great and wise philosopher, like the writer of this book, he would now have comprehended that Work consists of whatever a body is *obliged* to do, and that Play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do. And this would help him to understand why constructing artificial flowers or performing on a tread-mill is work, while rolling ten-pins or climbing Mont Blanc is only amusement. There are wealthy gentlemen in
140 England who drive four-horse passenger-coaches twenty or thirty miles on a daily line, in the summer, because the privilege costs them considerable money; but if they were offered wages for the service, that would turn it into work and then they would resign. The boy mused awhile over the substantial change which had taken place in his worldly circumstances, and then wended toward headquarters to report.

1. In the first two paragraphs of the passage, the mood transitions from
 - A. playful to serious.
 - B. pastoral to gloomy.
 - C. nostalgic to expectant.
 - D. exuberant to foreboding.
 - E. despairing to resigned.
2. In the second paragraph, the reader can infer that Tom wants to switch jobs with Jim because he realizes that
 - A. fetching water will take less time than whitewashing the fence.
 - B. fetching water will be easier than whitewashing the fence.
 - C. he will be able to socialize and waste time at the pump.
 - D. Aunt Polly will be angry if he doesn't whitewash the fence.
 - E. his friends won't see that he has to work on a beautiful day.
3. In lines 46-47 the narrator's description of Tom's newly acquired "wealth" is ironic because
 - A. the narrator knows that the items are not what most people consider valuable.
 - B. Tom does not really believe that he is now "rolling in wealth."
 - C. the reader knows that the items are more valuable than Tom realizes.
 - D. Tom realizes that the lesson he has learned about human nature is more valuable.
 - E. the narrator knows that Tom does not deserve his new wealth.

-
4. Tom's strategy for getting the other boys to whitewash the fence reveals all of the following EXCEPT that Tom
- A. understands human nature.
 - B. is good at manipulating other people.
 - C. is a talented performer and showman.
 - D. feels remorse about bankrupting the other boys.
 - E. enjoys spending time with the other boys.
5. In lines 1-10, the narrator's tone is
- A. philosophical and bitter.
 - B. satirical and amused.
 - C. analytical and impassioned.
 - D. judgmental and outraged.
 - E. cynical and despairing.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS 6-10

The following passage from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* takes place after Tom has tried to make Becky jealous by flirting with another girl, and Becky has retaliated by flirting with another boy. Carefully read the passage before selecting the best answers to the multiple-choice questions that follow.

There was something about Aunt Polly's manner, when she kissed Tom, that swept away his low spirits and made him light-hearted and happy again. He started to school and had the luck of coming upon Becky Thatcher at the head of Meadow Lane. His mood always determined his manner. Without a moment's hesitation he ran to her and said:

- 5 "I acted mighty mean to-day, Becky, and I'm so sorry. I won't ever, ever do that way again, as long as ever I live—please make up, won't you?"

The girl stopped and looked him scornfully in the face:

"I'll thank you to keep yourself *to* yourself, Mr. Thomas Sawyer. I'll never speak to you again."

- 10 She tossed her head and passed on. Tom was so stunned that he had not even presence of mind enough to say "Who cares, Miss Smarty?" until the right time to say it had gone by. So he said nothing. But he was in a fine rage, nevertheless. He moped into the schoolyard wishing she were a boy, and imagining how he would trounce her if she were. He presently encountered her and delivered a stinging remark as he passed. She

- 15 hurled one in return, and the angry breach was complete. It seemed to Becky, in her hot resentment, that she could hardly wait for school to "take in," she was so impatient to see Tom flogged for the injured spelling-book. If she had had any lingering notion of exposing Alfred Temple, Tom's offensive fling had driven it entirely away.

- 20 Poor girl, she did not know how fast she was nearing trouble herself. The master, Mr. Dobbins, had reached middle age with an unsatisfied ambition. The darling of his desires was, to be a doctor, but poverty had decreed that he should be nothing higher than a village schoolmaster. Every day he took a mysterious book out of his desk and absorbed himself in it at times when no classes were reciting. He kept that book under lock and key. There was not an urchin in school but was perishing to have a glimpse of it, but the

- 25 chance never came. Every boy and girl had a theory about the nature of that book; but no two theories were alike, and there was no way of getting at the facts in the case. Now, as Becky was passing by the desk, which stood near the door, she noticed that the key was in the lock! It was a precious moment. She glanced around; found herself alone, and the next instant she had the book in her hands. The title-page—Professor Somebody's

- 30 *Anatomy*—carried no information to her mind; so she began to turn the leaves. She came at once upon a handsomely engraved and colored frontispiece—a human figure, stark naked. At that moment a shadow fell on the page and Tom Sawyer stepped in at the door and caught a glimpse of the picture. Becky snatched at the book to close it, and had the hard luck to tear the pictured page half down the middle. She thrust the volume
- 35 into the desk, turned the key, and burst out crying with shame and vexation.

“Tom Sawyer, you are just as mean as you can be, to sneak up on a person and look at what they’re looking at.”

“How could I know you was looking at anything?”

40 “You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Tom Sawyer; you know you’re going to tell on me, and oh, what shall I do, what shall I do! I’ll be whipped, and I never was whipped in school.”

Then she stamped her little foot and said:

45 “Be so mean if you want to! I know something that’s going to happen. You just wait and you’ll see! Hateful, hateful, hateful!”—and she flung out of the house with a new explosion of crying.

Tom stood still, rather flustered by this onslaught. Presently he said to himself:

50 “What a curious kind of a fool a girl is! Never been licked in school! Shucks! What’s a licking! That’s just like a girl—they’re so thin-skinned and chicken-hearted. Well, of course I ain’t going to tell old Dobbins on this little fool, because there’s other ways of getting even on her, that ain’t so mean; but what of it? Old Dobbins will ask who it was tore his book. Nobody’ll answer. Then he’ll do just the way he always does—ask first one and then t’other, and when he comes to the right girl he’ll know it, without any telling. Girls’ faces always tell on them. They ain’t got any backbone. She’ll get licked. Well, it’s a kind of a tight place for Becky Thatcher, because there ain’t any way out of it.” Tom conned the thing a moment longer, and then added: “All right, though; she’d like to see me in just such a fix—let her sweat it out!”

60 Tom joined the mob of skylarking scholars outside. In a few moments the master arrived and school “took in.” Tom did not feel a strong interest in his studies. Every time he stole a glance at the girls’ side of the room Becky’s face troubled him. Considering all things, he did not want to pity her, and yet it was all he could do to help it. He could get up no exultation that was really worthy the name. Presently the spelling-book discovery was made, and Tom’s mind was entirely full of his own matters for a while after that. Becky roused up from her lethargy of distress and showed good interest in the proceedings. She did not expect that Tom could get out of his trouble by denying that he spilt the ink on the book himself; and she was right. The denial only seemed to make the thing worse for Tom. Becky supposed she would be glad of that, and she tried to believe she was glad of it, but she found she was not certain. When the worst came to the worst, she had an impulse to get up and tell on Alfred Temple, but she made an effort and forced herself to keep still—because, said she to herself, “he’ll tell about me tearing the picture sure. I wouldn’t say a word, not to save his life!”

70 Tom took his whipping and went back to his seat not at all broken-hearted, for he thought it was possible that he had unknowingly upset the ink on the spelling-book himself, in some skylarking bout—he had denied it for form’s sake and because it was custom, and had stuck to the denial from principle.

75 A whole hour drifted by, the master sat nodding in his throne, the air was drowsy
with the hum of study. By and by, Mr. Dobbins straightened himself up, yawned, then
unlocked his desk, and reached for his book, but seemed undecided whether to take
it out or leave it. Most of the pupils glanced up languidly, but there were two among
80 them that watched his movements with intent eyes. Mr. Dobbins fingered his book
absently for a while, then took it out and settled himself in his chair to read! Tom shot
a glance at Becky. He had seen a hunted and helpless rabbit look as she did, with a gun
levelled at its head. Instantly he forgot his quarrel with her. Quick—something must
be done! done in a flash, too! But the very imminence of the emergency paralyzed his
invention. Good!—he had an inspiration! He would run and snatch the book, spring
85 through the door and fly. But his resolution shook for one little instant, and the chance
was lost—the master opened the volume. If Tom only had the wasted opportunity back
again! Too late. There was no help for Becky now, he said. The next moment the master
faced the school. Every eye sank under his gaze. There was that in it which smote even
the innocent with fear. There was silence while one might count ten—the master was
90 gathering his wrath. Then he spoke: “Who tore this book?”

There was not a sound. One could have heard a pin drop. The stillness continued; the
master searched face after face for signs of guilt.

“Benjamin Rogers, did you tear this book?”

A denial. Another pause.

95 “Joseph Harper, did you?”

Another denial. Tom’s uneasiness grew more and more intense under the slow torture
of these proceedings. The master scanned the ranks of boys—considered a while, then
turned to the girls:

“Amy Lawrence?”

100 A shake of the head.

“Gracie Miller?”

The same sign.

“Susan Harper, did you do this?”

105 Another negative. The next girl was Becky Thatcher. Tom was trembling from head to
foot with excitement and a sense of the hopelessness of the situation.

“Rebecca Thatcher” [Tom glanced at her face—it was white with terror]—“did you
tear—no, look me in the face” [her hands rose in appeal]—“did you tear this book?”

A thought shot like lightning through Tom’s brain. He sprang to his feet and shouted—
”I done it!”

110 The school stared in perplexity at this incredible folly. Tom stood a moment, to gather his dismembered faculties; and when he stepped forward to go to his punishment the surprise, the gratitude, the adoration that shone upon him out of poor Becky's eyes seemed pay enough for a hundred floggings. Inspired by the splendor of his own act, he took without an outcry the most merciless flogging that even Mr. Dobbins had ever administered; and also received with indifference the added cruelty of a command to remain two hours after school should be dismissed—for he knew who would wait for him outside till his captivity was done, and not count the tedious time as loss, either.

115 Tom went to bed that night planning vengeance against Alfred Temple; for with shame and repentance Becky had told him all, not forgetting her own treachery; but even the longing for vengeance had to give way, soon, to pleasanter musings, and he fell asleep at last with Becky's latest words lingering dreamily in his ear—

“Tom, how *could* you be so noble!”

6. In lines 12–14, Tom's wish reveals that
- A. Becky and Tom will never be able to resolve their conflict.
 - B. Becky represents a feminine ideal that Tom can never attain.
 - C. Tom is worried that the other boys will discover his crush on Becky.
 - D. Tom resents Becky because she is smarter than he is.
 - E. Tom is uncomfortable with a conflict he can't resolve with a fistfight.
7. In lines 47–56, Tom's tone is
- A. scornful and petulant.
 - B. amazed and awestruck.
 - C. hostile and detached.
 - D. dismissive and mean-spirited.
 - E. witty and self-deprecating.
8. The reader can infer from the passage that both Tom and Becky share what trait?
- A. difficulty forgiving others
 - B. a vengeful nature
 - C. indifference to what others think of them
 - D. lack of understand of their own emotions
 - E. a propensity to get in trouble at school

9. In line 58, the narrator's description of Tom's attitude toward his "studies" is an example of
- A. hyperbole.
 - B. understatement.
 - C. sarcasm.
 - D. overstatement.
 - E. parody.
10. This passage reveals all of the following about Tom EXCEPT that he is
- A. impulsive.
 - B. empathic.
 - C. irresponsible.
 - D. quick-thinking.
 - E. courageous.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS 11-15

Carefully read the following passage from Chapter 9 of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* before selecting the best answers to the multiple-choice questions that follow.

At half-past nine, that night, Tom and Sid were sent to bed, as usual. They said their prayers, and Sid was soon asleep. Tom lay awake and waited, in restless impatience. When it seemed to him that it must be nearly daylight, he heard the clock strike ten! This was despair. He would have tossed and fidgeted, as his nerves demanded, but he was afraid he might wake Sid. So he lay still, and stared up into the dark. Everything was dimly still. By and by, out of the stillness, little, scarcely perceptible noises began to emphasize themselves. The ticking of the clock began to bring itself into notice. Old beams began to crack mysteriously. The stairs creaked faintly. Evidently spirits were abroad. A measured, muffled snore issued from Aunt Polly's chamber. And now the tiresome chirping of a cricket that no human ingenuity could locate, began. Next the ghastly ticking of a deathwatch in the wall at the bed's head made Tom shudder—it meant that somebody's days were numbered. Then the howl of a far-off dog rose on the night air, and was answered by a fainter howl from a remoter distance. Tom was in an agony. At last he was satisfied that time had ceased and eternity begun; he began to doze, in spite of himself; the clock chimed eleven, but he did not hear it. And then there came, mingling with his half-formed dreams, a most melancholy caterwauling. The raising of a neighboring window disturbed him. A cry of "Scat! you devil!" and the crash of an empty bottle against the back of his aunt's woodshed brought him wide awake, and a single minute later he was dressed and out of the window and creeping along the roof of the "ell" on all fours. He "meow'd" with caution once or twice, as he went; then jumped to the roof of the woodshed and thence to the ground. Huckleberry Finn was there, with his dead cat. The boys moved off and disappeared in the gloom. At the end of half an hour they were wading through the tall grass of the graveyard.

It was a graveyard of the old-fashioned Western kind. It was on a hill, about a mile and a half from the village. It had a crazy board fence around it, which leaned inward in places, and outward the rest of the time, but stood upright nowhere. Grass and weeds grew rank over the whole cemetery. All the old graves were sunken in, there was not a tombstone on the place; round-topped, worm-eaten boards staggered over the graves, leaning for support and finding none. "Sacred to the memory of" So-and-So had been painted on them once, but it could no longer have been read, on the most of them, now, even if there had been light.

A faint wind moaned through the trees, and Tom feared it might be the spirits of the dead, complaining at being disturbed. The boys talked little, and only under their breath, for the time and the place and the pervading solemnity and silence oppressed their spirits. They found the sharp new heap they were seeking, and ensconced themselves within the protection of three great elms that grew in a bunch within a few feet of the grave.

Then they waited in silence for what seemed a long time. The hooting of a distant owl was all the sound that troubled the dead stillness. Tom's reflections grew oppressive. He must force some talk. So he said in a whisper:

"Hucky, do you believe the dead people like it for us to be here?"

40 Huckleberry whispered:

“I wisht I knowed. It’s awful solemn like, ain’t it?”

“I bet it is.”

There was a considerable pause, while the boys canvassed this matter inwardly. Then Tom whispered:

45 “Say, Hucky—do you reckon Hoss Williams hears us talking?”

“O’ course he does. Least his sperrit does.”

Tom, after a pause:

“I wish I’d said Mister Williams. But I never meant any harm. Everybody calls him Hoss.”

50 “A body can’t be too partic’lar how they talk ‘bout these-yer dead people, Tom.”

This was a damper, and conversation died again.

Presently Tom seized his comrade’s arm and said:

“Sh!”

“What is it, Tom?” And the two clung together with beating hearts.

55 “Sh! There ‘tis again! Didn’t you hear it?”

“I—”

“There! Now you hear it.”

“Lord, Tom, they’re coming! They’re coming, sure. What’ll we do?”

“I dono. Think they’ll see us?”

60 “Oh, Tom, they can see in the dark, same as cats. I wisht I hadn’t come.”

“Oh, don’t be afeard. I don’t believe they’ll bother us. We ain’t doing any harm. If we keep perfectly still, maybe they won’t notice us at all.”

“I’ll try to, Tom, but, Lord, I’m all of a shiver.”

“Listen!”

65 The boys bent their heads together and scarcely breathed. A muffled sound of voices floated up from the far end of the graveyard.

“Look! See there!” whispered Tom. “What is it?”

“It’s devil-fire. Oh, Tom, this is awful.”

70 Some vague figures approached through the gloom, swinging an old-fashioned tin lantern that freckled the ground with innumerable little spangles of light. Presently Huckleberry whispered with a shudder:

“It’s the devils sure enough. Three of ‘em! Lordy, Tom, we’re goners! Can you pray?”

“I’ll try, but don’t you be afeard. They ain’t going to hurt us. ‘Now I lay me down to sleep, I—”

75 “Sh!”

“What is it, Huck?”

“They’re humans! One of ‘em is, anyway. One of ‘em’s old Muff Potter’s voice.”

“No—tain’t so, is it?”

80 “I bet I know it. Don’t you stir nor budge. He ain’t sharp enough to notice us. Drunk, the same as usual, likely—blamed old rip!”

“All right, I’ll keep still. Now they’re stuck. Can’t find it. Here they come again. Now they’re hot. Cold again. Hot again. Red hot! They’re p’inted right, this time. Say, Huck, I know another o’ them voices; it’s Injun Joe.”

85 “That’s so—that murderin’ half-breed! I’d druther they was devils a dern sight. What kin they be up to?”

The whisper died wholly out, now, for the three men had reached the grave and stood within a few feet of the boys’ hiding-place.

“Here it is,” said the third voice; and the owner of it held the lantern up and revealed the face of young Doctor Robinson.

90 Potter and Injun Joe were carrying a handbarrow with a rope and a couple of shovels on it. They cast down their load and began to open the grave. The doctor put the lantern at the head of the grave and came and sat down with his back against one of the elm trees. He was so close the boys could have touched him.

“Hurry, men!” he said, in a low voice; “the moon might come out at any moment.”

95 They growled a response and went on digging. For some time there was no noise but
the grating sound of the spades discharging their freight of mould and gravel. It was
very monotonous. Finally a spade struck upon the coffin with a dull woody accent, and
within another minute or two the men had hoisted it out on the ground. They pried off
the lid with their shovels, got out the body and dumped it rudely on the ground. The
100 moon drifted from behind the clouds and exposed the pallid face. The barrow was got
ready and the corpse placed on it, covered with a blanket, and bound to its place with
the rope. Potter took out a large spring-knife and cut off the dangling end of the rope
and then said:

105 “Now the cussed thing’s ready, Sawbones, and you’ll just out with another five, or here
she stays.”

“That’s the talk!” said Injun Joe.

“Look here, what does this mean?” said the doctor. “You required your pay in advance,
and I’ve paid you.”

110 “Yes, and you done more than that,” said Injun Joe, approaching the doctor, who was now
standing. “Five years ago you drove me away from your father’s kitchen one night, when
I come to ask for something to eat, and you said I warn’t there for any good; and when
I swore I’d get even with you if it took a hundred years, your father had me jailed for a
vagrant. Did you think I’d forget? The Injun blood ain’t in me for nothing. And now I’ve
got you, and you got to settle, you know!”

115 He was threatening the doctor, with his fist in his face, by this time. The doctor struck
out suddenly and stretched the ruffian on the ground. Potter dropped his knife, and
exclaimed:

120 “Here, now, don’t you hit my pard!” and the next moment he had grappled with the doctor
and the two were struggling with might and main, trampling the grass and tearing the
ground with their heels. Injun Joe sprang to his feet, his eyes flaming with passion, snatched
up Potter’s knife, and went creeping, catlike and stooping, round and round about the
combatants, seeking an opportunity. All at once the doctor flung himself free, seized the
heavy headboard of Williams’ grave and felled Potter to the earth with it—and in the same
instant the half-breed saw his chance and drove the knife to the hilt in the young man’s
125 breast. He reeled and fell partly upon Potter, flooding him with his blood, and in the same
moment the clouds blotted out the dreadful spectacle and the two frightened boys went
speeding away in the dark.

11. Tension in the first paragraph has the effect of
 - A. contrasting Tom's and Sid's characters.
 - B. describing the nighttime setting.
 - C. emphasizing Aunt Polly's age.
 - D. anticipating Huck's arrival.
 - E. explaining childhood superstitions.

12. The appearance of the cemetery (lines 21-30) contradicts the
 - A. distance from the village.
 - B. expectation of supernatural occurrences.
 - C. boys' sense of daring.
 - D. inscription "sacred to the memory."
 - E. new grave of heaped earth.

13. Tom wished he'd called Hoss Williams "Mister Williams" because
 - A. Williams was well respected.
 - B. Tom believed in ghosts.
 - C. Huck would be impressed.
 - D. Huck was badly frightened.
 - E. Tom was mocking etiquette.

14. Injun Joe's statement that "The Injun blood ain't in me for nothing" (line 113) implies he is motivated by
 - A. pride.
 - B. humiliation.
 - C. hunger.
 - D. treachery.
 - E. greed.

15. In this passage the author's diction makes distinctions between
 - A. mood and pace.
 - B. action and denouement.
 - C. exposition and dialogue.
 - D. imagery and epithets.
 - E. euphemisms and clarity.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS 16-20

Carefully read the following passage from Chapter 23 of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* before selecting the best answers to the multiple-choice questions that follow.

5 At last the sleepy atmosphere was stirred—and vigorously: the murder trial came on in the court. It became the absorbing topic of village talk immediately. Tom could not get away from it. Every reference to the murder sent a shudder to his heart, for his troubled conscience and fears almost persuaded him that these remarks were put forth in his hearing as “feelers”; he did not see how he could be suspected of knowing anything about the murder, but still he could not be comfortable in the midst of this gossip. It kept him in a cold shiver all the time. He took Huck to a lonely place to have a talk with him. It would be some relief to unseal his tongue for a little while; to divide his burden of distress with another sufferer. Moreover, he wanted to assure himself that Huck had remained discreet.

10

“Huck, have you ever told anybody about—that?”

“Bout what?”

“You know what.”

“Oh—’course I haven’t.”

15

“Never a word?”

“Never a solitary word, so help me. What makes you ask?”

“Well, I was afeard.”

“Why, Tom Sawyer, we wouldn’t be alive two days if that got found out. *You* know that.”

20

Tom felt more comfortable. After a pause:

“Huck, they couldn’t anybody get you to tell, could they?”

“Get me to tell? Why, if I wanted that half-breed devil to drownd me they could get me to tell. They ain’t no different way.”

25

“Well, that’s all right, then. I reckon we’re safe as long as we keep mum. But let’s swear again, anyway. It’s more surer.”

“I’m agreed.”

So they swore again with dread solemnities.

“What is the talk around, Huck? I’ve heard a power of it.”

30 “Talk? Well, it’s just Muff Potter, Muff Potter, Muff Potter all the time. It keeps me in a sweat, constant, so’s I want to hide som’ers.”

“That’s just the same way they go on round me. I reckon he’s a goner. Don’t you feel sorry for him, sometimes?”

35 “Most always—most always. He ain’t no account; but then he hain’t ever done anything to hurt anybody. Just fishes a little, to get money to get drunk on—and loaf around considerable; but lord, we all do that—leastways most of us—preachers and such like. But he’s kind of good—he give me half a fish, once, when there warn’t enough for two; and lots of times he’s kind of stood by me when I was out of luck.”

“Well, he’s mended kites for me, Huck, and knitted hooks on to my line. I wish we could get him out of there.”

40 “My! we couldn’t get him out, Tom. And besides, ‘twouldn’t do any good; they’d ketch him again.”

“Yes—so they would. But I hate to hear ‘em abuse him so like the dickens when he never done—that.”

45 “I do too, Tom. Lord, I hear ‘em say he’s the bloodiest looking villain in this country, and they wonder he wasn’t ever hung before.”

“Yes, they talk like that, all the time. I’ve heard ‘em say that if he was to get free they’d lynch him.”

“And they’d do it, too.”

50 The boys had a long talk, but it brought them little comfort. As the twilight drew on, they found themselves hanging about the neighborhood of the little isolated jail, perhaps with an undefined hope that something would happen that might clear away their difficulties. But nothing happened; there seemed to be no angels or fairies interested in this luckless captive.

55 The boys did as they had often done before—went to the cell grating and gave Potter some tobacco and matches. He was on the ground floor and there were no guards.

His gratitude for their gifts had always smote their consciences before—it cut deeper than ever, this time. They felt cowardly and treacherous to the last degree when Potter said:

60 “You’ve been mighty good to me, boys—better’n anybody else in this town. And I don’t forget it, I don’t. Often I says to myself, says I, ‘I used to mend all the boys’ kites and things, and show ‘em where the good fishin’ places was, and befriend ‘em what I could, and now they’ve all forgot old Muff when he’s in trouble; but Tom don’t, and Huck don’t—they don’t forget him, says I, ‘and I don’t forget them.’ Well, boys, I done an awful thing—drunk and
65 crazy at the time—that’s the only way I account for it—and now I got to swing for it, and it’s right. Right, and *best*, too, I reckon—hope so, anyway. Well, we won’t talk about that.

I don't want to make *you* feel bad; you've befriended me. But what I want to say, is, don't *you* ever get drunk—then you won't ever get here. Stand a litter furdur west—so—that's it; it's a prime comfort to see faces that's friendly when a body's in such a muck of trouble, and there don't none come here but yourn. Good friendly faces—good friendly faces. Git up on one another's backs and let me touch 'em. That's it. Shake hands—yourn'll come through the bars, but mine's too big. Little hands, and weak—but they've helped Muff Potter a power, and they'd help him more if they could.”

Tom went home miserable, and his dreams that night were full of horrors. The next day and the day after, he hung about the court-room, drawn by an almost irresistible impulse to go in, but forcing himself to stay out. Huck was having the same experience. They studiously avoided each other. Each wandered away, from time to time, but the same dismal fascination always brought them back presently. Tom kept his ears open when idlers sauntered out of the court-room, but invariably heard distressing news—the toils were closing more and more relentlessly around poor Potter. At the end of the second day the village talk was to the effect that Injun Joe's evidence stood firm and unshaken, and that there was not the slightest question as to what the jury's verdict would be.

Tom was out late, that night, and came to bed through the window. He was in a tremendous state of excitement. It was hours before he got to sleep. All the village flocked to the court-house the next morning, for this was to be the great day. Both sexes were about equally represented in the packed audience. After a long wait the jury filed in and took their places; shortly afterward, Potter, pale and haggard, timid and hopeless, was brought in, with chains upon him, and seated where all the curious eyes could stare at him; no less conspicuous was Injun Joe, stolid as ever. There was another pause, and then the judge arrived and the sheriff proclaimed the opening of the court. The usual whisperings among the lawyers and gathering together of papers followed. These details and accompanying delays worked up an atmosphere of preparation that was as impressive as it was fascinating.

Now a witness was called who testified that he found Muff Potter washing in the brook, at an early hour of the morning that the murder was discovered, and that he immediately sneaked away. After some further questioning, counsel for the prosecution said:

“Take the witness.”

The prisoner raised his eyes for a moment, but dropped them again when his own counsel said:

“I have no questions to ask him.”

The next witness proved the finding of the knife near the corpse. Counsel for the prosecution said:

“Take the witness.”

“I have no questions to ask him,” Potter's lawyer replied.

A third witness swore he had often seen the knife in Potter's possession.

“Take the witness.”

Counsel for Potter declined to question him. The faces of the audience began to betray annoyance. Did this attorney mean to throw away his client’s life without an effort?

110 Several witnesses deposed concerning Potter’s guilty behavior when brought to the scene of the murder. They were allowed to leave the stand without being cross-questioned.

115 Every detail of the damaging circumstances that occurred in the graveyard upon that morning which all present remembered so well was brought out by credible witnesses, but none of them were cross-examined by Potter’s lawyer. The perplexity and dissatisfaction of the house expressed itself in murmurs and provoked a reproof from the bench. Counsel for the prosecution now said:

“By the oaths of citizens whose simple word is above suspicion, we have fastened this awful crime, beyond all possibility of question, upon the unhappy prisoner at the bar. We rest our case here.”

120 A groan escaped from poor Potter, and he put his face in his hands and rocked his body softly to and fro, while a painful silence reigned in the court-room. Many men were moved, and many women’s compassion testified itself in tears. Counsel for the defence rose and said:

125 “Your honor, in our remarks at the opening of this trial, we foreshadowed our purpose to prove that our client did this fearful deed while under the influence of a blind and irresponsible delirium produced by drink. We have changed our mind. We shall not offer that plea.” [Then to the clerk:] “Call Thomas Sawyer!”

16. “At last the sleepy atmosphere was stirred—and vigorously” implies the mood in the village was
- A. sociability.
 - B. sobriety.
 - C. excitement.
 - D. repugnance.
 - E. fear.
17. When Tom and Huck talk over the murder trial, their moral dilemma is that
- A. gossip ruins reputations.
 - B. justice requires truth.
 - C. silence assures survival.
 - D. kindness is appreciated.
 - E. vows are solemn.

18. Huck's analogy comparing drunks and preachers implies
- A. bad people can be reformed.
 - B. preachers are known to drink.
 - C. fishing is a popular pastime.
 - D. drunkenness only hurts the drinker.
 - E. preachers don't do real work.
19. The narrator's persona in this passage can be characterized as
- A. objective.
 - B. resigned.
 - C. sympathetic.
 - D. frightened.
 - E. mocking.
20. Tom's courtroom testimony is foreshadowed by the line(s)
- A. "Huck, have you ever told anybody about—that?" (line 11)
 - B. But nothing happened; there seemed to be no angels or fairies interested in this luckless captive. (lines 53-54)
 - C. "But what I want to say, is, don't you ever get drunk—then you won't ever get here." (lines 67-68)
 - D. Tom went home miserable, and his dreams that night were full of horrors. (line 74)
 - E. Did this attorney mean to throw away his client's life without an effort? (line 108)

PRACTICE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS 21-25

Carefully read the following passage from Chapter 29 of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* before selecting the best answers to the multiple-choice questions that follow.

Huck was already upon his watch when the ferryboat's lights went glinting past the wharf. He heard no noise on board, for the young people were as subdued and still as people usually are who are nearly tired to death. He wondered what boat it was, and why she did not stop at the wharf—and then he dropped her out of his mind and put
5 his attention upon his business. The night was growing cloudy and dark. Ten o'clock came, and the noise of vehicles ceased, scattered lights began to wink out, all straggling foot passengers disappeared, the village betook itself to its slumbers and left the small watcher alone with the silence and the ghosts. Eleven o'clock came, and the tavern lights were put out; darkness everywhere, now. Huck waited what seemed a weary long
10 time, but nothing happened. His faith was weakening. Was there any use? Was there really any use? Why not give it up and turn in?

A noise fell upon his ear. He was all attention in an instant. The alley door closed softly. He sprang to the corner of the brick store. The next moment two men brushed by him, and one seemed to have something under his arm. It must be that box! So they were
15 going to remove the treasure. Why call Tom now? It would be absurd—the men would get away with the box and never be found again. No, he would stick to their wake and follow them; he would trust to the darkness for security from discovery. So communing with himself, Huck stepped out and glided along behind the men, cat-like, with bare feet, allowing them to keep just far enough ahead not to be invisible.

They moved up the river street three blocks, then turned to the left up a cross street. They went straight ahead, then, until they came to the path that led up Cardiff Hill; this they took. They passed by the old Welshman's house, half way up the hill, without
20 hesitating, and still climbed upward. Good, thought Huck, they will bury it in the old quarry. But they never stopped at the quarry. They passed on, up the summit. They
25 plunged into the narrow path between the tall sumach bushes, and were at once hidden in the gloom. Huck closed up and shortened his distance, now, for they would never be able to see him. He trotted along awhile; then slackened his pace, fearing he was gaining too fast; moved on a piece, then stopped altogether; listened; no sound; none, save that he seemed to hear the beating of his own heart. The hooting of an owl came over the
30 hill—ominous sound! But no footsteps. Heavens, was everything lost! He was about to spring with winged feet, when a man cleared his throat not four feet from him! Huck's heart shot into his throat, but he swallowed it again; and then he stood there shaking as if a dozen agues had taken charge of him at once, and so weak that he thought he must surely fall to the ground. He knew where he was. He knew he was within five steps of
35 the stile leading into Widow Douglas' grounds. Very well, he thought, let them bury it there; it won't be hard to find.

Now there was a voice—a very low voice—Injun Joe's:

“Damn her, maybe she’s got company—there’s lights, late as it is.”

“I can’t see any.”

40 This was that stranger’s voice—the stranger of the haunted house. A deadly chill went to Huck’s heart—this, then, was the “revenge” job! His thought was, to fly. Then he remembered that the Widow Douglas had been kind to him more than once, and maybe these men were going to murder her. He wished he dared venture to warn her; but he knew he didn’t dare—they might come and catch him. He thought all this and more in the

45 moment that elapsed between the stranger’s remark and Injun Joe’s next—which was—

“Because the bush is in your way. Now—this way—now you see, don’t you?”

“Yes. Well, there is company there, I reckon. Better give it up.”

“Give it up, and I just leaving this country forever! Give it up and maybe never have another chance. I tell you again, as I’ve told you before, I don’t care for her swag—you may have it. But her husband was rough on me—many times he was rough on me—and mainly he was the justice of the peace that jugged me for a vagrant. And that ain’t all. It ain’t a millionth part of it! He had me *horsewhipped!*—horsewhipped in front of the jail, like a nigger!—with all the town looking on! Horsewhipped!—do you understand? He took advantage of me and died. But I’ll take it out of *her*.”

50

55 “Oh, don’t kill her! Don’t do that!”

“Kill? Who said anything about killing? I would kill *him* if he was here; but not her. When you want to get revenge on a woman you don’t kill her—bosh! you go for her looks. You slit her nostrils—you notch her ears like a sow!”

“By God, that’s—”

60 “Keep your opinion to yourself! It will be safest for you. I’ll tie her to the bed. If she bleeds to death, is that my fault? I’ll not cry, if she does. My friend, you’ll help me in this thing—for *my* sake—that’s why you’re here—I mightn’t be able alone. If you flinch, I’ll kill you. Do you understand that? And if I have to kill you, I’ll kill her—and then I reckon nobody’ll ever know much about who done this business.”

65 “Well, if it’s got to be done, let’s get at it. The quicker the better—I’m all in a shiver.”

“Do it *now*? And company there? Look here—I’ll get suspicious of you, first thing you know. No—we’ll wait till the lights are out—there’s no hurry.”

70 Huck felt that a silence was going to ensue—a thing still more awful than any amount of murderous talk; so he held his breath and stepped gingerly back; planted his foot carefully and firmly, after balancing, one-legged, in a precarious way and almost toppling over, first on one side and then on the other. He took another step back, with the same elaboration and the same risks; then another and another, and—a twig snapped under his foot! His breath stopped and he listened. There was no sound—the stillness was perfect. His gratitude was measureless. Now he turned in his tracks, between the

75 walls of sumach bushes—turned himself as carefully as if he were a ship—and then stepped quickly but cautiously along. When he emerged at the quarry he felt secure, and so he picked up his nimble heels and flew. Down, down he sped, till he reached the Welshman’s. He banged at the door, and presently the heads of the old man and his two stalwart sons were thrust from windows.

80 “What’s the row there? Who’s banging? What do you want?”

“Let me in—quick! I’ll tell everything.”

“Why, who are you?”

“Huckleberry Finn—quick, let me in!”

85 “Huckleberry Finn, indeed! It ain’t a name to open many doors, I judge! But let him in, lads, and let’s see what’s the trouble.”

“Please don’t ever tell *I* told you,” were Huck’s first words when he got in. “Please don’t—I’d be killed, sure—but the widow’s been good friends to me sometimes, and I want to tell—I *will* tell if you’ll promise you won’t ever say it was me.”

90 “By George, he *has* got something to tell, or he wouldn’t act so!” exclaimed the old man; “out with it and nobody here’ll ever tell, lad.”

Three minutes later the old man and his sons, well armed, were up the hill, and just entering the sumach path on tiptoe, their weapons in their hands. Huck accompanied them no further. He hid behind a great boulder and fell to listening. There was a lagging, anxious silence, and then all of a sudden there was an explosion of firearms and a cry.

95 Huck waited for no particulars. He sprang away and sped down the hill as fast as his legs could carry him.

21. A reader may infer that Huck observed the ferryboat with little interest because he
- A. frequently saw boats passing by the town.
 - B. was exhausted himself that night.
 - C. wasn’t involved in social activities.
 - D. couldn’t see in the dark.
 - E. was hiding from passersby.
22. The phrase “moved on a piece” (line 28) is an
- A. anachronism.
 - B. idiom.
 - C. image.
 - D. epigram.
 - E. oxymoron.

23. When Injun Joe threatened to kill his accomplice and the Widow Douglas (lines 56-58), he assumed
- A. his partner was a coward.
 - B. the widow would recognize him.
 - C. the widow would die anyway.
 - D. he'd escape the scene undetected.
 - E. he'd keep all the loot.
24. The simile describing Huck's turning "as carefully as if he were a ship" (line 75) suggests that Huck
- A. avoided the rocks.
 - B. swung around slowly.
 - C. sought a narrow passage.
 - D. looked for landmarks.
 - E. started moving faster.
25. The Welshman's response to Huckleberry Finn that "It ain't a name to open many doors, I judge!" suggests he regards Huck with
- A. outrage.
 - B. skepticism.
 - C. pity.
 - D. disinterest.
 - E. tolerance.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS 26-30

Carefully read the following passage from Chapter 33 of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* before selecting the best answers to the multiple-choice questions that follow.

5 When the cave door was unlocked, a sorrowful sight presented itself in the dim twilight of the place. Injun Joe lay stretched upon the ground, dead, with his face close to the crack of the door, as if his longing eyes had been fixed, to the latest moment, upon the light and the cheer of the free world outside. Tom was touched, for he knew by his own experience how this wretch had suffered. His pity was moved, but nevertheless he felt an abounding sense of relief and security, now, which revealed to him in a degree which he had not fully appreciated before how vast a weight of dread had been lying upon him since the day he lifted his voice against this bloody-minded outcast.

10 Injun Joe's bowie-knife lay close by, its blade broken in two. The great foundation-beam of the door had been chipped and hacked through, with tedious labor; useless labor, too, it was, for the native rock formed a sill outside it, and upon that stubborn material the knife had wrought no effect; the only damage done was to the knife itself. But if there had been no stony obstruction there the labor would have been useless still, for if the beam had been wholly cut away Injun Joe could not have squeezed his body
15 under the door, and he knew it. So he had only hacked that place in order to be doing something—in order to pass the weary time—in order to employ his tortured faculties. Ordinarily one could find half a dozen bits of candle stuck around in the crevices of this vestibule, left there by tourists; but there were none now. The prisoner had searched them out and eaten them. He had also contrived to catch a few bats, and these, also, he
20 had eaten, leaving only their claws. The poor unfortunate had starved to death. In one place near at hand, a stalagmite had been slowly growing up from the ground for ages, builded by the water-drip from a stalactite overhead. The captive had broken off the stalagmite, and upon the stump had placed a stone, wherein he had scooped a shallow hollow to catch the precious drop that fell once in every three minutes with the dreary regularity of a clock-tick—a dessertspoonful once in four and twenty hours. That drop
25 was falling when the Pyramids were new; when Troy fell; when the foundations of Rome were laid; when Christ was crucified; when the Conqueror created the British empire; when Columbus sailed; when the massacre at Lexington was “news.” It is falling now; it will still be falling when all these things shall have sunk down the afternoon of history, and the twilight of tradition, and been swallowed up in the thick night of oblivion. Has
30 everything a purpose and a mission? Did this drop fall patiently during five thousand years to be ready for this flitting human insect's need? and has it another important object to accomplish ten thousand years to come? No matter. It is many and many a year since the hapless half-breed scooped out the stone to catch the priceless drops, but
35 to this day the tourist stares longest at that pathetic stone and that slow-dropping water when he comes to see the wonders of McDougal's cave. Injun Joe's cup stands first in the list of the cavern's marvels; even “Aladdin's Palace” cannot rival it.

40 Injun Joe was buried near the mouth of the cave; and people flocked there in boats and wagons from the towns and from all the farms and hamlets for seven miles around; they brought their children, and all sorts of provisions, and confessed that they had had almost as satisfactory a time at the funeral as they could have had at the hanging.

45 This funeral stopped the further growth of one thing—the petition to the governor for Injun Joe’s pardon. The petition had been largely signed; many tearful and eloquent meetings had been held, and a committee of sappy women been appointed to go in deep mourning and wail around the governor, and implore him to be a merciful ass and trample his duty under foot. Injun Joe was believed to have killed five citizens of the village, but what of that? If he had been Satan himself there would have been plenty of weaklings ready to scribble their names to a pardon-petition, and drip a tear on it from their permanently impaired and leaky water-works.

50 The morning after the funeral Tom took Huck to a private place to have an important talk. Huck had learned all about Tom’s adventure from the Welshman and the Widow Douglas, by this time, but Tom said he reckoned there was one thing they had not told him; that thing was what he wanted to talk about now. Huck’s face saddened. He said:

55 “I know what it is. You got into No. 2 and never found anything but whiskey. Nobody told me it was you; but I just knowed it must ‘a’ ben you, soon as I heard ‘bout that whiskey business; and I knowed you hadn’t got the money becuz you’d ‘a’ got at me some way or other and told me even if you was mum to everybody else. Tom, something’s always told me we’d never get holt of that swag.”

60 “Why, Huck, I never told on that tavern-keeper. *You* know his tavern was all right the Saturday I went to the picnic. Don’t you remember you was to watch there that night?”

“Oh yes! Why, it seems ‘bout a year ago. It was that very night that I follered Injun Joe to the widder’s.”

“*You* followed him?”

65 “Yes—but you keep mum. I reckon Injun Joe’s left friends behind him, and I don’t want ‘em souring on me and doing me mean tricks. If it hadn’t ben for me he’d be down in Texas now, all right.”

Then Huck told his entire adventure in confidence to Tom, who had only heard of the Welshman’s part of it before.

70 “Well,” said Huck, presently, coming back to the main question, “whoever nipped the whiskey in No. 2, nipped the money, too, I reckon —anyways it’s a goner for us, Tom.”

“Huck, that money wasn’t ever in No. 2!”

“What!” Huck searched his comrade’s face keenly. “Tom, have you got on the track of that money again?”

75 “Huck, it’s in the cave!”

Huck’s eyes blazed.

“Say it again, Tom.”

“The money’s in the cave!”

- “Tom—honest injun, now—is it fun, or earnest?”
- 80 “Earnest, Huck—just as earnest as ever I was in my life. Will you go in there with me and help get it out?”
- “I bet I will! I will if it’s where we can blaze our way to it and not get lost.”
- “Huck, we can do that without the least little bit of trouble in the world.”
- “Good as wheat! What makes you think the money’s—”
- 85 “Huck, you just wait till we get in there. If we don’t find it I’ll agree to give you my drum and every thing I’ve got in the world. I will, by jings.”
- “All right—it’s a whiz. When do you say?”
- “Right now, if you say it. Are you strong enough?”
- 90 “Is it far in the cave? I ben on my pins a little, three or four days, now, but I can’t walk more’n a mile, Tom—least I don’t think I could.”
- “It’s about five mile into there the way anybody but me would go, Huck, but there’s a mighty short cut that they don’t anybody but me know about. Huck, I’ll take you right to it in a skiff. I’ll float the skiff down there, and I’ll pull it back again all by myself. You needn’t ever turn your hand over.”
- 95 “Less start right off, Tom.”
- “All right. We want some bread and meat, and our pipes, and a little bag or two, and two or three kite-strings, and some of these new-fangled things they call lucifer matches. I tell you, many’s the time I wished I had some when I was in there before.”
- 100 A trifle after noon the boys borrowed a small skiff from a citizen who was absent, and got under way at once. When they were several miles below “Cave Hollow,” Tom said:
- “Now you see this bluff here looks all alike all the way down from the cave hollow—no houses, no woodyards, bushes all alike. But do you see that white place up yonder where there’s been a landslide? Well, that’s one of my marks. We’ll get ashore, now.”
- They landed.
- 105 “Now, Huck, where we’re a-standing you could touch that hole I got out of with a fishing-pole. See if you can find it.”
- Huck searched all the place about, and found nothing. Tom proudly marched into a thick clump of sumach bushes and said:
- 110 “Here you are! Look at it, Huck; it’s the snuggest hole in this country. You just keep mum about it. All along I’ve been wanting to be a robber, but I knew I’d got to have a thing like this, and where to run across it was the bother. We’ve got it now, and we’ll keep it quiet, only we’ll let Joe Harper and Ben Rogers in—because of course there’s got to be a Gang, or else there wouldn’t be any style about it. Tom Sawyer’s Gang—it sounds splendid, don’t it, Huck?”

26. The description of Injun Joe's death evokes a feeling of
- A. futility.
 - B. horror.
 - C. pathos.
 - D. gratitude.
 - E. justice.
27. Aladdin's Palace in line 37 is used as
- A. geographic reference.
 - B. naïve exaggeration.
 - C. tragic example.
 - D. ironic allusion.
 - E. cultural contrast.
28. The narrator's shift in tone in lines 47-49 is matched by the
- A. widespread public curiosity.
 - B. petition for pardon.
 - C. women in mourning.
 - D. governor's official reaction.
 - E. accusation of murder.
29. Tom's willingness to give Huck his boyhood treasures (85-86) suggests
- A. guilt.
 - B. confidence.
 - C. greed.
 - D. loyalty.
 - E. impulsiveness.
30. Tom's conclusion that "All along I've been wanting to be a robber" in line 110 indicates Tom's character is
- A. resilient.
 - B. enterprising.
 - C. chastened.
 - D. foolhardy.
 - E. intimidating.

Answers with Explanations

1. Although the first paragraph describes a world of leisure (play), the mood it conveys is not particularly playful, an adjective that suggests a joking quality. The second paragraph is somber rather than merely serious, an adjective that is too vague to capture the shift in mood (A). While there is perhaps a nostalgic element in the first paragraph's idealized description of Cardiff Hill, the mood of the second paragraph cannot be interpreted as expectant, an adjective that connotes a positive sense of hope (C). Likewise, while the first paragraph is clearly exuberant, the second paragraph conveys a melancholy mood rather than any hint of danger or foreboding (D). There is certainly nothing despairing in the cheerful, sunny first paragraph, and Tom seems miserable but not resigned to his circumstances in the second paragraph (E). **With its joyous, idealized description of Cardiff Hill as a "summer world . . . brimming with life" and "green with vegetation," as a "Delectable Land, dreamy, reposeful, and inviting," the first paragraph conveys the essential feature of the pastoral: delight in the simple pleasures of nature and country life. The mood turns gloomy in the second paragraph, when Tom appears full of "deep melancholy" and the "burden" of existence. (B) is thus the best answer.**

2. Tom's motivation for wanting to switch jobs with Jim is clearly NOT that he thinks fetching water will take less time. In fact, it is just the opposite: he remembers "that although the pump was only a hundred and fifty yards off, Jim never got back with a bucket of water under an hour" (A). There is also no evidence that Tom thinks Jim's "hateful work" is easier than his own (B). Although Tom clearly realizes that Aunt Polly will be angry with him if he doesn't whitewash the fence (and gets caught switching jobs), there is no suggestion that he actually wants to make her angry (D). The reader learns later in the passage that Tom is upset that the "free boys . . . would make fun of him for having to work—the very thought of it burnt him like fire." Yet his embarrassment is not why he wants to switch jobs. In fact, the town pump is a public, visible spot, where "boys and girls were always . . . waiting their turns, resting, trading playthings, quarreling, fight, skylarking" and where his friends might see him working (E). **In fact, this chance to spend an enjoyable, unhurried hour socializing with the "company at the pump" is Tom's motivation for wanting to switch jobs with Jim (C).**

3. Tom most certainly *does* believe that he is "rolling in wealth" (B), even if the reader does not consider these items valuable—much less more valuable than Tom does (C). At the end of the passage, the narrator clearly states that Tom "had discovered a great law of human action, without knowing it." Although the lesson he has learned may turn out to have more lasting value than the schoolboy "wealth" he has acquired, Tom does not recognize this fact (D). Although the narrator unmistakably shows the deception Tom uses to attain his "wealth," there is no condemnation in his account or any suggestion that Tom does not deserve his new treasures (E). **The narrator's detailed description of Tom's "wealth" is humorously ironic because the narrator clearly realizes that most people, including the reader, do not consider these schoolboy trinkets to be valuable (A). Thus there is a discrepancy between what Tom perhaps naively believes and what the more sophisticated narrator and reader understand to be true, at least for the adult world.**

4. At the end of this passage, the narrator concludes that Tom “had discovered a great law of human action,” so (A) is clearly incorrect. Likewise, the whole whitewashing scene demonstrates that Tom is a master at manipulating other people (B), having learned “that in order to make a man or a boy covet a thing, it is only necessary to make the thing difficult to attain.” (C) can also be ruled out, because this passage clearly reveals Tom’s talent as a showman who is capable of hiding his true feelings, showing “reluctance in his face but alacrity in his heart” as he stages his manipulative performance. (E) can also be eliminated, because although Tom’s main purpose is to trick the other boys, he nevertheless enjoys having “plenty of company” as he does so. **(D) is the correct answer: Far from feeling remorse, Tom is delighted with his newly acquired “wealth” and “would have bankrupted every boy in the village” if he “hadn’t run out of whitewash.”**
5. In these lines, the narrator’s tone is certainly philosophical, but it is amused rather than bitter (A). Likewise, his tone might be described as analytical because he is analyzing the true nature of work, but he is calm rather than impassioned in his analysis (C). The narrator does not seem particularly judgmental in his analysis of human nature. There is perhaps a tone of gentle, goodhearted mockery, but there is no sense that he is condemning people for their foolishness, and he is certainly not outraged by it (D). Likewise, although his tone might be described as cynical about the foolishness of human nature, the narrator seems amused rather than despairing (E). **(B) is the best answer. His tone is satirical because the narrator is pointing out a human weakness (the essence of satire), yet this satire is good-natured and humorous. The narrator is amused rather than outraged by the “great law of human action” he is revealing.**
6. Tom’s wish that Becky “were a boy” is a purely practical desire for an easy, familiar, masculine method of resolving a conflict—but a method that Tom cannot employ with a girl. This wish reveals nothing about whether he and Becky will ever be able to resolve their conflict in some other, less “manly” way (A) or whether this particular girl represents a feminine ideal—much less one that he can never attain (B). Tom does not seem the least bit worried about keeping his feelings for Becky private. In fact, there does not seem to be any teasing about crushes or “engagements” at their school (C). Although Tom wishes he had the presence of mind to have called Becky “Miss Smarty,” his taunting name for her is a reference to her know-it-all attitude rather than to her actual intelligence or even success at school. There is no evidence that Tom resents Becky for being smarter than he is—or even that she truly is smarter (D). **The best answer is (E). Tom realizes that he can’t simple “trounce” Becky—because she is a girl. However, fist fighting is his customary method of resolving conflicts with boys, and he is clearly uncomfortable with a new kind of conflict that does not permit such a straightforward method of resolution.**

7. In these lines, Tom’s tone might be described as amazed, in that he is amazed that Becky has “Never been licked at school” and that girls are so “thin-skinned and chicken-hearted” as to be afraid of something Tom considers trivial (“What’s a licking!”). However, he is astonished by Becky’s foolishness and inexperience, rather than awed by these qualities (B). Likewise, Tom’s tone might be described as hostile, in that his anger at Becky for rejecting him has seeped into his internal thoughts about her fear of being whipped. Yet there is nothing detached about the tone of these thoughts. In fact, he is quite agitated about the prospect of her getting whipped and seems to be covering up his own distress with a show of bravado (C). Tom is certainly dismissive of Becky (whom he calls “this little fool”) and condescending about the cowardice and spinelessness of girls in general. Yet he is clearly not mean-spirited. In fact, despite his anger, he decides not to “tell old Dobbins” on Becky, because there are “other ways of getting even on her, that ain’t so mean” (D). Tom’s tone is neither witty nor self-deprecating. He says nothing particular clever in his condemnation of Becky and her gender, and he definitely says nothing critical or even falsely modest about himself. In fact, he comes off as rather self-congratulatory by implying that *he* isn’t afraid of getting licked, that *he* isn’t so mean-spirited as to “tell old Dobbins” on Becky, that *he* wouldn’t let his face “tell” on him (E). **The best answer is (A). Tom’s tone is clearly scornful, because he is ridiculing Becky and her gender for being “thin-skinned” and “chicken-hearted”—for lacking a “backbone” and a poker face. Tom’s scornfulness is also petulant: a hurt, irritable, sulking attitude (caused by the pain of rejection) permeates his critique of Becky.**

8. Tom clearly does not have a hard time forgiving other people. In fact, at the beginning of the passage he forgives Becky quite easily, “without a moment’s hesitation,” simply because his mood has changed. Some readers might interpret the passage as showing that Becky has a hard time forgiving other people, because she is not willing to forgive Tom as easily as he is willing to forgive her. Yet she does forgive him after his “noble” act (A). There is nothing remotely vengeful about Tom. Even when he is angry at Becky, he refuses to tell on her and then performs his “noble” act to prevent her from being punished, instantly forgetting his quarrel with her when he sees her “hunted and helpless” distress. Moreover, his “longing for vengeance” against Alfred Temple is short-lived, quickly giving way to “pleasanter musings” about Becky. Nor is Becky vengeful by nature. Although it “seemed” to her that she “was so impatient to see Tom flogged,” the reader realizes that Becky is fooling herself about wanting revenge, despite her unwillingness to expose Alfred Temple (B). On some level, Tom doesn’t care what other people think of him—he is willing to confess to something he didn’t do and have the whole school stare “in perplexity as this incredible folly.” Yet he certainly cares what Becky thinks of him: her “adoration” is “pay enough for a hundred floggings.” Becky, on the other hand, clearly cares what other people think of her. When she cries in panicked anguish that she “never was whipped in school,” she seems to be just as mortified by the thought of public humiliation (of being viewed as a bad girl) as by the prospect of physical pain (C). Clearly, Becky, unlike Tom, does not often (if ever) get in trouble at school, so (E) is incorrect. **The best answer is (D). The passage shows how both characters misread their own emotions. Although Tom is truly “in a fine rage” when Becky refuses to make up with him, his “Who cares, Miss Smarty” is an obvious cover-up of how much he does care. Nor does he understand why he feels “pity” instead of “exultation” at her predicament. Likewise, Becky is truly angry at Tom, but she is dreading rather than longing to see him flogged, despite how it “seemed” to her. When Tom’s denials only get him in more trouble, Becky’s misreading of her own feelings becomes painfully clear: “Becky supposed she would be glad of that, and she tried to believe she was glad of it, but she found she was not certain.”**
9. The narrator’s statement that “Tom did not feel a strong interest in his studies” is certainly not an example of hyperbole (A) or its synonym, overstatement (D), because the narrator is not exaggerating for effect. In fact, he is doing just the opposite. Nor is his statement an example of sarcasm. Since the narrator is not addressing his remark directly *to* Tom, he clearly does not intend to wound or ridicule him—and the aim to wound is integral to the definition of sarcasm (C). (E) can also be ruled out, because a parody is a humorous imitation of another writer, work, or style—and the narrator’s statement is not mocking or imitating. **The correct answer is (B). The narrator is using understatement, saying less than what he really means to create a comic or ironic effect. Obviously, Tom feels much less than “a strong interest in his studies.” In fact, we realize from the narrator’s statement that Tom probably feels absolutely *no* interest in his studies. He is an easily distracted student to begin with and is particularly distracted by his quarrel with Becky.**

10. (A) is clearly incorrect, because at the end of the passage, Tom impulsively shouts, “I done it!” to save Becky from punishment. (B) can also be eliminated, because Tom clearly feels great empathy for Becky. He instantly forgets his quarrel with her and resolves to take action when he sees her “hunted and helpless rabbit look” and her face “white with terror.” Likewise, (D) can be ruled out, because Tom is clearly quick-thinking in devising a way to save Becky: “A thought shot like lightning through Tom’s brain.” That thought leads to an act of courage—accepting punishment to save Becky—so (E) is also wrong. **(C) is the best answer. There is nothing in the passage that presents Tom as irresponsible (despite how he sometimes acts at other points in the novel). Although “for form’s sake” he denies spilling ink on his spelling-book, he privately considers it possible that “he had unknowingly” done so. Consequently, he does not feel “broken-hearted” about the whipping, accepting responsibility for his possible action (though in a somewhat convoluted way). More significantly, Tom obviously feels that it is his responsibility to protect Becky—and he takes that responsibility seriously, even if he acts impulsively to fulfill it.**
11. The first paragraph creates tension from Tom’s restlessness in an ordinary bedroom while his brother Sid sleeps. It heightens suspense about what comes next in the story’s plot. Tom is impatient for something to happen. Sid doesn’t do anything, so he is hardly a contrast in character (A) or a factor in the plot. The description of nighttime sounds such as Aunt Polly’s snores, slow marking of time by the clock, and spooky superstitions like the deathwatch beetle in the wall (B, C, E) **set the stage for Huck’s arrival (D) and the boys’ departure for the graveyard.**
12. This question asks for a contradiction—something opposite—to the dilapidated cemetery. Its isolation from the town, spookiness, and the boys’ sense of adventure (A, B, C) fit with the graveyard’s rundown appearance. And the new grave (E) adds to the aura of death. **However, the inscription “sacred to the memory” (D) implies that the dead are holy and honored by the living, which is contradicted by the cemetery’s appearance.**
13. Be alert to differences between the narrator’s perspective and the characters’. Tom says that the dead man was commonly called Hoss Williams, a familiarity from a child that doesn’t suggest dignity or respect (A). Huck seems to know more about spirits and devils than Tom does, and so wouldn’t be impressed (C). As action progresses, Huck isn’t frightened until he hears the grave robbers arrive (D). There’s irony in Tom’s impulse to call plain old Hoss Williams “Mister” after the man was dead. But that indicates the author’s mocking attitude to funeral etiquette more than the point of view of the boy character (E). **The answer is Tom believes in ghosts (B).**
14. Injun Joe recalled the humiliating experience of being turned away from the doctor’s kitchen when he was hungry and being jailed as a vagrant (A, B, C). Injun Joe and Muff Potter did demand more money for robbing the grave, suggesting greed (E). But Injun Joe also said he waited five years to get even with the doctor. He cited his Indian nature as determination to get revenge, even if it took 100 years. **That’s treachery (D).**

15. This passage is notable for changes in diction or word choice. The author created a gloomy mood and slow pace in the first three paragraphs with well-chosen adjectives (A). This exposition—the explanatory narration—has an educated voice. The action of robbing the grave is described with spare directness, and the doctor’s murder—the denouement or outcome—also happens with vivid verbs (B). There are a few sensory images, descriptive epithets (D, E), such as Hoss Williams, Injun Joe, and Sawbones, and euphemisms (inoffensive words substituting for harsher, more direct expression). **The biggest distinction is between the exposition and the dialogue of regional and historic colloquialisms (C) from the uneducated boys and criminals.** The dialogue’s phonetic spelling and punctuation emphasize this difference too.
16. The town’s atmosphere during the murder trial is described by the metaphor of being stirred vigorously. That suggests a disturbance greater than just being sociable or following the case seriously (A, B). Tom felt repugnance and fear (D, E), but the question asks about the villagers generally. **The closest answer is the mood was excitement (C).**
17. Tom and Huck were clearly struggling with whether to reveal what they knew about Muff Potter, who was in jail but innocent of murder. It’s true that Potter’s reputation as a drunk was common gossip and made him a suspect (A). The boys’ vow of silence protected them from Injun Joe, but it doomed Muff Potter (C, E). The boys felt guilty because Potter was kind to them in the past, and was pathetically grateful for their attention to him in jail (D). More important, Tom and Huck were conscience-stricken because **the truth only they can tell could challenge Injun Joe’s testimony and save Potter from an unjust guilty verdict (B).**
18. An analogy is a comparison between different things to indicate similarity. Easygoing Huck didn’t talk about reforming people (A). Eliminate (D) because it doesn’t offer a comparison. The immediate antecedent to his comment “we all do that—leastways most of us—preachers and such like” is the phrase “loafs around considerable.” So while (B) and (C) are possible inferences, **the sharpest similarity is E, preachers don’t do real work either.**
19. The narrator’s persona refers to the personality or façade presented by the writer. The passage describes Tom and Huck’s struggle to keep a secret, Muff Potter’s pathos in jail, and the lawyers in court proceeding to a life-or-death verdict. The narrator refers to the boys’ troubled conscience and distress. The narration has emotional weight, so it’s not strictly objective (A). But it doesn’t seem resigned (B) to an inevitable outcome dooming Muff Potter. The boys and Potter are frightened, but the narrator is not (D). Nor does the narrator mock the seriousness of the situation (E). **The narrator seemed sympathetic to the suffering of the innocent parties (C).**

20. From the beginning, the drama in this passage is whether Tom will remain silent or tell what he knows about the murder. Choice (A) seems to seek assurance in favor of silence. Muff Potter's warning about drunkenness in choice (C) recaps how he got into trouble, but it is a tangent. Choice (D) emphasizes Tom's mental struggles and fear of talking. Choice (E) is a narrator's aside that heightens the drama and suggests an inevitable verdict. **Only (B) speaks to the necessity of making something happen to change the outcome of the trial, rather than waiting and hoping.**
21. Huck was on a mission to watch the tavern when he saw the ferryboat. He noted some unusual things about the boat. The ferry didn't stop at the wharf, the opposite of (A). The boat's passengers were exhausted, but Huck was observant at his post from before 10 p.m. to after 11, so eliminate (B, D, and E). The fact that Huck didn't recognize the excursion boat full of young people suggests (C), **he wasn't invited to social activities.**
22. An anachronism is a reference to something in the wrong time period, like a bicycle in the Middle Ages. An idiom is a common phrase unique to native speakers. An image is a mental impression. An epigram is a witty expression. An oxymoron is a statement that combines seemingly contradictory terms, like "jumbo shrimp." So "moved on a piece" is (B), **an idiom.**
23. The dialogue between Injun Joe and his accomplice revealed Injun Joe's motive, besides burglary, for harming the Widow Douglas. He wanted revenge against her late husband, who had been the justice of the peace. The accomplice had scruples about committing murder, but he wasn't a coward about robbery (A). There's not enough information to know whether the widow would recognize Injun Joe (B). The likelihood the widow will die begs the question of why he threatened the accomplice (C). Injun Joe told the accomplice in lines 49 and 50 that he could have all the loot (swag) from the robbery (E). **When Injun Joe said "nobody'll ever know much about who done this business," he meant he expected to escape (D) and the crime would be unsolved.**
24. Writer Mark Twain was a former riverboat pilot who used the language and images of ships. Picture how Huck might sneak down a path through a thicket of bushes like a ship in the night. Huck turned around before he passed the rock quarry (A). He retraced his steps, so he needn't look for landmarks (C, D). The simile emphasizes caution while turning rather than speed (E). **He would have swung around slowly (B).**
25. Huck woke up the Welshman by pounding on his door, which could cause outrage, but that doesn't address his name recognition (A). The dramatic action in the middle of the night doesn't suggest emotions such as pity, neutral disinterest, or tolerance for a local vagabond (C, D, E). **The Welshman sounds skeptical or inclined to disbelieve (B) the boy.**

26. The discovery of Injun Joe's body and his broken knife beside the heavy door indicated the futility (A) of his attempt to escape. **That gave his death more pathos (C).** The scene had details that suggest what starvation was like, but it was not gruesome enough to cause horror (B). Tom felt gratitude that he was no longer in danger and justice was done (D, E), but the passage went beyond Tom's reaction.
27. Aladdin's Palace refers to an Arab folk tale about a poor tailor who discovered a cave of treasures, including a lamp with a genie to work magic on command. Aladdin built a fabulous jeweled palace with his riches. Readers may remember there was a chamber in Tom Sawyer's cavern called Aladdin's Palace, which could be a geographic reference (A). The comparison between Injun Joe's cup and Aladdin's Palace isn't just literally about the cave, or a tourist exaggeration compared to a foreign culture (B, E). The Aladdin story isn't tragic, it's magical (C). **The allusion to Aladdin's Palace resonated as irony (D) because the life-giving drops of water in the stone cup became more valuable than any treasure—including the box of money hidden in the cave.**
28. The pathos of Injun Joe's death hardens despite the public curiosity at the funeral (A) as the realization spreads that the dead man was a repeat killer. The petition for mercy and the mourning women (B, C, D) are ridiculed as sappy and making an ass of the governor. **The accusation that Injun Joe killed five people (E) clearly provokes ridicule for "weaklings" who "drip a tear" on a pardon petition.**
29. Because Injun Joe hid in the cave, Tom could be reasonably confident (B) the money was there too. But the question focuses on Tom's willingness to give Huck his toys and collectibles. That's a generous gesture, the opposite of greed (C). Retrieving the money would take time and effort, the opposite of impulsiveness (E). **The boys remained friendly and cooperative, so the best answer is (D) loyalty.**
30. Even though the thief and killer Injun Joe died in the cave, Tom goes back to his old tricks imagining a career as a robber with a gang of boys. It's hard to take Tom seriously that he'd actually be enterprising or foolhardy enough to do this (B, D). Foolhardy means foolishly reckless. Tom doesn't seem chastened or disciplined by hardship (C). And he's not intimidating (E) or frightening. **But he is resilient (A) despite being terrified of Injun Joe.**

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

Chapter 1

1. What is the effect of beginning this story with one word—"Tom!"

This character commands immediate attention, as does the person doing the complaining about him—Aunt Polly. The obvious question is what is happening between Tom and his aunt.

So with one word—"Tom!"—author Mark Twain draws readers into character, plot, conflict, and setting—the narrative arc. The technique of beginning a story in the middle or toward the end of events or action is called in medias res.

2. What are the characters like, and how do they relate to each other?

Tom is a lazy but competitive boy who misbehaves in familiar ways. He steals sweets and avoids schoolwork and chores in order to play. He fights with his younger half-brother Sid and other boys. He lies easily and convincingly to get out of trouble, outwit challengers, and manipulate others.

Sid points out Tom's shortcomings to their Aunt Polly, to Tom's resentment and retaliation. Aunt Polly is a well-meaning, stern woman responsible for raising Tom and Sid, her dead sister's children. Aunt Polly is guided by Christian religious precepts and affection.

Jim is a young slave boy who does household work. Aunt Polly owns Jim.

These characters live in a poor rural village called St. Petersburg along the Mississippi River, where woods and water are nearby for adventures. Poor as they are, black slaves are still considered beneath them.

3. Who is telling this story? What are the advantages of this narrative point of view?

*The narration has the **third-person point of view**, in which the writer knows the thoughts and experiences of all the characters.*

The narration also distinguishes between the exposition—background information and explanations—and the characters' dialogue. The author's diction indicates this switch. The word choices and sentence structure of the narration indicate a careful and concise writer. Note the precise vocabulary, apt description, sensory images, and literary and biblical allusions.

4. What is Twain's intention in violating conventions of standard written English? What effect does he create?

The unusual dialogue is based on Missouri dialect from the period of Western settlement before the Civil War. Colloquialisms and idioms are rendered with phonetic spelling, punctuation and its own peculiar syntax. It does not conform to grammatical English. The dialect adds historical verisimilitude and is meant to be entertaining for its own sake.

Chapter 2

1. What impression is given of the time and place?

It's a Saturday morning in summer. The countryside is beautiful and beckoning. The townspeople are in a happy mood, especially the singing children.

2. What narrative technique is Twain employing when he describes the fence Tom must paint as a "far-reaching continent" of fence?

The metaphor is clearly hyperbole. Twain is allowing his omniscient narrator to enter Tom's mind and describe the assigned task from Tom's perspective rather than from an outside, objective perspective.

3. How does Tom deal with his setbacks? What does this episode contribute to Tom's character development?

Tom offers to trade jobs, then bribes the slave boy Jim with a marble and the sight of his sore toe. Jim has to fetch water 450 feet, which takes an hour because children of all races gather at the pump. That task seems better by comparison. But Aunt Polly anticipated Tom's tactic.

Tom scoffs at Jim's fear of Aunt Polly. She does spank Jim for dawdling. Tom calculates he doesn't have enough trinkets to bribe other boys to do his work. He gets a better idea. He pretends to be an artist showing off his painting skill—a spoof of artistic pretension. Tom answers Ben Rogers' taunts with rhetorical questions that imply he enjoys working. Tom tells the competitive boys they're not capable of doing the job to please his aunt. The boys pay Tom for the privilege of proving they're competent.

Tom's ploy pays off in free time, more toys, and Aunt Polly's approval. Throughout this entire incident, Tom's craftiness and laziness are established.

4. What's the appeal of Ben Rogers's riverboat game? What might Ben's role in the game foreshadow?

Ben Rogers impersonates a boat and the captain giving orders to a crew. In his imagination he's in control of an impressive machine. This imitation of adult authority, competence, and responsibility foreshadows Ben's susceptibility to Tom's manipulation.

5. Compare what Tom says to Ben to the narrator's conclusion at the end chapter.

The writer's aside explicitly addresses the reader. It restates Tom's ploy as wisdom about human nature and business. Examples compare the low-paying work of poor people to the sports of the wealthy: walking a treadmill to Alpine mountain climbing.

This contradiction mocks conventional rules about child rearing, discipline, and punishment. Such ridicule exemplifies Twain's sarcasm.

Then Tom must report to "headquarters," a metaphor suggesting a lucky soldier accountable to his military officer. It compares childish make-believe to adult responsibility.

Chapter 3

1. How does Tom present himself to Aunt Polly? How does she react?

The narration picks up the military metaphor as a transition. Tom's distrustful aunt expected Tom to desert his assignment. In the face of her warning against lying, Tom tells the limited truth that the fence is painted, but not the whole truth that he didn't do it himself.

Suspicious Aunt Polly inspects the fence. But she wrongly attributes the finished job to a change in Tom's motivation. She rewards him with an apple. While she quotes the Bible, Tom steals a doughnut.

2. Does Tom behave differently with other boys and girls than he does with Aunt Polly? Or does he behave the same?

Tom retaliates openly in anger against his brother Sid, by throwing clods of dirt at him. Tom evades his aunt by stealth, lying, stealing, and sneaking away. He can remain silent to gain advantage, as when Sid breaks the sugar bowl. Tom also punishes Aunt Polly with sulky silence when she suffers a guilty conscience for her unkindness.

Tom's physical aggression becomes play when his friends imitate war. Tom gets to be a military general who tells other boys to fight and "die" while he remains safe on the sidelines.

Tom shows off to get the attention of girls. He forgets Amy Lawrence when he sees the Thatcher girl. Tom becomes confused and dreamy after the mystery girl tosses him a flower.

Tom thinks he's treated unfairly. He imagines dying in theatrical ways to provoke grief from his aunt and the new girl. He indulges these thoughts regardless of his aunt's affection, cousin Mary's happy homecoming, or the fact that the Thatcher girl is a stranger.

Tom's self-centered emotions indicate little understanding of the consequences of lying, love, or death.

Chapter 4

1. What is Mosaic Law?

Mosaic Law refers to the laws handed to Moses throughout the first five books of the Bible. Because the 613 points of Law (which the Jews call Torah) were delivered to Moses, the law is called Mosaic Law.

2. Analyze the description of Aunt Polly's prayer. What is the effect of the description?

The description of Aunt Polly's prayer is an extended metaphor. The prayer is compared to a brick structure built with "courses" of Bible quotations and a little "mortar" of originality. Aunt Polly stands on this foundation to lecture her family about the Commandments—like Moses on the mountaintop. The comparison diminishes and mocks Aunt Polly.

3. What does the expression to "gird up [one's] loins" mean? What is the effect of its use in this chapter?

This expression from the Bible refers to the way men tucked the hems of long tunics up into their loincloths, leaving their legs free so they could work. This allusion has come to mean preparing for hard labor or battle. The use of the expression here is sarcastic, comparing Tom's having to memorize five Bible verses with hard and dangerous labor.

4. What is the Sermon on the Mount? Where is the satire in this episode?

This is a biblical allusion to the teaching of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of Matthew. Tom attempts to learn the Beatitudes, a series of instructions and commandments, each of which begins with the phrase, "Blessed are...."

The satire is in Twain's criticism of religious values and practices. Aunt Polly requires her nephews' attention to religion. Their behavior does not reflect their own attitudes, ideals, and beliefs. Tom succeeds in memorizing his passages but only with help and a reward from his cousin Mary. He also has no idea what they mean.

5. What is Tom's opinion of Sunday school? What is the narrator's?

Tom hates to wash and dress for church, and fidgets with other inattentive children. However, he desires status and prizes, so he barter Sunday school tickets in order to win a Bible.

The narrator mocks the effort of memorizing the verses by showing that Tom is willing to do it for the prize, and by pointing out that the Bible that could be won by memorizing the 2,000 verses was a plain book worth about forty cents.

6. How does the adults' behavior reinforce the satire?

Like the children, the adults at Sunday school are excited to meet Judge Thatcher, an important man from a bigger small town. The adults call attention to themselves by bustling about their tasks, giving orders, and reprimanding or praising students. The superintendent wants to award a Bible to a star student, to impress the judge.

Wrapped up in status and material rewards, the adults are no better—no more spiritual—than the children.

7. What is significant about the superintendent's reaction to Tom's victory? How does Twain's word choice maintain a mocking, satiric tone?

Mr. Walters' surprise is reported in hyperbolic terms, to comic effect. The tickets, rather than representing spiritual rewards, become "certified checks good for their face value," and the Bible prize becomes a business transaction. Claiming to be a Bible scholar (and, by extension, a "good Christian"), Tom is a fraud. The narrator suggests that Walters suspects this but cannot spoil the occasion of Judge Thatcher's visit by making an example of Tom.

8. How does Amy Lawrence react?

Amy's pride plunges to jealousy when Tom ignores her and she realizes he's infatuated with another girl. This lesson in love is another irony.

9. What is ironic about Judge Thatcher's reaction?

Judge Thatcher lectures Tom on the value of education and gratitude to his teachers. The assertion that Tom would not take money for his Bible is false because Tom bartered for tickets to get the 40-cent book. This irony concludes an extended metaphor about the business of the Sunday school.

10. What is the highest point of this satiric plotline?

Still ostensibly impressed with Tom's Christian scholarship, the judge asks Tom to name two of Jesus's twelve disciples. The climax—the punchline—of this satiric episode is Tom's embarrassing himself and the adults with a wrong answer. This episode exemplifies satire that ridicules religion.

Chapter 5

1. Compare the description of the minister's sermon to Tom's boredom.

First, the whispering choir sounds like the badly behaved children in Sunday school. The narrator's asides exaggerate the rudeness and tedium.

The minister shows off during poetry readings and hymn singing. The reading of notices is compared to a bulletin board and newspaper. The long, detailed prayer resembles Tom's detailed observation of the fly. Twain mimics the sentence structure too.

The biblical allusion to the lion and lamb being led by a child refers to a biblical prophecy about a coming reign of eternal peace without death. Tom doesn't understand it, but imagines showing off as a lion tamer. Compare that allusion to the realistic behavior of the beetle and the dog.

2. What did Tom conclude from this?

Tom thinks these antics improved the church service. Adults were amused too, so Tom might be right. Tom didn't understand the moral of the sermon. But he thinks it was wrong for the dog to run away with his beetle. That's a joke about the Eighth Commandment against stealing.

Chapter 6

1. What does Tom know about illness?

His minor aches and injuries are excuses for showing off and avoiding responsibilities like school. He pretends to be dying without regard for his family's feelings. Aunt Polly is sensible and deals with Tom using homemade remedies.

2. Why is Huckleberry Finn an outcast in the village?

Huckleberry is the abandoned son of a drunk. He dresses in rags, scavenges for food, lives outdoors, and has no supervision. He does not attend school or church. Adults dread him as a bad influence on their children.

3. Why do children like Huck?

Huck has freedom to go and do as he pleases. He possesses vulgar knowledge such as swearing and superstitions. Huck's social contacts span respectable boys, low-status black people, and reprobates like his father, Muff Potter, and Injun Joe.

4. Why does Tom challenge adult perceptions of Huck?

Tom provokes the teacher to beat him, knowing the punishment includes sitting next to the new girl he admires. Tom turns conflict with adult attitudes to his advantage in order to meet Becky Thatcher.

5. What can a reader infer from Tom's declaration of love? What evidence in the chapter supports that inference?

Tom and Becky negotiate attention and rejection before they know each other's names. Their curiosity and attempts to please are tentative. Tom is clever and bold about getting a reaction from a stranger. Becky is flattered and embarrassed. He can't be sure that she welcomes or reciprocates his feelings. Tom is so overwrought he loses the spelling bee and forfeits his medal. His emotions are new and important to him.

The narrator describes Tom's errors in geography class "till chaos come again." That's an allusion to the biblical Creation story, in which God turned formless confusion into the material world. The allusion matches Tom's lovestruck mood.

Chapter 7

1. What does this chapter contribute to the overall impact or structure of the novel?

This chapter depicts two contrasting but complementary episodes: Tom's game with Joe Harper and the tick, and his "engagement" to Becky Thatcher. The game with Joe develops naturally and easily, and the two communicate almost without words. Their understanding of one another is effortless.

By contrast, Tom and Becky expend a number of words and never do seem to come to an understanding of one another.

The contrast of scenes is, of course, humorous, as is Tom's inability to make himself clear to Becky and Becky's warranted caution and naivety. The contrast also advances the developing conflict between "good" and "bad," or "legal" and "illegal," "respectable" and "disreputable."

Chapter 8

1. The narrator states paradoxically that Tom's mood was in "happy accord with his surroundings." Examine the setting and explain the truth in the paradox.

Tom is sad and confused because of his misunderstanding with Becky. The setting is an isolated woods on a hot afternoon, when even animals are still and silent. Tom made his "pathless" way through the "dead noonday heat." The peacefulness of the woods causes Tom to envy the grave of Jimmy Hodges, who is beyond earthly worries. Of course, death is not temporary.

2. How does the narrator change this mood?

The narration switches to Tom's regret that his Sunday school record isn't good enough to assure him a place in heaven. Tom's self-preservation instincts and anger at Becky relieve the gloom.

3. What are the common factors that influence Tom's career choices?

This question requires analysis of specific careers for general traits. Tom seeks attention, physical action, danger, violence, and travel. He wants to be a daring leader who provokes envy and intimidates others. All his career choices are potentially fatal. Again, Tom doesn't grasp the meaning of death.

4. Explain Tom's understanding of cause and effect in superstitions. What theme is being advanced in Twain's attention to Tom's superstitious nature?

Tom believes he can fulfill his desires with rituals and incantations. For example, he seeks to find lost marbles, cure warts, summon dead spirits, predict the future, and protect himself from evil. Tom puts effort into learning superstitions. By contrast, he avoids school and chores and puts himself in harm's way.

Tom's superstitions are, to him, more real than his aunt's religion. The memorization of Bible verses is no different from the memorization of incantations. In fact, Tom seems to understand the meanings and purpose of the incantations much more clearly than he does the Bible verses he memorizes.

5. What does the Robin Hood game reveal about the boys? How does their play echo Twain's mockery of religion and formal education?

By craving action and heroism, the boys are motivated to memorize complicated language and scenarios "by the book." That's very different from their performance in school and church.

6. On what note of suspense does this chapter end?

The boys' naive belief that civilization has no outlaws foreshadows the introduction of Injun Joe, the murderous antagonist, in the next chapter.

Chapter 9

1. How does the narrator create tension in the description of Tom's bedroom?

Because it is night, Tom's impatience is emphasized by sounds marking the slow passage of time. Examples are the ticking clock, creaking stairs, Aunt Polly's snores, the deathwatch beetle, and howling dogs. Adjectives like "dismally," "mysteriously," "tiresome," "ghastly," and "melancholy" color these details. They mirror Tom's "agony.

Pace is the rate of movement in the story. Events speed up with the broken bottle, the neighbor's shout, and Tom jumping out of bed to sneak away. The narrator creates suspense to anticipate Huck's arrival and subsequent action.

2. Contrast the narrator's diction to the language of the dialogue.

The narrator's diction—or word choice and sentence structure—is concise yet evocative. The exposition has well-chosen adjectives and imagery. The grammar is conventional English suited to the knowledgeable third-person perspective. Twain paid attention to the rhythm and pleasing sound of sentences. Their cadence and euphony come from assonance and consonance—repetition of vowel and consonant sounds.

The dialogue is colloquial dialect with aberrant spelling, phonetic punctuation, and colorful epithets. Epithets are descriptive terms for something, like "sawbones" for "doctor." Colloquialisms enhance the novel's setting in the Missouri frontier.

The characters' questions advance the action and reveal personality: "Now they're stuck. Can't find it. Here they come again. Now they're hot. Cold again. Hot again. Red hot!"

*Huck calls Injun Joe a "murderous half-breed." The adjective is both foreshadowing and stereotype. **Half-breed** is a pejorative term for a person of mixed race.*

3. Why is Doctor Robinson paying grave robbers?

Since ancient Greece, doctors have performed human dissection as a part of medical training. According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, early American laws only provided the bodies of executed criminals—as an extra form of punishment. So from the 18th century, anatomy teachers, students and accomplices resorted to grave robbery. Because bodies decompose, graves were robbed immediately after burial. Of course, this shocked the public and caused riots.

As medical schools opened across the expanding United States, grave robbing increased and became a crime. In 1832 Britain allowed dissection of unclaimed bodies, effectively ending the desecration of graves. American states eventually adopted similar laws over the 19th century.

In 1968, all the states adopted the Uniform Anatomy Gift Act, which allowed individuals to bequeath their own bodies for medical research and education. Donations are the principal source of cadavers today.

4. Why does Injun Joe threaten Doctor Robinson?

Injun Joe presses Muff Potter's demand for more money, and adds his own grievance. Five years before, the doctor turned Injun Joe away when he was hungry. The doctor's father had Injun Joe jailed as a vagrant. Injun Joe cites his Indian nature as unforgiving and vengeful.

From the 17th century, the American Southeast had distinctive populations of people with Indian, white, and black parentage. These intermarriages included free black people and escaped slaves. Under fugitive slave laws, descendants were abused and captured to be sold back into slavery.

However, the narration doesn't provide Injun Joe's background or expand his motivation. He's a one-dimensional character.

5. Summarize Injun Joe's response to Muff Potter.

Injun Joe implicates Muff Potter by putting the knife in his hand. When Potter regains consciousness, he asks why Injun Joe killed the doctor. Injun Joe denies this, and Potter is too drunk to know better. He begs Injun Joe to be honest, but the murderer lies again with a false account of the struggle. The pathetic Potter humiliates himself, citing friendship. Injun Joe promises silence, and urges Potter to run away. But he betrays Potter because the knife is left behind.

Injun Joe uses the epithet "chicken-heart," meaning coward. Potter's been set up.

Chapter 10

1. Summarize Tom and Huck's dilemma after the murder.

The boys know the punishment for murder is hanging. But they doubt justice will be done. Tom realizes witnesses are required to make an accusation. Both boys realize Injun Joe would kill them too if they told what they saw in the cemetery. Huck says that only drunken Muff Potter would be foolish enough to accuse Injun Joe. Tom recalls that Potter was too drunk to know the truth. The boys resolve to keep silent.

The boys know right from wrong. But circumstances skew principles in favor of survival. This is a cynical but realistic view of the adult world.

2. Explain the irony of the boys' written vow.

Huck, the unschooled boy, values the importance of writing. The boys overlook that writing makes their secret visible. To avoid being killed by Injun Joe, the vow declares they'll "drop dead" if they tell about the crime. The narrator is ironic in praising Tom's crude writing as sublime.

3. What is the effect of the howling dog?

The dog is a portent of death. The anxious boys believe that this superstition means Muff Potter is doomed. They're callous about the impact on Gracie Miller too.

This superstition contrasts with Tom's resolve to do better in Sunday school. Huck regrets he has no religious instruction to save him. Note that this superstition is attributed to "niggers," and Huck is the conduit of the lore.

4. How is Tom's resolve tested? What choices does he make?

Because Tom gets home at dawn and sleeps late, his disappearance is discovered by Sid. Aunt Polly's tearful rebuke of his thoughtlessness is worse than a beating. Tom is guilt-stricken and promises to reform to win her forgiveness.

However, Tom does not reveal what he was doing in the night. He does not ask for adult guidance through his fear or moral dilemma. He does not retaliate against Sid, nor complain in school when he is punished for skipping class. Tom feels sorry for himself.

Chapter 11

1. What is the effect of the anachronism of the telegraph?

An anachronism is a reference to something in the wrong time period. The historical period of Tom Sawyer is earlier than the telegraph.

Nonetheless, the anachronism emphasizes the speed of news and gossip in the little town, and the likelihood of Muff Potter's capture. Also, the parenthetical statement notes the speed of public opinion that Potter is guilty—before he's tried in court.

2. How does Muff Potter implicate himself?

Muff Potter returns to the cemetery with the crowd after Doctor Robinson's body is found. Before he is accused, Potter weeps and declares he didn't kill the doctor. He admits he came back for his knife. He relies on Injun Joe to tell the truth, when Injun Joe is a liar. Potter can't lie and is a bad judge of character.

3. How does this influence Tom and Huck?

The boys expect to see Injun Joe struck by lightning as God's punishment. When Injun Joe gets away with murder and lying, they fear he's a creature of Satan. It's another omen that Potter is doomed—relieving them of responsibility. Their understanding of Christian religion and superstition is muddled.

Tom's nightmares worry his family, but he won't speak of his distress to them. Aunt Polly guesses it is about the murder. Sid notices that Tom ties up his jaw and avoids the children's imitative game of coroner's inquest. The magnitude of Tom's dilemma alters his penchant for showing off.

Chapter 12

1. Describe the turning point of Tom's character arc.

Tom has new worries when Becky Thatcher is sick. He is finally thinking of someone other than himself.

2. Contrast the narrator's view of Aunt Polly's cures to her own intentions.

The narrator intrudes with a harsh judgment of Aunt Polly's gullibility about quack remedies and worthless experiments.

Chapter 13

1. Explain the irony of the boys' island hideaway.

The boys crave freedom from civilization. Yet they are within sight of the town. They still say their "bedtime prayers," as they were taught. They feel guilty about running away and stealing provisions. They are, therefore, still very much in and of civilization.

2. Contrast Huck's reaction to piracy with the other boys.

Huck gets more to eat; he's usually starving. But he's confused by the elaborate code of pirate conduct that Tom and Joe recite. Huck regrets his clothes aren't good enough for a pirate. The boys crave the freedom Huck has, yet impose order on themselves.

Chapter 14

1. What is the turning point of the boys' island idyll?

Despite the lyrical description of local wildlife away from civilization, all the boys get homesick. Watching the boats search for their presumed drowned bodies is thrilling but heightens their loneliness. Tom taunts the other boys into staying on the island, but he sneaks away in the night. As he prepares to go, he writes two messages and collects keepsakes in a hat.

Chapter 15

1. What is Tom's intention when he goes into his aunt's house? What does this suggest about his character?

Tom's intention is unclear, but it can be inferred. The boys' homesickness has already been established, and it is likely that Tom simply wants to be home again. The act suggests that, for all of his bravado and apparent indifference to others, Tom does have a caring and emotional side.

2. Which element prevails in this episode: pathos or absurdity?

There is conflict in this scene between Tom's longing for home, the love and grief of his family, and his selfish desire for pranks and drama regardless of the effect on others. The narrator's tone leans toward the tender emotions of the women.

Opinions may differ about Tom's maturing conscience, or whether cruelty committed by adults or children is forgivable. The tension in the plot sustains the pace toward resolution.

Chapter 16

1. How do the boys enjoy their freedom in the wilderness?

Tom, Huck, and Joe are resourceful in scavenging for food; turtle eggs and fish supplement the provisions they stole in town. Their games resemble what they played when they lived in the village: circus, marbles, outlaws, and swimming.

Their homesickness, however, belies the romance of being outcasts.

2. Why does Tom wait to tell Huck and Joe his secret plan?

Tom feared he could not keep the boys on the island with him. Tom's bravado is cut down to size by the other boys. He is not the intimidating, charismatic leader he aspires to be.

3. What happens when the boys try smoking?

Huck is an experienced pipe smoker who introduces Tom and Joe to the experience. It's a mark of competence and status. After their boastful talk, though, Tom and Joe become sick.

The narrator veils their symptoms with diction and images that are euphemisms for spit and vomit: "expectoration," "spouting fountain," "pumps bailing with might and main." Joe says that "I lost my knife." Huck observes "if they had any trouble they had got rid of it."

This indirectness is a bow to Victorian disapproval of vulgarity. Mark Twain's wife edited his manuscripts as he wrote, and was vigilant about such things.

4. Analyze the description of the thunderstorm.

The description builds with specific sensory observation from a quiet prelude to the climactic crash of the sycamore tree. The violent storm terrifies and exhausts the boys. It changes their motivation. Playing Indian massacre is a human parallel to the violence of nature.

Chapter 17

1. Contrast the description of the town to the beginning of Chapter 2.

Both descriptions of a Saturday in the village establish mood through sensory details and observed behavior. Chapter 2 expresses joy; Chapter 17 sets the scene for sorrow.

2. Does the narrator's tone match the mood of the characters?

The narrator uses sarcasm. Becky "soliloquized"—a fancy word for talked to herself, as actors do in a play. Her regret that she doesn't have Tom's brass andiron knob—the gift she rejected when she spurned him—as a memorial is silly. So is her exaggerated repetition that she will "never, never, never see him again."

The narrator's exaggerated diction mocks funeral behavior. The remembrance of "small trifles" becomes "pregnant with awful prophecy" once the missing boys are presumed dead. The significance of who saw the deceased last becomes a "dismal distinction" of lies "more or less tampered with by the witness." One boy offers the "grandeur" that "Tom Sawyer licked me once."

Note that the minister preaches on Jesus' words "I am the Resurrection and the Life." This is a biblical allusion to Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. It functions as foreshadowing.

The minister talks of the boys' "winning ways" that he was "blinded to" before the funeral. Their "rank rascalities" had seemed "deserving of the cowhide"—a cowhide is a whip. The "pathetic tale" is another lie.

3. What is Old Hundred?

Old Hundred is a popular hymn tune to which many lyrics were written, including the words commonly known as “The Doxology” and a popular setting for Psalm 100:

All peo-ple that on earth do dwell, Sing to the Lord with cheer-ful voice; Him serve with fear, His _

praise forth tell; come ye be - fore Him and re - joice.

4. How might the reference to “Tom Sawyer the Pirate” enjoying his proudest moment be interpreted?

Yes, Tom is the center of attention and admiration as he craves. Other possible interpretations include: The pirate overturned the preaching of church and school that good children triumph and bad children suffer. The outlaw came back into society as a hero. By embracing his fatal career as a pirate, the boy defied death—at least in his imagination.

5. What does Tom’s inclusion of Huck in the celebration mean?

Tom thinks the outcast boy deserves and needs the benefits of family and society. Huck is uncomfortable with the unfamiliar attention.

Chapter 18

1. The narrative goes backward to explain how the boys returned to the village and hid in the church. What is the effect?

This is another example of the technique of in medias res. The author also chose to begin the account of the funeral preparations from Becky Thatcher’s perspective in Chapter 17. This created the mood and rising action leading to the surprise climax of the boys’ “resurrection.” This exposition explains how the boys pulled off the prank to readers’ satisfaction.

2. How does Tom respond to Aunt Polly’s inevitable question about why he let her suffer grief when he wasn’t dead?

Tom admits that informing his aunt would have spoiled “everything”—an utterly selfish perspective. Aunt Polly retorts that his thoughtlessness was not loving—that actions matter. Tom pretends he dreamed about her and describes the scene he actually observed with Mrs. Harper.

3. What does “prophesying” mean?

Aunt Polly is credulous enough to believe Tom’s “dream.” She says Tom has the gift of prophesying—ability to reveal the will of God and foresee the future. Of course, Tom concocted the whole scheme.

He continues to retell what happened that night, revealing the message he wrote on bark from the island. This detail completes the episode of the island.

Aunt Polly forgives Tom, and thanks God for his return. She thinks it is a sign of God’s favor to reward her religious faith. The ultimate reward will be going to heaven after death. “Rest when the long night comes” is a euphemism for death.

Sid the skeptical truth-teller is silenced.

4. Why does Tom snub Becky?

Tom revels in his notoriety. Though he missed Becky, he decides he can be independent. He still resents her rejection of his “engagement.” His show of indifference gratifies his vanity. He talks to Amy Lawrence, who is happy to have him back.

5. How does Becky respond?

When Becky cannot get Tom’s attention, she extends invitations to a picnic to other children while hoping to interest him too. She’s making herself look important and independent. Then she cries.

6. What are the consequences of Tom and Becky’s behavior?

Becky gets even by sharing a book with Alfred Temple during recess. Tom becomes jealous (Alfred Temple was the well-dressed St. Louis boy Tom beat up in Chapter 1). Tom tires of flirting with Amy Lawrence. Becky tires of Alfred Temple, and Alfred realizes he was used to spite Tom. Alfred gets even by spilling ink on Tom’s schoolbook. Becky sees this and decides she’ll let Tom be punished, to retaliate for her embarrassment.

Tom and Becky haven’t resolved their emotional conflict, and they hurt Amy and Alfred’s feelings in the process. The boy/girl conflict spreads.

Chapter 19

1. How have the mood and tone changed?

The rejoicing is over. Tom's notion of independence is gone. The accolades heard at the funeral are gone. Aunt Polly is furious that she was duped by another one of Tom's pranks and lies. She embarrassed herself in front of Mrs. Harper by retelling Tom's "dream" story. Aunt Polly is seriously concerned about Tom's selfishness, meanness, and lying. After all, she is responsible for his upbringing because Tom is an orphan.

Tom acknowledges his faults. He tells the truth: that he came off the island with a message and that he loves her. But Aunt Polly struggles to believe him this time. Her love is not unconditional—but it is generous.

2. What is a "blessed lie"?

Good-hearted Aunt Polly hesitates to confirm whether Tom told the truth about the message in his jacket pocket. She wants to believe the boy loves her and can be kind. She has a conflict within herself as well as with Tom. By not looking in the jacket, she avoids confrontation. She is relieved when she does find the message—a happy denouement to her crisis of faith in Tom and goodness.

Chapter 20

1. How is Tom's new consciousness of the truth received?

Becky angrily rejects Tom's sincere apology and awaits revenge. Becky abets a lie by shifting blame for the spoiled books. The teacher judges Tom according to his reputation and the evidence, and punishes him.

A note: The teacher's anatomy book has pornographic implications. Twain softened them by adding that the teacher had ambitions to be a doctor. This adds to Becky's shame.

2. How does Tom resolve the conflict between truth and lying?

First, Tom becomes angry. As an experienced liar and manipulator, he anticipates how the teacher and girls will react. However, he cannot enjoy Becky's shame. Tom's truthful denial that he ruined the spelling book is disbelieved. But he treats denial and punishment as a matter of form—hypocrisy.

His concern for Becky and his desire for heroism finally unite when Tom takes the blame for the torn anatomy book. Tom manipulates the situation to his advantage again.

Chapter 21

1. What can be inferred regarding the narrator's opinion of the schoolteacher?

The narrator characterizes the teacher as a mean and petty tyrant, a drinker who gets "pretty well muddled" and conducts dull classes by rote. The composition themes "go back to the Crusades." The teacher puts little effort, originality, or discernment into his job. He and parents praise bad writing if it has heavy-handed morals.

2. Translate the parodies of school compositions.

The narrator criticizes the trite topics, strained diction, and insincerity of schoolwork. Each parody imitates these bad features. Restating the compositions in plain language reinforces Twain's ridicule.

"Is this, then, Life?" says that young people look forward to parties. A girl imagines herself as the center of attention, dancing in a fashionable white dress. She enjoys her daydreams, then goes to sleep and dreams some more. But after a while, she realizes frivolity is a waste of time and harms her health. Pleasure does not satisfy her serious spirit.

"A Missouri Maiden's Farewell to Alabama" is about a girl who visited Alabama, walked through the woods and by the rivers, and is crying because she has to go back to Missouri.

"A Vision" describes two frightened girls in a thunderstorm. It provides a contrast to the description of the storm in Chapter 16.

Chapter 22

1. What kind of organization is the Cadets of Temperance?

Drinking was common in early America, and viewed as both sociable and healthful. Liquor was used as medicine. Alcoholism was seen as failure of self-control, not physical addiction. During the 19th century, immigration, urbanization, and Western settlement made poverty and alcoholism social issues.

Religious revivals from the 1820s to 1840s encouraged personal responsibility and moral improvement through church membership and public campaigns. The temperance movement encouraged abstinence, government regulation of liquor production and consumption, and limited days and hours of operation at taverns. Temperance organizations enlisted women and children to encourage men to reform.

2. What are Tom's "shackles"?

The metaphor compares the Cadets' red sash to handcuffs. Tom is tempted to drink and swear because the Cadets prohibit this.

3. Why was Tom “deeply concerned” about the dying judge?

Tom wants to participate in the judge’s funeral procession to show off his sash. This is sarcasm.

4. Who is U.S. Sen. Benton?

Missouri Sen. Thomas Hart Benton was in office from 1821 to 1851. He favored Western expansion of white settlement, removal of Indian tribes, and abolition of slavery.

Chapter 23

1. Summarize Tom and Huck’s opinion of Muff Potter.

The boys think Muff Potter is a harmless drunk who will be found guilty of murder in court, or he will be lynched. They appreciate his favors and feel guilty about their silence. They fear Injun Joe more.

2. What is the effect of Muff Potter’s speech in the jail?

Muff Potter’s gratitude and remorse is pitiful. The effect is pathos.

3. When did Tom reveal his secret to Muff Potter’s defense lawyer?

The boys debate their moral dilemma and hope for something to happen. The author structures the chapter around Muff Potter’s peril and expands the courtroom drama leading to Tom’s testimony. This creates suspense and the surprise climax. Looking back, the exposition mentions that after the second day of the trial, Tom left home after dark.

4. Contrast Tom’s appearance in court to his fake funeral.

When Tom is in real danger of being killed, he is terrified. But he is genuinely brave and honest.

Chapter 24

1. Why is Huck’s confidence gone?

Huck didn’t trust the lawyer to keep his identity secret. He has no faith in adults or the justice system. He feels betrayed by Tom, who broke their vow of silence.

The narrator mocks the detective who fails to find Injun Joe. The tone implies Huck and Tom are right to be wary of adults.

Chapter 25

1. Contrast Tom's idea of the treasure hunt with Huck's.

Tom imagines elaborate plans to dig for a fictitious fortune. Huck is literal and does not romanticize situations. He thinks digging is a waste of time and work. Huck wants money for immediate needs. He says his father might return and take his money if he doesn't spend it fast.

Tom wants to set aside money to get married, though he won't name the girl. Huck recalls that his parents fought before they abandoned him. After Huck admits he's lonely, Tom says he'll take care of him. Tom thinks positively of the future.

Chapter 26

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of Injun Joe as an antagonist.

The boys' adversary is the adult counterpart to their make-believe games of outlaw. Injun Joe's deeds are inexcusable. His crimes make the boys confront social morals, and create a mood of dread and suspense. But his motivation for treachery is only attributed to being Indian. That is racial stereotype.

The treasure hunt involves the boys in what writers today call a "cozy mystery." This subgenre involves a likable amateur detective as the protagonist, and a small-town setting with supporting characters. There is no gory violence other than reference to a murder, no profanity or sex, and the antagonist is punished at the end. These elements also lend themselves to children's literature.

2. What was Murrell's gang?

John A. Murrell (1804-1844) was a notorious outlaw from Tennessee who stole horses and slaves for resale along the Mississippi River. Murrell was said to control a gang of robbers in several states. Murrell was in prison from 1834 to 1844, and died soon after his release. Folklore claims Murrell left loot at various sites.

Twain wrote about Murrell in "Life on the Mississippi" (1883).

3. Why does Injun Joe plan to flee to Texas?

Much of Texas was lawless Indian territory. It was part of Mexico until white settlers, led by Stephen Austin, were allowed to start a colony in 1820. The colonists rebelled and declared Texas an independent republic in 1836. The Texas Rangers were organized as protection against Indians and outlaws. Texas joined the United States in 1846.

Chapter 27

1. Why is Huck assigned to watch the tavern?

Tom investigates whether the two local taverns have a Room No. 2, a clue to the robbers' hidden treasure. But Tom does not want to be seen with Huck in public. This could be interpreted as either stealth or snobbery. As a street urchin, Huck has total freedom to stay out all night. But Huck is more afraid than Tom is to follow Injun Joe.

Chapter 28

1. How does the author sustain suspense?

It is a matter of pace. The exposition describes several nights of anxious waiting, then suddenly Tom appears running for safety. While Tom was trying keys, the tavern door suddenly opened. He was looking for money and found Injun Joe.

2. What is a temperance tavern?

The tavern provides lodging as well as food and drink. The temperance movement attempted to reduce alcohol consumption, including regulating taverns' days and hours of operation. The "haunted room" implies drinking was permitted in secret after the tavern should be closed.

3. How does Huck survive while hiding from Injun Joe?

Huck hides in the Rogers family's barn and relies on their slave Uncle Jake. Despite Huck's poverty and Jake's generosity, Huck believes he's socially superior and is doing the slave a favor by eating with him. Huck is imitating adult attitudes in the slave-holding South.

Chapter 29

1. How have Tom and Becky improved their relationship?

Tom and Becky play together and look forward to enjoying the picnic. Tom still takes the lead and influences Becky to change plans without telling her mother. Becky agrees against her better judgment.

2. How likely is it that the Widow Douglas expects the children?

Tom's tempting suggestion that the widow will provide ice cream is another example of his impulsiveness and presumption. The wealth and hospitality of the Widow Douglas were mentioned early in the novel. However, an adult with good manners would wait for an invitation.

Tom's suggestion does solve a plot problem. This explains how Tom and Becky were left behind at the cave after the picnic ends.

The literary term for an unexpected or unlikely character or occurrence is deus ex machina. It's artificial and forced writing. The literal translation is "god from a machine." This refers to ancient Greek theater, in which an actor playing a god was lowered to the stage by crane or lifted through a trap door in order to explain a situation or end the story.

3. Contrast the picnickers' cave exploration to Huck's pursuit of the robbers.

Here again, Twain uses shifts in mood and pace to propel the narrative. The picnickers venture from hot, green woodland into the dark, damp cave in an exuberant mood. They fight playfully over candles to light their way and chase down the aisles. The mysterious labyrinth is awesome, yet charming. The children exit exhausted but exhilarated. The bell signaling the ferryboat's departure ends the fun.

Huck's lonely vigil at the tavern is tense and purposeful. After a dull wait, the robbers appear suddenly. Huck pursues them up the dark hill intent on finding buried treasure. After hearing the murder threat, Huck runs back to the Welshman's house to save the Widow Douglas's life. Huck is frantic and bangs on the door for urgent help. This conflict is potentially tragic.

4. Is Injun Joe's revenge against the Widow Douglas convincing?

Injun Joe's confrontation with Doctor Robinson in Chapter 9 revealed he was jailed as a vagrant. The widow's late husband was the justice of the peace who imposed the jail sentence plus a public whipping. Though Injun Joe is a criminal, he is offended to be treated like a "nigger," a black person. He does not respect law enforcement. Injun Joe's method of revenge—mutilating the Widow Douglas and leaving her to die—is typical of caricatures of Indian viciousness.

This threat is a stark contrast to Tom's pirate code of behavior toward women.

Chapter 30

1. Contrast the adults' reactions and priorities to the children's.

The exposition shifts to an adult perspective to explain the denouement of Injun Joe's murder plot. It shows differences in attitude and competence.

The Welshman and his sons confronted the robbers and shot at them, while Huck ran away in fear. The Welshman needs a description of the criminals to aid the sheriff's posse, but Huck doesn't trust adult protection. The Welshman knows Huck is evading the truth. When Huck feels he can trust the older man, he reveals Injun Joe's identity. The Welshman posted guards around the Widow Douglas's house. (Note that he called them "negro men" rather than the demeaning term "niggers.")

The Widow Douglas nurses Huck during his illness, determined to appreciate the boy as a mark of religious faith. This contrasts to Huck's cynicism about people.

While the adults hunt for Injun Joe, Huck still wants to find the outlaws' treasure.

The consequences of Tom and Becky's changed plans also become apparent. They've been missing for a day. The adults' desperate search in the cave is the opposite of the picnickers' carefree exploration in Chapter 29.

Chapter 31

1. How did Tom and Becky lose their way in the cave?

Tom and Becky became distracted by the cave's scenery, their conversation, and the bats. Tom ventured into new areas, and Becky followed. They stopped marking their route with candle smoke, and didn't notice their long separation from the other picnickers.

2. How do Tom and Becky confront the situation?

This is another opportunity to compare and contrast. Becky recognizes the danger of being lost first. She makes Tom accept blame for his carelessness and seek a way out. He accepts responsibility for their survival and rescue.

Becky succumbs to fear and exhaustion, and resigns herself to death. Tom encourages and comforts her while keeping his own worries to himself. Tom is resourceful and brave. He doesn't tell her he saw Injun Joe. He thinks about shouting for help, saving candles, resting near water, sharing the cake, and using the kite string to search the passages.

3. What is the significance of Tom and Becky sharing "wedding cake"?

Becky saved the piece of cake from the picnic as a symbol of their future marriage. She is following a tradition that says those who sleep with wedding cake under their pillows will dream of their future spouses. This adds pathos to Becky's fear of dying.

Chapter 32

1. How does the author structure the children's dramatic return to the village?

Again, Twain uses the technique of in medias res. The chapter begins with a mood of despair in the village. The pace changes to a noisy rush to cheer Tom and Becky's return. Then the exposition goes chronologically backward to Tom's discovery of the hole leading out of the cave. This heightens the dramatic arc.

2. Why does Tom faint when he learns the cave door was locked?

The obvious answer is Tom knows Injun Joe is trapped in the cave. But Injun Joe was a remorseless killer who terrified Tom and Huck. Tom is showing a conscience and anticipating Injun Joe's suffering before death.

Keep in mind, though, that for two weeks after Tom's rescue from the cave, he never told anyone where Injun Joe was hiding. The sheriff pursuing Injun Joe had no clue where to look.

Chapter 33

1. How does the narrator regard Injun Joe's death?

Injun Joe's attempts to cut through the door and stave off starvation are described with pathos. The outcast was literally barred from light, freedom, and companionship. The futility of his struggle is emphasized by comparisons between the 24-hour drip of life-giving water to the span of history since the Pyramids were built. A metaphor compares him to a flitting insect, a short-lived creature of no importance. Injun Joe's stone cup and gravesite are reduced to tourist attractions.

Aladdin's Palace is the descriptive name of one of the cavern's chambers. It also is an allusion to an Arab folk tale about a poor tailor who discovered a cave of treasures, including a lamp with a genie to work magic on command. Aladdin built a fabulous jeweled palace with his riches. The irony is that water was more precious to Injun Joe.

The narrator's tone becomes contemptuous of the "sappy women" who petition the governor for a pardon, despite the five murders. Their mercy is compared to weaklings intimidated by Satan. Religious sentiment—as contrasted with real faith—impairs their judgment.

2. What did Tom deduce about the treasure?

Tom is remarkably resilient in resuming the treasure hunt with Huck. While lost in the cave, Tom saw Injun Joe and the cross mark that explained the clue to the robbers' No. 2 hideout. He overcomes his fear and superstitions. He rationalizes that Injun Joe's ghost must be miles away. He is persistent about interpreting footprints, digging to find the treasure box, and planning how to haul the loot back to the village.

3. What is Tom's reaction to finding the treasure?

Tom reverts to imagining a career as a robber. He elaborates on how to lead a gang and treat rich, beautiful women hostages. Tom clearly does not know what orgies are. When Tom and Huck meet the Welshman, Mr. Jones, they lie about what they found.

Chapter 34

1. How does Tom treat Huck at the party?

Tom tells Huck he'll take care of him in the unfamiliar social setting. Tom reintroduces Huck to respectable society along with the Welshman, Mr. Jones.

2. Contrast Sid to Tom and Huck.

Sid has had no adventures. He spoils the surprise party by telling Tom, Huck, and the other guests that Huck was responsible for tracking the robbers to the widow's house. As Tom says, Sid is petty and mean.

Nonetheless, Tom creates another surprise when he reveals that he and Huck are both rich. The \$12,000 in gold outshines the Widow Douglas's generous promise to raise and educate Huck. In adult perspective, that's more cash than anyone else has. The adults' property values fluctuate and are unreliable wealth.

Chapter 35

1. How do adults react to the boys' wealth?

Men pursue treasure hunts to find easy money; they behave like boys. Tom and Huck's guardians sensibly invest the boys' money to earn interest. The boys' income equals the minister's salary.

2. Compare adult ideas of spending to the boys' desires in Chapter 25.

The boys' opinions and actions become respectable and newsworthy. Judge Thatcher, Becky's father, thinks Tom's lie about the torn book was noble and indicates talent to be a lawyer or soldier. Lawyers are supposed to pursue truth and justice; soldiers endure hardship. Of course, Tom has his own career goals for different reasons.

3. What is Huck's perspective on wealth?

Huck is no longer an outcast. But he can't tolerate the widow's expectations of proper behavior. He can't stand good clothing, table manners, sleeping in a bed, going to school or praying. Huck wants his freedom back, along with its hardships. He wants to swim, fish, smoke, and swear. Huck thinks wealth means work and worry, and offers his money to Tom to be rid of the bother. Huck says he appreciates what is hard to get. He wants an occasional dime—or a robber's life.

4. How can a robber be respectable?

Tom tells Huck that robbers come from the aristocracy. This is sarcasm about the origins of wealth and deference to social class and titles.

5. Have the boys reconciled with adult expectations?

Tom tells Huck that he'll learn to like living with the wealthy widow. Huck promises to try for a month. Meanwhile, they plan a midnight gang initiation that includes a blood oath on a coffin. That resembles their first adventure in the cemetery in Chapter 9. Huck aspires to be a famous robber to make the Widow Douglas proud of him. At best, the boys resign themselves to society while preserving their imaginations.

Conclusion

1. Is this novel "strictly the history of a boy"? Why would the author make that claim?

Analysis of the novel reveals its satirical themes, as well as a chronicle of Western life in an early Mississippi River settlement. The author's disclaimer focuses on the novel's entertainment value and softens the social criticism.

2. Why would a novel about adults stop with a marriage?

As a genre, romance novels follow courtship to the conclusion of marriage. The assumption is that adult life follows a predictable pattern of child rearing and respectability after that.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

Chapter 1

1. What is the effect of beginning this story with one word—"Tom!"

2. What are the characters like, and how do they relate to each other?

3. Who is telling this story? What are the advantages of this narrative point of view?

4. What is Twain's intention in violating conventions of standard written English? What effect does he create?

Chapter 2

1. What impression is given of the time and place?

2. What narrative technique is Twain employing when he describes the fence Tom must paint as a “far-reaching continent” of fence?

3. How does Tom deal with his setbacks? What does this episode contribute to Tom’s character development?

4. What’s the appeal of Ben Rogers’s riverboat game? What might Ben’s role in the game foreshadow?

5. Compare what Tom says to Ben to the narrator’s conclusion at the end chapter.

Chapter 3

1. How does Tom present himself to Aunt Polly? How does she react?

2. Does Tom behave differently with other boys and girls than he does with Aunt Polly? Or does he behave the same?

Chapter 4

1. What is Mosaic Law?

2. Analyze the description of Aunt Polly’s prayer. What is the effect of the description?

3. What does the expression to “gird up [one’s] loins” mean? What is the effect of its use in this chapter?

4. What is the Sermon on the Mount? Where is the satire in this episode?

5. What is Tom’s opinion of Sunday school? What is the narrator’s?

6. How does the adults' behavior reinforce the satire?

7. What is significant about the superintendent's reaction to Tom's victory? How does Twain's word choice maintain a mocking, satiric tone?

8. How does Amy Lawrence react?

9. What is ironic about Judge Thatcher's reaction?

10. What is the highest point of this satiric plotline?

Chapter 5

1. Compare the description of the minister's sermon to Tom's boredom.

2. What did Tom conclude from this?

Chapter 6

1. What does Tom know about illness?

2. Why is Huckleberry Finn an outcast in the village?

3. Why do children like Huck?

4. Why does Tom challenge adult perceptions of Huck?

5. What can a reader infer from Tom's declaration of love? What evidence in the chapter supports that inference?

Chapter 7

1. What does this chapter contribute to the overall impact or structure of the novel?

Chapter 8

1. The narrator states paradoxically that Tom’s mood was in “happy accord with his surroundings.” Examine the setting and explain the truth in the paradox.

2. How does the narrator change this mood?

3. What are the common factors that influence Tom’s career choices?

4. Explain Tom’s understanding of cause and effect in superstitions. What theme is being advanced in Twain’s attention to Tom’s superstitious nature?

5. What does the Robin Hood game reveal about the boys? How does their play echo Twain’s mockery of religion and formal education?

6. On what note of suspense does this chapter end?

Chapter 9

1. How does the narrator create tension in the description of Tom's bedroom?

2. Contrast the narrator's diction to the language of the dialogue.

3. Why is Doctor Robinson paying grave robbers?

4. Why does Injun Joe threaten Doctor Robinson?

5. Summarize Injun Joe's response to Muff Potter.

Chapter 10

1. Summarize Tom and Huck's dilemma after the murder.

2. Explain the irony of the boys' written vow.

3. What is the effect of the howling dog?

4. How is Tom's resolve tested? What choices does he make?

Chapter 11

1. What is the effect of the anachronism of the telegraph?

2. How does Muff Potter implicate himself?

3. How does this influence Tom and Huck?

Chapter 12

1. Describe the turning point of Tom's character arc.

2. Contrast the narrator's view of Aunt Polly's cures to her own intentions.

Chapter 13

1. Explain the irony of the boys' island hideaway.

2. Contrast Huck's reaction to piracy with the other boys.

Chapter 14

1. What is the turning point of the boys' island idyll?

Chapter 15

1. What is Tom's intention when he goes into his aunt's house? What does this suggest about his character?

2. Which element prevails in this episode: pathos or absurdity?

Chapter 16

1. How do the boys enjoy their freedom in the wilderness?

2. Why does Tom wait to tell Huck and Joe his secret plan?

3. What happens when the boys try smoking?

4. Analyze the description of the thunderstorm.

Chapter 17

1. Contrast the description of the town to the beginning of Chapter 2.

2. Does the narrator’s tone match the mood of the characters?

3. What is Old Hundred?

4. How might the reference to “Tom Sawyer the Pirate” enjoying his proudest moment be interpreted?

5. What does Tom’s inclusion of Huck in the celebration mean?

Chapter 18

- 1. The narrative goes backward to explain how the boys returned to the village and hid in the church. What is the effect?

- 2. How does Tom respond to Aunt Polly’s inevitable question about why he let her suffer grief when he wasn’t dead?

- 3. What does “prophesying” mean?

- 4. Why does Tom snub Becky?

- 5. How does Becky respond?

- 6. What are the consequences of Tom and Becky’s behavior?

Chapter 19

1. How have the mood and tone changed?

2. What is a “blessed lie”?

Chapter 20

1. How is Tom's new consciousness of the truth received?

2. How does Tom resolve the conflict between truth and lying?

Chapter 21

1. What can be inferred regarding the narrator's opinion of the schoolteacher?

2. Translate the parodies of school compositions.

Chapter 22

1. What kind of organization is the Cadets of Temperance?

2. What are Tom's "shackles"?

3. Why was Tom "deeply concerned" about the dying judge?

4. Who is U.S. Sen. Benton?

Chapter 23

1. Summarize Tom and Huck’s opinion of Muff Potter.

2. What is the effect of Muff Potter’s speech in the jail?

3. When did Tom reveal his secret to Muff Potter’s defense lawyer?

4. Contrast Tom’s appearance in court to his fake funeral.

Chapter 24

1. Why is Huck's confidence gone?

Chapter 25

1. Contrast Tom's idea of the treasure hunt with Huck's.

Chapter 26

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of Injun Joe as an antagonist.

2. What was Murrell's gang?

3. Why does Injun Joe plan to flee to Texas?

Chapter 27

1. Why is Huck assigned to watch the tavern?

Chapter 28

1. How does the author sustain suspense?

2. What is a temperance tavern?

3. How does Huck survive while hiding from Injun Joe?

Chapter 29

1. How have Tom and Becky improved their relationship?

2. How likely is it that the Widow Douglas expects the children?

3. Contrast the picnickers' cave exploration to Huck's pursuit of the robbers.

4. Is Injun Joe's revenge against the Widow Douglas convincing?

Chapter 30

1. Contrast the adults' reactions and priorities to the children's.

Chapter 31

1. How did Tom and Becky lose their way in the cave?

2. How do Tom and Becky confront the situation?

3. What is the significance of Tom and Becky sharing “wedding cake”?

Chapter 32

1. How does the author structure the children’s dramatic return to the village?

2. Why does Tom faint when he learns the cave door was locked?

Chapter 33

1. How does the narrator regard Injun Joe's death?

2. What did Tom deduce about the treasure?

3. What is Tom's reaction to finding the treasure?

Chapter 34

1. How does Tom treat Huck at the party?

2. Contrast Sid to Tom and Huck.

Chapter 35

1. How do adults react to the boys' wealth?

2. Compare adult ideas of spending to the boys' desires in Chapter 25.

3. What is Huck's perspective on wealth?

4. How can a robber be respectable?

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2. Why would a novel about adults stop with a marriage?

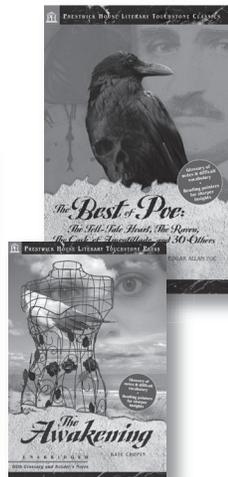
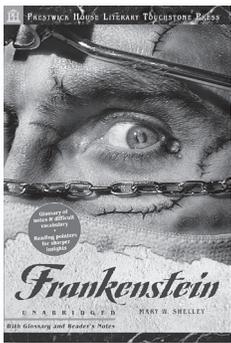
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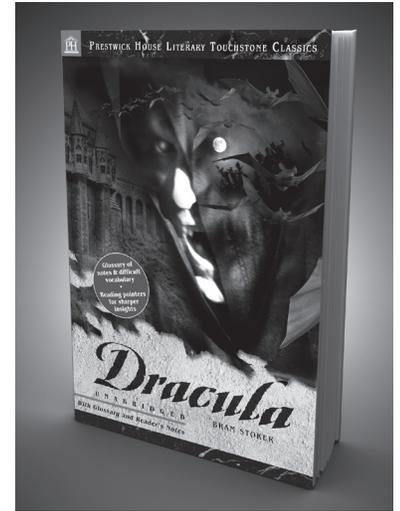
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