

**Mark Twain's**  
*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn:*  
**A Discussion Guide**

**David Bruce**

**Dedicated with Love to Brenda Kennedy**

**Copyright 2008 by Bruce D. Bruce**

**Educate Yourself**

**Read Like A Wolf Eats**

**Feel Free to Give This Book to Anyone Free of Charge**

**Be Excellent to Each Other**

**Books Then, Books Now, Books Forever**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Preface to this Book</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Biographical Notes on Mark Twain</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction to <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i></b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Notice and Explanatory</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Chapter 1: I Discover Moses and the Bulrushers</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Our Gang's Dark Oath</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Chapter 3: We Ambuscade the Arabs</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Chapter 4: The Hair Ball Oracle</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Chapter 5: Pap Starts in on a New Life</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Chapter 6: Pap Struggles with the Death Angel</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Chapter 7: I Fool Pap and Get Away</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Chapter 8: I Spare Miss Watson's Jim</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Chapter 9: The House of Death Floats By</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Chapter 10: What Comes of Handlin' Snake-Skin</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Chapter 11: They are After Us!</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Chapter 12: Better Let Blame Well Alone</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Chapter 13: Honest Loot From <i>Walter Scott</i></b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Chapter 14: Was Solomon Wise?</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Chapter 15: Fooling Poor Old Jim</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Chapter 16: The Rattlesnake Skin Does Its Work</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Chapter 17: The Grangerfords Take Me In</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Chapter 18: Overreaching Don't Pay</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Chapter 19: The Duke and the Dauphin Come Aboard</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Chapter 20: What Royalty Did to Pikeville</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Chapter 21: An Arkansaw Difficulty</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Chapter 22: Why The Lynching Bee Failed</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>Chapter 23: The Orneriness of Kings</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Chapter 24: The King Turns Parson</b>	<b>138</b>
<b>Chapter 25: All Full of Tears and Flapdoodle</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>Chapter 26: I Steal the King's Plunder</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>Chapter 27: Dead Peter has His Gold</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Chapter 28: Overreaching Don't Pay</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>Chapter 29: I Light Out in the Storm</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>Chapter 30: The Gold Saves the Thieves</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>Chapter 31: You Can't Pray a Lie</b>	<b>164</b>
<b>Chapter 32: I Have a New Name</b>	<b>172</b>
<b>Chapter 33: The Pitiful Ending of Royalty</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>Chapter 34: We Cheer Jim Up</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>Chapter 35: Dark, Deep Laid Plans</b>	<b>184</b>
<b>Chapter 36: Trying to Help Jim</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>Chapter 37: Jim Gets His Witch Pie</b>	<b>192</b>
<b>Chapter 38: Here a Captive Heart Busted</b>	<b>196</b>
<b>Chapter 39: Tom Writes Anonymous Letters</b>	<b>203</b>
<b>Chapter 40: A Mixed Up and Splendid Rescue</b>	<b>208</b>
<b>Chapter 41: Must A Been Spirits</b>	<b>210</b>

<b>Chapter 42: Why They Didn't Hang Jim</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>Chapter the Last: Nothing More to Write</b>	<b>225</b>
<b>Appendix A: Mark Twain's Exposure of the Lies that</b>	<b>229</b>
<b>    Bind</b>	
<b>Appendix B: Bibliography</b>	<b>232</b>
<b>Appendix C: Topics for Papers</b>	<b>234</b>
<b>Appendix D: Paper Hints</b>	<b>236</b>
<b>Appendix E: Short Reaction Memos</b>	<b>245</b>
<b>Appendix F: Mark Twain: His Life</b>	<b>254</b>
<b>Appendix G: Some Mark Twain Anecdotes</b>	<b>268</b>
<b>Appendix H: Some Mark Twain Quotations</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>Appendix I: About the Author</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Appendix J: Some Books by the Author</b>	<b>301</b>

## Preface to This Book

The purpose of this book is educational. I have read, studied, and taught Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and I wish to pass on what I have learned to other people who are interested in studying Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. In particular, I think that the readers of this short introduction to Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* will be bright high school seniors and college first-year students, as well as intelligent adults who simply wish to study *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* despite not being literature majors.

This book uses a question-and-answer format. It poses, then answers, relevant questions about Twain, background information, and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. This book goes through *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* chapter by chapter.

Teachers may find this book useful as a discussion guide for the novel. Teachers can have students read chapters from the novel, then teachers can ask students selected questions from this book.

The quotations from the novel come from this source:

Twain, Mark. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001. Edited by Walter Blair and Victor Fischer.

This book will use short quotations from critical works about *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. This use is consistent with fair use:

§ 107. Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair use

Release date: 2004-04-30

Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 106 and 106A, the fair use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phonorecords

or by any other means specified by that section, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered shall include —

- (1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- (2) the nature of the copyrighted work;
- (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

The fact that a work is unpublished shall not itself bar a finding of fair use if such finding is made upon consideration of all the above factors.

Source of Fair Use information:

<<http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/17/107>>.

### Biographical Notes on Mark Twain

- Samuel Langhorne Clemens (later Mark Twain) was born on November 30, 1835, in Florida, Missouri, but grew up in nearby Hannibal (his family moved there in 1839), which became the village (called St. Petersburg) in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Hannibal was located on the Mississippi River and had 2,000 inhabitants.
- Sam was the sixth child of John Marshall Clemens and Jane Lampton.
- Sam's father owned a grocery store.
- Sam's Uncle Quarles had a farm on which slaves worked. Sam sometimes stayed at the farm during summers, and he saw slaves being beaten.
- Hannibal, Missouri, was a slave-holding community. The slaves were mostly household servants.
- When Samuel L. Clemens was 12, his father died. Young Sam dropped out of school, then began work as an apprentice in a printer's shop to help support his family. Then he worked under his brother, Orion, at the newspaper called the *Hannibal Journal*.
- In June of 1853, Sam left Hannibal and started traveling, working for a while as a journalist and printer in places such as St. Louis, New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and Iowa, then becoming a riverboat pilot on the Mississippi River. The man who taught him the Mississippi River was Horace Bixby, pilot of the *Paul Jones*.
- Sam served briefly in the Confederate Army during the Civil War, but deserted and headed West to search for gold (unsuccessfully).



- He became a reporter and humorist for the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise*, where he adopted the pen name Mark Twain. One story of the name's meaning is that it is the cry given when a river man measures the depth of water in the Mississippi River and finds that it is 12 feet (two fathoms). "Mark Twain" means "Note that there are two fathoms of water." (A fathom is six feet.) Two fathoms of water is enough water for a riverboat not to be in danger of hitting bottom. Sam used the pen name Mark Twain for the first time on February 2, 1863. Another account of the origin of the name is that Sam used to call out "mark twain" when he and a thirsty friend entered a favorite Western saloon. In this case, "mark twain" meant "mark two more drinks on my tab."
- As a reporter, Twain was a social critic. In San Francisco, he wrote about the inhumane treatment of illegal Chinese immigrants and of the poor.
- In 1869, Twain's published the book (his 2nd) that was the most popular of all his books during his lifetime: *Innocents Abroad*. This humorous book tells of his travels to Europe and the Holy Land.
- On February 2, 1870, Sam married Olivia Langdon. Her family was prominent in Elmira, New York. Sam and Olivia soon moved to Hartford, Connecticut.
- Twain's next book was *Roughing It*, published in 1872. This humorous book told of Sam's experiences prospecting for gold.
- In 1873, Twain published his first novel, *The Gilded Age*, which was co-written by Charles Dudley Warner, about corruption during the 1800s.
- Twain published *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* in 1876.
- Twain published *The Prince and the Pauper* in 1881.

- Twain published *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in 1885.
- Twain published *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* in 1889.
- Many of Twain's investments failed and he became deep in debt, but he went on long speaking tours and earned the money needed to pay his debts and have some money of his own.
- Although Twain was a humorist, late in life he grew deeply pessimistic and pondered the existence of the nature of God (if God in fact does exist).
- Twain died of angina on April 21, 1910.
- In *The Mysterious Stranger*, Twain wrote, "The Human race in its poverty, has unquestionably one really effective weapon — laughter. Power, money, persuasion, supplication, persecution — these can lift at a colossal humbug — push it a little, weaken it a little, century by century, but only laughter can blow it to rags and atoms at a blast. Against the assault of laughter, nothing can stand." Twain often used humor to mock colossal humbugs.

## Introduction to

### *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

- A look at the title pages of the first editions show that these are the correct titles of these two novels:

*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Note that the *Tom Sawyer* title has a “The”; the *Huck Finn* title does not.

- *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a candidate for the title “The Great American Novel.”
- St. Petersburg is patterned after Hannibal, Missouri, where Mark Twain spent his youth. Hannibal is located approximately 80 miles from St. Louis, Missouri. Hannibal is located on the Mississippi River.
- *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* takes place in mid-19th-century America, before the Civil War. Slavery was legal at that time.
- Huck Finn thinks for himself; Tom Sawyer follows rules out of the books.
- Huck Finn is Realistic; Tom Sawyer is Romantic.
- Huck Finn is a nonconformist; in many ways, Tom Sawyer is a conformist.
- Huck Finn is mostly illiterate; Tom Sawyer is mostly literate.
- Huck Finn dislikes being the center of attention; Tom Sawyer revels in being the center of attention.
- Huck Finn is practical, Realistic, and pragmatic. He does things because they work. Tom Sawyer is often impractical,

unRealistic, and Romantic. He does things because they're in the books he reads.

- When Huck Finn is on his own, he is a good problem-solver. When Huck Finn is in the company of Tom Sawyer, he follows Tom's lead, no matter how silly and impractical Tom is.
- Jim has a functioning family. He runs away from Miss Watson because he is about to be sold down the river, away from his wife and children.
- Jim serves as a father figure to Huck on their journey down the river.
- Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer are about 12, 13, or 14 years of age.
- Twain published *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in 1885. At this time, slavery had been ended for 20 years; however, Reconstruction was failing, and the South was enacting a series of Jim Crow laws. Although blacks were really free, they still were being kept from their full rights because of racism and prejudice.
- By the summer of 1883, before *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was published (1885), Twain wrote to his publisher, "I've just finished writing a book and modesty compels me to say it's a rattling good one too."
- According to Ernest Hemingway, "all modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*."
- Huckleberry and fin (as in a fish's fin) are words associated with nature rather than civilization. "Finn" is an Irish name. Huck's Pap may be an Irish drunk.
- The frontispiece to the first edition of the novel showed a portrait of Huckleberry Finn. The portrait is good, but I think

that it is inaccurate in one detail: Huckleberry Finn does not like to wear shoes.

## NOTICE AND EXPLANATORY

### **In your opinion, what is the purpose of the Notice and the Explanatory (Note)?**

The Notice is humorous, and the Explanatory is serious. The same is true of the novel as a whole: It is both humorous and serious.

The Notice is humorous. This is the Notice:

#### NOTICE

PERSONS attempting to find a Motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a Moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a Plot in it will be shot.

By Order of the Author

Per G.G., Chief of Ordnance.

What we see in the Notice is a joke. It seems to be saying that this novel is not serious, that it has no motive, no moral, and no plot. Of course, it does have all of these things.

The Explanatory is serious, although humor is in it, too. In the Explanatory, Twain points out that the dialogue in the novel has been painstakingly created. It contains a number of dialects (the bulleted items are Twain's words):

- the Missouri negro dialect;
- the extremest form of the backwoods South-Western dialect;
- the ordinary "Pike County" dialect; and
- four modified varieties of this last.

Of course, if the novel were not serious, there would be no real good reason to take such pains with rendering the

dialects. And of course, Twain engages in humor in the Explanatory, too. He writes:

I make this explanation for the reason that without it many readers would suppose that all these characters were trying to talk alike and not succeeding.

## **CHAPTER 1: I DISCOVER MOSES AND THE BULRUSHERS**

**Why do you suppose Mark Twain chose “Huckleberry Finn” as the name of the protagonist in this novel?**

Huckleberry and fin (as in a fish’s fin) are words associated with nature rather than civilization.

In addition, Finn is an Irish name, so Huckleberry’s father may be an Irish drunk.

**What is a protagonist?**

A protagonist is the major character in a work of fiction. In this novel, Huckleberry Finn is the major character and so he is the protagonist.

**Compare and contrast the widow Douglas and Miss Watson.**

### *Similarities*

The two women are similar in that they are related, they are white middle-class women, and they are civilized. Apparently, both women are slave-owners. Miss Watson owns Jim, but more slaves than Jim are in the household. On p. 4, we read: “By and by they fetched the niggers in and had prayers, and then everybody was off to bed.”

Both women are religious. The widow Douglas prays over their meals (Huck thinks that she is grumbling about the food). She also teaches Huck about Moses and the Bulrushers.

### *Differences*

The widow Douglas is much gentler than her sister, Miss Watson.



Miss Watson is an old maid, while the widow Douglas is — of course — a widow.

### **What is Huck's opinion of civilization?**

On pp. 1-2, we read what Huckleberry (the narrator of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*), says about Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*:

Now the way that the book winds up, is this: Tom and me found the money that the robbers hid in the cave, and it made us rich. We got six thousand dollars apiece — all gold. It was an awful sight of money when it was piled up. Well, Judge Thatcher, he took it and put it out at interest, and it fetched us a dollar a day apiece all the year round — more than a body could tell what to do with. The widow Douglas she took me for her son, and allowed she would sivilize me; but it was rough living in the house all the time, considering how dismal regular and decent the widow was in all her ways; and so when I couldn't stand it no longer I lit out. I got into my old rags and my sugar hogshead again, and was free and satisfied. But Tom Sawyer he hunted me up and said he was going to start a band of robbers, and I might join if I would go back to the widow and be respectable. So I went back.

Even after Huck goes back, he doesn't like it. On p. 2, we read:

She put me in them new clothes again, and I couldn't do nothing but sweat and sweat, and feel all cramped up. Well, then, the old thing commenced again. The widow rung a bell for supper, and you had to come to time. When you got to the table you couldn't go right to eating, but you had to wait for the widow to tuck down her head and grumble a little over the

victuals, though there warn't really anything the matter with them. That is, nothing only everything was cooked by itself. In a barrel of odds and ends it is different; things get mixed up, and the juice kind of swaps around, and the things go better.

Basically, Huck doesn't like being civilized. He strongly prefers to be free. He wants to be able to swear, to smoke, and to scratch where it itches. Even though he goes back to the Widow Douglas, he finds it very uncomfortable — partly because of Miss Watson. On p. 3, we read:

Her sister, Miss Watson, a tolerable slim old maid, with goggles on, had just come to live with her, and took a set at me now with a spelling-book. She worked me middling hard for about an hour, and then the widow made her ease up. I couldn't stood it much longer. Then for an hour it was deadly dull, and I was fidgety. Miss Watson would say, "Don't put your feet up there, Huckleberry," and "Don't scrunch up like that, Huckleberry — set up straight;" and pretty soon she would say, "Don't gap and stretch like that, Huckleberry — why don't you try to behave?"

**When Huck wants to be free, he lives in a hogshead. What is a hogshead? How do you suppose Huck gets his food when he lives on his own?**

A hogshead is a large barrel. Thus, a sugar hogshead is a large barrel in which sugar was kept.

To get food, Huck:

- fishes
- hunts
- steals
- begs (probably)

- eats with Uncle Jake, a black slave (we find this out in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*)

**Why does the widow Douglas grumble over the food before Huck can eat? Does Huck, as the narrator of this book, always know what he is relating to the reader?**

Of course, the widow Douglas isn't grumbling about the food. She is praying.

In this novel, Huck serves as the narrator. He is a naïve narrator, which means that he doesn't always understand what he is seeing and reporting on.

**What is the difference between an omniscient narrator and a naïve narrator?**

The first-person narration of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is different from the omniscient narration of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. With an omniscient narrator, the reader can learn an awful lot, including what various characters are thinking. With first-person narration, the reader learns only the thoughts of the character who is narrating the work of art.

## CHAPTER 2: OUR GANG'S DARK OATH

**Compare Tom Sawyer's knowledge of ransoms in the beginning of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* to his knowledge of ransoms in the ending of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.**

The main way in which *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is inconsistent with the ending of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* is that Tom no longer knows what the word “ransom” means.

On p. 244 of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, we read (Huck asks a question, and Tom answers):

“What’s a ransom?”

“Money. You make them raise all they can, off’n their friends; and after you’ve kept them a year, if it ain’t raised then you kill them. That’s the general way. Only you don’t kill the women. You shut up the women, but you don’t kill them. They’re always beautiful and rich, and awfully scared. You take their watches and things, but you always take your hat off and talk polite. They ain’t anybody as polite as robbers — you’ll see that in any book. Well the women get to loving you, and after they’ve been in the cave a week or two weeks they stop crying and after that you couldn’t get them to leave. If you drove them out they’d turn right around and come back. It’s so in all the books.”

However, in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Tom doesn’t know what a ransom is. On pp. 10-11, we read (in Ch. 2):

“Ransomed? What’s that?”

“I don’t know. But that’s what they do. I’ve seen it in books; and so of course that’s what we’ve got to do.”

“But how can we do it if we don’t know what it is?”

“Why, blame it all, we’ve *got* to do it. Don’t I tell you it’s in the books? Do you want to go to doing different from what’s in the books, and get things all muddled up?”

“Oh, that’s all very fine to *say*, Tom Sawyer, but how in the nation are these fellows going to be ransomed if we don’t know how to do it to them? That’s the thing *I* want to get at. Now, what do you *reckon* it is?”

“Well, I don’t know. But per’aps if we keep them till they’re ransomed, it means that we keep them till they’re dead.”

Tom is ignorant. He doesn’t know the difference between burglary and robbery, although he thinks he does. On p. 10, he says,

“Stuff! stealing cattle and such things ain’t robbery; it’s burglary,” says Tom Sawyer. “We ain’t burglars. That ain’t no sort of style. We are highwaymen. We stop stages and carriages on the road, with masks on, and kill the people and take their watches and money.”

Of course, burglars enter a house to steal stuff. Tom doesn’t know the difference between burglary and robbery.

### **Who is the voice of reason in Ch. 2?**

Ben Rogers is. He calls into question many of Tom’s Romantic notions concerning robbers and the people they question.

## Write a character analysis of Jim based on Ch. 2.

*Jim is a slave.*

This is the main fact about Jim.

*Jim has a job to do.*

Of course, Jim is a slave, but he does his duty or at least tries to do it. Tom and Huck are sneaking around outside, and Huck trips over a root, making a sound. Jim hears the sound and says, "Who dah?" (6). Next he says that he will sit down and wait until he hears the sound again. However, he falls asleep, so he doesn't do his duty very well.

*Jim is superstitious.*

No one can doubt this. Tom takes three candles and leaves five cents for pay. (Tom has lots of money because of the treasure he found in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.) Jim takes the money and regards the five-cent piece as a supernatural object. He says that he was bewitched and witches rode him and the devil gave him the five-cent piece with his own hands. Each time Jim tells the story, he adds to it. First, he says that the witches rode him all over the state, and then he says that they rode him to New Orleans, and then he says that they rode him all over the world.

*Jim has the human failing of pride.*

On account of being rode by witches, Jim becomes proud. Huck writes, "Jim was monstrous proud about it, and he got so he wouldn't hardly notice the other niggers" (7).

Huck also writes, "Jim was most ruined, for a servant, because he got stuck up on account of having seen the devil and been rode by witches" (8).

*Jim is a bit of a con artist.*

Jim also says that the five-cent piece is a charm that was given to him by the Devil. As a charm, he can do two things with it:

- 1) Cure people.
- 2) Call witches by saying a few words to it.

These two things make me think that Jim is a bit of a con artist. Certainly, no five-cent piece will do these things, and Jim should know that. He might not want to call witches, but he would want to cure people of illness. A few attempts at curing people should show that the five-cent piece is not a charm. On the other hand, such things as placebos work wonders, so perhaps the five-cent piece does cure people.

### **What is Huck's attitude toward slavery in this chapter?**

His attitude is that it is something to be taken totally for granted. Huck doesn't even think about slavery. He doesn't question it. To him, slavery is normal and natural and is not to be questioned. There is absolutely nothing in this chapter to show that he thinks that slavery is wrong.

That questioning attitude will come later, and even then, Huck thinks that Southern society is right about slavery and he is wrong to question it.

### **Compare Tom and Huck as they are depicted in this chapter.**

*Tom is intrepid; Huck is cautious.*

*Intrepid* means resolutely courageous, fearless.

Tom is brave and is always looking for an adventure, while Huck is by nature cautious. For example, Tom thinks that they need more candles, so he goes into the widow Douglas' kitchen to get some (he leaves a nickel as payment). Huck

didn't want him to do it. On p. 7, we read: "I [Huck] didn't want him to try. I said Jim might wake up and come."

Next, Tom wants to play a joke on Jim. Once again, Huck doesn't want to do it — he's in a sweat to leave — but Tom takes Jim's hat and hangs it on a limb of the tree.

*Tom is a leader; Huck is a follower.*

The band of robbers is Tom Sawyer's Gang. Tom as usual is a leader, while Huck is a follower.

Tom is definitely in charge in this chapter. He has arranged for the boys to meet, and he is elected First Captain of the Gang. (Joe Harper is elected Second Captain.) Huck is simply a regular member of the Gang; he is not an officer. In this chapter, Huck follows Tom's lead.

*Tom is literate; Huck is illiterate.*

Huck is illiterate. He has to sign his name by making a mark. (Later, he goes to school and learns to read and to write a little.)

Tom, however, is literate. Tom has read a number of adventure stories, and he believes what they say. Huck, on the other hand, has read no books. Tom makes up the oath of the Gang. Part of the oath is based on his memories of what he has read in robber books, and part is out of his own imagination.

*Tom has a family; Huck does not really have a family.*

The boys decide that as members of the Gang that they ought to kill the families of the boys who tell the Gang's secrets. This is fine for Tom, because they can kill his Aunt Polly, but Huck doesn't have anyone to kill because his Pap probably will not come around again. Fortunately, Huck offers to let the other boys kill Miss Watson. That is acceptable, and Huck becomes a member of the Gang.



### CHAPTER 3: WE AMBUSCADE THE ARABS

**What do you suppose are the differences between the widow Douglas's version of Heaven and Miss Watson's version of Heaven?**

#### *Widow Douglas's Version*

Both are religious, of course, but the widow's version of heaven seems better than Miss Watson's. On p. 14 (Ch. 3), we read:

Sometimes the widow would take me one side and talk about Providence in a way to make a body's mouth water; but maybe next day Miss Watson would take hold and knock it all down again. I judged I could see that there was two Providences, and a poor chap would stand considerable show with the widow's Providence, but if Miss Watson's got him there warn't no help for him any more.

#### *Miss Watson's Version*

Of course, Miss Watson's version of heaven is not like the widow Douglas' version. According to Miss Watson (p. 4; Ch. 1):

Now she had got a start, and she went on and told me all about the good place. She said all a body would have to do there was to go around all day long with a harp and sing, forever and ever. So I didn't think much of it. But I never said so. I asked her if she reckoned Tom Sawyer would go there, and she said not by a considerable sight. I was glad about that, because I wanted him and me to be together.

**Miss Watson tells Huck that he can get anything he wants by praying for it, and Tom tells him that genies will do your bidding if you rub an old lamp or ring. What**

**happens when Huck puts these ideas to the test? What does his putting these ideas to the test tell you about Huck?**

We learn that Huck is a person who uses experience to decide what is real.

- Tom relies on adventure books to determine what is real.
- The widow Douglas relies on the Bible to determine what is real.
- Huck relies on his experience and on his five senses to determine what is real.

*Prayer*

When Huck hears that he can get what he wants by praying for it, he puts this idea to a test. He had a fishline, but he didn't have any hooks, so he prayed for hooks. However, he didn't get any hooks. This made him think about other people praying. If you always get what you pray for,

- Miss Watson, who is skinny, ought to be able to “fat up” (13).
- Deacon Winn should be able to get back the money he lost on pork.
- The widow Douglas should be able to get back the silver snuff box that was stolen from her.

Even after the widow Douglas explains that a person can get spiritual gifts by praying, Huck decides that he won't bother to pray. After all, spiritual gifts mean not thinking about oneself but instead helping other people. Huck realizes that this is a very good deal for other people, but not such a good deal for himself.

## *Genies*

Later, Tom tells Huck about genies. Huck asks how people get genies. Hearing that people get genies by rubbing on lamps or on iron rings, Huck tries it. He gets a tin lamp and an iron ring and rubs on them until he is sweating heavily, but no genies come. Because of that, he decides that Tom Sawyer is lying again. Tom may think that the caravan of A-rabs and elephants was transformed by magicians into a Sunday School picnic, but Huck says no. On p. 17, we read: “I reckoned he believed in the A-rabs and the elephants, but as for me I think different. It had all the marks of a Sunday school.”

### **Which thinker is more logical: Tom or Huck? How do you know?**

Huck is the more logical thinker, as we see when Huck tests whether prayer works and when he tests the origin of genies. Other people, such as the widow Douglas and Tom Sawyer, believe books, but Huck trusts his own experience. If he tries something and it doesn't work, then he is going to try something else and abandon the idea that didn't work.

Huck of course does not have a scientific outlook, but he is a believer in common sense — except for superstition. Huck is Realistic. He trusts his own experience more than he trusts book authorities. Huck is pragmatic.

Pragmatic: “Concerned with facts or actual events; practical.” — *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

### **If you feel like doing research, find out what *Don Quixote* is. Why do you suppose that Twain has Tom mention that book?**

*Don Quixote* is one of the adventure books that Tom Sawyer reads. It is a masterpiece, and Tom Sawyer does not read it correctly. *Don Quixote* is the story of a don from La Mancha,

who reads so many stories of wandering knights that he decides to become a wandering knight himself. Unfortunately, Don Quixote is deluded.

You may be aware of the episode in which Don Quixote battles what he thinks are giants; they are actually windmills, and Don Quixote is defeated. Tom reads this book, and he believes the explanation that magicians enchanted the giants and turned them into windmills.

The author of *Don Quixote* — Cervantes — and Twain have a lot in common. They both end up satirically mocking knights errant. Twain does that in his *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.

### **What does the word “ambuscade” mean?**

Note: When referring to words as words, use quotation marks or italics.

Huck is illiterate or semi-literate and doesn't know many words. In “ambuscade,” he is confusing two words and putting them together in one word. Probably the words Huck means are “ambush” and “barricade.” And perhaps “escape.”

### **If you feel like doing research, find out what a “portmanteau” word is. “Ambuscade” is a portmanteau word.**

Huck's confusing two words and putting them together creates a “portmanteau” word. A portmanteau word is a word that is created by putting parts of two words together. For example, the word “brunch” is created from the words “breakfast” and “lunch” and refers to a meal that is both breakfast and lunch. Another example is the word “chocolic,” which is created from the words “chocolate” and “alcoholic.” A chocolic is a person who is addicted to chocolate.

The term “portmanteau words” was invented by Lewis Carroll. In Mr. Carroll’s book *Through The Looking Glass*, the character Humpty Dumpty explains:

“Well, ‘slithy’ means ‘lithe and slimy’. ‘Lithe’ is the same word as ‘active’. You see, it’s like a portmanteau — there are two meanings packed into one word”.

Note: The British put commas and periods outside quotation marks; Americans put commas and periods inside quotation marks.

Another portmanteau word created by Mr. Carroll is “chortle,” which is created from the words “chuckle” and “snort.”

A clever portmanteau word is “anecdoteage,” which is created from “anecdote” and “dotage.” Probably all of us are familiar with old people who tell the same anecdotes over and over.

Professional golfer Tiger Woods created the clever portmanteau word “Cablinasian” to explain his heritage:

**Caucasian**

**Black**

**Indian (Native American)**

**Asian**

**How does Huck react when he thinks that his father has been found dead in the Mississippi River? Why does he react that way?**

On p. 14, we read:

Pap he hadn’t been seen for more than a year, and that was comfortable for me; I didn’t want to see him no more. He used to always whale me when he was

sober and could get his hands on me; though I used to take to the woods most of the time when he was around.

Huck doesn't like his father, whom he calls Pap. Of course, he has good reason not to like his father. Pap is an alcoholic, and before his wife died, he and his wife used to fight all the time.

Pap is also a child-beater. He used to "whale" Huck, which means he used to beat Huck. It's no wonder that when Pap is around, Huck goes into the woods to avoid him.

Huck is "comfortable" when he hears that his father was found drowned, but then he thinks that the drowned person was not his father, but was instead a woman dressed up in men's clothing. He thinks that because the drowned person was found floating face up, and Huck thinks that a man is always found floating face down. (Apparently, women's fatty breasts make them float face up, in Huck's opinion.)

Therefore, thinking that his father is alive, Huck writes, "So I was uncomfortable again. I judged the old man would turn up again by and by, though I wished he wouldn't" (14).

**If you feel like doing research, define "foreshadowing."**

The rumor about Pap and Huck's thoughts about Pap, of course, are foreshadowing. We are being prepared for the return of Pap, who in fact shows up quickly.

The 6th edition of *A Handbook to Literature* by C. Hugh Holman and William Harmon defines "foreshadowing" in this way: "The presentation of material in a work in such a way that later events are prepared for" (201).

Here are a couple of other definitions:

Foreshadowing is the use of hints or clues to suggest what will happen later in literature.

Source: [http://www.tnellen.com/cyber-eng/lit\\_terms/foreshadowing.html](http://www.tnellen.com/cyber-eng/lit_terms/foreshadowing.html)

Definition: A literary device used to hint at events that will follow later in the story, sometimes generating feelings of anxiety or suspense. Anton Chekhov once said that “if there is a gun hanging on the wall in the first act, it must fire in the last.” That remark captures the essence of foreshadowing.

Source: <http://contemporarylit.about.com/library/bldef-foreshadowing>

## CHAPTER 4: THE HAIR BALL ORACLE

### **How does Huck know that Pap is back in town?**

Huck comes across some footprints. We read:

I went down to the front garden and clumb over the stile where you go through the high board fence. There was an inch of new snow on the ground, and I seen somebody's tracks. They had come up from the quarry and stood around the stile awhile, and then went on around the garden fence. It was funny they hadn't come in, after standing around so. I couldn't make it out. It was very curious, somehow. I was going to follow around, but I stooped down to look at the tracks first. I didn't notice anything, at first, but next I did. There was a cross in the left boot heel, made with big nails, to keep off the devil. (19)

Because of the cross, Huck knows that his father is back in town.

### **Why does Judge Thatcher buy Huck's money for one dollar? Why does Huck want to sell the money?**

Judge Thatcher is a good person; he is not trying to steal Huck's money by "buying" it "for a consideration" — that is, one dollar. Basically, Judge Thatcher feels that Huck has a good reason for wanting to get rid of the money. As a resident of St. Petersburg, Judge Thatcher is familiar with Huck's story and he knows about Pap. He probably is able to guess that Pap has returned to St. Petersburg and that Huck wants to get rid of the money so that it won't go to Pap, who will drink and gamble it all away.

Therefore, Judge Thatcher enters into a quasi-legal contract with Huck. I think that Judge Thatcher knows that the contract will not hold up in court — Huck is not of a legal age to make contracts. However, the idea seems to be to delay



things. Maybe Judge Thatcher can drag out the proceedings long enough for Huck to be legally taken away from Pap and for the widow Douglas to be Huck's legal guardian. At that time, it will be safe to give the money back to Huck — or to “sell” it to him “for a consideration.”

By the way, Huck does have access to his money. Whenever Pap makes it hot for Huck, he “borrows” two or three dollars from Judge Thatcher and gives it to Pap, who gets drunk, gets rowdy, and gets thrown in jail. That gives Huck a rest of a few days from worrying about Pap.

Pap's being in jail is good for Huck. Too often criminals cry about how if they are punished by being sent to jail it will be bad for their children. In this case, at least, a father's being sent to jail is good for his son.

### **What is your opinion of the oracle of the hair-ball?**

First of all, we don't believe in the superstitions that Huck and Jim believe in, so we are unlikely to put any credence in the oracle of the hair-ball.

The hair-ball is apparently a scam by Jim to make money. When Huck comes to Jim to consult the hair-ball, Jim drops it on the floor, and it rolls only a little way. Jim listens to the hair-ball, then he says that the hair-ball won't talk sometimes unless it is first given money. Huck hands over a badly counterfeited quarter, and then the hair-ball begins to talk.

This is the oracle of the hair-ball, as stated by Jim:

“Yo' ole father doan' know yit what he's agwyne to do. Sometimes he spec he'll go 'way, en den agin he spec he'll stay. De bes' way is to res' easy en let de ole man take his own way. Dey's two angels hoverin' roun' 'bout him. One uv 'em is white en shiny, en t'other one is black. De white one gits him to go right, a little while, den de black one sail in en bust it

all up. A body can't tell, yit, which one gwyne to fetch him at de las'. But you is all right. You gwyne to have considerable trouble in yo' life, en considerable joy. Sometimes you gwyne to git hurt, en sometimes you gwyne to git sick; but every time you's gwyne to git well agin. Dey's two gals flyin' 'bout you in yo' life. One uv 'em's light en t'other one is dark. One is rich en t'other is po'. You's gwyne to marry de po' one fust en de rich one by en by. You wants to keep 'way fum de water as much as you kin, en don't run no resk, 'kase it's down in de bills dat you's gwyne to git hung." (21-22)

Much of the oracle is vague — many oracles are. Pap has a good and a bad angel, and he doesn't know what's he's going to do. This, of course, means that the oracle is true no matter what Pap does. In addition, Huck's fortune is also in many ways ambiguous read (these are Jim's words, with bullets added):

- But you is all right.
- You gwyne to have considerable trouble in yo' life, en considerable joy.
- Sometimes you gwyne to git hurt, en sometimes you gwyne to git sick; but every time you's gwyne to git well agin.
- Dey's two gals flyin' 'bout you in yo' life. One uv 'em's light en t'other one is dark. One is rich en t'other is po'. You's gwyne to marry de po' one fust en de rich one by en by.
- You wants to keep 'way fum de water as much as you kin, en don't run no resk, 'kase it's down in de bills dat you's gwyne to git hung.

The Annotated Huckleberry Finn has this note about the explanation of the meaning of “down in de bills”:

Leo Marx explained this phrase in his notes to the 1967 Bobbs-Merrill edition: “Written down in the specifications (bills, as in the phrase, fill the bill); thus, foreordained.” (51)

Of course, the fortune ends badly. Huck is going to get hung in the end.

It’s odd that the oracle says to stay away from the river, since Huck feels freest on the raft with Jim. Of course, bad things will happen on the river banks. Only the raft is free — and even there, the king and the duke cause trouble.

Some people think the hair-ball oracle shows Jim in a bad light — Jim is a bit of a con man. Others think that it shows a lively intelligence on Jim’s part.

By the way, comedian Lenny Bruce once said, “As soon as I gets to heaven, I’s gwyne to find out what a ‘gwyne’ is.”

## CHAPTER 5: PAP STARTS IN ON A NEW LIFE

### Write a character analysis of Pap.

*Pap is an alcoholic.*

No one can doubt this. Pap sleeps in sewers and in pigpens. Basically, he gets so drunk that he doesn't care where he sleeps. (One advantage of sleeping in the vicinity of animals is that their body heat keeps the vicinity warm.)

*Pap is a child beater.*

Huck said earlier that he used to take to the woods when he knew that his father was around. He did that because his father beat him so much.

*Pap is a child abandoner.*

Huck was alone in the world with no one to look after him until the widow Douglas took him in after he saved her life by going to the Welshman's house in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. His mother is dead, and his Pap simply abandoned him. Without any social services, no one took him in. (Apparently, Huck has no close relatives other than Pap. His mother is dead.)

*Pap is anti-education.*

On p. 24, we read:

“And looky-here — you drop that school, you hear? I'll learn people to bring up a boy to put on airs over his own father and let on to be better'n what *he* is. You lemme catch you fooling around that school again, you hear? Your mother couldn't read, and she couldn't write, nuther, before she died. None of the family couldn't before *they* died. *I* can't; and here you're a-swelling yourself up like this. I ain't the

man to stand it — you hear? Say — lemme hear you read.”

Huck does read out loud, and now Pap knows that he can read, although he didn't quite believe it before. Pap tears up a picture that Huck won for learning his lessons well.

Most fathers are delighted when their sons do better than they have, but not Pap.

*Pap is anti-religion.*

After Huck proves that he can read, Pap says:

“It's so. You can do it. I had my doubts when you told me. Now looky-here; you stop that putting on frills. I won't have it. I'll lay for you, my smarty; and if I catch you about that school I'll tan you good. First you know you'll get religion, too. I never see such a son.” (24)

This is funny because most parents want their children to believe in God and to get an education and be better than their parents.

*Pap looks out for Number One — himself.*

Most parents want their children to grow up knowing more and doing better than themselves, but Pap isn't like that. According to Pap, Huck is putting on airs by learning to read and write. Pap wants Huck to be like himself — illiterate and ignorant. Pap also doesn't want Huck to live better than he does. He doesn't understand why Huck gets to live in a house and have a mirror and a piece of carpet while he sleeps in a pigpen.

Pap also wants Huck's money, although Pap didn't earn it and had nothing to do with Huck's earning it. Pap explains, “I want it” (25). Pap also wants the dollar that Huck has on him right now. Why? Pap explains again, “I want it” (25).

Of course, if Pap gets the money, he will spend it on alcohol and probably gambling.

*Pap cusses.*

Pap is a pretty good cusser. After he leaves, he sticks his head back in the window and cusses Huck for putting on frills and thinking that he was better than Pap. After Huck thinks that Pap is gone for good, Pap sticks his head back in the window and warns him not to go to school.

*Pap is a disturber of the peace.*

Pap has his own way of having a good time:

- Get drunk.
- Go around town beating a tin pan all night and whooping and yelling and yahooing and keeping everyone up all night.
- Get arrested.
- Spend time in jail.

Basically, Pap is a Yahoo, a term that we get from Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

*Pap is a hypocrite who talks about reforming, but who does not reform.*

This is discussed a little later.

### **Should we support Welfare and other social programs?**

Conservatives who are against Welfare point to people like Pap and say that we should do away with Welfare because the money go to people to Pap. Liberals say, Wait a minute. The Welfare money also goes to people like Huckleberry. In addition, Social Services can keep kids like Huckleberry away from parents like Pap.

## **Does Twain think it is always possible to reform a sinful person?**

The short answer is no.

We see this on pp. 26-28. The new judge — the one who was against separating Pap and Huck because they were father and son — decides to reform Pap. He invites him to supper, gives him new clothes, and gives him a place to sleep. Pap signs his mark on a piece of paper and promises to reform and says,

“Look at it, gentlemen and ladies all; take a-hold of it; shake it. There’s a hand that was the hand of a hog; but it ain’t so no more; it’s the hand of a man that’s started in on a new life, and ’ll die before he’ll go back. You mark them words — don’t forget I said them. It’s a clean hand now; shake it — don’t be afeard.” (27)

However, Pap doesn’t reform. On p. 27, we read:

Then they tucked the old man into a beautiful room, which was the spare room, and in the night some time he got powerful thirsty and clumb out on to the porch-roof and slid down a stanchion and traded his new coat for a jug of forty-rod, and clumb back again and had a good old time; and towards daylight he crawled out again, drunk as a fiddler, and rolled off the porch and broke his left arm in two places, and was most froze to death when somebody found him after sun-up. And when they come to look at that spare room they had to take soundings before they could navigate it.

Let’s look at that last clause — “they had to take soundings before they could navigate it” (27). This clause uses river-boat terms — “soundings” and “navigate.” Soundings are used to take measurements of the depths of liquids. What

kind of liquids would be the room? Whiskey, no doubt, and worse things — bodily fluids.

**Write a short character analysis of the judge who tries to reform Pap.**

Of course, the new judge is naïve, but he quickly grows less naïve. He thinks that he can reform Pap, but the people in town who actually know Pap know that such an effort is not wise. By the time the episode is over, the judge ends up thinking that the only way to reform Pap is with a shotgun. Shoot him dead, and he won't drink no more.

**Is Huck a good writer when he describes Pap?**

Huck describes Pap like this:

He was most fifty, and he looked it. His hair was long and tangled and greasy, and hung down, and you could see his eyes shining through, like he was behind vines. It was all black, no gray; so was his long, mixed-up whiskers. There warn't no color in his face, where his face showed; it was white; not like another man's white, but a white to make a body sick, a white to make a body's flesh crawl — a tree-toad white, a fish-belly white. As for his clothes — just rags, that was all. He had one ankle resting on t'other knee; the boot on that foot was busted, and two of his toes stuck through, and he worked them, now and then. His hat was laying on the floor; an old black slouch with the top caved in, like a lid. (23)

This is an excellent description, although it is not written in standard English, the way that I want my students at Ohio University to write their papers.

Huck is very good at description. He doesn't use fancy literary terms like “alabaster” for white. Huck has perhaps never seen alabaster (and if he has, he didn't call it that), and he



has not read the books in which “alabaster” is used as a term for white. Instead, Huck uses a white that he has in fact seen and experienced at first hand: “There warn’t no color in his face, where his face showed; it was white; not like another man’s white, but a white to make a body sick, a white to make a body’s flesh crawl — a tree-toad white, a fish-belly white” (23).

Note: According to *The American College Heritage Dictionary*, alabaster is “A dense, translucent, white or tinted fine-grained gypsum [mineral]” (31).

### **What are similes, and which similes does Huck use when he describes Pap?**

A simile is a comparison of two things that usually uses “like” or “as.”

Examples of similes:

- My love is like a red, red rose. This simile comes from Robert Burns’ famous poem:

O, my luve is like a red, red rose

That’s newly sprung in June:

O, my luve is like the melodie

That’s sweetly played in tune

- She is sly like a fox.
- He is mad as a hatter.

Huck is also good at writing similes — comparisons (23):

His hair was long and tangled and greasy, and hung down, and you could see his eyes shining through, like he was behind vines.

His hat was laying on the floor; an old black slouch with the top caved in, like a lid.

Once again, Huck's writing is based on nature or on things that he seen at first hand.

Huck may be uneducated, but he is an excellent writer.

## CHAPTER 6: PAP STRUGGLES WITH THE DEATH ANGEL

### Is Pap a good parent at the cabin after he kidnaps Huck?

The answer in a word is no.

On pp. 30-31, we read:

But by and by pap got too handy with his hick'ry, and I couldn't stand it. I was all over welts. He got to going away so much, too, and locking me in. Once he locked me in and was gone three days. It was dreadful lonesome. I judged he had got drowned, and I wasn't ever going to get out any more. I was scared.

Here we see that Pap beats Huck and that he locks Huck in the cabin and leaves — sometimes for as long as three days. Of course, this is child neglect and child abuse.

Why is Pap gone so long? He is out doing his regular thing of getting drunk, causing a public disturbance, being arrested, and being jailed.

In addition, of course, Pap gets so drunk that he suffers from delirium tremens, thinks that Huck is the angel of death, and tries to kill him with a knife.

Pap is about the worst parent that any child can have.

By the way, I grew up saying “drowned,” too, just like Huck.

**Explain what foreshadowing is and how foreshadowing is used when Huck writes, “After supper pap took the**

**jug, and said he had enough whisky there for two drunks and one delirium tremens” (34).**

We read here that Pap thinks the jug has enough whiskey for “two drunks and one delirium tremens” (34). Sure enough, Pap will have a case of delirium tremens later.

Here are two definitions of foreshadowing:

Foreshadowing is the use of hints or clues to suggest what will happen later in literature.

Source: [http://www.tnellen.com/cyber-eng/lit\\_terms/foreshadowing.html](http://www.tnellen.com/cyber-eng/lit_terms/foreshadowing.html)

Definition: A literary device used to hint at events that will follow later in the story, sometimes generating feelings of anxiety or suspense. Anton Chekhov once said that “if there is a gun hanging on the wall in the first act, it must fire in the last.” That remark captures the essence of foreshadowing.

Source: <http://contemporarylit.about.com/library/bldef-foreshadowing>

### **By the way, what is delirium tremens?**

*The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fourth Edition, 2000, defines “delirium tremens” in this way:

An acute, sometimes fatal episode of delirium usually caused by withdrawal or abstinence from alcohol following habitual excessive drinking. It also may occur during an episode of heavy alcohol consumption.

Almost as soon as Pap mentions delirium tremens, he suffers from an attack of delirium tremens.

### **Why doesn't anyone take Huck away from Pap?**

The widow Douglas tries to get Huck from Pap, but she isn't able to. On p. 30, we read:

The widow she found out where I was, by and by, and she sent a man over to try to get hold of me; but pap drove him off with the gun, [...]

This shows something of the dark side of life again. The townspeople know where Huck is, but no one comes to rescue him.

Certainly, they could rescue him — and fairly easily, too. Simply wait until Pap is drunk and locked up in the jail again, then go to the cabin, free Huck, and take him away from his father.

However, it may be the case that the law plays a role in this. Pap is Huck's biological parent, and it can be difficult to separate a father from his son. The law will eventually work, but the law takes time. On p. 31, we read:

Pap warn't in a good humor — so he was his natural self. He said he was down to town, and everything was going wrong. His lawyer said he reckoned he would win his lawsuit and get the money, if they ever got started on the trial, but then there was ways to put it off a long time, and Judge Thatcher knowed how to do it. And he said people allowed there'd be another trial to get me away from him and give me to the widow for my guardian, and they guessed it would win, this time. This shook me up considerable, because I didn't want to go back to the widow's any more and be so cramped up and sivilized, as they called it.

**How does Huck like living uncivilized again?**

We find out that Huck likes living uncivilized — all except for the part about being beaten by Pap frequently.

Soon after Pap uses his gun to drive away the man sent by the widow Douglas, Huck becomes accustomed to living in an uncivilized way again.

On p. 30, we read:

The widow she found out where I was, by and by, and she sent a man over to try to get hold of me; but pap drove him off with the gun, and it warn't long after that till I was used to being where I was, and liked it — all but the cowhide part.

It was kind of lazy and jolly, laying off comfortable all day, smoking and fishing, and no books nor study. Two months or more run along, and my clothes got to be all rags and dirt, and I didn't see how I'd ever got to like it so well at the widow's where you had to wash, and eat on a plate, and comb up, and go to bed and get up regular, and be forever bothering over a book, and have old Miss Watson pecking at you all the time. I didn't want to go back no more. I had stopped cussing, because the widow didn't like it; but now I took to it again because pap hadn't no objections. It was pretty good times up in the woods there, take it all around.

In fact, when Huck hears that the widow Douglas is trying to use the law to take him away from Pap, Huck decides to run away rather than to return to the widow Douglas' house and be civilized again.

**Write an analysis of Pap's drunken speech. What does the speech tell you about Pap?**

*We learn that Pap thinks that he owns Huck.*

On p. 33, we read:

“Call this a govment! Why, just look at it and see what it's like. Here's the law a-standing ready to take a man's son away from him — a man's own son, which he has had all the trouble and all the anxiety and all the expense of raising. Yes, just as that man has got that son raised at last, and ready to go to work and begin to do suthin' for *him* and give him a rest, the law up and goes for him. And they call *that* govment!”

Pap of course is deluded if he thinks that he raised Huck. Instead, Huck used to go off into the woods in order to avoid seeing Pap because he beat him so much.

Most of us would not consider a 12-, 13-, or 14-year-old boy grown and ready to start supporting his parents, but Pap thinks that Huck ought to turn over his money to him.

*We learn that Pap hates the government.*

Pap criticizes the government whenever he gets drunk. He blames the government for all of his problems, such as not being able to get money, and for not making all black people slaves.

*We learn that Pap is a racist.*

A light-skinned black man who is an educated professor who speaks several languages and who dresses very well and who is free is an affront to Pap. Pap thinks that he is better than the black person simply because of the color of his skin. Pap is white, while the professor is black, and so Pap thinks that he is better than the professor.

By any rational standard, of course, the professor is superior to Pap, who is an alcoholic and a child abuser.

*We learn that Pap doesn't vote.*

On p. 34, we read:

They said he could *vote*, when he was at home. Well, that let me out. Thinks I, what is the country a-coming to? It was 'lection day, and I was just about to go and vote, myself, if I warn't too drunk to get there; but when they told me there was a State in this country where they'd let that nigger vote, I drawed out. I says I'll never vote agin. Them's the very words I said; they all heard me; and the country may rot for all me — I'll never vote agin as long as I live.

Somehow, I doubt if Pap ever voted — unless someone gave him alcohol to vote a certain way.

*We learn that Pap is a loudmouth.*

He expresses his opinions very loudly to people who probably don't want to hear them, as when he tells everyone that he will never vote again because a free black person has been given the vote.

**The professor Pap speaks about is a mulatto. What is a mulatto? If an American has one drop of black blood in him (or her), is that person considered black in America?**

According to <<http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=mulatto>>, a mulatto is “an offspring of a black and a white parent.”

In general, a person with a little black heritage is considered black in America.

Consider Tiger Woods. Many people consider him black, but he calls himself a Casiblinasian.



Tiger Woods is:

Caucasian

Black

Indian

Asian

In other words, Tiger Woods is Heinz 57 — like the rest of us.

**In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Twain exposes lies. How does Twain expose the lie that white people are better than black people in Pap's drunken speech?**

We prefer the black professor to Pap. By any rational standard, the black professor is superior to Pap.

Later, we will see that Jim, a slave, makes a much better father for Huck than Pap.

**Do people like Pap still exist in America today?**

Yes. I was over at Lakeview Apartments once (now it is called Riverpark Towers) in Athens, Ohio. A drunk was asleep in the elevator. His friends had all had to go to the restroom real bad, so they went to the restroom on him.

## CHAPTER 7: I FOOL PAP AND GET AWAY

### Is Huck a good liar?

In general, Huck is a pretty good liar. Of course, for Huck, lying is a survival skill. In this chapter, Huck lies twice to Pap.

#### 1) *Why Huck Got the Gun Out*

First, Pap wonders why Huck got the gun out. Of course, Huck got the gun out to defend himself against Pap, who thought during delirium tremens that Huck was the Angel of Death and was out to carry him away.

Huck realizes that Pap doesn't remember the night before — Pap, like other heavy drinkers, has had a blackout. Therefore, Huck tells him that a stranger had come to the cabin and that he had gotten the gun for protection. On p. 37, we read:

I judged he didn't know nothing about what he had been doing, so I says:

“Somebody tried to get in, so I was laying for him.”

“Why didn't you roust me out?”

“Well, I tried to, but I couldn't; I couldn't budge you.”

#### 2) *A Riderless Canoe Floating in the River*

The next time Huck lies is when he finds a riderless canoe floating in the river. At first, Huck was going to give it to his father, but since Pap wasn't in sight, Huck decides to hide it and use it when he makes his escape. Of course, getting and hiding the canoe takes time, and in addition, Huck has to explain why he is wet.

When Pap shows up, Huck has a story to tell him:

When he got along I was hard at it taking up a trot-line. He abused me a little for being so slow; but I told him I fell in the river and that was what made me so long. I knowed he would see I was wet, and then he would be asking questions. We got five cat-fish off the lines and went home. (38)

Huck won't always be such a good liar, but ordinarily his lies are believed. (Huck lies well when he has a good reason to lie.)

### **What do you think of Huck's problem-solving skills?**

Huck has excellent problem-solving skills. He gets away from Pap by sawing through a log, and he keeps people from following him by making it appear that he has been murdered.

### **How does Huck get away from Pap?**

We do have one problem with the story. In Ch. 6, Huck finds a saw. He has hunted the cabin 100 times, but on the 101st time, he finds a saw. This is a weakness because it seems as if Huck should have found the saw before. On p. 31, we read:

Pap was pretty careful not to leave a knife or anything in the cabin when he was away; I reckon I had hunted the place over as much as a hundred times; well, I was most all the time at it, because it was about the only way to put in the time. But this time I found something at last; I found an old rusty wood-saw without any handle; it was laid in between a rafter and the clapboards of the roof. I greased it up and went to work.

Of course, Huck is able to saw himself out of the cabin.

### **How does Huck keep people from following him?**

Huck knows that if people think he has been murdered, they will drag the river for his body (because he will make it appear that his body has been dumped in the river), and thereafter they won't search for him, thinking that he is dead and that his body has floated down the river or been sunk.

Huck does much to make it seem as if he has been murdered, and he does much to draw people from his trail:

- 1) He saws himself out.
- 2) He takes all the food and other useful items and puts them in the canoe he caught earlier.
- 3) Because he has worn out the ground by dragging things over it, he scatters dust over it to cover the worn places.
- 4) He puts the piece of log back and uses rocks to hold it in place. He is confident that no one will notice that the log has been sawn because it is in the back of the cabin and unless you are close you can't see where the log has been sawn.
- 5) He shoots a wild pig and takes it to the cabin.
- 6) He smashes in the door with the ax.
- 7) He bloodies the ax and the floor of the cabin with the pig's blood, then dumps the pig in the river. People will see where the pig was dragged and dumped in the river and they will think that the marks were made by Huck's murdered body.
- 8) He puts some of his own hair on the ax.
- 9) He uses corn meal to make a trail to a shallow lake, the other side of which has a creek. He also drops Pap's whetstone there — people will think that it was

dropped by accident. People will think that the murderer left the cabin by sailing away in a boat on the lake.

**Based on what you know about Tom Sawyer, would he have arranged the escape better than Huck?**

On p. 41, we read:

You could easy see that something had been dragged over the ground. I did wish Tom Sawyer was there, I knowed he would take an interest in this kind of business, and throw in the fancy touches. Nobody could spread himself like Tom Sawyer in such a thing as that.

Huck may have a lot of respect for Tom Sawyer, but actually Tom Sawyer would have messed things up, making the escape so fancy that it would not have been plausible.

## CHAPTER 8: I SPARE MISS WATSON'S JIM

### Why did Jim run away from Miss Watson?

He ran away because she was going to sell him down to New Orleans. This is bad for two reasons:

1. Jim will be separated from his family. Later, we will learn that he has a wife and a daughter and other children.
2. If he is sold in New Orleans, he will most likely go to work on a plantation, doing the backbreaking work of picking cotton instead of the easier work he has been doing for Miss Watson.

In the explanatory note on p. 397, we read:

Being sold “down the river” was the worst of fates for any slave: not only would he be permanently separated from his family, he would likely face a life of hard labor on a sugar or cotton plantation in Louisiana.

On p. 397, we read a note by Mark Twain himself:

The “nigger trader” was loathed by everybody. He was regarded as a sort of human devil who bought and conveyed poor helpless creatures to hell — for to our whites and blacks alike the southern plantation was simply hell; no milder name could describe it. If the threat to sell an incorrigible slave “down the river” would not reform him, nothing would — his case was past cure.

### Why does Miss Watson want to sell Jim?

Miss Watson, of course, wants to sell him for the money: \$800. In accepting the money, she is breaking a promise to

Jim. She has always said that she wouldn't sell him down to New Orleans. On p. 53, we read:

“Well, you see, it 'uz dis way. Ole missus — dat's Miss Watson — she pecks on me all de time, en treats me pooty rough, but she awluz said she wouldn' sell me down to Orleans. But I noticed dey wuz a nigger trader roun' de place considable, lately, en I begin to git oneasy. Well, one night I creeps to de do', pooty late, en de do' warn't quite shet, en I hear old missus tell de widder she gwyne to sell me down to Orleans, but she didn' want to, but she could git eight hund'd dollars for me, en it 'uz sich a big stack o' money she couldn' resis'. De widder she try to git her to say she wouldn' do it, but I never waited to hear de res'. I lit out, mighty quick, I tell you.”

### **How would society regard Huck for not turning in Jim to the authorities?**

Huck himself tells us about his conversation with Jim. After Huck says that he won't tell on Jim, Jim says:

“Well, I b'lieve you, Huck. I — I *run off*.”

“Jim!”

“But mind, you said you wouldn' tell — you know you said you wouldn' tell, Huck.”

“Well, I did. I said I wouldn't, and I'll stick to it. Honest *injun*, I will. People would call me a low-down ablistionist and despise me for keeping mum — but that don't make no difference. I ain't a-going to tell, and I ain't a-going back there, anyways. So, now, le's know all about it.” (52-53)

An abolitionist is a person who wants to abolish slavery.

In Huck's society, which is of course a slave-holding society, abolitionists are looked down on. Money comes into play here. Slaves are expensive. For example, Jim is worth \$800. People are worried about losing their investment if slavery is abolished.

In Great Britain, by the way, when the government abolished slavery, the government paid the slave-owners money to release their slaves.

Of course, in Huck's society, anyone who assisted a runaway slave would be held in contempt. By helping a runaway slave, the person would be causing a severe financial loss for the person who owned the slave.

### **Is Jim's plan for escape a good one?**

On pp. 53-54, Jim says,

“I see a light a-comin' roun' de p'int bymeby, so I wade' in en shove' a log ahead o' me en swum more'n half way acrost de river, en got in 'mongst de drift wood, en kep' my head down low, en kinder swum agin de current tell de raff come along. Den I swum to de stern uv it en tuck a-holt. It clouded up en 'uz pooty dark for a little while. So I clumb up en laid down on de planks. De men 'uz all 'way yonder in de middle, whah de lantern wuz. De river wuz arisin', en dey wuz a good current; so I reck'n'd 'at by fo' in de mawnin' I'd be twenty-five mile down de river, en den I'd slip in, jis b'fo' daylight en swim asho', en take to de woods on de Illinoi side.”

Jim wants to swim to the Illinois side of the river. The plan is not especially good, but it is the best that Jim can do on such short notice.

In the explanatory note on p. 398, we read:



Jim's initial plan was fraught with danger. Illinois, though nominally free, would not have recognized him as a free man, and southern Illinois was a particularly dangerous place for runaway slaves. In compliance with the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793, Illinois authorities arrested blacks who were unable to produce a certificate of freedom, holding them as indentured laborers until claimed by their owners (McDougall, 105-6; Hurd, 2:134-35). Substantial rewards offered for fugitive slaves made their capture and return profitable to local residents as well as professional bounty hunters. Although the law required that blacks be given a certificate of freedom if not claimed within a year, they were always in danger of being kidnapped, as were all "unattached" or free blacks. Laws against kidnapping were not enforced, with the result that it "assumed the proportions of an established enterprise" (N. Dwight Harris [1904] 1969, 54). Mark Twain knew that Jim's best route to freedom would be northeast, up the Ohio River, which he must reach by first going south.

## CHAPTER 9: THE HOUSE OF DEATH FLOATS BY

### What do we learn about Jim in this chapter?

We learn that Jim does have a fund of useful knowledge despite his superstition.

Through observation, he has learned that when chickens fly a yard or two, then light on the ground, it's a sign that a storm is coming. In Ch. 8, on p. 54, he sees some young birds acting like chickens before a storm, so he concludes that a storm is coming:

Some young birds come along, flying a yard or two at a time and lighting. Jim said it was a sign it was going to rain. He said it was a sign when young chickens flew that way, and so he reckoned it was the same way when young birds done it. I was going to catch some of them, but Jim wouldn't let me. He said it was death. He said his father laid mighty sick once, and some of them caught a bird, and his old granny said his father would die, and he did.

In this passage, we see superstition, but we also see analytical reasoning using an analogy. Jim reasons like this:

P1: Young chickens fly a yard or so, then light before a storm is coming.

P2: These young birds are acting like young chickens act before a storm.

P3: Young birds are a lot like young chickens.

C: Therefore, a storm must be coming.

In Ch. 9, we see that a storm does come. Because of Jim's knowledge of nature, he and Huck have had the foresight to lug their stuff into a cave, where they are dry and kept safe from the storm.

We should make a distinction between superstition and knowledge of nature. Superstitions about bad luck are worthless, but Jim's knowledge of the behavior of chickens comes in handy when forecasting the weather. This has nothing to do with superstition.

**In this novel, Huck and Jim float down the river on a raft. Where does the raft come from?**

On page 60, we read:

One night we caught a little section of a lumber raft — nice pine planks. It was twelve foot wide and about fifteen or sixteen foot long, and the top stood above water six or seven inches — a solid level floor. We could see saw-logs go by in the daylight, sometimes, but we let them go; we didn't show ourselves in daylight.

**What do we learn about the relationship between Huck and Jim during their visit to the floating house of death?**

*We learn that Jim is cautious.*

Jim doesn't want to go into the floating house. However, Huck, who wants to have an adventure like Tom Sawyer, convinces him to go into the floating house.

*We learn that Huck is top dog and first banana.*

Huck is a child, and Jim is a man, but Huck is white and Jim is black, so in this society, Jim is going to do pretty much what Huck tells him to do. In addition, of course, Huck is in a position of power over Jim. If Huck tells white people the whereabouts of Jim, a runaway slave, Jim will be captured, punished, and probably sold down the river.

*We learn that Jim is kind.*

Jim finds a dead man in the floating house of death, and he tells Huck not to look at him — “it’s too gashly” (61). Jim also throws some old rags on the dead man, but Huck says that he needn’t have done that — Huck didn’t look at the dead man.

At the end of the novel, we learn that the dead man is Pap, and that brings up a question of whether Jim is really being kind in this scene. Jim is probably hoping for help from Huck, and he knows that Huck is running away from Pap. If Huck knows that Pap is dead, then he doesn’t need to stay on Jackson’s Island or on the river. Instead, he can return home. (However, Huck is running away from the Widow Douglas and civilization.) Still, from other incidents in this novel, we know that Jim is kind, and so most likely he is kind here.

Note: The floating house of death is NOT a houseboat. It is a regular house that used to be on the bank of the river. The river flooded and washed the house downstream.

### **What kind of people lived in the floating house of death?**

On pp. 61-62, we read:

There was heaps of old greasy cards scattered around over the floor, and old whisky bottles, and a couple of masks, made out of black cloth; and all over the walls was the ignorantest kind of words and pictures, made with charcoal. There was two old dirty calico dresses, and a sun bonnet, and some women’s underclothes hanging against the wall, and some men’s clothing, too. We put the lot into the canoe; it might come good. There was a boy’s old speckled straw hat on the floor; I took that, too. And there was a bottle that had had milk in it; and it had a rag stopper for a baby to suck. We would a took the bottle, but it was

broke. There was a seedy old chest, and an old hair trunk with the hinges broke. They stood open, but there warn't nothing left in them that was any account. The way things was scattered about, we reckoned the people left in a hurry and warn't fixed so as to carry off most of their stuff.

In the next chapter, they examine an old blanket overcoat and find “eight dollars in silver sewed up in the lining” (63). Because of that, they conclude that the coat was stolen.

A few notes:

- The house must not have been a good house, since it was in a position to be swept into and carried away by the river.
- The people who lived there were low class and were probably lowlifes who drank, stole, and gambled.
- By the greasy cards and the ignorant graffiti and pictures (probably pornographic), we can tell that the people in the house were not intellectuals.
- Unfortunately, there was a baby among them, as we can tell by the bottle of milk and the rag stopper.
- The “masks, made out of black cloth” (61) are also a very good indication that the house was inhabited by robbers — and, judging by the women’s clothing, by prostitutes.
- Since a naked man has been shot in the house, we can guess that the house was inhabited by murderers.

By the way, we see that Huck is naive because he finds one wooden leg and then hunts all around for the other one. (Jim hunts, too.)

By the way, Al Capp, creator of the comic strip *Li'l Abner*, lost his leg after falling into the path of a trolley car when he was nine years old, and he was forced to use a wooden leg the rest of his life. He declined to take care of his leg, with the result that it sometimes deserted him when he needed it. One day, while he was walking with boxer Gene Tunney, he suddenly felt a need to grab onto something for balance, so he grabbed onto Mr. Tunney. Together, they looked back and saw the lower part of Mr. Capp's wooden leg. Mr. Capp gathered up the fallen leg, bolts, and nuts, then took his wooden leg to a garage, where the mechanic quickly fixed it. In this case, the mishap was a blessing, as Mr. Capp did not have to hear the boring speech that he and Mr. Tunney had planned to attend. Source: Al Capp, *My Well-Balanced Life on a Wooden Leg*, pp. 36, 38-39.

## CHAPTER 10: WHAT COMES OF HANDLIN' SNAKE-SKIN

**How does the relationship between Huck and Jim continue to develop in the rattlesnake scene?**

Huck makes a mistake here, and he doesn't let Jim know that he made a mistake.

Huck kills a rattlesnake and curls it by the foot of Jim's blanket, thinking to play a joke on Jim. However, when Jim is ready to go to sleep, the rattlesnake's mate is there, and it bites Jim. (Folklore says that if you kill a snake, its mate will curl up around it.)

Huck kills the second rattlesnake, then throws both rattlesnakes away so that Jim doesn't know what he has done. In doing this, Huck is avoiding accepting responsibility for his actions. By throwing the two snakes away and by not telling Jim what he had done, Huck doesn't have to apologize to Jim.

However, the two are friends enough that Huck thinks that he can play a practical joke on Jim. That is positive, although the joke has negative consequences.

**Huckleberry's belief about how Hank Bunker dies is an example of the false cause fallacy — in particular, the variety of the false cause fallacy that is known as the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* (“after this, therefore on account of this”). Explain the false cause and the *non causa pro causa* fallacies and explain how the story of Hank Bunker's death is an example of a fallacious argument.**

### *False Cause*

In the fallacy of *false cause*, the arguer makes an argument that relies on an imagined causal link between the premises

and the conclusion. Such a causal link does not actually exist.

If every time I wear a red sweater, my favorite team loses, and if every time I wear a blue sweater, my favorite team wins, I may conclude that I should wear only blue sweaters on the days that my favorite team plays a game. Of course, this is a fallacious argument because of false cause: the color of the sweater I am wearing has no effect on whether my favorite team wins or loses.

### *Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc*

The argument about sweaters is an example of the false cause fallacy that is called *post hoc ergo propter hoc* (“after this, therefore on account of this”). It assumes that the wearing of a red sweater caused the team to lose and the wearing of a blue sweater caused the team to win.

### *Hank Bunker*

Hank Bunker looked over his left shoulder at the new moon, something that is supposed to bring bad luck. Sure enough, two years later, he died, so looking over his shoulder at the new moon must have killed him.

### *Non Causa Pro Causa*

The Hank Bunker argument is an example of the false cause fallacy that is called *post hoc ergo propter hoc* (“after this, therefore on account of this”). This argument is also an example of the false cause fallacy that is called *non causa pro causa* (“not the cause for the cause”). Skeptics might say that what killed Hank Bunker was not looking over his left shoulder at the new moon; instead, what killed him was getting drunk and falling off the shot tower.

Glendower gives an example of *non causa pro causa* from Shakespeare’s *Henry IV, Part 1*:



**Glendower:**

At my nativity

The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,

Of burning cressets: and at my birth

The frame and huge foundation of the earth

Shaked like a coward.

**Hotspur:**

Why so it would have done at the same season

if your mother's cat had but kittened, though

yourself had never been born.

Glendower thinks that he is special because when he was born, meteors streaked through the sky and earthquakes rocked the earth. Hotspur says that those natural events would have happened even Glendower had not been born that day, and the only birth was that of a cat having kittens.

**How good is Huck when he practices at being a girl?**

Not very good. Jim points out two problems:

1) Huck doesn't walk like a girl.

2) He keeps pulling up his dress (gown) so he can reach into his pockets.

We read:

I practiced around all day to get the hang of the things, and by and by I could do pretty well in them, only Jim said I didn't walk like a girl; and he said I must quit pulling up my gown to get at my britches pocket. I took notice, and done better. (67)

## CHAPTER 11: THEY ARE AFTER US!

### Write a character analysis of Mrs. Judith Loftus.

*Mrs. Judith Loftus is kind to Huck, who pretends to be a young girl.*

When Huck arrives at her door, the first thing she says is that he must be hungry. Later, when Huck leaves, she gives him food. She offers to have her husband walk him where he wants to go, and she offers to let him stay all night.

*Mrs. Judith Loftus is a gossip.*

She hasn't been in town long, but she knows all about Huck's murder and about the runaway slave, Jim. She gives Huck a lot of valuable information.

*Mrs. Judith Loftus is poor.*

Rats live in her house. She asks Huck to throw a piece of iron at a rat because she wrenched her arm earlier.

*Mrs. Judith Loftus is concerned about money.*

She wants to get the reward for capturing Jim — \$300. For her, that is an awful lot of money.

*Mrs. Judith Loftus believes in slavery.*

She never says anything against slavery, and she wants the reward money for capturing Jim, so apparently she has grown up with the idea that slavery is morally acceptable.

*Mrs. Judith Loftus is clever.*

1) She sees Huck threading a needle like a boy would — bringing the needle up to the thread. She then contrives two tests to find out whether he is really a boy.

A) She asks Huck to throw a hunk of iron at a rat, and the rat would not be feeling well if it had stayed where it was when he threw the hunk of iron.

B) She drops a hunk of iron in his lap, and he closes his legs on it.

2) In addition, she is able to figure out that Jim is living on Jackson's Island.

*Mrs. Judith Loftus is perhaps gullible.*

She believes Huck's lies, even though she discovers that he is a boy, not a girl. When he tells her that he ran away from a cruel farmer, she seems to believe him.

However, she retains a little suspicion. On p. 75, she says:

Now trot along to your uncle, Sarah Mary Williams George Elexander Peters, and if you get into trouble, you send word to Mrs. Judith Loftus, which is me, and I'll do what I can to get you out of it. Keep the river road, all the way, and next time you tramp take shoes and socks with you. The river road's a rocky one, and your feet'll be in a condition when you get to Goshen, I reckon.

**Explain how Huck handles these situations in this chapter: 1) Mrs. Loftus learns that he is not a girl and 2) Huck learns that Mrs. Loftus's husband is coming to Jackson's Island to look for Jim.**

*1) Mrs. Loftus learns that he is not a girl.*

Huck earlier messed up by saying at first that his name was Sarah Williams, then forgetting and saying that his name is Mary Williams. He tries to explain that his name is Sarah Mary Williams, and some people call him Sarah while others call him Mary.

When Huck is caught by Mrs. Loftus, he tells a convincing lie. He says that he was apprenticed to a cruel farmer and so he ran away. The dress and bonnet he is wearing is his disguise. He is now on his way to his uncle, who will take care of him and who lives in Goshen.

Telling Mrs. Loftus that his uncle lives in Goshen is a masterstroke by Huck. He wants to leave immediately so that he can warn Jim that people are after him — Huck says “us” although everyone thinks that Huck is dead. Huck is able to say that he wants to leave so that he can reach Goshen by sunrise.

*2) Huck learns that Mrs. Loftus’s husband is coming to Jackson’s Island to look for Jim.*

Huck immediately goes to the island, where he builds a big fire where Jim is not. He then paddles to where Jim is and says, “Git up and hump yourself, Jim! There ain’t a minute to lose. They’re after us!” (75).

The word “us” is important here. Huck and Jim are part of a team. They load everything into the raft and get away from the island without any problem except being scared that they will be caught.

**Huck learns that whoever captures Jim will get a \$300 reward. Is Huck interested in the money?**

Huck is not interested in the reward for capturing Jim.

Huck finds out that there is a reward for capturing Jim, but he prefers to help Jim, not turn him in for the money.

## CHAPTER 12: BETTER LET BLAME WELL ALONE

**What kind of morality do Pap, Huck, and Jim observe in this chapter when it comes to food?**

### *Chickens*

Pap of course is not a moral character. He is, instead, a chicken stealer. He often steals a chicken and justifies it, as Huck explains:

Every night, now, I used to slip ashore towards ten o'clock at some little village and buy ten or fifteen cents' worth of meal or bacon or other stuff to eat; and sometimes I lifted a chicken that warn't roosting comfortable, and took him along. Pap always said, take a chicken when you get a chance, because if you don't want him yourself you can easy find somebody that does, and a good deed ain't ever forgot. I never see pap when he didn't want the chicken himself, but that is what he used to say, anyway. (79)

Pap, of course, is trying to justify stealing a chicken by saying that it is a way to do a good deed, but of course, Pap doesn't do good deeds.

### *Watermelons, Cantaloupes, Pumpkins, Corn, and Muskmelons*

Later, Huck and Jim become uneasy because they are stealing things such as watermelons, cantaloupes, pumpkins, corn, and muskmelons, so they attempt to still their consciences by deciding not to "borrow" two items. Huck states:

Mornings, before daylight, I slipped into corn-fields and borrowed a watermelon, or a mushmelon, or a punkin, or some new corn, or things of that kind. Pap

always said it warn't no harm to borrow things, if you was meaning to pay them back, sometime; but the widow said it warn't anything but a soft name for stealing, and no decent body would do it. Jim said he reckoned the widow was partly right and pap was partly right; so the best way would be for us to pick out two or three things from the list and say we wouldn't borrow them any more — then he reckoned it wouldn't be no harm to borrow the others. So we talked it over all one night, drifting along down the river, trying to make up our minds whether to drop the watermelons, or the cantelopes, or the mushmelons, or what. But towards daylight we got it all settled satisfactory, and concluded to drop crabapples and p'simmons. We warn't feeling just right before that, but it was all comfortable now. I was glad the way it come out, too, because crabapples ain't ever good, and the p'simmons wouldn't be ripe for two or three months yet. (79-80)

### *Crabapples and Persimmons*

Of course, Huck and Jim are giving up things that they either don't want (crabapples) or things that aren't tempting right now because they aren't ripe yet (persimmons).

However, Huck is a moral kid. He will soon attempt to save the lives of some robbers.

**Twain is a Realist writer as opposed to a Romantic writer. Do some research and explain what Realism and Romanticism are.**

As a Realist writer, Twain wants to show things as they really are. Very often, he does that in a satiric way. The Romantic view of things, on the other hand, is often not Realistic.

For example, Tom Sawyer reads a lot of Romantic adventure books. From these books, he gets an unRealistic view of the world. For example, he reads about Robin Hood, and he gets the idea that all robbers are honorable. Because of that notion, he wants to be the leader of a band of robbers. Twain, however, is a Realist writer, and he knows that robbers are not honorable men. The robbers that we see in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* — Injun Joe and his companion — are despicable.

In contrast to Twain, Sir Walter Scott is a Romantic writer. He wrote such books as *Ivanhoe*, which glorified knight-errantry. Twain, however, being a Realist writer, mocks knight-errantry in his novel *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. For example, the Yankee goes on a quest while wearing plate armor. He begins to sweat in the hot sun, and he would like to get his handkerchief in order to wipe away the sweat. However, his helmet is of a kind that he can't remove by himself to get at his handkerchief, which he is keeping in his helmet. Therefore, all he can do is cuss because of how uncomfortable he is. Later, a fly gets in his helmet, and it buzzes and flies around, lighting on his lip, then on his nose, then on an eye, and all the Yankee can do is endure the discomfort.

I once saw a *New Yorker* cartoon that mixed elements of the Romantic and the Real. The cartoon showed a beautiful castle on top of a mountain, but at the bottom of the mountain, beside the road that led up to the castle, was a bunch of garbage cans.

Here are a few notes on Realism and on Romanticism:

- Realists center on reality; a Realist portrait will include warts. Romantics focus on the ideal; a Romantic portrait will leave out the warts.

- Realist writers try to render reality in detail. Romantics leave out big sections of society, such as the poor.
- Realist writers tend to focus on character rather than plot. Plots tend to be believable. Romantic writers sometimes have unbelievable plots, such as spending 40 years to get out of prison.
- Realist writers use Realistic language; the language is vernacular — the way people really talk. Romantic writers often use an elevated language.
- Realist writers often focus on the middle and the lower classes. Romantic writers often focus on the upper classes. Sir Walter Scott writes more about knights than about farmers.

**Tom Sawyer has a Romantic view of robbers, but in this chapter Huck comes across real robbers. Compare and contrast Tom’s view of robbers with the real robbers that Huck sees.**

Tom Sawyer looks at robbers as being Romantic heroes, but the robbers in this chapter are anything but heroes.

Jim Turner is one of the three robbers. Jim Turner always gets more than his share of the loot by threatening to tattle on the other robbers. Right now, the other robbers are afraid that if they let Jim Turner go free, he will turn state’s evidence and get them punished. Jim Turner is evil — he once murdered a man named Hatfield.

Another robber is Bill, who wants to kill Jim Turner with a gun as he lies on the floor tied up.

The third and final robber is Jack Packard, who wants Jim Turner dead, but who wants Jim Turner to drown instead of being shot. Jack’s idea is to simply leave Jim Turner tied up



behind on the riverboat, which will eventually break apart and be swept down the river. According to Jack, “it ain’t good morals” (84) to shoot Jim Turner.

Note how these robbers are very different from the robbers that Tom Sawyer talked about in the first chapter of the novel:

- 1) Tom Sawyer thinks that most robbers would not tell the secrets of the gang. However, one of these robbers has threatened to turn state’s evidence unless he gets more than his share of the loot.
- 2) These robbers are not like a group of brothers, but instead are murderous thieves.
- 3) A woman would have to be crazy to fall in love with one of these robbers.

### **Why didn’t Jim do more to prevent Huck’s foolish behavior?**

Jim can’t because he is at Huck’s mercy.

Huck is in a position of power over Jim. If Huck tells white people the whereabouts of Jim, a runaway slave, Jim will be captured, punished, and probably sold down the river.

In addition, although Huck is a child and Jim is a man, Huck is white and Jim is black, so in this society, Jim is going to do pretty much what Huck tells him to do.

Huck’s behavior really is foolish — it is foolish to go on the wreck.

## CHAPTER 13: HONEST LOOT FROM *WALTER SCOTT*

**Why do you think Twain names the wrecked steamboat the *Walter Scott*? Who was Sir Walter Scott? (Hint: Twain hates Romantic writers. By the way, note that the names of ships are put in italics.)**

It is foolish for Huck and Jim to go on board a wrecked steamboat that is liable to break up at any moment and drown everyone on board. In Ch. 13, on p. 89, we find out that the wrecked steamboat is named the *Walter Scott*.

Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) was a Romantic writer; he was not a Realist writer. As a Realist writer, Mark Twain was opposed to the Romantic writers, and so, as a joke, he names the wrecked steamboat the *Walter Scott*.

Sir Walter Scott wrote *Ivanhoe*, which is about knights errant, but he did not look at them Realistically, the way that Twain did in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Twain wrote humorously about the discomfort of wearing plate armor, and about sweating and not being able to get at one's handkerchief. Sir Walter doesn't do any of that.

**How does Huck treat the robbers on board the *Walter Scott*?**

Huck does take the robbers' boat because he and Jim need it so that they can get off the *Walter Scott*, but he tries to save the lives of the robbers on board the *Walter Scott*. Huck wants the men caught and punished, but he doesn't want them to die by drowning. Of course, if they are convicted in a jury and hung, that's different.

Huck goes ashore as soon as he can, and he finds a ferryboat owner and tells a long, involved story about him and his family being washed on board the *Walter Scott*. In particular,

Huck makes the ferryboat owner believe that a female relative of the richest man in town is aboard the steamboat.

Because of the lie, the ferryboat owner goes to the steamboat to rescue the people aboard.

At first, Huck felt good about what he had done. On p. 91, we read:

I struck for the light, but as soon as he turned the corner I went back and got into my skiff and bailed her out, and then pulled up shore in the easy water about six hundred yards, and tucked myself in among some woodboats; for I couldn't rest easy till I could see the ferryboat start. But take it all around, I was feeling ruther comfortable on accounts of taking all this trouble for that gang, for not many would a done it. I wished the widow knowed about it. I judged she would be proud of me for helping these rapsCALLIONS, because rapsCALLIONS and dead beats is the kind the widow and good people takes the most interest in.

However, Huck sees the steamboat floating down river, very low in the water. He rows out to the steamboat and calls a few times, but he quickly learns that no one on board is alive.

Huck tried to save the lives of the robbers on board, but he failed.

### **Write a character analysis of the ferryman.**

*The ferryman is a humorous character.*

The ferryman is talkative. When Huck asks if he is the watchman of the boat, the ferryman says,

“Yes,” he says, kind of pretty-well-satisfied like. “I’m the captain, and the owner, and the mate, and the pilot, and watchman, and head deck-hand; and sometimes I’m the freight and passengers. I ain’t as

rich as old Jim Hornback, and I can't be so blame' generous and good to Tom, Dick, and Harry as what he is, and slam around money the way he does; but I've told him a many a time 't I wouldn't trade places with him; for, says I, a sailor's life's the life for me, and I'm derved if I'd live two mile out o' town, where there ain't nothing ever goin' on, not for all his spondulicks and as much more on top of it. Says I — ” (pp. 88-89)

*The ferryman is concerned about money.*

Huck wants the ferryman to go to the steamboat and rescue the people on board, but the ferryman replies:

“By Jackson, I'd *like* to, and, blame it, I don't know but I will; but who in the dingnation's a-goin' to *pay* for it? Do you reckon your pap — ” (90)

This does not reflect well on the ferryman. He has a chance to save a few lives, but he is worried about who is going to pay for it.

*The ferryman is boastful.*

He tells the richest man in town that he wouldn't live where the richest man in town does, that he much prefers the life of a sailor.

**When Huck acts like Tom Sawyer in Ch. 12 and Ch. 13, what happens? When Huck acts like himself, what happens?**

When Huck acts like Tom Sawyer, things go wrong. We see that he gets into trouble by going aboard the wrecked steamboat, although he and Jim do make off with the robbers' loot.

When Huck acts like Huck, as when he gets away from his father by sawing himself out of the cabin and by faking his own murder, things go very well indeed. Huck thinking for

himself is a very practical person. Huck thinking like Tom is foolhardy, the way that Tom is foolhardy.

Let's remember that Huck risks his life by going aboard the wrecked steamboat. It could have broken up and floated downstream at any moment, and both Huck and Jim could have drowned.

On p. 81, we read Huck's reasons for going aboard the wrecked steamboat:

Do you reckon Tom Sawyer would ever go by this thing? Not for pie, he wouldn't. He'd call it an adventure — that's what he'd call it; and he'd land on that wreck if it was his last act. And wouldn't he throw style into it? — wouldn't he spread himself, nor nothing? Why, you'd think it was Christopher C'lumbus discovering Kingdom-Come. I wish Tom Sawyer *was* here.

On p. 82, we read about why Huck wants to find out about the voices he and Jim had heard:

By this time Jim was gone for the raft. I was just a-biling with curiosity; and I says to myself, Tom Sawyer wouldn't back out now, and so I won't either; I'm a-going to see what's going on here.

## CHAPTER 14: WAS SOLOMON WISE?

**If you have read *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* before and feel like doing research, explain what foreshadowing is and explain how foreshadowing is used in the scene in which Huck and Jim talk about kings and dukes.**

Later, the king and the duke will join Huck and Jim on the raft. Mark Twain prepares for that by having Huck and Jim discuss kings after Huck reads one of the books found in the loot that they got from the robbers of the *Walter Scott*.

Foreshadowing is the use of hints or clues to suggest what will happen later in literature.

Source: [http://www.tnellen.com/cyber-eng/lit\\_terms/foreshadowing.html](http://www.tnellen.com/cyber-eng/lit_terms/foreshadowing.html)

Definition: A literary device used to hint at events that will follow later in the story, sometimes generating feelings of anxiety or suspense. Anton Chekhov once said that “if there is a gun hanging on the wall in the first act, it must fire in the last.” That remark captures the essence of foreshadowing.

Source: <http://contemporarylit.about.com/library/bldef-foreshadowing>

In the explanatory note on p. 406, we read:

Comprising all of chapter 14, this passage is the last part of the long section Mark Twain inserted into his typescript in 1883 [...]. Having already introduced “the king” and “the duke” in 1880, in what became chapter 19 [...], Mark Twain reminded himself to set the stage for their appearance with this inserted passage: “Back yonder, Huck reads & tells about monarchies & kings & c. So Jim stares when he learns the ranks of these 2 [...].”

In other words, Twain deliberately uses foreshadowing in this chapter.

**Is Ch. 14 racist in the things that Twain has the character Jim say? Is the end of Ch. 8 racist in the things that Twain has the character Jim say?**

The end of Ch. 8 is reminiscent of the stereotype of the minstrel show darkie:

“Have you got hairy arms and a hairy breast, Jim?”  
[These are supposed to be signs of coming wealth.]

“What’s de use to ax dat question? Don’ you see I has?”

“Well, are you rich?”

“No, but I ben rich wunst and gwyne to be rich agin. Wunst I had foteen dollars, but I tuck to specalat’n’, en got busted out.”

“What did you speculate in, Jim?”

“Well, fust I tackled stock.”

“What kind of stock?”

“Why, live stock — cattle, you know. I put ten dollars in a cow. But I ain’ gwyne to resk no mo’ money in stock. De cow up ’n’ died on my han’s.” (55)

In this conversation, Jim reveals a lack of knowledge about such things as stocks and bonds.

However, in the explanatory note on p. 406, we read:

The debates are also reminiscent of the comic dialogues between the genteel interlocutor and the vernacular end men, Bones and Tambo, which were a standard feature of minstrel shows of the mid-

nineteenth century. In 1906 Clemens fondly recalled the minstrel shows of his youth, in particular the “delightful jangle of assertion and contradiction” that characterized them [...]. The suggestion of minstrel show elements in *Huckleberry Finn* has led some critics to describe Jim’s character and behavior as a racial stereotype [...]. They have been well answered by critics who recognize how ingeniously Mark Twain has put minstrel conventions in the service of ridiculing Huck’s racism, and giving readers a lively sense of Jim’s intelligence [...].

In Ch. 14 is another conversation between Jim and Huck; one thing to notice is that Jim wins the argument in Ch. 14, thus “giving readers a lively sense of Jim’s intelligence” (406). Huck has stated that the French talk differently from Americans, and this surprises Jim greatly; in fact, he doesn’t believe it. To make his point, Huck uses an analogy:

“Looky here, Jim, does a cat talk like we do?”

“No, a cat don’t.”

“Well, does a cow?”

“No, a cow don’t, nuther.”

“Does a cat talk like a cow, or a cow talk like a cat?”

“No, dey don’t.”

“It’s natural and right for ’em to talk different from each other, ain’t it?”

“Course.”

“And ain’t it natural and right for a cat and a cow to talk different from *us*?”

“Why, mos’ sholy it is.”



“Well, then, why ain’t it natural and right for a *Frenchman* to talk different from us? You answer me that.” (97)

Unfortunately for Huck, Jim does have an answer. His answer shows that Huck is using a poor analogy to make his case:

“Is a cat a man, Huck?”

“No.”

“Well, den, dey ain’t no sense in a cat talkin’ like a man. Is a cow a man? — er is a cow a cat?”

“No, she ain’t either of them.”

“Well, den, she ain’t got no business to talk like either one er the yuther of ’em. Is a Frenchman a man?”

“Yes.”

“*Well*, den! Dad blame it, why doan’ he *talk* like a man? You answer me *dat!*” (97)

On p. 97, Huck says: “I see it warn’t no use wastin’ words — you can’t learn a nigger to argue. So I quit.”

Huck has to quit. He may be right, but he has been defeated by Jim’s lively intelligence.

In this novel, Twain exposes lies. One lie that white people of the time before (and, unfortunately, often after) the Civil War believed was that black people are not intelligent.

## CHAPTER 15: FOOLING POOR OLD JIM

**How does this chapter develop the relationship between Huck and Jim? How does this chapter advance Huck's education about black people?**

In this novel, Mark Twain exposes lies. Some of the lies come from books. For example, in Tom Sawyer's reading of Romantic adventure novels he learns that robbers are honorable men. Of course, Huck's actual experience of robbers shows that they are not honorable men — they are dangerous and evil lowlifes.

Other lies exposed by Mark Twain are that black people are not as good as white people. Experience is a good teacher, and by experience Huck learns that Jim is a good person, and certainly better than many white people, including Huck's father, Pap.

In this important chapter, Huck learns that black people such as Jim have feelings. All of these things are truths that Huck learns: Black people can be friends, and they can have their feelings hurt, and when you hurt a friend's feelings, you ought to apologize, even if you are white and your friend is black.

On a wider level, Mark Twain is exposing in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* the lie that slavery is based on. That lie states that black people are property instead of human beings and can be sold. This is exactly the way that people in the novel see Jim. He is not a human being; instead, he is a piece of property that can be sold for \$800.

In Ch. 15, Huck and Jim become separated. Jim is on the raft, and Huck is in a canoe. The river is foggy, so they can't see each other, and they go down opposite sides of an island. When the end of the night comes, the fog has lifted, and Huck paddles in search of the raft. When he finds the raft, Jim is asleep, worn out with his exertions in the night. Huck

then decides to play a practical joke on Jim. Huck pretends that the two were never separated during the night and that Jim dreamed the entire thing. Jim is finally convinced, and he begins to “interpret” (104) the dream. Morning arrives, and now you can see lots of things on the raft such as leaves and branches that indicate that it has had a hard time during the foggy night, and Huck says,

“O, well, that’s all interpreted well enough as far as it goes, Jim,” I says, “but what does *these* things stand for?”

It was the leaves and rubbish on the raft, and the smashed oar. You could see them first rate, now.

Jim looked at the trash, and then looked at me, and back at the trash again. He had got the dream fixed so strong in his head that he couldn’t seem to shake it loose and get the facts back into its place again, right away. But when he did get the thing straightened around he looked at me steady, without ever smiling, and says:

“What do dey stan’ for? I’s e gwyne to tell you. When I got all wore out, wid work, en wid de callin’ for you, en went to sleep, my heart wuz mos’ broke bekase you wuz los’, en I didn’ k’yer no’ mo’ what become er me en de raf’. En when I wake up en fine you back agin, all safe en soun’, de tears come, en I could a got down on my knees en kiss yo’ foot I’s so thankful. En all you wuz thinkin’ ’bout, wuz how you could make a fool uv ole Jim wid a lie. Dat truck dah is *trash*; en trash is what people is dat puts dirt on de head er dey fren’s en makes ’em ashamed.”

Then he got up, slow, and walked to the wigwam, and went in there, without saying anything but that. But that was enough. It made me feel so mean I could

almost kissed *his* foot to get him to take it back. (104-105)

In this passage Jim stands up for himself. He has been a friend to Huck, and he lets Huck know that Huck has not treated him like a friend in return. Jim is saying that he is a human being who deserves the respect and dignity that all human beings are entitled to.

Note that Jim calls Huck “trash” (105). Of course, most people would call Huck poor white trash, but Jim is not using the word in that sense. To Jim, “trash” is a person who plays a joke on a friend and makes that friend feel ashamed.

We then read, “It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger — but I done it, and I warn’t ever sorry for it afterwards, neither” (105).

The word “nigger” is controversial, of course, and some people may wonder why Huck does not use the word “friend” instead. Maybe Twain wanted to emphasize the word “nigger” when Huck apologizes to Jim. The word “friend” would not have the same impact or be as radical. We do apologize to friends, but many of Twain’s readers may have found it shocking for a white person to apologize to a “nigger.”

In this chapter, Huck learns to treat Jim as a friend and a human being, rather than as a slave. Friends don’t do things that will humiliate their friends, and Huck has played a practical joke that hurts Jim and makes him feel small.

Therefore, Huck humbles himself enough to apologize to Jim, and he doesn’t regret it later.

Make no mistake, Huck is a racist, as we have seen and will see. However, he is learning that blacks are people, too. He may never totally learn that about all black people, but he does learn that about Jim.

## CHAPTER 16: THE RATTLESNAKE SKIN DOES ITS WORK

**The first part of this chapter, in which Huck swims to a raft to gather information, did not appear in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* during Mark Twain's lifetime. Why not?**

One worry was that *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was much longer than *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Twain's publishing company wanted to make the two books matching volumes, so the publisher suggested deleting the scene. Twain agreed. The Mark Twain edition restores the scene because Twain agreed to leave it out only because of the publisher, not because of any aesthetic reason.

**Why is the first part of this chapter both entertaining and informative?**

It is entertaining because of the fun of the boasting of the raftsmen, along with their songs and jokes. It also includes a good ghost story about Charles William Albright and the haunted barrel.

It also conveys important information about the waters of the Ohio and the Mississippi Rivers that will be important later when Huck and Jim discover that they have gone past Cairo:

And they talked about how Ohio water didn't like to mix with Mississippi water. Ed said if you take the Mississippi on a rise when the Ohio is low, you'll find a wide band of clear water all the way down the east side of the Mississippi for a hundred mile or more, and the minute you get out a quarter of a mile from shore and pass the line, it is all thick and yellor the rest of the way across. (113)

**Why does Huck wrestle with his conscience in this chapter? What happens as a result of his wrestling with his conscience?**

Huck begins to wrestle with his conscience in this chapter because he realizes that he is helping Jim escape, and he realizes that his society considers helping a slave to escape morally wrong. However, he does decide to help Jim escape.

On pp. 123-124, we read:

Jim said it made him all over trembly and feverish to be so close to freedom. Well, I can tell you it made me all over trembly and feverish, too, to hear him, because I begun to get it through my head that he *was* most free — and who was to blame for it? Why, *me*. I couldn't get that out of my conscience, no how nor no way. It got to troubling me so I couldn't rest, I couldn't stay still in one place. It hadn't ever come home to me before what this thing was that I was doing. But now it did; and it stayed with me, and scorched me more and more. I tried to make out to myself that *I* warn't to blame, because *I* didn't run Jim off from his rightful owner; but it warn't no use, conscience up and says, every time, 'But you knowed he was running for his freedom, and you could a paddled ashore and told somebody.' That was so — I couldn't get around that no way. That was where it pinched. Conscience says to me, 'What had poor Miss Watson done to you, that you could see her nigger go off right under your eyes and never say one single word? What did that poor old woman do to you, that you could treat her so mean? Why she tried to learn you your book, she tried to learn you your manners, she tried to be good to you every way she knowed how. *That's* what she done.'

And on p. 124, after Jim talks about buying his wife, and then buying their children, and hiring an abolitionist to steal their children if their master wouldn't sell them, Huck thinks,

It most froze me to hear such talk. He wouldn't ever dared to talk such talk in his life before. Just see what a difference it made in him the minute he judged he was about free. It was according to the old saying, 'Give a nigger an inch and he'll take an ell.' Thinks I, this is what comes of my not thinking. Here was this nigger, which I had as good as helped to run away, coming right out flat-footed and saying he would steal his children — children that belonged to a man I didn't even know; a man that hadn't ever done me no harm.

There is a lot of irony here. Huck thinks that he is doing the wrong thing when he helps Jim to escape, but we know that slavery is wrong and that he is doing the right thing when he helps Jim to escape.

By the way, an "ell" is a unit of length. Usually, it is 45 inches and is supposed to be the average length of a person's arm. An ell is much longer than an inch.

By the way, on p. 124, we find out that Jim and his wife have two children.

**What does Huck do when the two slave hunters ask if the man on board the raft is white or black?**

Huck decides to do the right thing. He skillfully lies and lets the two slave hunters think that his father has smallpox. This lie keeps the two slave hunters from boarding the raft and seeing that Jim is on board.

By the way, the two slave hunters give Huck two \$20 gold pieces to bribe him to keep floating down the river. He splits

the money with Jim, which shows something good and generous about Huck.

In addition, Huck gives up a chance to get a reward for turning in Jim.

**Write a character analysis of the two men who think Huck’s “family” has smallpox.**

The two men are slave hunters. Five male slaves have run away, and they are searching for them.

The two men don’t trust Huck. Hearing from Huck that there is a man on the raft and that the man is white, one of the men says that they will check the man out for themselves. They don’t trust Huck when he says that the man is white.

The two men have money. They each give Huck a \$20 gold piece to go further down the river.

The two men are selfish. In addition to being slave hunters, they are willing to let another village to get smallpox just as long as their own village doesn’t get it.

The two men try to ease their consciences. They give Huck money to go away. They aren’t willing to help Huck physically, but they do give him money.

The two men fear smallpox.

**What is smallpox, and when was a vaccine for it discovered?**

According to <<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/overview/disease-facts.asp>>,

Smallpox is a serious, contagious, and sometimes fatal infectious disease. There is no specific treatment for smallpox disease, and the only prevention is vaccination. The name “smallpox” is derived from the Latin word for “spotted” and refers to the raised



bumps that appear on the face and body of an infected person.

Smallpox is very contagious and often fatal. The two men fear that Huck's family have smallpox (because of Huck's skillful lying), and they bribe Huck to go further down the river and land at another village.

Smallpox has been eradicated since 1980, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). Edward Jenner discovered a vaccine against smallpox when he noticed that dairymaids who had gotten the related disease cowpox did not get smallpox. He inoculated people with cowpox; after getting cowpox, these people were immune against smallpox. Mr. Jenner developed his vaccine in 1796.

**Why don't Huck and Jim ever stop at Cairo, Illinois?  
Why do they continue to float *south*?**

Huck and Jim continue to float south because of some mishaps:

1) They miss seeing Cairo, Illinois, because they float past it the night they became separated in the dense fog, and Jim floated down one side of an island and Huck floated down the other side. That was the night that Huck played a practical joke on Jim, pretending that it was all a dream, and after an effort of the will, Huck apologized to Jim.

2) The two decide to go back upriver in the canoe, but the canoe turns up missing (129).

Because of these mishaps, they decide that the only thing they can do is to continue to go down river until they can buy a canoe from a "raft laying up at shore" (130). However, before they can do that, the raft gets run over by a steamboat.

**Which superstition does the chapter heading refer to?**

Note that the chapter refers to a superstition. Back in Ch. 10, we read:

We rummaged the clothes we'd got, and found eight dollars in silver sewed up in the lining of an old blanket overcoat. Jim said he reckoned the people in that house stole the coat, because if they'd a knowed the money was there they wouldn't a left it. I said I reckoned they killed him, too; but Jim didn't want to talk about that. I says:

“Now you think it's bad luck; but what did you say when I fetched in the snake-skin that I found on the top of the ridge day before yesterday? You said it was the worst bad luck in the world to touch a snake-skin with my hands. Well, here's your bad luck! We've raked in all this truck and eight dollars besides. I wish we could have some bad luck like this every day, Jim.”

“Never you mind, honey, never you mind. Don't you git too peart. It's a-comin'. Mind I tell you, it's a-comin'.” (63)

Of course, soon afterward, a rattlesnake bit Jim because of a practical joke that Huck plays — a practical joke that Huck does not apologize for. However, now Huck thinks that touching a snake-skin with his bare hands has brought even more bad luck to Jim and himself.

## CHAPTER 17: THE GRANGERFORDS TAKE ME IN

### **What is your opinion of the Grangerfords?**

The best thing to say about the Grangerfords is that they are generous to Huck.

When Huck tells his story — a lie, as usual — and says that he is an orphan and alone in the world, the Grangerfords offer to let him live with them as long as he wishes. On p. 135, we read, “So they said I could have a home there as long as I wanted it.”

They also feed Huck right away — after making sure that he is not a Shepherdson — and Buck gives him some of his clothing to wear.

This family is generous to Huck.

The worst thing to say about the Grangerfords is that they are involved in a silly and dangerous feud.

Of course, we find out that they are feuding with the Shepherdsons, and both sides are killing off members of the other side as fast as they can.

### **What are the names of the oldest Grangerfords, and why do you suppose Twain chose those names?**

The names of the oldest Grangerfords are Saul and Rachel.

These are good names, but they are pre-Christian. Rachel is a famous woman in the Old Testament, and Saul is both a King of Old Testament times and Saint Paul’s name when he was persecuting Christians before he converted.

Perhaps this is to remind us of “an eye for an eye.”

### **Write a character analysis of Emmeline Grangerford.**

Emmeline Grangerford is a morbid little girl. We can certainly see that in her art and poetry, both of which Mark Twain has great fun describing. (“Morbid” means “Characterized by preoccupation with unwholesome thoughts or feelings,” according to *The American Heritage College Dictionary*.)

If Emmeline were alive today, she would be a Gothic girl dressed in black.

When Emmeline was alive, she allowed death to rule her life.

### **What is your opinion of Emmeline Grangerford’s art and poetry?**

#### *Art*

On p. 137, we read about Emmeline’s picture “Shall I Never See Thee More Alas”:

There was some that they called crayons, which one of the daughters which was dead made her own self when she was only fifteen years old. They was different from any pictures I ever see before; blacker, mostly, than is common. One was a woman in a slim black dress, belted small under the arm-pits, with bulges like a cabbage in the middle of the sleeves, and a large black scoop-shovel bonnet with a black veil, and white slim ankles crossed about with black tape, and very wee black slippers, like a chisel, and she was leaning pensive on a tombstone on her right elbow, under a weeping willow, and her other hand hanging down her side holding a white handkerchief and a reticule, and underneath the picture it said “Shall I Never See Thee More Alas.”

On pp. 137-38, we read about Emmeline's picture "I Shall Never Hear Thy Sweet Chirrup More Alas":

Another one was a young lady with her hair all combed up straight to the top of her head, and knotted there in front of a comb like a chair-back, and she was crying into a handkerchief and had a dead bird laying on its back in her other hand with its heels up, and underneath the picture it said "I Shall Never Hear Thy Sweet Chirrup More Alas."

On pp. 138-39, we read about Emmeline's picture "And Art Thou Gone Yes Thou Art Gone Alas." An excerpt:

There was one where a young lady was at a window, looking up at the moon, and tears running down her cheeks; and she had an open letter in one hand with black sealing-wax showing on one edge of it, and she was mashing a locket with a chain to it against her mouth, and underneath the picture it said "And Art Thou Gone Yes Thou Art Gone Alas." (139)

Pretty clearly, one of Emmeline's favorite words was "Alas."

Huck's reaction to the pictures is likely to be similar to our reaction to the pictures:

These was all nice pictures, I reckon, but I didn't somehow seem to take to them, because if ever I was down a little they always give me the fan-tods [made him nervous and irritable]. Everybody was sorry she died, because she had laid out a lot more of these pictures to do, and a body could see by what she had done what they had lost. But I reckoned that with her disposition she was having a better time in the graveyard. (138)

A few comments:

1) Emmeline's favorite word seems to have been "alas," since it appears so often in the titles of her pictures.

2) I think that we can agree with Huck "that with her disposition she was having a better time in the graveyard" (138).

3) IMPORTANT: Emmeline has been surrounded by death because of the feud, so her morbid interest in death is perhaps not surprising.

### *Poetry*

On p. 139, we read:

This young girl kept a scrap-book when she was alive, and used to paste obituaries and accidents and cases of patient suffering in it out of the *Presbyterian Observer*, and write poetry after them out of her own head. It was very good poetry. This is what she wrote about a boy by the name of Stephen Dowling Bots that fell down a well and was drowned:

#### ODE TO STEPHEN DOWLING BOTS, DEC'D

And did young Stephen sicken,  
 And did young Stephen die?  
 And did the sad hearts thicken,  
 And did the mourners cry?  
 No; such was not the fate of  
 Young Stephen Dowling Bots;  
 Though sad hearts round him thickened,  
 'Twas not from sickness' shots.

No whooping-cough did rack his frame,  
 Nor measles drear with spots;  
 Not these impaired the sacred name  
 Of Stephen Dowling Bots.  
 Despised love struck not with woe  
 That head of curly knots,  
 Nor stomach troubles laid him low,  
 Young Stephen Dowling Bots.  
 O no. Then list with tearful eye,  
 Whilst I his fate do tell.  
 His soul did from this cold world fly  
 By falling down a well.  
 They got him out and emptied him;  
 Alas it was too late;  
 His spirit was gone for to sport aloft  
 In the realms of the good and great.

A few comments:

1) When one grieves, one's heart usually does not "thicken" (139).

2) Usually, love is not "Despised" (139).

On pp. 140-41, we read:

If Emmeline Grangerford could make poetry like that  
 before she was fourteen, there ain't no telling what  
 she could a done by and by. Buck said she could

rattle off poetry like nothing. She didn't ever have to stop to think. He said she would slap down a line, and if she couldn't find anything to rhyme with it she would just scratch it out and slap down another one, and go ahead. She warn't particular, she could write about anything you choose to give her to write about just so it was sadful. Every time a man died, or a woman died, or a child died, she would be on hand with her "Tribute" before he was cold. She called them Tributes. The neighbors said it was the doctor first, then Emmeline, then the undertaker — the undertaker never got in ahead of Emmeline but once, and then she hung fire on a rhyme for the dead person's name, which was Whistler. She warn't ever the same, after that; she never complained, but she kind of pined away and did not live long. Poor thing, many's the time I made myself go up to the little room that used to be hers and get out her poor old scrap-book and read in it when her pictures had been aggravating me and I had soured on her a little. I liked all that family, dead ones and all, and warn't going to let anything come between us. Poor Emmeline made poetry about all the dead people when she was alive, and it didn't seem right that there warn't nobody to make some about her, now she was gone; so I tried to sweat out a verse or two myself but I couldn't seem to make it go, somehow. They kept Emmeline's room trim and nice, and all the things fixed in it just the way she liked to have them when she was alive, and nobody ever slept there. The old lady took care of the room herself, though there was plenty of niggers, and she sewed there a good deal and read her Bible there, mostly.

A few comments:



1) Emmeline Grangerford is a morbid little girl. We can certainly see that in her art and poetry, both of which Mark Twain has great fun describing. (“Morbid” means “Characterized by preoccupation with unwholesome thoughts or feelings,” according to *The American Heritage College Dictionary*.)

2) The poetry by Emmeline is very bad poetry.

3) Huck calls the poetry by Emmeline “very good” (139), but he is mistaken.

4) In part, Emmeline Grangerford is in the novel because Twain wishes to contrast two kinds of language: Huck’s experience-based language and Emmeline’s literary language. Emmeline uses a very literary style in her writing. Huck’s style is based on experience, not on literature.

5) Huck is unable to make poetry like Emmeline’s because he lacks her knowledge of literature.

6) IMPORTANT: Emmeline has been surrounded by death because of the feud, so her morbid interest in death is perhaps not surprising.

7) Before the Civil War (and before modern medicine), children often died. Families had many children in part because they knew that some of them would probably die.

**Why was *Adventures of Huckleberry* banned in Concord, Massachusetts, shortly after it was published?**

Of course, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been widely challenged and occasionally banned. A book is challenged when someone wants it taken off a library’s shelves or not taught in schools. A book is banned when the book is taken

off a library's shelves or not taught in schools. Of course, banning a book is censoring a book.

These days, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is likely to be challenged or banned because of its depictions of race and because it uses the n-word. When it was first published, however, it was likely to be challenged or banned because of its depiction of Huckleberry Finn rather than because of its depiction of Jim.

In 1885, soon after the book was published, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was banned in Concord, Massachusetts, when it was taken off the shelves of the Concord Public Library. In March of 1885, an article appeared in the *New York Herald*. In the article, one member of the Concord library committee calls *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* "trash of the veriest sort." Another member of the library quoted in the article stated that the novel was "couched in the language of a rough, ignorant dialect. All through its pages is a systematic use of bad grammar and an employment of inelegant expressions."

### **Why is it a masterstroke that Mark Twain let Huckleberry Finn narrate his own story using his own language?**

Of course, one of Mark Twain's masterstrokes in this novel is letting Huckleberry tell his own story in his own way, although Huck is barely educated and is ungrammatical. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is written in the first person, using the voice of Huck. In contrast, Twain's earlier novels, including *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Prince and the Pauper*, are written in the third person, using an omniscient narrator.

Letting a barely educated, ungrammatical young boy narrate his own story is revolutionary, and it is one of the reasons why Ernest Hemingway said that all American literature

comes from this one novel. Mark Twain is expanding the kind of language that can be used to write American literature. Another person who did much the same for another language is Dante, who used the vernacular language of Florence in his masterpiece *The Divine Comedy* instead of the literary Latin that many of his contemporaries used.

**Compare and contrast the language that Huckleberry Finn uses in his book with the language that Emmeline Grangerford uses in her poetry.**

We can certainly contrast the language that Huck uses with the language used by Emmeline Grangerford, who is roughly Huck's age when she dies.

The Grangerfords are Southern aristocracy, and so their background is quite a bit different from Huck's background. Emmeline has a much better education than Huck, and she has been exposed to many more books and for a longer time than Huck. Emmeline is also a lot more concerned — make that “obsessed” — with death than Huck is. Huck doesn't take much stock in dead people, and he is afraid of ghosts.

Huck reads Emmeline's poem “ODE TO STEPHEN DOWLING BOTS, DE'D,” and then he tries to write a poem like it, but he finds that he can't:

Poor Emmeline made poetry about all the dead people when she was alive, and it didn't seem right that there warn't nobody to make some about her, now she was gone; so I tried to sweat out a verse or two myself but I couldn't seem to make it go, somehow.  
(141)

Of course, Huck can't write a poem like Emmeline's poems because her language is not his language. She is familiar with literary traditions and with literary language that Huck is not familiar with.

Emmeline Grangerford uses words such as “list” and “whilst” that she has gotten out of books. Her language is the language of books.

In contrast, Huck’s language comes out of experience — his own experience. Huck has experienced nature, and his language incorporates images from nature. We remember how he described his father in Ch. 5 (23):

He was most fifty, and he looked it. His hair was long and tangled and greasy, and hung down, and you could see his eyes shining through, like he was behind vines. It was all black; no gray; so was his long, mixed-up whiskers. There warn’t no color in his face, where his face showed; it was white; not like another man’s white, but a white to make a body sick, a white to make a body’s flesh crawl — a tree-toad white, a fish-belly white. As for his clothes — just rags, that was all. He had one ankle resting on t’other knee; the boot on that foot was busted, and two of his toes stuck through, and he worked them now and then. His hat was laying on the floor; an old black slouch with the top caved in, like a lid.

Huck refers to a white color that he has seen: “a tree-toad white, a fish-belly white” (23). Emmeline, of course, would use a literary term for white — something like “alabastor” (a kind of mineral) or “ivory.” She would use terms such as these because she has read them in books; she would use them even if she had never seen alabastor.

### **How are Emmeline Grangerford and Tom Sawyer alike?**

Emmeline Grangerford and Tom Sawyer are alike because they share a reliance on books over experience. Emmeline uses a certain kind of language because that is the language she has read in books. When Tom plays pretend games such as Robin Hood, he follows certain rules — rules that he has

gotten from books. Robin Hood always defeats Guy of Guisborne, even when the boy playing Guy is fighting better than the boy playing Robin Hood, because in the books Robin Hood kills Guy of Guisborne. Tom follows the rules even when he doesn't understand the rules. For example, he doesn't know what "ransom" means, but he insists that his Gang of Robbers must ransom prisoners because that's what the books says.

### **Which conflict existed between British and American literature in Twain's time?**

Emmeline Grangerford and Tom Sawyer both read books from Europe. Tom, of course, reads adventure books about Robin Hood and pirates, while Emmeline reads British poetry. Emmeline, of course, uses the conventions of British poetry in her own poetry.

In contrast, Huck is unfamiliar with British literature, and he uses his own, distinctive language when he tells his own story. Being unfamiliar with the conventions of British literature, he does not use those conventions when he tells his own story.

Other American authors such as James Fenimore Cooper and Harriet Beecher Stowe used characters who spoke in an American way; however, the narrators of those novels — told in the third person — used a formal literary language like that of British literature.

This kind of American literature used American characters who used the American vernacular but also used British-literature conventions in writing about those American characters.

Mark Twain in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* completely and totally ignores the conventions of British literature; instead, he completely and totally turns over the narration to the voice of Huckleberry Finn, who is completely and totally

an American character with an American voice. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has nothing of a formal literary voice except where that formal literary voice is parodied in the poetry of Emmeline or in the Shakespeare soliloquy as misremembered by the Duke.

Earlier, Walt Whitman created a colloquial, vernacular, American voice for poetry. In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain does the same thing for American prose.

For a while, American authors seemed to have an inferiority complex — they felt that American literature was inferior to the older, more-established British literature. Walt Whitman in poetry and Mark Twain in novels changed that.

**What is your opinion of the furnishings, including art objects, of the Grangerfords' house?**

Basically, the furnishings in the house are tacky.

On pp. 136-137, we read (these are Huck's words, with bullets added):

- It was a mighty nice family, and a mighty nice house, too. I hadn't seen no house out in the country before that was so nice and had so much style. It didn't have an iron latch on the front door, nor a wooden one with a buckskin string, but a brass knob to turn, the same as houses in town. There warn't no bed in the parlor, nor a sign of a bed; but heaps of parlors in towns has beds in them. There was a big fire place that was bricked on the bottom, and the bricks was kept clean and red by pouring water on them and scrubbing them with another brick; sometimes they washed them over with red water-paint that they call Spanish brown, same as they do in town. They had big brass dog-irons that could hold up a saw-log.

- There was a clock on the middle of the mantel piece, with a picture of a town painted on the bottom half of the glass front, and a round place in the middle of it for the sun, and you could see the pendulum swinging behind it. It was beautiful to hear that clock tick; and sometimes when one of these peddlers had been along and scoured her up and got her in good shape, she would start in and strike a hundred and fifty before she got tuckered out. They wouldn't took any money for her.
- Well, there was a big outlandish parrot on each side of the clock, made out of something like chalk, and painted up gaudy.
- By one of the parrots was a cat made of crockery and a crockery dog by the other; and when you pressed down on them they squeaked but didn't open their mouths nor look different nor interested. They squeaked through underneath.
- There was a couple of big wild-turkey-wing fans spread out behind those things.
- On the table in the middle of the room was a kind of a lovely crockery basket that had apples and oranges and peaches and grapes piled up in it which was much redder and yellower and prettier than real ones is, but they warn't real because you could see where pieces had got chipped off and showed the white chalk or whatever it was, underneath.
- This table had a cover made out of beautiful oil cloth, with a red and blue spread-eagle painted on it, and a painted border all around. It come all the way from Philadelphia, they said.
- There was some books, too, piled up perfectly exact, on each corner of the table. One was a big family

Bible full of pictures. One was “Pilgrim’s Progress,” about a man that left his family, it didn’t say why. I read considerable in it, now and then. The statements was interesting, but tough. Another was “Friendship’s Offering,” full of beautiful stuff and poetry; but I didn’t read the poetry. Another was Henry Clay’s Speeches, and another was Dr. Gunn’s Family Medicine, which told you all about what to do if a body was sick or dead. There was a hymn book, and a lot of other books.

- And there was nice split-bottom chairs, and perfectly sound, too — not bagged down in the middle and busted, like an old basket.
- They had pictures hung on the walls — mainly Washingtons and Lafayettes, and battles, and Highland Marys, and one called “Signing the Declaration.”

On. p. 141, we read:

Well, as I was saying about the parlor, there was beautiful curtains on the windows, white, with pictures painted on them, of castles with vines all down the walls, and cattle coming down to drink. There was a little old piano, too, that had tin pans in it, I reckon, and nothing was ever so lovely as to hear the young ladies sing “The Last Link is Broken” and play “The Battle of Prague” on it. The walls of all the rooms was plastered, and most had carpets on the floors, and the whole house was whitewashed on the outside.



## CHAPTER 18: OVERREACHING DON'T PAY

### Are the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons cowards?

Ironically, the Grangerfords have respect for the Shepherdsons. Old Baldy Shepherdson sees a 14-year-old cousin of Buck's named Bud riding alone without a weapon, and he rides him down and kills him. Bud knows that old Baldy will overcome him and kill him, and he can't do anything to stop him, so he stops and faces old Baldy so that he gets his wounds in the front, which is more honorable than running away and getting shot in the back.

Huck thinks that old Baldy must be a coward if he kills an unarmed 14-year-old, but Buck disagrees. On p. 147, we read:

“I reckon that old man was a coward, Buck.”

“I reckon he *warn't* a coward. Not by a blame' sight. There ain't a coward amongst them Shepherdsons — not a one. And there ain't no cowards amongst the Grangerfords, either. Why, that old man kep' up his end in a fight, one day, for a half an hour, against three Grangerfords, and come out winner. They was all a-horseback; he lit off of his horse and got behind a little woodpile, and kep' his horse before him to stop the bullets; but the Grangerfords staid on their horses and capered around the old man, and peppered away at him, and he peppered away at them. Him and his horse both went home pretty leaky and crippled, but the Grangerfords had to be *fetched* home — and one of 'em was dead, and another died the next day. No, sir, if a body's out hunting for cowards he don't want to fool away any time amongst them Shepherdsons, becuz they don't breed any of that *kind*.”

Buck certainly has a lot of respect for the Shepherdsons, and I imagine the Shepherdsons have a lot of respect for the

Grangerfords, but nevertheless the two families are feuding and spilling brave blood for no good reason.

In a just war, such as that of the Allies fighting the Axis powers in World War II, we would, however, want the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons fighting on our side. Their kind of courage would be useful in a just war.

All too often, as here, good qualities are put to use in the service of evil.

### **What is the original cause of the feud between the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons?**

No one remembers the original cause of the feud, which makes it even more of a waste of life. On p. 146, we read:

“Well,” says Buck, “a feud is this way: A man has a quarrel with another man, and kills him; then that other man’s brother kills *him*; then the other brothers, on both sides, goes for one another; then the *cousins* chip in — and by and by everybody’s killed off, and there ain’t no more feud. But it’s kind of slow, and takes a long time.”

“Has this one been going on long, Buck?”

“Well I should *reckon*! It started thirty year ago, or som’ers along there. There was trouble ’bout something, and then a lawsuit to settle it; and the suit went agin one of the men, and so he up and shot the man that won the suit — which he would naturally do, of course. Anybody would.”

“What was the trouble about, Buck? — land?”

“I reckon maybe — I don’t know.”

“Well, who done the shooting? — was it a Grangerford, or a Shepherdson?”

“Laws, how do *I* know? It was so long ago.”

“Don’t anybody know?”

“O, yes, pa knows, I reckon, and some of the other old folks; but they don’t know, now, what the row was about in the first place.”

Buck does not see anything wrong with shooting someone because of the feud, even though he doesn’t know what the feud is about. The same thing is true of most of the other Grangerfords and Shepherdsons.

We can see the importance of obeying law here. If the man who had lost the lawsuit had not killed the man who had won the lawsuit, the feud would never had started and many people who were dead would still be alive in the novel.

### **How does Buck die?**

Even with all the death in this chapter, we can’t be sure that the feud ends. There is a lot of death, and the Grangerfords seem to get the worst of it, but there may be enough Grangerfords alive to keep the feud going.

A Romeo and Juliet elopement leads to an ambush of the Grangerfords. Sophia Grangerford wants to marry Harney Shepherdson, and the two sneak out at night and get married. When the Grangerfords find out, the men ride after her (the women are rousing other relatives to help them find Sophia). The Shepherdsons ambush the Grangerfords, and Buck’s father and two older brothers are killed. In addition, the Grangerfords kill two or three of the Shepherdsons. Later, of course, Buck, who is only 14 years old, and his 19-year-old cousin are killed. Wounded, they run to the river and try to swim downstream, but the Shepherdsons kill them by shooting from the riverbank.

Chances are, the feud continues. Although the male members of the Grangerford family are dead, they are related to many families in the area, and these families may continue the feud.

**How does Twain engage in satire when the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons go to church together?**

On p. 147, by the way, Twain engages in satire regarding hypocrisy. We read:

Next Sunday we all went to church, about three mile, everybody a-horseback. The men took their guns along, so did Buck, and kept them between their knees or stood them handy against the wall. The Shepherdsons done the same. It was pretty ornery preaching — all about brotherly love, and such-like tiresomeness, but everybody said it was a good sermon, and they all talked it over, going home, and had such a powerful lot to say about faith, and good works, and free grace, and preforeordination, and I don't know what all, that it did seem to me to be one of the roughest Sundays I had run across yet.

Even though the Grangerfords and the Shepherds go to church together and hear sermons about brotherly love, they carry their guns right into the church and they are still willing to kill each other outside of church.

**Why is the rule of law better than taking the law into our own hands?**

Law is one of Humankind's greatest inventions. Where law is king, no feuds exist. The feud in this case erupted because one family did not respect the rule of law. A lawsuit arose between members of the two families, the judge ruled against one person. That person shot the other man (the winner) in the lawsuit, and violence and murder erupted because neither family was respecting the rule of law. We can be

thankful for the long arm of the law today because it prevents blood feuds.

By the way, in the *Odyssey*, when Odysseus kills the suitors who have been plaguing his wife and son, he worries about starting a feud — the families of the suitors he has killed are likely to try to kill him.

**Many slaves engaged in subtle acts of resistance against their owners. How do the Grangerford slaves resist their owners? Do we see any other acts of resistance by any other slaves in this novel?**

### *The Grangerford Slaves*

1. The Grangerford slaves protected Jim by hiding him and bringing him food.
2. The Grangerford slaves let only Huck know where Jim was hidden.
3. The Grangerford slaves caught the raft, which had been damaged by the steamboat, and they kept it rather than letting their owners know about it.

### *Other Acts of Rebellion*

1. Jim, of course, runs away to be free. In Ch. 16, five slaves run away. Of course, throughout the novel, people are aware that money can be had for capturing runaway slaves.
2. In Ch. 8, Jim talks about the other slaves taking holiday when the old folks — the widow Douglas and Miss Watson — leave to go to a camp meeting.
3. This may or may not be an act of rebellion. When Huck is discovered outside the Grangerford home at the beginning of Ch. 17, the Grangerfords think that he may be a Shepherdson and so they take

precautions. When he is inside the house, they stay away from the windows until they are sure that he is not a Shepherdson in case the Shepherdsons are outside hoping to shoot them. While Huck is still outside, a slave woman named Betsy carries a lantern into the room where the Grangerfords are. Colonel Grangerford tells her, “Snatch that light away, Betsy, you old fool — ain’t you got any sense?” (132). If this is an act of rebellion, Betsy is lighting up the room so that a Grangerford can get shot.

## CHAPTER 19: THE DUKE AND THE DAUPHIN COME ABOARD

**How does Huck describe the sunrise at the beginning of the chapter? Why do you suppose this description is important?**

The description of the sunrise is poetry.

It suggests a distinction between the peacefulness of the river and the violence that can be found on the riverbanks — that is, in the villages and farms along the river.

The raft is a refuge from the violence of the riverbanks, but even it is not entirely safe. The king and the duke will come on board soon.

**What does the word “dauphin” mean? (When referring to words as words, use quotation marks or italics.)**

From 1349 to 1830, the term “dauphin” was used to refer to the oldest son of the King of France. Therefore, the dauphin would expect to inherit the throne one day. The king in this chapter is a con man and is not the oldest son of the King of France.

**Also, what is “bilge water”?**

The duke claims to be the rightful Duke of Bridgewater, but the king mispronounces the word and calls him the Duke of Bilgewater. “Bilge water” is the water that is found in the very lowest part of the ship. It stinks.

**Based on what you learn in this chapter, write a character analysis of the duke and the king. (Be aware that the phrase “con men” is two words.)**

*The duke and the king are liars.*

On p. 159, we read:

I was about to dig out from there in a hurry, but they was pretty close to me, then, and sung out and begged me to save their lives — said they hadn't been doing nothing, and was being chased for it — said there was men and dogs a-coming.

Of course, the duke and the king are lying. They have been doing things — they are con men.

*The duke and the king are con men and hypocrites.*

We find out what the duke and the king — who did not meet each other until now — have been doing.

The duke had been selling an article to take the tartar off your teeth. Actually, this article did work very well. It did take the tartar off your teeth — and it worked so well that it took the enamel off, too.

The king had been working as a temperance preacher. Unfortunately for him, the townspeople found out that he liked to drink when he wasn't preaching against drinking.

*The duke and the king are drinkers.*

The king likes to take a nip now and again — and get drunk now and again — and we will find out that the duke likes the same thing.

*The duke and the king don't like work.*

The duke says straight out, "oh, I do lots of things — most anything that comes handy, so it ain't work (161).

Judging from the king's pursuits, he doesn't like work, either.

One reason these con men call themselves a duke and a king is to use Huck as a servant and Jim as a temporary slave.



*The duke and the king pursue odd vocations.*

The duke does these vocations (160-161):

- Well, I'd been selling an article to take the tartar off the teeth — and it does take it off, too, and generly the enamel along with it — but I stayed about one night longer than I ought to, and was just in the act of sliding out when I ran across you on the trail this side of town, and you told me they were coming, and begged me to help you to get off. [...]
- Jour printer by trade;
- do a little in patent medicines;
- theatre-actor — tragedy, you know;
- take a turn at mesmerism and phrenology when there's a chance;
- teach singing-geography school for a change;
- sling a lecture, sometimes —
- O, I do lots of things — most anything that comes handy, so it ain't work.

Note: The above are the duke's words but with bullets added.

The king does these vocations (160-161):

- Well, I'd ben a-runnin' a little temperance revival thar 'bout a week, and was the pet of the women-folks, big and little, for I was makin' it mighty warm for the rummies, I *tell* you, and takin' as much as five or six dollars a night, — ten cents a head, children and niggers free — and business a growin', all the time; when somehow or another a little report got

around, last night, that I had a way of puttin' in my time with a private jug on the sly. [...]

- I've done considerable in the doctoring way in my time. Layin' on o' hands is my best holt — for cancer, and paralysis, and sich things; and
- I k'n tell a fortune pretty good, when I've got somebody along to find out the facts for me.
- Preachin's my line, too, and
- workin' camp-meetin's, and
- missionaryin' around.

Note: The above are the king's words but with bullets added.

The king's laying on of hands takes advantage of people. If you have cancer, your being touched by the king will not cure you of cancer. Of course, the other things that the king and the duke do take advantage of people, even the ones that at first hearing sound like they wouldn't do that. For example, the duke can do the work of a printer. Later, he will work as a printer, but he will use that skill to take advantage of people.

*The king and the duke are just like Pap.*

On p. 165, Huck writes, "If I never learnt nothing else out of pap, I learnt that the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way."

**The king and the duke are con men. If you feel like doing research, identify some scams that con men (and women) pull today.**

If the duke and the king were alive and active today, they would probably be involved in fraudulent telefunding for charitable donations. These con men (and no doubt con

women) do such things as raise funds for what is supposed to be a real charity. Often, they will use a name that is very similar to the name of a well-known and legitimate charity. The National Kidney Foundation is a well-known and legitimate charity, so a con man may say that he is calling for the American Kidney Foundation. The American Cancer Society is a well-known and legitimate charity, so a con man may say that he is calling for the American Cancer Center.

If you fall for one of these “charity” scams, the con men will keep on calling you, asking you to donate to other “charity” scams. You will be on their sucker list.

Some large telemarketing firms engage in legal but what I would call unethical practices. They will contract with a legitimate charity to raise money for it, but after giving the legitimate charity a set fee whatever the large telemarketing firm raises over that amount goes to the large telemarketing firm, not to the charity.

Raising money for charity can be quite profitable:

In 1998, professional charity telemarketers raised \$103.6 million in Ohio alone, or nearly \$2 million per week. The charities received only \$48 million of the money raised. The telemarketers kept \$56 million.

Source:

<<http://www.crimes-of-persuasion.com/Crimes/Telemarketing/Outbound/Minor/donations.htm>>.

## CHAPTER 20: WHAT ROYALTY DID TO PIKE-VILLE

**Huck is a master of rhetoric. In large part, his mastery takes the form of telling lies. What is rhetoric, and how effective is the lie he tells the duke and the king?**

According to the fourth edition of *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, “rhetoric” can be defined in these ways, among others: “The art or study of using language effectively and persuasively” and “Skill in using language effectively and persuasively.”

Huck is able to use rhetoric effectively. We see that in the lie that he tells the king and the duke. Of course, he must lie in order to explain why he and Jim are traveling on the raft.

This is the lie that Huck tells (166):

THEY asked us considerable many questions; wanted to know what we covered up the raft that way, for, and laid by in the daytime instead of running — was Jim a runaway nigger? Says I —

“Goodness sakes, would a runaway nigger run *south*?”

No, they allowed he wouldn’t. I had to account for things some way, so I says —

“My folks was living in Pike county, in Missouri, where I was born, and they all died off but me and pa and my brother Ike. Pa, he ’lowed he’d break up and go down and live with uncle Ben, who’s got a little one-horse place on the river forty-four mile below Orleans. Pa was pretty poor, and had some debts; so when he’d squared up there warn’t nothing left but sixteen dollars and our nigger, Jim. That warn’t enough to take us fourteen hundred mile, deck

passage nor no other way. Well, when the river rose, pa had a streak of luck one day; he ketched this piece of a raft; so we reckoned we'd go down to Orleans on it. Pa's luck didn't hold out; a steamboat run over the forrard corner of the raft one night, and we all went overboard and dove under the wheel; Jim and me come up, all right, but pa was drunk, and Ike was only four years old, so they never come up no more. Well, for the next day or two we had considerable trouble, because people was always coming out in skiffs and trying to take Jim away from me, saying they believed he was a runaway nigger. We don't run day-times no more, now; nights they don't bother us."

Huck will not always be a good liar; however, when he has a good reason to lie, he can lie well. Here he wishes to protect Jim, who is a friend, so he lies well.

We can agree that Huckleberry makes an excellent persuasive point when he says, "Goodness sakes, would a runaway nigger run *south*?" (166). Obviously, a runaway slave would run north, not south. The runaway slave would be trying to get to get the free northern states, such as Ohio. It wouldn't make sense to run south, deeper into the slave states, which are filled with people who believe in slavery and who would be happy to return a runaway slave to his owner.

**What do we learn about the duke and the king in this chapter? What kinds of cons do they pull?**

We learn that they are just as evil as we thought they were.

Twain writes well here. Instead of *telling* us that the king and the duke are evil, he *shows* us that they are evil.

### *The King*

The king works a religious revival and pretends to be a pirate who has reformed and is returning to the Indian Ocean to try to reform the other pirates. The people in the revival are taken in by this, and they take up a collection.

- 1) In addition to the \$87.75 — a huge amount of money for the time —
- 2) he takes a 3-gallon jug of whiskey that he discovers that no one is guarding.
- 3) Finally, a lot of pretty girls ask the king for a kiss, and he hugs and kisses them 5 or 6 times each.

On p. 174, we read:

The king said, take it all around, it laid over any day he'd ever put in in the missionarying line. He said it warn't no use talking, heathens don't amount to shucks, alongside of pirates to work a camp meeting with.

### *The Duke*

Meanwhile, the duke has been busy. He has made a lot of money, but he has not been as successful as the king. He has made \$9.50.

On p. 174, we read (numbers added):

- 1) "The duke was thinking *he'd* been doing pretty well, till the king come to show up, but after that he didn't think so so much."
- 2) "He had set up and printed off two little jobs for farmers, in that printing-office — horse-bills — and took the money, four dollars."
- 3) "And he had got in ten dollars worth of advertisements for the paper, which he said he would put in

for four dollars if they would pay in advance — so they done it.”

4) “The price of the paper was two dollars a year, but he took in three subscriptions for half a dollar apiece on condition of them paying him in advance; they were going to pay in cord-wood and onions, as usual, but he said he had just bought the concern and knocked down the price as low as he could afford it, and was going to run it for cash.”

5) “He set up a little piece of poetry, which he made, himself, out of his own head, — three verses — kind of sweet and saddish — the name of it was, ‘Yes, Crush, Cold World, this Breaking Heart’ — and he left that all set up and ready to print in the paper and didn’t charge nothing for it. Well, he took in nine dollars and a half, and said he’d done a pretty square day’s work for it.”

Note that the duke’s poetry sounds as if it could have been written by the Western Lady who furnished the examples of the Prose and Poetry on Examination Evening at Tom Sawyer’s school in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Or it could have been written by Emmeline Grangerford.

### **What are some characteristics of the duke and the king?**

*They are unscrupulous.*

They are ripping off people — taking money that is supposed to be given for charity or supposed to be given in return for someone’s labor and materials.

*They are bold.*

The duke simply walks into a printing shop and pretends that he works there. The king tells an outrageous story about being a pirate.

*They are convincing actors.*

They are believed. No one questions that the duke works at the printing shop, and no one questions that the king is a pirate.

*They are successful — so far.*

They will not always be successful, but for right now they are making money. Of course, we already know that being a con man is an up-and-down kind of business. When Huck met them, they had very little. Now they have something because their scams are working for the time being.



## CHAPTER 21: AN ARKANSAW DIFFICULTY

**Write character analyses of the lazy young men in the town.**

Here we see more of the dark side of life. The lazy young men in town are scumbags. We see much evidence of this.

*The lazy young men are loafers.*

On pp. 181-182, we read:

There was empty dry-goods boxes under the awnings, and loafers roosting on them all day long, whittling them with their Barlow knives; and chawing tobacco, and gaping and yawning and stretching — a mighty ornery lot. They generly had on yellow straw hats most as wide as an umbrella, but didn't wear no coats nor waistcoats; they called one another Bill, and Buck, and Hank, and Jo, and Andy, and talked lazy and drawly, and used considerable many cuss words. There was as many as one loafer leaning up against every awning post, and he most always had his hands in his britches pockets, except when he fetched them out to lend a chaw of tobacco or scratch.

*One of the few things the lazy young men do is chew tobacco.*

Many of them borrow all the tobacco they chew and never or seldom pay it back. On p. 182, we read:

What a body was hearing amongst them, all the time.  
Was, —

“Gimme a chaw ’v tobacker, Hank.”

“Cain’t; I hain’t got but one chaw left. Ask Bill.”

*The lazy young men enjoy tormenting animals.*

On p. 183, we read:

And pretty soon you'd hear a loafer sing out, "Hi! so boy! sick him, Tige!" and away the sow would go, squealing most horrible, with a dog or two swinging to each ear, and three or four dozen more a-coming; and then you would see all the loafers get up and watch the thing out of sight, and laugh at the fun and look grateful for the noise. Then they'd settle back again, till there was a dog-fight. There couldn't anything wake them up all over, and make them happy all over, like a dog-fight — unless it might be putting turpentine on a stray dog and setting fire to him, or tying a tin pan to his tail and seeing him run himself to death.

*An Important Point*

How would you like to marry one of these lazy young men — or see your sister married to one of them?

**What are the houses on the riverfront like?**

On p. 183, we read:

On the river front some of the houses was sticking out over the bank, and they was bowed and bent, and about ready to tumble in. The people had moved out of them. The bank was caved away under one corner of some others, and that corner was hanging over. People lived in them, yet, but it was dangersome, because sometimes a strip of land as wide as a house caves in at a time. Sometimes a belt of land a quarter of a mile deep will start in and cave along and cave along till it all caves into the river in one summer. Such a town as that has to be always moving back,

and back, and back, because the river's always gnawing at it.

Remember the floating house of death? It was probably a house like these.

### **Write a character analysis of Boggs.**

Boggs is basically a harmless — but loud — drunk.

Boggs is over 50 years old and very red-faced (184).

Boggs gets drunk monthly: “Here comes old Boggs! — in from the country for his little old monthly drunk — here he comes, boys!” (184).

Boggs is harmless (184):

“Wonder who he's a gwyne to chaw up this time. If he'd a-chawed up all the men he's ben a gwyne to chaw up in the last twenty year, he'd have considerable reputation, now.”

Another one says, “I wisht old Boggs 'd threaten me — 'cuz then I'd know I warn't gwyne to die for a thousan' year.”

Everyone knows that Boggs is harmless (184):

He see me, and rode up and says —

“Whar'd you come f'm, boy? You prepared to die?”

Then he rode on. I was scared; but a man says:

“He don't mean nothing; he's always a-carryin' on like that, when he's drunk. He's the best-naturedest old fool in Arkansaw — never hurt nobody, drunk nor sober.”

Boggs has a daughter (184). After Colonel Sherburn says that he won't stand Boggs cursing him for much longer, the

townspeople send for Boggs' daughter to get him to leave immediately. We find out on p. 187 that she is about 16 years old.

**Write a character analysis of Colonel Sherburn.**

Colonel Sherburn is a scumbag who kills a harmless drunk simply because he feels his honor has been insulted.

Colonel Sherburn is an aristocrat, very well to do, and the best-dressed man in town.

On p. 185, Colonel Sherburn tells Boggs, who has been cursing and threatening him:

“I’m tired of this; but I’ll endure it till one o’clock. Till one o’clock, mind — no longer. If you open your mouth against me only once, after that time, you can’t travel so far but I will find you.”

It will be 1 p.m. in 15 minutes, so Boggs needs to be quiet now.

Colonel Sherburn murders Boggs even though Boggs is quiet, and even though Boggs is trying to get away, has raised both hands into the air, and has not raised a weapon against Colonel Sherburn. In addition, Colonel Sherburn murders Boggs in front of his daughter.

On pp. 185-186, we read:

“Go for his daughter! — quick, go for his daughter; sometimes he’ll listen to her. If anybody can persuade him, she can.”

So somebody started on a run. I walked down street a ways and stopped. In about five or ten minutes here comes Boggs again — but not on his horse. He was a-reeling across the street towards me, bareheaded, with a friend on both sides of him a-holt of his arms

and hurrying him along. He was quiet, and looked uneasy; and he warn't hanging back, any, but was doing some of the hurrying himself. Somebody sings out —

“Boggs!”

I looked over there to see who said it, and it was that Colonel Sherburn. He was standing perfectly still, in the street, and had a pistol raised, in his right hand, — not aiming it, but holding it out with the barrel tilted up towards the sky. The same second, I see a young girl coming on the run, and two men with her. Boggs and the men turned round, to see who called him, and when they see the pistol the men jumped to one side, and the pistol barrel come down slow and steady to a level — both barrels cocked. Boggs throws up both of his hands and says, “O Lord, don't shoot!” Bang! goes the first shot, and he staggers back, clawing at the air — bang! goes the second one, and he tumbles backwards on to the ground, heavy and solid, with his arms spread out. That young girl screamed out, and comes rushing, and down she throws herself on her father, crying, and saying, “O, he's killed him, he's killed him!” The crowd closed up around them, and shouldered and jammed one another, with their necks stretched, trying to see, and people on the inside trying to shove them back, and shouting, “Back, back! give him air, give him air!”

### *Two Important Points*

How would you like to marry Colonel Sherburn — or see your sister married to him?

As bad as the lazy young men of the town are, they have not murdered any innocent men that we are aware of. That

makes Colonel Sherburn worse than the lazy young men of the town.

**What role do two Bibles play in this chapter? Can you conclude anything from that role about Twain's attitude toward religion?**

On pp. 186-187, we read:

They took Boggs to a little drug store — the crowd pressing around, just the same, and the whole town following, and I rushed and got a good place at the window, where I was close to him and could see in. They laid him on the floor, and put one large Bible under his head, and opened another one and spread it on his breast — but they tore open his shirt, first, and I seen where one of the bullets went in. He made about a dozen long gasps, his breast lifting the Bible up when he drew in his breath, and letting it down again when he breathed it out — and after that he laid still; he was dead. Then they pulled his daughter away from him, screaming and crying, and took her off. She was about sixteen, and very sweet and gentle-looking, but awful pale and scared.

In this paragraph, we see two Bibles being used to “help” Boggs. One use is beneficial; the other is not. One Bible is put under his head; this Bible acts as a pillow and may be a comfort. However, the other Bible is put on his chest, which is exactly the wrong thing to do when a man has been shot and is struggling to breathe.

In this scene, the Bible is being used, and it is being misused. Twain may be saying that when a Bible is used correctly, it can be a blessing, but when it is used incorrectly, it can be a curse.

**What will happen to Boggs' daughter now that her father is dead?**

We can't be sure what will happen to Boggs' daughter. She may have a mother to take care of her; she may not. She may have relatives to take care of her; she may not. But if Boggs was the bread winner of the family, she is in trouble. This society does not have Welfare, food stamps, or Social Security.

**How does the crowd react immediately after Boggs is murdered (and before they decide to try to lynch Colonel Sherburn)?**

After Boggs has been murdered, everyone gossips about the murder, and everyone tries to see Boggs' dead body. On pp. 187-188, we read:

Well, pretty soon the whole town was there, squirming and scrouging and pushing and shoving to get at the window and have a look, but people that had the places wouldn't give them up, and folks behind them was saying all the time, "Say, now, you've looked enough, you fellows; 'tain't right and 'tain't fair, for you to stay thar all the time, and never give nobody a chance; other folks has their rights, as well as you."

There was considerable jawing back, so I slid out, thinking maybe there was going to be trouble. The streets was full, and everybody was excited. Everybody that seen the shooting was telling how it happened, and there was a big crowd packed around each one of these fellows, stretching their necks and listening. One long lanky man with long hair and a big white fur stove-pipe hat on the back of his head, and a crooked-handled cane, marked out the places on the ground where Boggs stood and where Sherburn stood — and the people following him around from one place to t'other and watching everything he

done, and bobbing their heads to show they understood, and stooping a little and resting their hands on their thighs to watch him mark the places on the ground with his cane; and then he stood up straight and stiff where Sherburn had stood, frowning, and having his hat brim down over his eyes, and sung out, "Boggs!" and then fetched his cane down slow, to a level, and says "Bang!" staggered backwards, says "Bang!" again, and fell down flat on his back. The people that had seen the thing said he done it perfect; said it was just exactly the way it all happened. Then as much as a dozen people got out their bottles and treated him.

The villagers regard the murder and the corpse as entertainment. They are starved for spectacle. One of the sad facts of Humankind is that all too often we find murder and death fascinating.



## CHAPTER 22: WHY THE LYNCHING BEE FAILED

### How do the slaves react when the crowd comes after Colonel Sherburn?

The slaves are very worried. Huck writes, “Lots of the women and girls was crying and taking on, scared most to death” (189). We can guess that lynchings have occurred in the area, and the slaves are worried that a slave will be lynched. No doubt the slaves have heard of other slaves being lynched.

### What is Colonel Sherburn’s view of men?

Colonel Sherburn says that the average man is a coward.

He says that a man safe as long as it is daylight and a man is not behind him. This means that the average man won’t shoot anyone in the daylight — at least not face to face.

We note, of course, that Colonel Sherburn killed Boggs face to face in broad daylight and in front of witnesses.

Apparently, Colonel Sherburn thinks that he is brave.

Colonel Sherburn has a very low opinion of Humankind. Certainly, Colonel Sherburn has a lot of contempt for ordinary men. On p. 190, near the beginning of his speech to the crowd of men wanting to lynch him, he says:

Do I know you? I know you clear through. I was born and raised in the south, and I’ve lived in the north; so I know the average all around. The average man’s a coward. In the north he lets anybody walk over him that wants to, and goes home and prays for a humble spirit to bear it. In the south one man, all by himself, has stopped a stage full of men, in the daytime, and robbed the lot. Your newspapers call you a brave people so much that you think you *are* braver than any other people — whereas you’re just *as* brave, and

no braver. Why don't your juries hang murderers? Because they're afraid the man's friends will shoot them in the back, in the dark — and it's just what they *would* do.

Near the end of his speech, Colonel Sherburn says (191):

Now the thing for *you* to do, is to droop your tails and go home and crawl in a hole. If any real lynching's going to be done, it will be done in the dark, southern fashion; and when they come, they'll bring their masks, and fetch a *man* along.

Colonel Sherburn's idea of a man is strange. A man is someone who is willing to lead a group of masked men in the dark so they can lynch someone. Colonel Sherburn does not respect the rule of law. We need law to protect ourselves against people such as Colonel Sherburn.

**What evidence exists in the novel that Colonel Sherburn's view of men is correct?**

We see much evidence of Man's inhumanity to Man in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Certainly many evil characters can be found on the riverbanks. Of course, even the people whom Colonel Sherburn would consider brave can be evil.

*Pap*

Pap is a drunk who abandoned his son, Huck. When he found out that Huck is rich, he came back to take Huck's money from him.

*The Shepherdsons and the Grangerfords*

The Shepherdsons and the Grangerfords are brave according to Colonel Sherburn's view of courage. They don't mind murdering each other in the daylight. The two families are aristocratic, like Colonel Sherburn. They kill children.

*The Duke and the King*

The Duke and the King are lowlifes, and they are con men.

*The Lazy Young Men*

The Lazy Young Men are worthless. They set dogs on fire and kill them for amusement. The Lazy Young Men are at the bottom of society: White Trash.

*The Villagers of St. Petersburg*

One person made one attempt to get Huck from Pap, but that attempt failed. (I am referring to the man who went to the cabin at the request of the widow Douglas, not to the legal battle over Huck.) When Huck was thought to be murdered, lots of people went to the cabin to see the so-called murder scene. Not enough of an attempt was made to stand up for what is right: to get Huck from Pap.

*White Society as a Whole*

This is a slave society. The only person who wants Jim to be free is Jim — and much later, Huck. We don't see any abolitionists in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, unless you can count Huck, and even then, it seems that Huck wants only Jim to be free, not all black people.

*Society as a Whole*

A lot is wrong with society. Certainly black society is not perfect. Jim can be a bit of a con man himself, with his hair-ball. And Jim and other slaves believe in superstition.

**What evidence exists in the novel that Colonel Sherburn's view of men is incorrect?**

The main evidence that Colonel Sherburn's view of men is incorrect is Huck and Jim. The society that they have on the raft is mainly a good one. Unfortunately, men on the

riverbanks — and the king and duke — keep making trouble for them.

Jim, of course, is taking action to right an injustice. Slavery is wrong. Jim is doing the right thing by running away, and by planning to hire an abolitionist to steal his wife and his children if he (Jim) can't buy them.

Huck, of course, is also doing the right thing by helping Jim to become free. This, of course, takes an effort of the will on Huck's part because he thinks that he is doing evil by helping Jim to become free.

Of course, other evidence of goodness appears in this novel. We remember that Aunt Polly provides a home for Tom Sawyer and Sid, and we remember that the widow Douglas wanted to provide a home for Huckleberry Finn.

**Why is this very intense scene followed by a humorous scene involving a circus?**

We have had a very intense scene in which a man is murdered and the murderer escapes. Twain follows it with a humorous scene involving a circus to relieve the tension. We remember that satire is humorous criticism. To make the criticism go down, a satirist uses humor. It's like drinking medicine first, then eating a spoonful of sugar.

We should remember also that Colonel Sherburn's opinion need not be the opinion of Mark Twain. Colonel Sherburn is contemptuous of almost everyone. Mark Twain recognizes the evil that exists in the world, but he also recognizes that good people (such as Huck and Jim) also exist in the world.

**Huck is a naive narrator who doesn't understand everything that he sees. How is that shown in his comments on the circus?**

Huck writes several comments that show that he doesn't understand everything he sees.

On pp. 191-192, we read:

It was a real bully circus. It was the splndidest sight that ever was, when they all come riding in, two and two, a gentleman and lady, side by side, the men just in their drawers and undershirts, and no shoes nor stirrups, and resting their hands on their thighs, easy and comfortable, — there must a been twenty of them — and every lady with a lovely complexion, and perfectly beautiful, and looking just like a gang of real sure-enough queens, and dressed in clothes that cost millions of dollars, and just littered with diamonds.

Of course, the ladies are wearing rhinestones, not diamonds, and their costumes don't cost millions of dollars.

On p. 192, we read:

Well, all through the circus they done the most astonishing things; and all the time, that clown carried on so it most killed the people. The ring-master couldn't ever say a word to him but he was back at him quick as a wink with the funniest things a body ever said; and how he ever *could* think of so many of them, and so sudden and so pat, was what I couldn't no way understand. Why, I couldn't a thought of them in a year.

Of course, the clown's comments have been written in advance, and the ring-master is playing straight man.

On pp. 193-194, we read about the “drunk” man in the audience riding on top of a horse:

But pretty soon he struggled up astraddle and grabbed the bridle, a-reeling this way and that; and the next minute he sprung up and dropped the bridle and stood! and the horse a-going like a house afire, too. He just stood up there, a-sailing around as easy and comfortable as if he warn't ever drunk in his life — and then he begun to pull off his clothes and sling them. He shed them so thick they kind of clogged up the air, and altogether he shed seventeen suits. And, then, there he was, slim and handsome, and dressed the gaudiest and prettiest you ever saw, and he lit into that horse with his whip and made him fairly hum — and finally skipped off, and made his bow and danced off to the dressing room, and everybody just a-howling with pleasure and astonishment.

Then the ringmaster he see how he had been fooled, and he *was* the sickest ringmaster you ever see, I reckon. Why, it was one of his own men! He had got up that joke all out of his own head, and never let on to nobody. Well, I felt sheepish enough to be took in so, but I wouldn't a been in that ring-master's place not for a thousand dollars.

Of course, this is all part of the act; it's not something that is a spur-of-the-moment practical joke.

Huck's last comment is funny: “I don't know; there may be bullier circuses than what that one was, but I never struck them yet. Anyways, it was plenty good enough for *me*; and wherever I run across it, it can have all of *my* custom every time” (194).

Huck didn't pay to get into the circus, but instead he sneaked in, so his “custom” doesn't amount to much.

## CHAPTER 23: THE ORNERINESS OF KINGS

### How do the duke and king rip off the townspeople?

At the beginning of Ch. 21, the king and duke practiced Shakespeare because they think that they will make money from performing a sword fight and other scenes from Shakespeare's plays. In addition, the duke worked on a soliloquy that is nonsense, made up as it is from bits and pieces of a few of Shakespeare's plays. Unfortunately for them, in Ch. 23, the duke and king's Shakespeare performance did not go well. The audience laughed and left, except for one person who fell asleep.

Therefore, the duke and the king rip off the townspeople by putting on "The Royal Nonesuch." Of course, if it's a nonesuch, it doesn't exist. In this case, what doesn't exist is a good show. The duke and the king want to make money, and "The Royal Nonesuch" is one way to do that.

The duke is a clever person. He knows Arkansas, and he gets people to spend money to see the show by advertising, "WOMEN AND CHILDREN NOT ADMITTED" (195). Apparently, the townspeople think that they are going to see a scandalous show.

Actually, the show is scandalous, but the nudity is male, not female. The king comes out crawling on all fours, naked but painted with stripes, and cavorting. We hear that there was more to his outfit, but other than Huck saying that it was "wild" and "awful funny," we don't learn what it was (196).

An explanatory note on p. 438 explains where Twain got the idea for the "entertainment":

In his manuscript Mark Twain entitled this skit "The Tragedy of the Burning Shame" and, as he recalled in 1907, it was based on the indecent entertainment

he had heard Jim Gillis describe in 1865 in his cabin on Jackass Hill:

In one of my books — “Huckleberry Finn,” I think — I have used one of Jim’s impromptu tales, which he called “the Tragedy of the Burning Shame.” I had to modify it considerably to make it proper for print, and this was a great damage. As Jim told it — inventing it as he went along — I think it was one of the most outrageously funny things I have ever listened to. How mild it is in the books, and how pale; how extravagant and how gorgeous in its unprintable form!

In the note, we learn that Jim Gillis invented the tale as he went along. This sounds similar to what comedians do today when they tell about the entertainment known as “The Aristocrats.” A movie exists of comedians telling about this act. It is completely made up, and it is scandalous, with lots of very low humor.

**How do the duke and the king avoid being punished by the people they ripped off the first two nights of the show?**

The duke and the king “sell” the first crowd, who enjoy the king’s caperings and make him do it twice more, but who are surprised and angered that that is all of the show. They start to go for the king and the duke, but then — at the suggestion of a judge — decide to sell the rest of the town. The next night, everyone who wasn’t at the first show is at the second, and they are sold. On the third night, the townspeople show up to see the show again, and they are figuring to get revenge for being sold.

On p. 198, Huck writes:

The third night the house was crammed again — and they warn’t newcomers this time, but people that was



at the show the other two nights. I stood by the duke at the door, and I see that every man that went in had his pockets bulging, or something muffled up under his coat — and I see it warn't no perfumery, neither, not by a long sight. I smelt sickly eggs by the barrel, and rotten cabbages, and such things; and if I know the signs of a dead cat being around, and I bet I do, there was sixty-four of them went in. I shoved in there for a minute, but it was too various for me, I couldn't stand it. Well, when the place couldn't hold no more people the duke he give a fellow a quarter and told him to tend door for him a minute, and then he started around for the stage door, I after him; but the minute we turned the corner and was in the dark, he says:

“Walk fast, now, till you get away from the houses, and then shin for the raft like the dickens was after you!”

The king and the duke outsmart the townspeople and leave — with the money — before the townspeople can exact revenge.

**How good is Huck's understanding of history? (Did King Henry VIII throw the tea overboard during the Boston Tea Party?)**

Huck's understanding of history is very poor. He mixes up a lot of his facts. For example, this is part of what he tells Jim about King Henry VIII on pp. 199-200:

Well, Henry he takes a notion he wants to get up some trouble with this country. How does he go at it — give notice? — give the country a show? No. All of a sudden he heaves all the tea in Boston Harbor overboard, and whacks out a declaration of independence, and dares them to come on. That was *his*

style — he never give anybody a chance. He had suspicions of his father, the duke of Wellington. Well, what did he do? — ask him to show up? No — drowned him in a butt of mamsey, like a cat. Spose people left money laying around where he was — what did he do? He collared it. Spose he contracted to do a thing; and you paid him, and didn't set down there and see that he done it — what did he do? He always done the other thing. Spose he opened his mouth — what then? If he didn't shut it up powerful quick, he'd lose a lie, every time. That's the kind of a bug Henry was; and if we'd a had him along stead of our kings, he'd a fooled that town a heap worse than ourn done. I don't say that ourn is lambs, because they ain't, when you come right down to the cold facts; but they ain't nothing to *that* old ram, anyway. All I say is, kings is kings, and you got to make allowances. Take them all around, they're a mighty ornery lot. It's the way they're raised.

Of course, King Henry VIII wasn't around at the time of the Boston Tea Party. He also didn't write the Declaration of Independence. In addition, Huck considers the throwing of the tea into Boston Harbor a dastardly deed, but patriotic Americans consider it a justified act of rebellion — as is whacking out a declaration of independence.

I think that we can all sympathize with Huck here. We all make mistakes, and sometimes the mistakes are funny. As a freshman in college, I wrote that William Shakespeare was a Victorian playwright. Of course, he was an Elizabethan playwright, as the following dates show:

Queen Elizabeth I: 1533-1603

William Shakespeare: 1564-1616

Queen Victoria: 1819-1901

### **What is Huck's attitude toward royalty?**

Huck actually has a very low opinion of royalty. He has already figured out that the duke and the king aren't real royalty, but only humbugs, although Jim thinks that they are really royalty. Jim does wonder why the king smells so bad (200).

Huck makes a couple of funny comments. Jim says,

“Now de duke, he's a tolerble likely man in some ways.”

“Yes, a duke's different. But not very different. This one's a middling hard lot, — for a duke. When he's drunk, there ain't no near-sighted man could tell him from a king.” (200)

And Huck says, “What was the use to tell Jim these warn't real kings and dukes? It wouldn't a done no good; and, besides, it was just as I said; you couldn't tell them from the real kind” (201).

### **What do we learn about Jim in this chapter? How does this chapter advance Huck's education about black people? How does this chapter expose the lie that black parents don't care about their children as much as white people?**

One of the things that Huck learns is that black people do care for their families just like and as much as white people and that black people can grieve over the mistakes that they make. At least, Huck learns that Jim cares for his family just as much as white people care for their families. It isn't certain by any means that Huck learns this about all black parents.

In this chapter, Jim is moaning and mourning. During night watch, he heard a sound like a slap, and that reminded him

of a time just after his daughter Elizabeth had recovered from scarlet fever. The door was open, and he told her to shut the door, but she didn't. He told her to shut the door again, and she didn't, but merely stood smiling up at him. This made him angry, and he hit her and went into another room. She cried. Ten minutes later, he returned, and the door was standing open. Now he was REALLY mad.

Just then, the wind slammed the door shut, making a loud noise, and his daughter didn't act startled. This scared Jim, and he went outside, then snuck up behind his daughter and yelled "POW" as loud as he could. She wasn't startled, and then Jim knew the truth — because of the scarlet fever, she was deaf.

On p. 202, Jim says:

*She never budge!* O, Huck, I bust out a-cryin', en grab her up in my arms en say, 'O, de po' little thing! de Lord God Amighty fogive po' ole Jim, kaze he never gwyne to fogive hissself as long's he live!' O, she was plumb deaf en dumb, Huck, plumb deaf en dumb — en I'd ben a treat'n her so!

This is an important moment in Huck's education regarding black people.

Earlier in the chapter, we read (201):

I went to sleep, and Jim didn't call me when it was my turn. He often done that. When I waked up, just at daybreak, he was sitting there with his head down betwixt his knees, moaning and mourning to himself. I didn't take notice, nor let on. I knowed what it was about. He was thinking about his wife and his children, away up yonder, and he was low and homesick; because he hadn't ever been away from home before in his life; and I do believe he cared just as much for his people as white folks does for theirs. It don't

seem natural, but I reckon it's so. He was often moaning and mourning, that way, nights, when he judged I was asleep, and saying, "Po' little 'Lizabeth! po' little Johnny! It mighty hard; I spec' I ain't ever gwine to see you no mo', no mo'!" He was a mighty good nigger, Jim was.

Huck says in that passage, "I do believe he cared just as much for his people as white folks does for their'n. It don't seem natural, but I reckon it's so." That it is so is shown in the story about Elizabeth.

When we compare Pap and Jim as fathers, there is no comparison — JIM IS THE BETTER FATHER.

By the way, even very good mothers have bad moments. Author Molly Magid Hoagland once read some old journal entries that her late mother had made. In one entry, her mother severely criticizes herself because she had yelled at Molly, who was then five years old, so hard that Molly was terrified and used her hands to cover her ears. Her mother wrote, "I will never do that again." Fortunately, Molly, who is herself a mother now, says, "I don't remember that incident at all, nor any other episodes of scary yelling, and the fact that I don't is a great comfort to me in my worst moments as a mother." (Source: Molly Magid Hoagland, "These Are the Good Old Days." Huffington Post. 10 May 2008 <[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/molly-magid-hoagland/these-are-the-good-old-da\\_b\\_101125.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/molly-magid-hoagland/these-are-the-good-old-da_b_101125.html)>.)

### **By the way, what is scarlet fever?**

According to the sixth edition of *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, scarlet fever is

an acute, communicable infection [...]. The disease is now uncommon, probably because antibiotic therapy has lessened the likelihood of spread. It occurs in young children, usually between two and eight

years of age, and is spread by droplet spray from carriers and from individuals who have contracted the disease. [...] Typical symptoms are sore throat, headache, fever, flushed face with a ring of pallor about the mouth, red spots in the mouth, coated tongue with raw beefy appearance and inflamed papillae underneath it (strawberry tongue), and a characteristic eruption on the body.

Source: <http://www.bartleby.com/65/sc/scarletf.html>

Date Downloaded: 30 October 2008

Of course, although scarlet fever is uncommon now, it was much commoner in Twain's time. Today we have antibiotics that doctors in Twain's time knew nothing about. Note where scarlet fever gets its name: It causes such things as a strawberry-colored tongue and red spots in the mouth.

## CHAPTER 24: THE KING TURNS PARSON

### **How does the duke fix things so that they don't have to tie up Jim when everyone white leaves the raft?**

They are pretending that Jim is a runaway slave, and so Huck, the duke, and the king tie him up when they go on shore. This is tiresome for Jim, so the duke, a problem-solver, devises a way for them not to tie Jim up:

He was uncommon bright, the duke was, and he soon struck it. He dressed Jim up in King Lear's outfit — it was a long curtain-calico gown, and a white horse-hair wig and whiskers; and then he took his theatre-paint and painted Jim's face and hands and ears and neck all over a dead dull solid blue, like a man that's been drowned nine days. Blamed if he warn't the horriblemest looking outrage I ever see. Then the duke took and wrote out a sign on a shingle, so —

*Sick Arab — but harmless when not out of his head.*  
(203)

Of course, this is meant to be funny, and it is. Also of course, this solution can cause problems. If anyone were to see Jim in this outfit, they would be sure to tell many other people, who would come to look, and Huck and the others do not want that kind of attention.

### **What happens to make Huck think, “It was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race” (210)?**

In this chapter, the duke and the king set out to steal the inheritance of the three Wilks daughters.

Because of their earnings from the Royal Nonesuch, the duke and the king have enough money to buy store-bought clothing, and the king looks respectable in his new duds — in fact, he looks like a preacher. (This is one of Twain's

themes — clothing affects what we think about the people wearing them.)

The king discovers from a fellow getting ready to leave the country that a Peter Wilks has died and left lots of money and property behind for his brothers Harvey and William (the deaf-and-dumb — meaning unable to speak — brother) and his three daughters.

The king has no good morals at all (neither does the duke), and he is ready and willing to steal from three orphaned girls. Therefore, he pumps the fellow for all the information he has and prepares to imitate the brother Harvey (a reverend) while the duke impersonates the deaf-and-dumb William.

Huck is not a fool, and he knows what the king is planning to do. In addition, Huck is asked to take a role — to be the reverend’s valet.

The king and the duke arrive at the town, hear that their “brother” has died, and bust out crying. That is why Huck says, “It was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race” (210).

### **What is the cast of characters for this section of the novel?**

Here is a cast of characters for this section of the novel:

Peter Wilks: the dead brother who left behind much money and lots of property; he was a tanner

Harvey Wilks: a reverend, played by the king; the real Harvey is a dissenting minister

William Wilks: the deaf-and-dumb brother, played by the duke

Mary Jane Wilks: red-headed, 19 years old

Susan Wilks: 15 years old



Joanna Wilks: 14 years old; has a hare lip; is given to good works

Levi Bell: a lawyer

Dr. Robinson: a medical doctor

• **Do clothes make the man?**

They are very important.

This is an important theme in the writing of Mark Twain: Clothing is an important class indicator. When people are stripped naked, it is difficult to tell their class.

For example, in *The Prince and the Pauper*, the two boys are judged by their clothing. When the boys exchange clothing, the prince is treated as if he is a pauper, and the pauper is treated as if he is a prince.

In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the king looks ornery while he is dressed in his rags. But when he buys and puts on a suit, he looks like a respectable reverend, although he is still a greedy, immoral con man:

We had all bought store clothes where we stopped last; and now the king put his'n on, and he told me to put mine on. I done it, of course. The king's duds was all black, and he did look real swell and starchy. I never knowed how clothes could change a body before. Why, before, he looked like the orneriest old rip that ever was; but now, when he'd take off his new white beaver and make a bow and do a smile, he looked that grand and good and pious that you'd say he had walked right out of the ark, and maybe was old Leviticus himself. (204)

## **CHAPTER 25: ALL FULL OF TEARS AND FLAP- DOODLE**

### **What happens to the money the duke and the king made in the Royal Nonesuch?**

The duke and the king find out in a letter where Peter Wilks hid \$6,000 in cash, so the duke and the king get the money — which was hidden in the cellar. They count the money and find that it is \$415 short. The duke explains it by saying, “Well, he was a pretty sick man, and likely he made a mistake — I reckon that’s the way of it. The best way’s to let it go, and keep still about it. We can spare it” (214).

However, the king is worried about what other people will think when they learn that some of the money is missing, so to avoid suspicion, he and the duke make up the deficit with the money that they made in the Royal Nonesuch. (Making up the deficit is the duke’s idea.) This pretty much beggars them.

By the way, we see the hypocrisy of the king and the duke. They decide to make a show of giving all the money to the three Wilks daughters. (William and Harvey were supposed to get \$3,000 of the money.) Of course, this is only a show. The king and the duke plan on stealing all the money and carrying it away with them.

Huck regards money much differently than the duke and the king do. Huck has a little over \$6,000 (see *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*), but he is willing to leave it behind. (He thinks that Pap will get it.)

### **Why does Dr. Robinson suspect the king and the duke?**

For one thing, Dr. Robinson thinks that the king does a very poor imitation of an Englishman.

The king is not educated, but he tries to appear educated. Like many people do when they try to put on airs, he messes things up.

The king tries to talk about funeral obsequies, but instead he says “funeral orgies” (217). The two terms have very different meanings.

The king should have followed this advice from Strunk and White:

Avoid fancy words: Avoid the elaborate, the pretentious, the coy, and the cute. Do not be tempted by a twenty-dollar word when there is a ten-center handy, ready and able. (Source: Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*, 4th edition, pp. 76-77.)

By trying to use a fancy word (obsequies), the king messes up and uses the wrong word (orgies). An orgy is an excessive indulgence in something. For example, someone can participate in an orgy of drinking, an orgy of feasting, or a sexual orgy. An obsequy is a funeral ceremony or rite.

The king keeps talking about funeral orgies, and the duke, who is better educated than the king, knows that this word is wrong. Therefore, the duke writes on a scrap of paper, “obsequies, you old fool” (217) and gives it to the king.

However, the king, who is an experienced con man, tries to bluff, and so he keeps on using the word “orgies” and explains his use of the word by making up an etymology for it. On pp. 217-218, the king says:

“I say orgies, not because it’s the common term, because it ain’t — obsequies bein’ the common term — but because orgies is the right term. Obsequies ain’t used in England no more, now — it’s gone out. We say orgies, now, in England. Orgies is better, because it means the thing you’re after, more exact. It’s a

word that's made up out'n the Greek *orgo*, outside, open, abroad; and the Hebrew *jeesum*, to plant, cover up; hence inter. So, you see, funeral orgies is an open er public funeral."

Dr. Robinson is better educated than the king, so he knows that this explanation is nonsense. Therefore, Dr. Robinson, who has an iron jaw, laughs in the king's face. We read: "'Keep your hands off of me!' says the doctor. 'You talk like an Englishman — *don't* you? It's the worst imitation I ever heard. You Peter Wilks's brother! You're a fraud, that's what you are!'" (218).

At least the king knows that some English words come from Greek and Hebrew.

**Who wins in this situation: the one lone sensible voice or the foolish crowd?**

Dr. Robinson is the one lone sensible voice, but in this situation, the misheaded crowd wins. We see this clearly on pp. 218-219. The doctor, of course, is correct in believing that the king and the duke are not relatives of the Wilks girls, but the townspeople believe otherwise because the king has been using the information he got from the man leaving town to find out lots of information about the Wilks family and the town and the townspeople. Of course, the king has been revealing his knowledge every chance he has got. We should note that the doctor was not present when the king first arrived — the doctor was attending to a very ill person who has apparently died. If the doctor had been present and had heard the king revealing his knowledge, he might have been taken in. Or perhaps not. Chances are, the doctor has been to England and knows what a real English accent is.

The Wilks daughters are not fools, but in this case they act foolishly:

Mary Jane straightened herself up, and my, but she was handsome! She says:

“*Here* is my answer.” She hove up the bag of money and put it in the king’s hands, and says, “Take this six thousand dollars, and invest for me and my sisters any way you want to, and don’t give us no receipt for it.”

Then she put her arm around the king on one side, and Susan and the hare-lip done the same on the other. Everybody clapped their hands and stomped on the floor like a perfect storm, whilst the king held up his head and smiled proud. The doctor says:

“All right; I wash *my* hands of the matter. But I warn you all that a time’s coming when you’re going to feel sick whenever you think of this day” — and away he went.

“All right, doctor,” says the king, kinder mocking him, “we’ll try and get ’em to send for you” — which made them all laugh, and they said it was a prime good hit. (219)

In Ch. 26, the duke is worried about the doctor, but the king says, “Cuss the doctor! What do we k’yer for *him*? Hain’t we got all the fools in town on our side? and ain’t that a big enough majority in any town?” (228).

## CHAPTER 26: I STEAL THE KING'S PLUNDER

### Write character analyses of the three Wilks daughters.

#### *Mary Jane Wilks*

- She is red-headed and 19 years old.
- She is generous and kind, as we find when she gives up her room to the king and moves into her sister's room.
- She is also loyal, as we saw in the previous chapter, when she took the \$6,000 in gold and gave it to the king to invest without even requesting a receipt for it, although Dr. Robinson warned her that the king was a fraud.

#### *Susan Wilks*

She is 15 years old. She is kind like Mary Jane.

#### *Joanna Wilks*

- She is 14 years old, has a hare lip, and is given to good works.
- She eats in the kitchen with Huck after everyone else has finished eating. This may show a prejudice against the handicapped, or perhaps she may be eating in the kitchen because she is young. (Joanna is 14, and Susan is 15, but Susan eats with everyone else and sits by Mary Jane at the dinner table.)
- Joanna is inquisitive and intelligent, asking Huck about his life in England and not believing all the lies he tells her. She also knows that Sheffield isn't on the sea.

#### *All the Girls*

Basically, all the girls are very nice. Joanna tells Huck that she doesn't believe all the lies that he has been telling her. Just then, Mary Jane and Susan walk in, and they make Joanna apologize although, as we know, Huck has in fact been

lying to her. Because all the girls are so nice, Huck feels bad because the king and the duke are trying to rob them.

### **Why does Huck steal the king's plunder?**

Basically, the three Wilks girls are so nice that Huck doesn't want the king and the duke to steal their money.

Note that this con is bigger than the other cons. Previously, the king and the duke ripped people off for 25 cents each — the cost of a ticket to the Royal Nonsuch. This time, they want to take thousands of dollars from three orphaned girls.

On pp. 224-225, we read about how nice the Wilks girls are. Huck has been telling lies — badly, because he doesn't have a good reason to lie — and since Joanna doesn't believe him, she asks him to put his hand on a book and say that he has not been telling lies:

I see it warn't nothing but a dictionary, so I laid my hand on it and said it. So then she looked a little better satisfied, and says:

“Well, then, I'll believe some of it; but I hope to gracious if I'll believe the rest.”

“What is it you won't believe, Joe?” says Mary Jane, stepping in with Susan behind her. “It ain't right nor kind for you to talk so to him, and him a stranger and so far from his people. How would you like to be treated so?”

“That's always your way, Maim — always sailing in to help somebody before they're hurt. I hain't done nothing to him. He's told some stretchers, I reckon, and I said I wouldn't swallow it all; and that's every bit and grain I *did* say. I reckon he can stand a little thing like that, can't he?”

“I don’t care whether ’twas little or whether ’twas big, he’s here in our house and a stranger, and it wasn’t good of you to say it. If you was in his place, it would make you feel ashamed; and so you oughtn’t to say a thing to another person that will make *them* feel ashamed.”

“Why, Maim, he said — ”

“It don’t make no difference what he *said* — that ain’t the thing. The thing is for you to treat him *kind*, and not be saying things to make him remember he ain’t in his own country and amongst his own folks.”

I says to myself, *This* is a girl that I’m letting that old reptle rob her of her money!

Then Susan *she* waltzed in; and if you’ll believe me, she did give Hare-lip hark from the tomb!

Says I to myself, And this is *another* one that I’m letting him rob her of her money!

Then Mary Jane she took another inning, and went in sweet and lovely again — which was her way — but when she got done there warn’t hardly anything left o’ poor Hare-lip. So she hollered.

“All right, then,” says the other girls; “you just ask his pardon.”

She done it, too. And she done it beautiful. She done it so beautiful it was good to hear; and I wished I could tell her a thousand lies, so she could do it again.

I says to myself, This is *another* one that I’m letting him rob her of her money. And when she got through they all jest laid theirselves out to make me feel at home and know I was amongst friends. I felt so ornery and low down and mean, that I says to myself,



My mind's made up: I'll hive that money for them or bust.

**Both the king and the duke are scoundrels, but of the two, which is the greedier?**

Of the two, the king is the greedier. The duke is all for leaving with the \$6,000 in gold, but the king wants all the money that can be raised from the sale of the house, the furnishings, the slaves, and even a plot in a cemetery (as we find out in Ch. 28 on p. 248).

The duke wants to leave the girls with something to live on, but the king wants everything.

On pp. 226-27, we read about the duke's plan:

“That we better glide out of this, before three in the morning, and clip it down the river with what we've got. Specially, seeing we got it so easy — *given* back to us, flung at our heads, as you may say, when of course we allowed to have to steal it back. I'm for knocking off and lighting out.”

On p. 227, the king is able to talk the duke into staying and attempting to get even more money:

“Why, how you talk!” says the king. “We shan't rob 'em of nothing at all but jest this money. The people that buys the property is the sufferers; because as soon's it's found out 'at we didn't own it — which won't be long after we've slid — the sale won't be valid, and it'll all go back to the estate. These-yer orphans 'll git their house back agin, and that's enough for *them*; they're young, and spry, and k'n easy earn a livin'. *They* ain't a-goin to suffer. Why, jest think — there's thous'n's and thous'n's that ain't nigh so well off. Bless you, *they* ain't got noth'n to complain of.”

Well, the king he talked him blind; so at last he give in, and said all right, but said he believed it was blame' foolishness to stay, and that doctor hanging over them.

The king might think that the girls don't have anything to complain of, but since the girls will be robbed of \$6,000 and will have been made fools of and will have to work to earn a living, the girls might disagree.

**What would happen to the Wilks daughters if the scheme of the king and the duke would succeed?**

The king and the duke are scoundrels. They are going to rip off the three Wilks daughters. The plan is to take the \$6,000 in gold as well as the money from selling all the Wilks daughters' possessions, then skip town. The king says that the girls won't be hurt except by the theft of the \$6,000, but I doubt it. They may have a hard time getting their possessions back. For example, some of the slaves have been sold far away. Will the girls be able to get those slaves back?

Most likely, the girls will have to work for a living, but that can be difficult. Careers for girls at this time are low-paying: nursery maids, maids, governesses, etc. Basically, the girls would be servants.

The industrial revolution is taking place, so in the cities the girls could work in factories, perhaps, but those are low-paying jobs.

Perhaps Mary Jane could work as a secretary for the lawyer, Levi Bell.

## CHAPTER 27: DEAD PETER HAS HIS GOLD

### Write a character analysis of the undertaker.

Huck is impressed by the undertaker and by his quiet ways. On p. 232, we read:

When the place was packed full, the undertaker he slid around in his black gloves with his softy soothing ways, putting on the last touches, and getting people and things all ship-shape and comfortable, and making no more sound than a cat. He never spoke; he moved people around, he squeezed in late ones, he opened up passage-ways, and done it with nods, and signs with his hands. Then he took his place over against the wall. He was the softest, glidingest, stealthiest man I ever see; and there warn't no more smile to him than there is to a ham.

Later, a dog makes a racket in the basement. The undertaker goes to the basement, stops the dog from making a racket, then lets everyone know that the dog had a rat. This is something that Huckleberry and the other people approve of:

You could see it was a great satisfaction to the people, because naturally they wanted to know. A little thing like that don't cost nothing, and it's just the little things that makes a man to be looked up to and liked. There warn't no more popular man in town than what that undertaker was. (233)

### In what way is Miss Watson implicitly compared to the king and the duke?

The king's greed leads him to sell the slaves, thus breaking up families. A slave mother has two sons. The two sons are sold up the river, and the mother is sold down the river. The king has separated this family for life. It is almost impossible for the mother and her sons to ever see each other again.

However, Huck says that the slaves will be reunited soon because the sale isn't valid.

Similarly, when Miss Watson sold Jim down the river, she separated him from his family. If he had gone to New Orleans, he probably would not ever have seen his wife and his children again.

We should note that the selling of the slaves upsets the Wilks daughters and the townspeople. On pp. 234-235, we read:

So the next day after the funeral, along about noon-time, the girls' joy got the first jolt: a couple of nigger traders come along, and the king sold them the niggers reasonable, for three-day drafts as they called it, and away they went — the two sons up the river to Memphis, and their mother down the river to Orleans. I thought them poor girls and them niggers would break their hearts for grief; they cried around each other, and took on so it most made me down sick to see it. The girls said they hadn't ever dreamed of seeing the family separated or sold away from the town. I can't ever get it out of my memory, the sight of them poor miserable girls and niggers hanging around each other's necks and crying; and I reckon I couldn't a stood it all but would a had to bust out and tell on our gang if I hadn't knowed the sale warn't no account and the niggers would be back home in a week or two.

The thing made a big stir in the town, too, and a good many come out flatfooted and said it was scandalous to separate the mother and the children that way. It injured the frauds some, but the old fool he bulled right along, spite of all the duke could say or do, and I tell you the duke was powerful uneasy.

Huck knows that Jim loves his children. Here he learns that other black folk love their children — and that the children love their mother.

**Who do the king and the duke think stole the money?**

Huck, of course, steals the money. He was going to find a safe place for it, but he ended up shoving it into the coffin.

Huck is very clever here. When the king and the duke find the money missing, they ask Huck about it. Huck sees a chance to blame someone else for the robbery (without getting them in trouble), and he takes the chance.

Huck says that he saw slaves coming out of the king's room a number of times — once all together. He also says that it was clear that they had gone in to clean, found the king still sleeping, and tiptoed away on the one occasion when they came out in a group.

The king and the duke think that the three slaves (a mother and her two sons) found and stole the money, so Huck is no longer a suspect.

Huck is often a talented liar, especially when he is lying for a good reason. When he is lying for the king and the duke (instead of against them), he is not such a good liar. Here he is lying against the king and the duke, and his lie is convincing.

## CHAPTER 28: OVERREACHING DON'T PAY

### Why does Huck tell Mary Jane the truth?

Huck feels sorry for Mary Jane when he sees her crying, so he asks her to tell him her problems. She is upset about the slaves being sold and the mother being separated from her two sons. Because of that, without thinking, Huck tells her that the mother and sons will be reunited. Of course, he then has to tell her how he knows that.

On p. 239, he decides to tell her the truth:

I see I had spoke too sudden, and said too much, and was in a close place. I asked her to let me think, a minute; and she set there, very impatient and excited and handsome, but looking kind of happy and eased-up, like a person that's had a tooth pulled out. So I went to studying it out. I says to myself, I reckon a body that ups and tells the truth when he is in a tight place, is taking considerable many resks; though I ain't had no experience, and can't say for certain; but it looks so to me, anyway; and yet here's a case where I'm blest if it don't look to me like the truth is better and actuly *safer*, than a lie. I must lay it by in my mind, and think it over some time or other, it's so kind of strange and unregular. I never see nothing like it. Well, I says to myself at last, I'm agoing to chance it; I'll up and tell the truth this time, though it does seem most like setting down on a kag of powder and touching it off, just to see where you'll go to.

Huck knows that telling the truth is risky, but he takes a chance and tells it.

In addition, Huck writes her a note. In it, he tells her where the money is.

### **Why does Huck insist that Mary Jane leave the house?**

Huck lets Mary Jane know that the king and the duke are scoundrels, but he also makes her promise to leave the house before she sees the king and the duke again.

Huck does this for a few reasons:

*1) Mary Jane can't hide her feelings.*

She would be unable to see the king and the duke without their knowing that she knew that they were scoundrels, even though she never said a word. They would know her feelings simply by looking at her face.

On p. 242, we read:

“Why, it’s because you ain’t one of these leather-face people. I don’t want no better book than what your face is. A body can set down and read it off like coarse print. Do you reckon you can go and face your uncles, when they come to kiss you good-morning, and never — ”

Mary Jane doesn’t have a poker face. Whatever she is thinking appears on her face.

*2) Huck wants time to leave with Jim.*

Huck is planning on skipping out, getting to the raft, and floating down the river with Jim. However, he wants it to be dark because he doesn’t want anyone to see him and row out to the raft to talk to him.

*3) Of course, Huck wants to protect Jim.*

These reasons show both Huck’s intelligence and morality, and they show his loyalty to Jim.

### What lies does Huck tell in this chapter?

Huck is very good — when he has a good reason — at telling lies.

In this chapter, he tells a number of them:

*1) Huck lies to Mary Jane.*

After Huck tells the truth to Mary Jane and asks her to leave without seeing the king and the duke, he says that he will make an excuse for her leaving and that he will send the king and the duke her love. Mary Jane says that she won't have her love sent to the two rascallions, and Huck lies and says that she won't have to. But then, he sends them her love anyway.

On pp. 242-243, we read, "It was well enough to tell *her* so — no harm in it. It was only a little thing to do, and no trouble; and it's the little things that smooths people's roads the most, down here below; it would make Mary Jane comfortable, and it wouldn't cost nothing."

*2) Huck then lies and tells Susan and Joanna that Mary Jane has gone to visit a sick friend.*

In telling about the sick friend's illness, Huck mentions the mumps, which is not serious enough an illness to have people set up all night with the ill person. Therefore, Huck makes up a new kind of mumps when he talks to Susan and Joanna:

"Mumps your granny! — they don't set up with people that's got the mumps."

"They don't, don't they? You better bet they do with *these* mumps. These mumps is different. It's a new kind, Miss Mary Jane said."

"How's it a new kind?"



“Because it’s mixed up with other things.”

“What other things?”

“Well, measles, and whooping-cough, and erysiplas, and consumption, and yaller janders, and brain fever, and I don’t know what all.” (245)

This new kind of mumps Huck says is known as the “dreadful pluribus-unum mumps” (246). Huck uses a little Latin to make everyone think that these mumps are serious.

*E pluribus unum* is Latin for “one out of many.”

## CHAPTER 29: I LIGHT OUT IN THE STORM

**Explain what irony is, and explain why it is ironic when Huck is told that he is a poor liar and needs more practice at it.**

The real Wilks brothers show up, and the townspeople want to question both the real Wilks brothers and the fake Wilks brothers — and Huck.

This information comes from [http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/wheeler/lit\\_terms\\_I.html](http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/wheeler/lit_terms_I.html):

**IRONY: Irony comes in many forms.**

**Verbal Irony** (also called sarcasm) is a trope in which a speaker makes a statement in which its actual meaning differs sharply from the meaning that the words ostensibly express. Often this sort of irony is plainly sarcastic in the eyes of the reader, but the characters listening in the story may not realize the speaker's sarcasm as quickly as the readers do.

**Dramatic Irony** (the most important type for literature) involves a situation in a narrative in which the reader knows something about present or future circumstances that the character does not know. In that situation, the character acts in a way we recognize to be grossly inappropriate to the actual circumstances, or the character expects the opposite of what the reader knows that fate holds in store, or when the character anticipates a particular outcome that unfolds itself in an unintentional way.

**Situational Irony** (also called cosmic irony) is a trope in which accidental events occur that seem oddly appropriate, such as the poetic justice of a pickpocket getting his own pocket picked.

On p. 253, Levi Bell, the lawyer, tells Huck that he is a poor liar:

And by and by they had me up to tell what I knowed. The king he give me a left-handed look out of the corner of his eye, and so I knowed enough to talk on the right side. I begun to tell about Sheffield, and how we lived there, and all about the English Wilkses, and so on; but I didn't get pretty fur till the doctor begun to laugh; and Levi Bell, the lawyer, says:

“Set down, my boy, I wouldn't strain myself if I was you. I reckon you ain't used to lying, it don't seem to come handy; what you want is practice. You do it pretty awkward.”

I didn't care nothing for the compliment, but I was glad to be let off, any way.

This is an example of dramatic irony. Levi Bell thinks that Huck hasn't had much practice at lying, but we the audience know that Huck has lied often in his life.

Huck is actually a pretty good liar when he is lying in something he believes in, but he doesn't lie very well when he doesn't believe in something. He doesn't lie well here because he is lying for the king and the duke, and he isn't on their side. Also, of course Huck doesn't know much about England — and his English accent if he attempted one would be very poor.

An example of Huck lying well occurs in Ch. 16 when two white men are looking for runaway slaves. They want to look on Huck's raft, but Huck is able to convince them that his family has smallpox and that his family is on the raft. Because of Huck's lying, the two men give Huck \$20 each to float the raft further down river before landing and getting help.

**Con men need to be good actors, fast thinkers, good liars, and totally unethical people. How do the king and the duke exhibit these traits in this chapter?**

*Being Good Actors*

The king and the duke are good actors when the real Wilkses appear.

The duke, who is supposed to be deaf and dumb, pretends not to notice anything and he goo-gooes as if nothing is happening. The king, however, looks disappointed that there could be two such con men as the real Wilks brothers.

On p. 249, we read:

The duke he never let on he suspicioned what was up, but just went a goo-gooing around, happy and satisfied, like a jug that's googling out buttermilk; and as for the king, he just gazed and gazed down sorrowful on them newcomers like it give him the stomach-ache in his very heart to think there could be such frauds and rascals in the world. O, he done it admirable.

*Thinking Quickly*

1) The king also thinks quickly. The real William's arm is in a sling, so that he can't write, and the king points out that that is real handy. The real Wilkses claim that if William could write, they could prove their identity: Everyone could see that he had written the letter to lawyer Levi Bell. However, because his right arm is hurt, he can't write. (William's arm is in a sling because he broke his arm.)

On p. 250, the king says, "Broke his arm — *very* likely, *ain't* it? — and very convenient, too, for a fraud that's got to make signs, and ain't learnt how. Lost their baggage! That's

*mighty good! — and mighty ingenious — under the circumstances!”*

2) The king also displays quick thinking when the lawyer tricks him and the duke into signing their names so that he can compare their handwriting to the handwriting in letters that he has received from Harvey Wilks in England.

It turns out that none of the handwriting matches the letters. Of course, the handwriting of the king and the duke don't match, but the handwriting of the real Harvey Wilks doesn't match either, because he had bad handwriting and his brother William deciphered his very bad handwriting and wrote his letters for him.

On p. 254, the king claims that the test wasn't fair:

Well, what do you think? — that muleheaded old fool wouldn't give in *then!* Indeed he wouldn't. Said it warn't no fair test. Said his brother William was the cussedest joker in the world, and hadn't *tried* to write — *he* see William was going to play one of his jokes the minute he put the pen to paper. And so he warmed up and went warbling right along till he was actuly beginning to believe what he was saying *himself*[...].

### *Lying Persuasively*

The king also displays quick thinking as he lies persuasively when he is asked what mark can be seen tattooed on the deceased Peter Wilks' breast. The king says, “It's jest a small, thin, blue arrow — that's what it is; and if you don't look clost, you can't see it” (255).

Of course, everybody — the king, the duke, and Huck — thinks and acts quickly (in ch. 30) when the gold is discovered inside Peter Wilks' coffin and in the excitement,

everyone crowds in to see. The king, the duke, and Huck take off running and get away.

Huck thinks that he and Jim are free of the king and the duke as they float down the river again, but the king and the duke steal a skiff and row to them, greatly disappointing Huck — and Jim, too, no doubt.

*Being Totally Unethical*

In all their actions, the king and the duke have shown that they are totally unethical. The duke may have wanted to escape with the cash and leave the property, but he was concerned about making a quick escape. Being found guilty of defrauding the Wilks girls would not be healthy.

## CHAPTER 30: THE GOLD SAVES THE THIEVES

### What happens when the bag of gold is discovered?

Everyone surges forward to see the gold, giving the king, the duke, and Huck a chance to escape. We should note that all three of them — the king, the duke, and Huck — had a chance of being lynched, although Huck may have gotten off because of his youth. In addition, if Huck had been caught, Mary Jane may arrive in time to save Huck.

Huck reaches the raft, and he takes off down the river with Jim, but the king and duke steal a skiff and catch up to them.

Of course, the money will end up in the hands of the Wilks daughters, to whom it belongs.

### Why don't the king and the duke think Huck stole the money?

The king and the duke are both con men, and they have both thought about stealing the money. Each accuses the other of stealing the gold for himself, and since the duke is stronger than the king, he forces him to admit that he stole the money, although we know, of course, that Huck stole it.

The king and the duke make a living from defrauding other people, and so they each easily think that the other con man is trying to defraud him.

On p. 264, we read:

So the king sneaked into the wigwam, and took to his bottle for comfort; and before long the duke tackled *his* bottle; and so in about a half an hour they was as thick as thieves again, and the tighter they got the loviner they got; and went off a-snooring in each other's arms. They both got powerful mellow, but I noticed the king didn't get mellow enough to forget to remember to not deny about hiding the money-

bag, again. That made me feel easy and satisfied. Of course when they got to snoring, we had a long gabble, and I told Jim everything.

Jim and Huck have a good relationship. They are able to talk to each other and to tell each other the truth.

By the way, the king and the duke are almost broke now. Almost all the money they made in the Royal Nonesuch went to the Wilks daughters to make up the deficit in Ch. 25.

This is ironic. The king and the duke were trying to get the money of the Wilks daughters, but the Wilks daughters end up with the money of the king and the duke.



## CHAPTER 31: YOU CAN'T PRAY A LIE

### **How profitable are the king and the duke's scams in this chapter?**

The king and the duke's scams in Ch. 31 are not profitable at all.

The raft has drifted very far South now — the trees have lots of Spanish moss on them. Since the raft has drifted so far south, the king and the duke know that they are out of the range of danger, so they attempt to practice their cons again. Unfortunately for them, being a con man is an up-and-down kind of business, and this is one of the down times.

On p. 265, Huck details some of their cons and the results. These are Huck's words except for my headings:

#### *Temperance Lecture*

First they done a lecture on temperance; but they didn't make enough for them both to get drunk on.

#### *Dancing School*

Then in another village they started a dancing school; but they didn't know no more how to dance than a kangaroo does; so the first prance they made, the general public jumped in and pranced them out of town.

#### *Elocution School*

Another time they tried a go at yellocution; but they didn't yellocute long till the audience got up and give them a solid good cussing, and made them skip out.

*Missionarying, and Mesmerizing, and Doctoring, and Telling Fortunes, and a Little of Everything*

They tackled missionarying, and mesmerizing, and doctoring, and telling fortunes, and a little of everything; but they couldn't seem to have no luck. So at last they got just about dead broke, and laid around the raft as she floated along, thinking and thinking, and never saying nothing, by the half a day at a time, and dreadful blue and desperate.

**How do the king and the duke react to their lack of luck in their cons?**

They grow depressed, and they start talking together in low voices so that Huck and Jim can't hear them. On pp. 265-266, we read:

And at last they took a change and begun to lay their heads together in the wigwam and talk low and confidential two or three hours at a time. Jim and me got uneasy. We didn't like the look of it. We judged they was studying up some kind of worse deviltry than ever. We turned it over and over, and at last we made up our minds they was going to break into somebody's house or store, or was going into the counterfeited money business, or something.

Of course, we find out that they are plotting to get the reward for Jim — a fake reward, of course, since the flyers advertising Jim as an escaped slave are the duke's invention.

**How does Huck find out what happened to Jim?**

Huck tries to shake (run away from) the duke after they discover the king drunk (and broke). He runs to the raft, only to find out that Jim isn't there. He then gets the story from a young loafer. The loafer says that Jim is a runaway slave who is now down at Silas Phelps' place, two miles away.

Huck learns that an old fellow — the king — sold out his chance of collecting the \$200 reward for 40 silver dollars because he is going up the river. (Judas got 30 pieces of silver for selling out Jesus, but there has been inflation since then.)

Later (after Huck makes up his mind to free Jim), the duke tries to mislead Huck, but Huck isn't misled. The duke starts to tell Huck the truth about Jim being at Silas Phelps' place, but then he changes his mind, and in an attempt to keep Huck away for a few days (so that the duke and the king can put on the Royal Nonesuch play), he tells Huck, "The man that bought him is named Abram Foster — Abram G. Foster — and he lives forty mile back here in the country, on the road to Lafayette" (274). To get there, Huck would have to walk three days; the duke thinks that that is a good way to keep Huck out of the way for a while.

### **Why does Huck decide to go to Hell?**

Huck feels that slavery is a just system. Huck truly believes the morally right thing to do is make Jim a slave again. Huck truly believes that the morally wrong thing to do is to continue to help Jim achieve his freedom. Even though Huck has been willing to help a single slave — Jim — try to achieve his freedom, Huck never progresses to the idea that slavery is morally wrong.

In his journal, Mark Twain himself once called *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* "a book of mine in which a sound heart and a deformed conscience come into collision." In fact, Huck's conscience is deformed. His conscience bothers him because he is helping Jim to achieve his freedom. If his conscience were as sound as his heart, his conscience would tell him that he is doing the morally right thing when he tries to help Jim achieve his freedom.

Huck's heart is sound, of course. He regards Jim as a friend, and he wants to help his friend to achieve his freedom. As we know, Huck relies on his own experience rather than on the ideas passed down through culture. His own experience tells him that Jim is a person who ought to be treated as a human being. The ideas of his culture tell him that black people such as Jim are not full human beings; instead, they are pieces of property that can be bought and sold.

In Ch. 31, Huck struggles with himself. He has to decide between what his experience tells him and what the ideas of his culture tell him. He is alone on the raft after he discovers that the king and the duke have sold Jim, and he thinks about what he ought to do.

Huck's conscience really does bother him. He does not want to be known as a person who tried to help a slave escape: "And then think of *me!* It would get all around, that Huck Finn helped a nigger to get his freedom; and if I was ever to see anybody from that town again I'd be ready to get down and lick his boots for shame" (268).

Huck also thinks that God approves of slavery and disapproves of Huck trying to help a runaway slave achieve freedom:

The more I studied about this, the more my conscience went to grinding me, and the more wicked, and low-down and ornery I got to feeling. And at last, when it hit me all of a sudden that here was the plain hand of Providence slapping me in the face and letting me know my wickedness was being watched all the time from up there in heaven, whilst I was stealing a poor old woman's nigger that hadn't ever done me no harm, and now was showing me there's One that's always on the lookout, and ain't a-going to allow no such miserable doings to go only just so fur

and no further, I most dropped in my tracks I was so scared. (268-269)

Huck does not follow the writing rule about keeping related words together, but in doing so he says something true. He writes that “I was stealing a poor old woman’s nigger that hadn’t ever done me no harm [...]” (269). Of course, he means to say that Miss Watson had never hurt him, but the sentence says (and it is the truth) that Jim never hurt him.

According to Huck’s deformed conscience, he is going to go to Hell because he has been helping a runaway to achieve his freedom: “people that acts as I’d been acting about that nigger goes to everlasting fire” (269).

Under the pressure of his deformed conscience, Huck writes a letter to Miss Watson: “Miss Watson your runaway nigger Jim is down here two mile below Pikesville and Mr. Phelps has got him and he will give him up for the reward if you send. HUCK FINN” (269).

However, once Huck writes the letter to Miss Watson, he doesn’t feel any better. Of course, now Huck’s sound heart is talking to him. He tries to pray, but he finds that he can’t pray. He is feeling a conflict here. Huck’s deformed conscience tells him that the morally right thing to do is to stop helping Jim escape from slavery — in fact, the morally right thing to do is make sure that Jim becomes a slave again. However, Huck’s sound heart and his experience with Jim on the trip down the Mississippi River tells him to help his friend become free.

In thinking about his friend, Huck stops using the word “nigger” and instead he uses the word “Jim”:

And got to thinking over our trip down the river; and I see Jim before me, all the time: in the day, and in the night-time, sometimes moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a floating along, talking, and singing,

and laughing. But somehow I couldn't seem to strike no places to harden me against him, but only the other kind. I'd see him standing my watch on top of his'n [...] (269-270)

Huck continues to think about all the kind things that Jim has done for him, and then he makes his decision:

“All right, then, I'll go to hell” — and tore it [the paper] up.

It was awful thoughts, and awful words, but they was said. (271)

This is magnificent irony. Huck thinks that he is going to go to Hell because he wants to set Jim free. We, of course, know that such an act would earn Huck a place in Heaven.

We should note that even though Huck decides to free Jim, he still feels that doing so is the morally wrong thing to do. Huck thinks:

It was awful thoughts, and awful words, but they was said. And I let them stay said; and never thought no more about reforming. I shoved the whole thing out of my head; and said I would take up wickedness again, which was in my line, being brung up to it, and the other warn't. And for a starter, I would go to work and steal Jim out of slavery again; and if I could think up anything worse, I would do that, too; because as long as I was in, and in for good, I might as well go the whole hog. (271)

Even now, Huck is still using his society's conception of slavery. He says that he will “steal Jim” (271). You can steal a piece of property, and even now Huck is thinking of Jim as a piece of property. Even now, Huck is affected by the ideas of his culture. Even now, Huck thinks that God approves of slavery.

However, Huck has made much progress. He has come much further in his understanding of one black person than most people in his society did. This is a victory. It may be a partial victory, but it is still a victory.

**In Ch. 31, Huck decides to go to Hell. Most literary critics agree that this is the climax of the novel. If you feel like doing research, define “climax” and explain why this scene is the climax of the novel.**

The website <http://masconomet.org/teachers/trevenen/lit-terms.htm#C> defines “climax” in this way:

The climax of a story is the point where the reader knows who wins the conflict. It has nothing to do with “the most exciting part of a story” or anything else like it. You know yourself that many stories you read in school have no exciting parts. This is strictly a technical term that denotes the part of the story where, now that it has been read or seen, the reader or audience can see when either the protagonist or the antagonist won. Any story that has conflict has a climax unless it is designed like Frank Stockton’s “The Lady or the Tiger” where the whole point of the story was that there is no climax.

In this scene, we know that Huck makes the right choice, although he thinks that he has made a choice that will send him to Hell. He decides to free Jim no matter what his society says about his choice.

**For what did the king sell Jim? The term “forty dirty dollars” is an allusion to what? Define “allusion.”**

When Judas turned in Jesus to the Roman authorities, he was paid 30 pieces of silver. Twain is implicitly comparing the act of betraying Jim to the act of betraying Jesus. (Why \$40? Maybe inflation.)

The website <[http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/wheeler/lit\\_terms\\_A.html](http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/wheeler/lit_terms_A.html)> defines “allusion” in this way:

A casual reference in literature to a person, place, event, or another passage of literature, often without explicit identification. Allusions can originate in mythology, biblical references, historical events, or legends. Authors often use allusion to establish a tone, create an implied association, contrast two objects or people, make an unusual juxtaposition of references, or bring the reader into a world of experience outside the limitations of the story itself. Authors assume that the readers will recognize the original sources and relate their meaning to the new context. For instance, if a teacher were to refer to his class as a horde of Mongols, the students will have no idea if they are being praised or vilified unless they know what the Mongol horde was and what activities it participated in historically. This historical allusion assumes a certain level of education or awareness in the audience, so it should be taken as a compliment rather than an attempt at obscurity.



## CHAPTER 32: I HAVE A NEW NAME

**Define “coincidence” and explain the huge coincidences that occur in this chapter. Do huge coincidences lessen the value of a literary work?**

This definition comes from *The American Heritage College Dictionary*:

**coincidence:** a sequence of events that although accidental seem to have planned.

- 1) The first huge coincidence is that after floating down the Mississippi River for hundreds of miles, Huck discovers that Jim has been sold to Tom Sawyer’s Aunt Sally.
- 2) In a further coincidence, Tom happens to arrive for a rare visit on the very day that Huck is mistaken for Tom. Of course, the title of the chapter — “I Have a New Name” — refers to Huck’s being thought to be Tom Sawyer.

Yes, huge coincidences do often lessen the value of a literary work. The last third of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been maligned. Many readers prefer Huck and Jim alone to Huck, Jim, and Tom. However, later I will be arguing that Mark Twain has a serious purpose for the last third of this novel.

### **What examples of prejudice do we see in this chapter?**

On p. 279, we read about a remarkable example of prejudice as Huck answers Aunt Sally’s question:

“It warn’t the grounding — that didn’t keep us back but a little. We blowed out a cylinder-head.”

“Good gracious! anybody hurt?”

“No’m. Killed a nigger.”

“Well, it’s lucky; because sometimes people do get hurt. Two years ago last Christmas, your uncle Silas was coming up from Newrleans on the old Lally Rook, and she blowed out a cylinder-head and crippled a man. And I think he died, afterwards. He was a Babtist. Your uncle Silas knowed a family in Baton Rouge that knowed his people very well. Yes, I remember now, he *did* die. Mortification set in, and they had to amputate him. But it didn’t save him. Yes, it was mortification — that was it. He turned blue all over, and died in the hope of a glorious resurrection. They say he was a sight to look at. [...]”

This is a horrible example of prejudice, and it brings into question exactly how much Huck has learned about black people.

Huck has learned to regard Jim as a human being, but he has not learned to regard other slaves as human beings.

The prejudice of Aunt Sally is also notable because she is a Christian woman who is married to a man who built his own church on his own plantation and preached in it, as we find out in Ch. 33 on p. 285:

That’s all he said. He was the innocentest, best old soul I ever see. But it warn’t surprising; because he warn’t only just a farmer, he was a preacher, too, and had a little one-horse log church down back of the plantation, which he built it himself at his own expense, for a church and school house, and never charged nothing for his preaching, and it was worth it, too. There was plenty other farmer-preachers like that, and done the same way, down South.

### CHAPTER 33: THE PITIFUL ENDING OF ROY-ALTY

**Tom Sawyer loves to perform. What performance does he put on in this chapter?**

The performance he puts on here, after he meets Huck and finds out that Huck is thought to be Tom, is to pretend to be a stranger come by mistake to the Phelpses' plantation.

Tom introduces himself as another boy, sits down to dinner with the Phelpses, and as he is eating, kisses Aunt Sally on the lips.

Of course, this astonishes Aunt Sally, who is very angry until Tom says that he is Sid, then Aunt Sally wants him to kiss her, and Tom won't until she asks him to — which of course she does.

On p. 288, we read:

Then he looks on around, the same way, to me — and says:

“Tom, didn't *you* think Aunt Sally'd open out her arms and say, 'Sid Sawyer' — ”

“My land!” she says, breaking in and jumping for him, “you impudent young rascal, to fool a body so — ” and was going to hug him, but he fended her off, and says:

“No, not till you've asked me, first.”

So she didn't lose no time, but asked him; and hugged him and kissed him over and over again, and then turned him over to the old man, and he took what was left. And after they got a little quiet again, she says:

“Why, dear me, I never see such a surprise. We warn’t looking for *you*, at all, but only Tom. Sis never wrote to me about anybody coming but him.”

These are Tom’s major performances in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*:

- Winning the Bible: David and Goliath
- Attending His Own Funeral
- Testifying at Muff Potter’s Trial
- Acting Braver than He Feels in Front of Becky Thatcher in the Cave

Of course, in this novel Tom’s character has not changed in that he still loves performances.

**How does Huck react when Tom tells him that he will help to steal Jim?**

Huck can’t believe that Tom would sink so low as to steal a slave. This shows us the influence that society has on Huck.

On p. 284, we read:

“All right; but wait a minute. There’s one more thing — a thing that *nobody* don’t know but me. And that is, there’s a nigger here that I’m a trying to steal out of slavery, and his name is *Jim* — old Miss Watson’s Jim.”

He says:

“What! Why, Jim is — ”

He stopped and went to studying. I says:

“I know what you’ll say. You’ll say it’s dirty, low-down business; but what if it is? *I*’m low-down; and

I'm agoing to steal him, and I want you to keep mum and not let on. Will you?"

His eye lit up, and he says:

"I'll *help* you steal him!"

Well, I let go all holts, then, like I was shot. It was the most astonishing speech I ever heard — and I'm bound to say Tom Sawyer fell considerable in my estimation. Only I couldn't believe it. Tom Sawyer a *nigger stealer!*

"Oh, shucks!" I says; "you're joking."

"I ain't joking, either."

"Well, then," I says, "joking or no joking, if you hear anything said about a runaway nigger, don't forget to remember that *you* don't know nothing about him, and *I* don't know nothing about him."

Of course, we remember that Huck thinks that he is going to Hell for stealing Jim out of slavery. He must think that Tom Sawyer will also go to Hell for helping to steal Jim out of slavery.

**When Huck finds out the townspeople know about the "Royal Nonesuch," what does he do? What does this tell you about Huck?**

Huck wants to warn the king and the duke that the townspeople know about the Royal Nonesuch. Huck is a good boy, and he knows that the townspeople will exact vengeance on the king and the duke, and he knows that the vengeance will be severe.

In fact, the king and the duke are tarred and feathered and ridden out of town on a rail.

We really do see good things in Huck here. He says, “Well, it made me sick to see it; and I was sorry for them poor pitiful rascals, it seemed like I couldn’t ever feel any hardness against them any more in the world. It was a dreadful thing to see. Human beings *can* be awful cruel to one another” (290). Of course, the king and the duke are con men who have harmed a lot of people, and who wanted to badly harm the Wilks girls financially. They also treated Huck and especially Jim poorly, yet Huck is able to pity the way they are treated.

### **What do “tar and feather” and “ride on a rail” mean?**

These are kinds of rough frontier justice.

When a person is tarred and feathered, their clothes are stripped off of them, hot tar is smeared on their body, and chicken feathers are poured over them. The result is to make them look feathered from the neck down.

When a person is ridden on a rail, they sit on a wooden beam and the crowd carries them out of town.

Of course, the people who are tarred and feathered and ridden on a rail are subjected to the abuse of the crowd, and some of them were injured or died.

If they were lucky, they finally were let off the rail, warned not to come into the region again, and left alone. The person would have nothing — no money, no clothing, and unless a companion was tarred and feathered with them, no friends. They would have a hard time getting help and getting cleaned up and getting clothing.

On pp. 289-290, we read:

[...] I told Tom all about our Royal Nonesuch rapscallions, and as much of the raft-voyage as I had time to; and as we struck into the town and up

through the middle of it — it was as much as half after eight, then — here comes a raging rush of people, with torches, and an awful whooping and yelling, and banging tin pans and blowing horns; and we jumped to one side to let them go by; and as they went by I see they had the king and the duke astraddle of a rail — that is, I knowed it *was* the king and the duke, though they was all over tar and feathers, and didn't look like nothing in the world that was human — just looked like a couple of monstrous big soldier-plumes. Well, it made me sick to see it; and I was sorry for them poor pitiful rascals, it seemed like I couldn't ever feel any hardness against them any more in the world. It was a dreadful thing to see. Human beings *can* be awful cruel to one another.

## CHAPTER 34: WE CHEER JIM UP

### How does Tom figure out where Jim is?

Tom does it through detective work. He notices that a slave is taking food inside a hut. At first, he and Huck thought that the food was for a dog, but Tom notices that some of the food is watermelon, which a dog will not eat.

In addition, the slave locks the hut, which means that a prisoner must be inside. If a dog were inside, the slave could simply close the door.

### Compare and contrast Tom's plan and Huck's plan for freeing Jim.

Tom's plans are impractical and unrealistic. Huck's plans are both practical and realistic. This is certainly true in their plans for freeing Jim as well as in earlier plans they have made.

On p. 292, we read:

“My plan is this,” I says. “We can easy find out if it's Jim in there. Then get up my canoe tomorrow night, and fetch my raft over from the island. Then the first dark night that comes, steal the key out of the old man's britches, after he goes to bed, and shove off down the river on the raft, with Jim, hiding daytimes and running nights, the way me and Jim used to do before. Wouldn't that plan work?”

“*Work?* Why, cert'nly it would work, like rats a-fighting. But it's too blame' simple; there ain't nothing *to* it. What's the good of a plan that ain't no more trouble than that? It's as mild as goose-milk. Why, Huck, it wouldn't make no more talk than breaking into a soap factory.”



I never said nothing, because I warn't expecting nothing different; but I knowed mighty well that whenever he got *his* plan ready it wouldn't have none of them objections to it.

And it didn't. He told me what it was, and I see in a minute it was worth fifteen of mine, for style, and would make Jim just as free a man as mine would, and maybe get us all killed, besides. So I was satisfied, and said we would waltz in on it. I needn't tell what it was, here, because I knowed it wouldn't stay the way it was. I knowed he would be changing it around, every which way, as we went along, and heaving in new bullinesses wherever he got a chance. And that is what he done.

Earlier in the novel, we saw that Huck's plans tend to be practical and Realistic. For example, Huck planned his own murder so that people would think that he was dead and wouldn't try to follow him. If Tom had done the planning, he would have messed everything up by making it too fancy and Romantic — he would have done things according to what he has read in his adventure books.

**Who is the leader in this chapter (and in this section of the novel): Tom or Huck?**

Clearly, Tom is. On his own, Huck is able to think well and act well, but when he is around Tom, he follows Tom's lead.

Unfortunately, Tom is a poor leader. Huck would be better off if he simply did things his own way.

We see that Tom is a poor leader in the things that he makes Jim go through. Also, as we have seen and as we will see, Tom's plans are impractical and unRealistic. Huck's plans are both practical and Realistic.

**Write a character analysis of the slave who takes care of Jim.**

On p. 295, we read:

This nigger had a good-natured, chuckleheaded face, and his wool was all tied up in little bunches with thread. That was to keep witches off. He said the witches was pestering him awful, these nights, and making him see all kinds of strange things, and hear all kinds of strange words and noises, and he didn't believe he was ever witched so long, before, in his life. He got so worked up, and got to running on so, about his troubles, he forgot all about what he'd been agoing to do.

This passage tells us a few things about the slave:

- 1) The slave is male and black.
- 2) The slave is superstitious and believes in witches.
- 3) The slave is chuckleheaded — that is, he is a simpleton.
- 4) The slave is credulous. He believes that the witches are fooling him when Jim recognizes Tom and Huck. Later, he believes that the witches are fooling him when several dogs come from under Jim's bed. (Tom and Huck have forgotten to latch the door of the lean-to next to the hut where Jim is being held prisoner. They have dug a tunnel to the lean-to.) Later, the credulous slave believes Tom when Tom offers to make him a witch pie.

**How do Tom and Huck fool the slave who believes in witches?**

Tom and Huck fool the slave who believes in witches by letting him believe that the witches are fooling him.

This slave has been feeding Jim, and when Tom and Huck go into the shed where Jim is held prisoner, Jim recognizes them and shouts with joy, leading the witch-believing slave to believe that Jim knows Tom and Huck.

On pp. 295-297, we read:

When we got in, we couldn't hardly see anything, it was so dark; but Jim was there, sure enough, and could see us; and he sings out:

"Why *Huck!* En good *lan* '! ain' dat Misto Tom?"

I just knowed how it would be; I just expected it. *I* didn't know nothing to do; and if I had I couldn't a done it, because that nigger busted in and says:

"Why, de gracious sakes! do he know you genlmen?"

We could see pretty well, now. Tom he looked at the nigger, steady and kind of wondering, and says:

"Does *who* know us?"

"Why, dis-yer runaway nigger."

"I don't reckon he does; but what put that into your head?"

"What *put* it dar? Didn' he jis' dis minute sing out like he knowed you?"

Tom says, in a puzzled-up kind of way:

"Well, that's mighty curious. *Who* sung out? *When* did he sing out? *What* did he sing out?" And turns to me, perfectly ca'm, and says, "Did *you* hear anybody sing out?"

Of course there warn't nothing to be said but the one thing; so I says:

“No; *I* ain’t heard nobody say nothing.”

Then he turns to Jim, and looks him over like he never see him before; and says:

“Did you sing out?”

“No, sah,” says Jim; “*I* hain’t said nothing, sah.”

“Not a word?”

“No, sah, *I* hain’t said a word.”

“Did you ever see us before?”

“No, sah; not as *I* knows on.”

So Tom turns to the nigger, which was looking wild and distressed, and says, kind of severe:

“What do you reckon’s the matter with you, anyway? What made you think somebody sung out?”

“Oh, it’s de dad-blame’ witches, sah, en *I* wisht *I* was dead, *I* do. Dey’s awluz at it, sah, en dey do mos’ kill me, dey sk’yers me so. Please to don’t tell nobody ’bout it, sah, er ole Mars Silas he’ll scole me; ’kase he say dey *ain*’ no witches. *I* jis’ wish to goodness he was heah now — *den* what would he say! *I* jis’ bet he couldn’ fine no way to git aroun’ it *dis* time. But it’s awluz jis’ so; people dat’s *sot*, stays sot; dey won’t look into noth’n en fine it out f’r deyselves, en when *you* fine it out en tell um ’bout it, dey doan b’lieve you.”

Tom give him a dime, and said we wouldn’t tell nobody [...].

## CHAPTER 35: DARK, DEEP LAID PLANS

### **According to Tom and the books that Tom has read, how should Jim escape?**

Tom has many silly ideas about prisoners that he has read about in adventure books:

- 1) Although the boys could easily get Jim out by removing a board that is nailed across a window, Tom believes that it is more adventuresome for a prisoner to have to dig his way out, although it is a lot more bother.
- 2) Although the boys could get Jim out that night, Tom thinks that it is more adventuresome to take a long time to get a prisoner out of captivity.
- 3) Tom thinks that a prisoner has to use foxfire to dig by because a lantern casts too much light and can get you into trouble. Of course, the boys have to pretend that a lantern could get them into trouble.
- 4) Tom thinks that a prisoner has to saw off the leg of the bed, eat the sawdust, and put grease and dust around the sawed place. Of course, Jim could easily lift up the bed and free himself.
- 5) Tom thinks that a prisoner has to have a moat. Of course, there isn't any, but Tom says if the boys have time on the night of the escape, they'll dig one.
- 6) Tom thinks that sawing off Jim's leg would be a good touch, but Tom says there ain't necessity enough for it. (Huck says there ain't *no* necessity for it.)
- 7) Tom thinks that a prisoner has to have a rope ladder. Of course, Jim doesn't need a ladder at all because he is on the ground floor of a one-story shed.

Tom insists that the ladder be a rope ladder because that is the way it is in the books — a hickory-bark ladder won't do. The ladder has to be smuggled in to the prisoner in a pie.

8) Tom thinks that a prisoner must keep a journal. Of course, Jim can't read or write, but Tom says that he can make marks on a shirt, and that can be his journal.

9) Tom thinks that a prisoner must have a pen made out of a pewter spoon or a piece of an old iron barrel-hoop. Huck points out that a pen made from a goose feather would be more practical, but Tom insists on doing things by the books.

10) Tom thinks that a prisoner must write with ink made of rust and tears or write with his own blood.

11) Tom thinks that a prisoner must write messages on tin plates and throw them out the window. Of course, as mentioned previously, Jim can't write, but Tom isn't bothered by the facts.

### **Whose feelings is Huck respecting more: Tom's or Jim's?**

Huck is respecting Tom's feelings more than Jim's. Huck is willing to let Jim be tortured simply in order to satisfy Tom's longing for adventure.

If Huck were to insist on having his plan followed, he, Tom, and Jim would be floating down the Mississippi that same night, since there isn't any difficulty in getting Jim free.

Of course, the plan does have a flaw. How can they get Jim to freedom? They are far south now, and sailing down the Mississippi won't get Jim any closer to the free states. They

would have to buy one or two canoes and start paddling upstream to freedom.

**Slave owners felt that the Bible justified slavery. What are some verses that they could point to, to justify their belief?**

Many verses in the Bible mention slavery. These quotations are from the King James version:

Exodus 21:1-4

*1:* Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them.

*2:* If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.

*3:* If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.

*4:* If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.

Deuteronomy 15:12-18

*12:* And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

*13:* And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty:

*14:* Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him.

*15:* And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day.

*16:* And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee;

*17:* Then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise.

*18:* It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free from thee; for he hath been worth a double hired servant to thee, in serving thee six years: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest.

Exodus 21:7

*7:* And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do.

These verses offer some limited protection to the slave:

Exodus 21:20-21

*20:* And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand; he shall be surely punished.

*21:* Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money.

Exodus 21:26-27

*26:* And if a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake.



27: And if he smite out his manservant's tooth, or his maidservant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake.

Women are spoils of war and can be made slaves — and yes, that means sex slaves:

Deuteronomy 21:10-14

*10:* When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive,

*11:* And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife;

*12:* Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails;

*13:* And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.

*14:* And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her.

Deuteronomy 20:14

*14:* But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

## CHAPTER 36: TRYING TO HELP JIM

**Note that Mark Twain is exposing a lie in this part of the novel: the lie that whites ought to have power over blacks. Whites had power over blacks in the pre-bellum South, even when the whites were boys and the blacks were men. Twain shows how silly that is in the last third of his novel. What are some of the silly things that Tom makes Jim do in this chapter?**

Tom has Jim do a number of silly things in this chapter:

- 1) Jim has to receive a pie with a rope ladder baked into it, even though the rope ladder will be worthless to him.
- 2) Jim has to steal items out of Uncle Silas' coat pockets and steal items tied to Aunt Sally's apron strings. Once again, these items are useless to Jim.
- 3) Jim has to keep a journal on one of Uncle Silas' shirts, even though Jim can't read and write.
- 4) Tom and Huck get some tin plates and a pewter spoon and a brass candlestick (the last two items are to make pens out of). Jim is supposed to write messages on the plates and then throw them out the window. Of course, Jim doesn't know how to read and write, so no one will be able to read the messages Jim scratches on the plates.
- 5) Jim has to receive some items, such as a piece of brass candlestick, in his food. He bites on a piece of corn pone in which Tom has hidden a piece of brass candlestick and almost mashes all of his teeth out, so after that, Jim always sticks his fork into his food a few times before eating it to make sure nothing is hidden in it.

On p. 309, we read, “Jim he couldn’t see no sense in the most of it, but he allowed we was white folks and knowed better than him; so he was satisfied, and said he would do it all just as Tom said.” (Of course, Mark Twain’s satiric point is that white folks do NOT know better than black folks.)

Of course, there is no sense in any of this, but whites have power over blacks in this society, and Jim has to do what the white folks say, just like slaves have to do what the white folks say.

It is silly for white boys to have this kind of power over a black man, and it is silly for white slave masters to have this kind of power over black slaves.

**In the last third of this novel, Tom requires Jim to do many silly and/or dangerous things. Huck goes along with Tom. Why do you think Mark Twain has Huck do this?**

The serious message here is that Huck is like the good person who does not speak out against evil.

Good people often do nothing or do wrong.

Some people who were opposed to slavery did little or nothing about it.

Tom is like a person in favor of mistreating a person by making him a slave. Huck is in the position of a good person going along with what a bad person wants him to do.

Each of us has to decide what we will do about the evil that exists in the world. Some people are in favor of evil. Some people actively oppose evil. Some people are philosophically opposed to evil, but don’t do anything about it.

### **An Important Quotation**

“In Germany, they first came for the Communists, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a trade unionist. Then they came for the homosexuals, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a homosexual. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn’t speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, but by that time there was no one left to speak up.”

— Martin Niemoller, Dachau, 1945

We can see why Mark Twain allowed some huge coincidences in his novel. To show the silliness of whites having power over black slaves, he needed Tom Sawyer on the scene. Huck, if he were alone, would never treat Jim this badly. However, Huck has always deferred to Tom’s “leadership.”

## CHAPTER 37: JIM GETS HIS WITCH PIE

### Compare and contrast Tom and Huck.

Tom and Huck are two very different boys. Tom is Romantic and impractical, while Huck is Realistic and practical. In many ways, Huck is more cautious than Tom and more mature.

### What is the purpose of the witch pie?

The main purpose is to smuggle in a rope ladder to Jim, who doesn't need it because the shed is at ground level.

The superstitious slave would say that the purpose of the witch pie is to feed the hungry witches so they leave him alone. (The witches bother him most when he is feeding Jim; therefore, they must be hungry, Tom tells the slave.)

**One rule of good writing is to keep related words together. Which words are out of place in the following passage: "... but Uncle Silas he had a noble brass warming pan which he thought considerable of, because it belonged to one of his ancestors with a long wooden handle that come over from England with William the Conqueror in the Mayflower or one of them early ships and was hid away up garret with a lot of other old pots and things that was valuable" (319)?**

The passage makes it sound like the ancestor has a long wooden handle, not the brass warming pan.

### What kinds of creative problem-solving do Tom and Huck engage in, in this chapter?

#### *Counting the Spoons*

Aunt Sally finds a spoon missing, and Tom and Huck have to figure out what to do about it. Uncle Silas fishes the spoon out of his pocket, where the boys have hidden it so that Jim

can pick Uncle Silas' pocket later. However, Tom and Huck want to get Aunt Sally so confused that she will not realize that a spoon is missing if it turns up missing later.

This is what they do. Huck hides a spoon up his sleeve, and Aunt Sally counts out nine spoons. Then he puts the spoon back without her noticing, and Aunt Sally counts 10 spoons, where there were only nine before. She keeps counting the spoons over and over, getting different results each time, and she resolves never to count the spoons again.

On p. 318, we read:

“Well, I’ll count ’m *again*.”

So I smouched one, and they come out nine, same as the other time. Well, she *was* in a tearing way — just a-trembling all over, she was so mad. But she counted and counted, till she got that addled she’d start to count-in the *basket* for a spoon sometimes: and so, three times they come out right, and three times they come out wrong. Then she grabbed up the basket and slammed it across the house and knocked the cat galley-west; and she said “cle’r out and let her have some peace, and if we come bothering around her again betwixt that and dinner she’d skin us.” So we had the odd spoon; and dropped it in her apron pocket whilst she was a-giving us our sailing orders, and Jim got it, all right, along with her shingle-nail, before noon. We was very well satisfied with this business, and Tom allowed it was worth twice the trouble it took, because he said *now* she couldn’t ever count them spoons twice alike again to save her life; and wouldn’t believe she’d counted them right if she *did*; and said that after she’d about counted her head off, for the next three days he judged she’d give it up and offer to kill anybody that wanted her to ever count them any more.

*Baking the Pie*

Tom and Huck have to figure out how to bake a pie that they can hide a rope-ladder in. They try baking the crust alone, but of course it always caves in. Eventually, they hit on the right method of baking the pie — they put the rope-ladder in the pie, then they bake the pie.

**Are the Phelpses rich?**

No, they own a small plantation and some slaves, but they are not rich.

They have 10 spoons.

Uncle Silas has had three new shirts in two years. We also learn that he does have flannel shirts.

We read in Ch. 37:

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

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

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

“Because you hain’t got but one *on*. Just *listen* at the man! I know you took it off, and know it by a better way than your wool-gathering memory, too, because it was on the clo’es line yesterday — I see it there myself. But it’s gone — that’s the long and the short of it, and you’ll just have to change to a red flann’l one till I can get time to make a new one. And it’ll be the third I’ve made in two years; it just keeps a body on the jump to keep you in shirts; and whatever you do manage to *do* with ’m all is more’n *I* can make out. A body ’d think you *would* learn to take some sort of care of ’em at your time of life.” (313-314)

**Uncle Silas says that he has been studying Acts 17. If you have a Bible, read Acts 17 and try to figure out why Twain chose that particular chapter.**

On p. 448, we read:

Silas’s biblical namesake preaches with Paul in Acts 17. Mark Twain may have intended an ironic reference to either verse 26 (“And [He] hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face on the earth”) or verse 29 (“Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device”). Either statement can be understood as a condemnation of slavery, a practice which denies the brotherhood of mankind for the sake of economic gain [...].

In addition, there is a Silas in Acts 17, so Uncle Silas is reading about a man named Silas. Silas is a companion of St. Paul.



## CHAPTER 38: HERE A CAPTIVE HEART BUSTED

**Describe the coat of arms that Tom creates for Jim. Do some research and answer these questions: What is a coat of arms, and what is a bar sinister?**

On p. 321, we see an illustration of the coat of arms that Tom creates for Jim.

On p. 322, Tom describes the design he has made for Jim's coat of arms:

“On the scutcheon we'll have a bend *or* in the dexter base, a saltire *murrey* in the fess, with a dog, couchant, for common charge, and under his foot a chain embattled, for slavery, with a chevron *vert* in a chief engrailed, and three inverted lines on a field *azure*, with the nombril points rampant on a dancette indented; crest, a runaway nigger, *sable*, with his bundle over his shoulder on a bar sinister; and a couple of gules for supporters, which is you and me; motto, *Maggiore fretta, minore otto*. Got it out of a book — means, the more haste the less speed.”

Of course, Tom wants Jim to have a coat of arms because the heroes of many of the adventure books Tom reads have coats of arms.

As you would expect, Tom does not understand all the big words he uses:

“Geewhillikins,” I says, “but what does the rest of it mean?”

“We ain't got no time to bother over that,” he says; “we got to dig in like all git-out.”

“Well, anyway,” I says, “what's *some* of it? What's a fess?”

“A fess — a fess is — *you* don’t need to know what a fess is. I’ll show him how to make it when he gets to it.”

“Shucks, Tom,” I says, “I think you might tell a person. What’s a bar sinister?”

“Oh, *I* don’t know. But he’s got to have it. All the nobility does.”

That was just his way. If it didn’t suit him to explain a thing to you, he wouldn’t do it. You might pump at him a week, it wouldn’t make no difference. (322)

Of course, Jim is a runaway slave, not a member of nobility, but Tom doesn’t care. In the adventure books he reads, prisoners are nobles and have coats of arms. Jim is a prisoner, so of course he has to act as if he is noble and has a coat of arms.

Just so you know, the essential part of a coat of arms is the shield, aka escutcheon. This can bear such devices as these:

- a cross, which is a Christian symbol
- a chief, which is a band in the top third of the shield
- a fess, which is a band across the middle of the shield
- a bend, which is a diagonal band
- heraldic animals, such as a lion
- heraldic flowers, such as the fleur-de-lis

The colors used on the coat of arms often have fancy names:

- black (sable)
- blue (azure)

- gold (or)
- green (vert)
- red (gules)
- purple
- white or silver (argent)

The purpose of the coat of arms is to identify a family or an individual.

The bar sinister appears often in Romantic literature. Here is some information about it:

#### **bar sinister, bend sinister**

Since the invention (apparently by Sir Walter Scott) of the heraldic term bar sinister as a symbol of bastardy, there has been a good deal of objection to it by people full of heraldic lore. In the arcane world of heraldry there is no bar sinister; it is illegitimate and unrecognized there. (Heraldry does have a bend sinister, but that carries no information about bastardy at all.) Nevertheless, for the world today the term bar sinister is a Standard figurative term symbolic of illegitimate birth, and that's that.

Source: Kenneth G. Wilson (1923–). *The Columbia Guide to Standard American English*. 1993.

#### **Which additional tortures do Tom and Huck inflict on Jim in this chapter?**

1) Tom has Jim scratch a lot of silly slogans in a whetstone, even though Jim can't read and write. The slogans appear on p. 322:

1. *Here a captive heart busted.*
2. *Here a poor prisoner, forsook by the world and friends, fretted out his sorrowful life.*
3. *Here a lonely heart broke, and a worn spirit went to its rest, after thirty seven years of solitary captivity.*
4. *Here, homeless and friendless, after thirty-seven years of bitter captivity, perished a noble stranger, natural son of Louis XIV.*

2) Tom and Huck plan on bringing in a lot of animals to spend time with Jim: snakes, spiders, and rats. According to Tom, Jim will easily be able to tame these animals — even the rattlesnake.

3) Tom wants to bring in a flower for Jim to raise. Jim can water the flower with his tears.

Obviously, Tom has lots of useless things for Jim to do, including watering the flower with his tears although Jim seldom cries. On p. 328, we read:

So Tom was stumped. But he studied it over, and then said Jim would have to worry along the best he could with an onion. He promised he would go to the nigger cabins and drop one, private, in Jim's coffee pot, in the morning. Jim said he would "jis' 's soon have tobacker in his coffee;" and found so much fault with it, and with the work and bother of raising the mullen, and jewsharpening the rats, and petting and flattering up the snakes and spiders and things, on top of all the other work he had to do on pens, and inscriptions, and journals, and things, which made it more trouble and worry and responsibility to be a prisoner than anything he ever undertook, that Tom most lost all patience with him; and said he was just

loaded down with more gaudier chances than a prisoner ever had in the world to make a name for himself, and yet he didn't know enough to appreciate them, and they was just about wasted on him. So Jim he was sorry, and said he wouldn't behave so no more, and then me and Tom shoved for bed.

Of course, in this section, Mark Twain continues to expose the lie that white people ought to have power over black people. All of us can agree that Tom and Huck do some very stupid things to Jim. Similarly, white slave owners did some very stupid things to black slaves, such as breaking up their families.

**Tom does not criticize what he reads in Romantic adventure books. (Over and over again, Tom says that Jim must do some crazy thing because that's the way it's done in the books.) What are some of the mistaken ideas that Tom gets about rattlesnakes from his Romantic adventure books? What does Huck and Jim's experience teach them about rattlesnakes?**

Tom is certainly mistaken about animals. A rattlesnake cannot be tamed, no matter what Tom's adventure books say.

Huck and Jim's experience teach them to stay away from rattlesnakes. Tom talks about Jim taming a rattlesnake so that it will put its head in Jim's mouth. Of course, having been bitten by a rattlesnake earlier in the novel, Jim doesn't want anything to do with rattlesnakes.

**In this chapter (and the other chapters in which Jim is a prisoner, and in earlier chapters), Twain is showing how dehumanizing slavery can be, both for the black and the white members of a slave-holding society. How does Twain show that white people have been dehumanized by slavery? (Note that Twain is exposing the lie that**

**owning slaves is not dehumanizing to the white slave-owning society.)**

Obviously, slavery can be dehumanizing. It is bad for the slaves, but it is also bad for the slave owners.

If you want to keep someone in the muck, the only way to keep them there is to get in the muck yourself and stand on them.

We have seen the dehumanizing effects of slavery on those who live in a slave state.

1) Mrs. Judith Loftus is in many ways a kind woman, but her only thought about the runaway slave Jim is how much money her husband would get if he were to capture the runaway slave.

2) Aunt Sally and Uncle Silas are good Christian people in many ways — Uncle Silas preaches, and he talks about to Jim about Christianity. In Ch. 36, on p. 309, we read:

[...] Jim told him uncle Silas come in every day or two to pray with him, and aunt Sally come in to see if he was comfortable and had plenty to eat, and both of them was kind as they could be [...]

However, we need to remember Aunt Sally's conversation with Huck in which she learns that a slave was killed on board a steamboat; this conversation occurs on p. 279 in Ch. 32:

“It warn't the grounding — that didn't keep us back but a little. We blowed out a cylinder-head.”

“Good gracious! anybody hurt?”

“No'm. Killed a nigger.”

“Well, it's lucky; because sometimes people do get hurt. [...]”

3) Huck is dehumanized as well. Jim is his friend, yet Huck is deferring to Tom Sawyer's wishes, and they are badly mistreating Jim. Huck, of course, is having a difficult time coming to terms with the fact that blacks are people, too. He has come a long way in understanding this in his relationship with Jim, but it is not clear that Huck totally understands it. Even at this point of the novel, Huck is a racist.

4) Tom is dehumanized. He regards Jim as a plaything to help him act out his adventure-book fantasies.

## CHAPTER 39: TOM WRITES ANONYMOUS LETTERS

**In Ch. 39, we read that one of the Phelps' sons is named Thomas Franklin Benjamin Jefferson Alexander. In Ch. 37, we read that one of the Phelps' daughters is named Matilda Angelina Araminta. What does this tell you about the then-current style of naming children?**

On pp. 447-448, we read about Matilda Angelina Araminta:

In a footnote to chapter 11 of *The Gilded Age*, Mark Twain explained: "In those old days the average man called his children after his most revered literary and historical idols; consequently there was hardly a family, at least in the West, but had a Washington in it — and also a Lafayette, a Franklin, and six or eight sounding names from Byron, Scott, and the Bible, if the offspring held out." Matilda is the heroine of Scott's poem *Rokeby* (1813); Angelina is the heroine of Goldsmith's "The Hermit," included in *The Vicar of Wakefield*; and Araminta, the female lead in William Congreve's *The Old Bachelor* (1693), as well as Moneytrap's wife in Sir John Vanbrugh's *The Confederacy* (1705).

On pp. 448-449, we read about Thomas Franklin Benjamin Jefferson Alexander:

Another Phelps offspring named after the "most revered literary and historical idols" of the time [...]. Samuel Clemens himself was delivered by a doctor named Thomas Jefferson Chowning; he had a father named after Chief Justice John Marshall, a brother named Benjamin, another named Orion, and even an uncle named Hannibal.

**In this chapter (and the other chapters in which Jim is a prisoner), Twain is showing what can happen when**



**someone does not criticize the moral beliefs he or she was brought up with. In part, he does that by showing what happens when Tom does not criticize what he reads in Romantic adventure books. (Over and over again, Tom says that Jim must do some crazy thing because that's the way it's done in the books.) The crazy thing that exists in the ante-bellum South because people have been raised to believe in it is slavery. Which moral beliefs should slave masters criticize?**

Tom reads a lot of Romantic adventure books and accepts that they are describing reality. Because of that, he has Jim do many crazy things. These things are not practical at all. If Tom were practical like Huck, he would base his opinion of what is real on his experience, not on what he reads in books. Tom does not do that, and therefore his opinion of reality is faulty.

The crazy thing that exists in the ante-bellum South because that's the way people have been raised to believe is slavery. If people were to trust their own experience and not rely on what they have been taught, they should be able to see that slavery is wrong.

1) For example, Huck has been raised to believe that black parents do not care about their children as much as white parents. However, his experience shows that that is wrong:

First, Jim's mourning over hitting his deaf Lizabeth shows that he cares for her.

Second, when the king sold the slave mother down south and her two sons up north, the slaves grieved because they knew that they were unlikely ever to see each other again.

Even though Huck has experience with Jim, he still relies to a certain extent on what he has been taught regarding slavery. Even though Huck relies on his

experience — usually — to tell him what to do, he still allows Tom, who is educated better than he is, to torture Jim.

2) Slave masters should criticize the belief that people can be property.

All people ought to be free, with the exception of criminals who deserve to be imprisoned.

3) Slave masters should criticize the belief that white people ought to have power over black people.

Tom and Huck have power over Jim, but it would be better if Jim — who is an adult — had power over Tom and Huck — who are children.

4) Slave masters should criticize the belief that white people are better than black people.

Certainly, Jim makes a better parent for Huck than Pap does. In addition, the black professor is a much better person than Pap, who is white.

**In your opinion, what crazy ideas that we now believe in do you think will be criticized 150 years from now?**

Maybe that gay people should not be allowed to marry.

Maybe that people eat meat and are not vegetarians.

**Why does Huck do what Tom says, and why does Jim do what Tom and Huck says?**

Basically, people lower in class do what people higher in class tell them to do.

Tom is the highest in class.

Next comes Huck.

Lowest in class is Jim.

Jim, of course, is a slave deep in slave country. He is at the mercy of these two white boys who could alert all the white adults to his real identity rather than helping him escape.

### **How do Tom and Huck keep dull times away from Aunt Sally?**

They do a number of things to make life interesting for Aunt Sally:

#### *Thefts*

We have already seen how Tom and Huck make life interesting for Aunt Sally by stealing things from her. We saw how upset she became when a spoon was missing, and we saw how upset she became when Tom and Huck fooled her by stealing a spoon and then returning it so that she kept coming up with a different number each time she counted her spoons. She is also upset because of her husband's missing shirt and because of the missing sheet and because of the missing candlestick.

#### *Rats*

To get rats to put in Jim's hut, Tom and Huck unstop a rathole and capture 15 of the biggest and healthiest rats that Huck has ever seen. They put the cage under Aunt Sally's bed, and one of her sons opens the rat cage and the rats come out. Aunt Sally ends up on the bed screaming.

#### *Snakes*

Tom and Huck capture a number of garter snakes and bring them into the house. Unfortunately, they don't tie the bag very well and the snakes get loose. For a long time after that, the snakes keep popping up at inopportune times and do such inopportune acts as sliding down someone's back. Huck says that the garter snakes are harmless, but Aunt Sally doesn't like snakes, and therefore, she becomes very jumpy.

### *Anonymous Letters*

The anonymous letters that Tom writes also make life interesting for Aunt Sally.

#### **Why does Tom insist on writing anonymous letters?**

This is more silliness of Tom Sawyer's. He has read in adventure books that anonymous letters often tip off the guards about an escape attempt, so of course he has to have anonymous letters, too. The only thing the anonymous letters do is to make the escape dangerous.

There is also a lot of foolishness with Huck dressing up in a gown to impersonate a servant girl delivering the anonymous letters — although no one can see him deliver the letters.

**One rule of good writing is to keep related words together. Which words are out of place in the following passage? “I am one of the gang, but have got religgion and wish to quit it and lead an honest life again, and will betray the helish design” (334).**

The passage makes it sound as if the writer of the letter wishes to quit having religion so he can be honest again.

#### **How much clothing do the slaves have?**

Not much.

The yaller (light-skinned) slave girl from whom Tom and Huck borrow a dress probably has but the one dress.

When Tom tells Huck to steal her frock (for a brief time), Huck replies, “Why, Tom, that’ll make trouble, next morning, because of course she prob’bly hain’t got any but that one” (332).

## CHAPTER 40: A MIXED UP AND SPLENDID RESCUE

### What happens during the rescue of Jim?

Because of Tom's anonymous letters, lots of farmers are at the Phelps' house the night of the escape. This excites Tom, and he wishes that he could postpone the escape so that he could get even more armed farmers there for the next escape attempt.

The farmers decide not to wait in the farmhouse, but to station men in the shed. Tom, Huck, and Jim escape through the hole they have dug and run away. Tom makes a noise during the escape because his pants get caught on a splinter while crossing a fence and he has to pull loose from the splinter.

The armed farmers hear the noise and one of them says, "Who's that? Answer, or I'll shoot" (339). No one answers, so the farmers shoot. They also let the dogs loose.

The dogs know the boys and Jim, so they greet them, then run past them. Tom, Huck, and Jim make their way to freedom.

Tom is especially happy because he has been shot in the calf of his leg.

### What heroism does Jim show in this chapter?

After Tom has been shot — through his own foolishness — in the escape, Jim insists that they get a doctor for him, even though he knows that he is risking his own freedom. On pp. 340-341, we read:

But me and Jim was consulting — and thinking. And after we'd thought a minute, I says:

"Say it, Jim."

So he says:

“Well, den, dis is de way it look to me, Huck. Ef it wuz *him* dat ’uz bein’ sot free, en one er de boys wuz to git shot, would he say, ‘Go on en save me, nemmine ’bout a doctor f’r to save dis one?’ Is dat like Mars Tom Sawyer? Would he say dat? You *bet* he wouldn’t! *Well* den, is *Jim* gywne to say it? No, sah — I doan’ budge a step out’n dis place ’dout a *doctor*, not if it’s forty year!”

I knowed he was white inside, and I reckoned he’d say what he did say — so it was all right, now, and I told Tom I was agoing for a doctor. He raised considerable row about it, but me and Jim stuck to it and wouldn’t budge; so he was for crawling out and setting the raft loose himself; but we wouldn’t let him. Then he give us a piece of his mind — but it didn’t do no good.

In fact, getting the doctor does lead to Jim’s capture. The doctor knows that Jim is a runaway, and he hails men to capture Jim.

Earlier in the novel, Huck didn’t think that black people cared for their children as much as white people did. Then Huck learned that Jim did indeed care for his children as much as white people cared for their children. Now Huck learns that Jim cares for Tom — a white boy who has treated him horribly — so much that he is willing to risk his freedom.

## CHAPTER 41: MUST A BEEN SPIRITS

### How convincing are the lies Huck tells in this chapter?

Huck lies to the doctor:

The doctor was an old man; a very nice, kind looking old man, when I got him up. I told him me and my brother was over on Spanish island hunting, yesterday after noon, and camped on a piece of a raft we found, and about midnight he must a kicked his gun in his dreams, for it went off and shot him in the leg; and we wanted him to go over there and fix it and not say nothing about it, nor let anybody know, because we wanted to come home this evening and surprise the folks.

“Who is your folks?” he says.

“The Phelpses, down yonder.”

“Oh,” he says. And after a minute, he says: “How’d you say he got shot?”

“He had a dream,” I says, “and it shot him.”

“Singular dream,” he says.

So he lit up his lantern, and got his saddlebags, and we started. But when he sees the canoe, he didn’t like the look of her — said she was big enough for one, but didn’t look pretty safe for two. I says:

“O, you needn’t be afeard, sir, she carried the three of us easy enough.”

“What three?”

“Why, me and Sid, and — and — and *the guns*; that’s what I mean.”

“Oh,” he says. (343)

The doctor seems suspicious, so Huck’s lie doesn’t work this time.

In general, Huck lies well, but he lies especially well when he has an especially good reason to lie. Of course, the doctor is a very intelligent man who probably usually knows when he is being lied to.

Huck lies to Uncle Silas:

So then I crept into a lumber pile to get some sleep; and next time I waked up the sun was away up over my head! I shot out, and went for the doctor’s house, but they told me he’d gone away in the night, some time or other, and warn’t back yet. Well, thinks I, that looks powerful bad for Tom, and I’ll dig out for the island, right off. So away I shoved, and turned the corner, and nearly rammed my head into uncle Silas’s stomach! He says:

“Why, *Tom!* Where you been, all this time, you rascal?”

“*I hain’t been nowheres,*” I says, “only just hunting for the runaway nigger — me and Sid.”

“Why, where ever did you go?” he says. “Your aunt’s been mighty uneasy.”

“She needn’t,” I says, “because we was all right. We followed the men and the dogs, but they outrun us, and we lost them; but we thought we heard them on the water, so we got a canoe and took out after them and crossed over, but couldn’t find nothing of them; so we cruised along up shore till we got kind of tired and beat out; and tied up the canoe and went to sleep, and never waked up till about an hour ago, then we



paddled over here to hear the news, and Sid's at the postoffice to see what he can hear, and I'm a-branching out to get something to eat for us, and then we're going home."

So then we went to the postoffice to get 'Sid'; but, just as I suspicioned, he warn't there; so the old man he got a letter out of the office, and we waited awhile longer, but Sid didn't come; so the old man said come along, let Sid foot it home, or canoe-it, when he got done fooling around — but we would ride. I couldn't get him to let me stay and wait for Sid; and he said there warn't no use in it, and I must come along, and let aunt Sally see we was all right. (344-345)

This lie is better, and it is believed, but Uncle Silas is a lot easier to fool than the doctor.

**Write a character and language analysis of Old Mrs. Hotchkiss, who discusses Jim's escape.**

On pp. 345-346, we read:

And the place was plum full of farmers and farmers' wives, to dinner; and such another clack a body never heard. Old Mrs. Hotchkiss was the worst; her tongue was a-going all the time. She says:

[Old Mrs. Hotchkiss speaks.]

"Well, sister Phelps, I've ransacked that-air cabin over, an' I b'lieve the nigger was crazy. I says to sister Damrell — didn't I, sister Damrell? — s'I, he's crazy, s'I — them's the very words I said. You all hearn me: he's crazy, s'I; everything shows it, s'I. Look at that-air grindstone, s'I; want to tell *me* 't any cretur 'ts in his right mind 's a goin' to scrabble all them crazy things onto a grindstone, s'I? Here sich

'n' sich a person busted his heart; 'n' here so 'n' so pegged along for thirty-seven year, 'n' all that — natcherl son o' Louis somebody, 'n' sich everlast'n rubbish. He's plumb crazy, s'I; it's what I says in the fust place, it's what I says in the middle, 'n' it's what I says last 'n' all the time — the nigger's crazy — crazy 's Nebokoodneezer, s'I.”

[Old Mrs. Damrell speaks.]

“An' look at that-air ladder made out'n rags, sister Hotchkiss,” says old Mrs. Damrell; “what in the name o' goodness *could* he ever want of — ”

[Old Mrs. Hotchkiss speaks.]

“The very words I was a-sayin' no longer ago th'n this minute to sister Utterback, 'n' she'll tell you so herself. Sh-she, look at that-air rag ladder, sh-she; n' s'I, yes, *look* at it, s'I — what *could* he a-wanted of it, s'I. Sh-she, sister Hotchkiss, sh-she — ”

[Brer Penrod speaks.]

“But how in the nation'd they ever *git* that grindstone *in* there, *anyway*? 'n' who dug that-air *hole*? 'n' who — ”

[Old Mrs. Hotchkiss speaks.]

“My very *words*, Brer Penrod! I was a-sayin' — pass that-air sasser o' m'lasses, won't ye? — I was a-sayin' to sister Dunlap, jist this minute, how did they git that grindstone in there, s'I. Without *help*, mind you — 'thout *help!* *Thar's* wher 'tis. Don't tell *me*, s'I; there *wuz* help, s'I; 'n' ther' wuz a *plenty* help, too, s'I; ther's ben a *dozen* a-helpin' that nigger, 'n' I lay I'd skin every last nigger on this place but *I'd* find out who done it, s'I; 'n' moreover, s'I — ”

The main characteristic of old Mrs. Hotchkiss is that she is talkative and interrupts everybody all the time. In addition, she says “s’I” frequently — it means “says I.” She also stutters.

## CHAPTER 42: WHY THEY DIDN'T HANG JIM

### Write a character analysis of the doctor in Ch. 41 and Ch. 42.

The doctor is “a very nice, kind-looking old man” (343). He is also intelligent enough to be suspicious when he is lied to:

The doctor was an old man; a very nice, kind looking old man, when I got him up. I told him me and my brother was over on Spanish island hunting, yesterday after noon, and camped on a piece of a raft we found, and about midnight he must a kicked his gun in his dreams, for it went off and shot him in the leg; and we wanted him to go over there and fix it and not say nothing about it, nor let anybody know, because we wanted to come home this evening and surprise the folks.

“Who is your folks?” he says.

“The Phelpses, down yonder.”

“Oh,” he says. And after a minute, he says: “How’d you say he got shot?”

“He had a dream,” I says, “and it shot him.”

“Singular dream,” he says. (343)

The doctor seems suspicious, so Huck’s lie doesn’t work this time:

So he lit up his lantern, and got his saddlebags, and we started. But when he sees the canoe, he didn’t like the look of her — said she was big enough for one, but didn’t look pretty safe for two. I says:

“O, you needn’t be afeard, sir, she carried the three of us easy enough.”

“What three?”

“Why, me and Sid, and — and — and *the guns*; that’s what I mean.”

“Oh,” he says. (343)

The doctor is clever in how he arranges for the capture of Jim. (See pp. 352-354.) He waits until Jim is asleep, then when some men come by in a skiff, he motions them over and they capture Jim.

The doctor believes in slavery.

The doctor is kind in what he says about Jim (see below).

**What heroism has Jim shown that we learn about in this chapter? (Note that Twain exposes the lie that black people can’t be heroes.)**

On pp. 352-353, we read what the doctor says about Jim:

“Don’t be no rougher on him than you’re obleeged to, because he ain’t a bad nigger. When I got to where I found the boy, I see I couldn’t cut the bullet out without some help, and he warn’t in no condition for me to leave, to go and get help; and he got a little worse and a little worse, and after a long time he went out of his head, and wouldn’t let me come anigh him any more, and said if I chalked his raft he’d kill me, and no end of wild foolishness like that, and I see I couldn’t do anything at all with him; so I says, I got to have *help*, somehow; and the minute I says it, out crawls this nigger from somewheres and says he’ll help; and he done it, too, and done it very well. Of course I judged he must be a runaway nigger, and there I *was*! and there I had to stick, right straight along, all the rest of the day, and all night.”

Jim risks his freedom to save Tom Sawyer, and of course we know that he is recaptured and loses his freedom.

This action by Jim is really remarkable because Tom badly mistreated Jim when Jim was a prisoner.

At the end of the novel, Jim is a human being again. For much of the last third of the novel, he has been a comic stereotype.

Another lie that Twain exposes in this section of the novel is that a black person cannot be a hero. A hero is someone who risks his life to help another person. Jim certainly risks his freedom. In addition, when he is captured, some white people want to lynch as an example to runaway slaves, so Jim risks his life, also, to help Tom.

### **How so the people who capture Jim treat him?**

On p. 352, we read:

I followed the men to see what they was going to do with Jim; and the old doctor and uncle Silas followed after Tom into the house. The men was very huffy, and some of them wanted to hang Jim, for an example to all the other niggers around there, so they wouldn't be trying to run away, like Jim done, and making such a raft of trouble, and keeping a whole family scared most to death for days and nights. But the others said, don't do it, it wouldn't answer at all; he ain't our nigger, and his owner would turn up and make us pay for him, sure. So that cooled them down a little, because the people that's always the most anxious for to hang a nigger that hain't done just right, is always the very ones that ain't the most anxious to pay for him when they've got their satisfaction out of him.

They cussed Jim considerable, though, and give him a cuff or two side the head, once in a while, but Jim never said nothing, and he never let on to know me, and they took him to the same cabin, and put his own clothes on him, and chained him again, and not to no bed-leg, this time, but to a big staple drove into the bottom log, and chained his hands, too, and both legs, and said he warn't to have nothing but bread and water to eat, after this, till his owner come or he was sold at auction because he didn't come in a certain length of time, and filled up our hole, and said a couple of farmers with guns must stand watch around about the cabin every night, and a bulldog tied to the door in the daytime; and about this time they was through with the job and was tapering off with a kind of generl good-bye cussing [...].

After they find out that Jim helped the doctor save Tom Sawyer's life, they treat Jim a little better.

On p. 354, we read:

Then the others softened up a little, too, and I was mighty thankful to that old doctor for doing Jim that good turn; and I was glad it was according to my judgment of him, too; because I thought he had a good heart in him and was a good man, the first time I see him. Then they all agreed that Jim had acted very well, and was deserving to have some notice took of it, and reward. So every one of them promised, right out and hearty, that they wouldn't cuss him no more.

Then they come out and locked him up. I hoped they was going to say he could have one or two of the chains took off, because they was rotten heavy, or could have meat and greens with his bread and water, but they didn't think of it, and I reckoned it warn't

best for me to mix in, but I judged I'd get the doctor's yarn to aunt Sally somehow or other, as soon as I'd got through the breakers that was laying just ahead of me. Explanations, I mean, of how I forgot to mention about 'Sid' being shot, when I was telling how him and me put in that dratted night paddling around hunting the runaway nigger.

### **Why is Jim free?**

Tom Sawyer tells the story of how Jim came to be free on p. 357:

“I mean every word I *say*, aunt Sally, and if somebody don't go, I'll go. I've knowed him all his life, and so has Tom, there. Old Miss Watson died two months ago, and she was ashamed she ever was going to sell him down the river, and *said* so; and she set him free in her will.”

Note that Miss Watson did not free Jim until after she died.

**Do some research and briefly explain these terms: Reconstruction, Black Codes, Jim Crow, Ku Klux Klan, *Plessy versus Ferguson*, *Brown versus Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, and Civil Rights Movement.**

After the Civil War, black people were legally free, but for a long time white people did not treat them as equals. We can see that by historical events following the Civil War. In writing this section, I am indebted to *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Sixth Edition, 2001.

*Reconstruction: 1865-1877*

Following the Civil War, the South was devastated. Reconstruction was a way to bring the Southern states back into the Union and to find what role the freed slaves would play in the Union. President Abraham Lincoln proposed amnesty



for many Southerners, but many people wished the Southerners to be severely punished. One important issue was whether the newly freed slaves would have civil rights. Reconstruction ended when federal troops were removed from the South. The end of Reconstruction saw rule by whites, and it saw racial bitterness.

### *Black Codes*

The black codes were laws passed in 1865-1866; they affected black people in the ex-Confederate states. These black codes varied from state to state. The black codes did grant blacks the right to marry, the right to own personal property, and the right to sue in a court of law. However, they legalized segregation in public facilities and restricted the ex-slaves' freedom in other ways, such as restricting the right to own real estate.

### *Jim Crow*

The Jim Crow laws legalized segregation in the South. The facilities for whites and the facilities for blacks were supposed to be separate but equal, but the facilities for blacks were usually much inferior to those for whites.

### *Ku Klux Klan*

During Reconstruction, the Ku Klux Klan flourished. Ex-Confederates organized the Ku Klux Klan to support white supremacy. These were vigilante groups and armed patrols that feared black outrages and black insurrections. In May 1866, the Ku Klux Klan was organized. Klansmen wore white sheets, and their horses wore white robes. They engaged in lynchings and whippings and other forms of terror. They posed as the spirits of Confederate dead soldiers. One of the main purposes of the Ku Klux Klan was to keep black men from voting. This allowed ex-Confederates to gain political offices.

### *Plessy versus Ferguson*

In 1896, the Supreme Court decided a case that allowed segregation to be legal. A Louisiana statute that had passed in 1890 mandated separate carriages for blacks and for whites; the carriages were racially segregated but were supposed to be equal as well as separate. This law was challenged on the basis of the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause. However, the Supreme Court ruled that the equal protection clause did not apply to social equality; instead, the Supreme Court ruled that the equal protection clause applied only to political equality.

### *Brown versus Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*

The Supreme Court decided this case in 1954. Brown is Linda Brown, who wanted to attend a particular elementary school in Topeka, Kansas, but was not allowed to because she was black. Earlier, the case *Plessy v. Ferguson* had made the doctrine of "separate but equal" legal, but this case overturned that case and made segregation in schools illegal. In 1955, after further hearings, the Supreme Court ordered that schools be integrated "with all deliberate speed."

### *Civil Rights Movement*

The Civil Rights Movement was an important grassroots movement of the late 1950s and the 1960s. An important leader of the movement was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., although many other people, black and white, participated. He led a boycott of segregated Montgomery, Alabama, buses. Eventually, the bus system was forced to integrate. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination in restaurants, theaters, hotels, and motels. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 ensured that blacks could vote; it placed federal observers at polling places to make sure that blacks were not prevented from voting. The Civil Rights Act of 1968 made discrimination in housing and real estate illegal.

**After the Civil War, blacks were legally free, but for a long time whites did not treat blacks as equals. How is that similar to Jim's situation in the chapters in which he is a prisoner?**

As a Realist writer, Mark Twain exposes lies.

In the first part of the novel, Twain exposes the lies of Romantic literature (e.g., robbers are heroes).

In the second part of the novel, he exposes the lies of slavery (e.g., black people don't care about their children as much as white people).

In the third part of the novel, he does what he did in the first and second parts, but he also exposes the lies that followed the freeing of the slaves (e.g., now that the slaves are legally free, they are free in fact).

Jim is legally free in these last chapters featuring Jim as a prisoner, but of course he is not really free. Similarly, the slaves were legally free following the Civil War, but soon Jim Crow laws developed, and they were no longer free in fact.

That Tom and Huck both victimize Jim seems odd at first. Tom is an active victimizer, while Huck is a passive victimizer who follows Tom's lead. Huck represents the good people who do nothing to stop evil. Tom in these chapters is evil. Tom is also a child who doesn't understand that the Romantic literature he reads contains lies. Similarly, the Southerners did not realize that many of the lies they believed about black people were in fact lies.

Huck is like an abolitionist who does nothing after the slaves have been freed. But that is a time when the newly freed slaves needed help to get their rights.

Tom is like an ex-slave master who wants to keep the newly freed slaves under his control.

Ironically, for most of the novel Jim is a free man trying to find freedom.

After the Civil War, members of the KKK and others tried to keep ex-slaves from enjoying the right to vote and tried to deny ex-slaves other civil rights. Tom is analogous to the members of the KKK. Huck is analogous to those who did little to resist the KKK.

**Keeping people in slavery is bad both for the slaves and the slave owners. Tom and Huck have been keeping Jim a prisoner although Tom knows that Jim is legally free and although Huck knows how to easily effect Jim's escape. How is keeping Jim a prisoner bad for Tom and Huck?**

- Tom gets shot during the escape attempt.
- Tom is a prisoner to mistaken beliefs.
- Huck treats a friend badly.
- Huck and Tom waste a lot of effort trying to free Jim according to the rules of Tom's adventure books.
- Huck and Tom get stomachaches from eating sawdust, and at one point their hands look like they have been chewed by dogs.

**Why does Aunt Polly show up?**

Aunt Polly is wondering what is going on. She has received letters saying that Tom AND SID have arrived safely and are doing well, but of course Sid is home with her. Aunt Polly has sent letters to her sister asking what is going on, but of course first Tom and now Huck have taken the letters so that Aunt Sally can't read them. Aunt Polly figures that Tom is

up to some devilment or other and visits her sister to find out what is happening.

## CHAPTER THE LAST: NOTHING MORE TO WRITE

### **What was Tom's plan if the escape had worked?**

On p. 360, we read:

The first time I caught Tom, private, I asked him what was his idea, time of the evasion? — what it was he'd planned to do if the evasion worked all right and he managed to set a nigger free that was already free before? And he said, what he had planned in his head, from the start, if we got Jim out, all safe, was for us to run him down the river, on the raft, and have adventures plumb to the mouth of the river, and then tell him about his being free, and take him back up home on a steamboat, in style, and pay him for his lost time, and write word ahead, and get out all the niggers around, and have them waltz him into town with a torchlight procession, and a brass band, and then he would be a hero, and so would we. But I reckoned it was about as well the way it was.

### **Huck thinks that Pap must have gotten all his money by now. Why didn't that happen?**

On pp. 361-362, we read:

And then Tom he talked along, and talked along, and says, le's all three slide out of here, one of these nights, and get an outfit, and go for howling adventures amongst the Injuns, over in the Territory, for a couple of weeks or two; and I says, all right, that suits me, but I ain't got no money for to buy the outfit, and I reckon I couldn't get none from home, because it's likely pap's been back before now, and got it all away from Judge Thatcher and drunk it up.

“No he hain’t,” Tom says; “it’s all there, yet — six thousand dollars and more; and your pap hain’t ever been back since. Hadn’t when I come away, anyhow.”

Jim says, kind of solemn:

“He ain’t a comin’ back no mo’, Huck.”

I says:

“Why, Jim?”

“Nemmine why, Huck — but he ain’t comin’ back no mo.”

But I kept at him; so at last he says:

“Doan’ you ’member de house dat was float’n down de river, en dey wuz a man in dah, kivered up, en I went in en unkivered him and didn’ let you come in? Well, den, you k’n git yo’ money when you wants it; kase dat wuz him.”

Once again, we see that Jim is a human being at the end of the novel. He is a father figure to Huck. He looks out for Huck.

Jim only reluctantly lets Huck know that Pap is dead so that Huck knows that he can get his money without any problems and that he doesn’t have to worry about Pap returning to beat him again.

### **Why didn’t Jim tell Huck about Pap?**

Here are two interpretations:

- 1) Jim performed a kindness in trying to keep the news from Huck.

2) Jim performed a selfish act. He knew that Huck was running away from Pap (and we know he was also running away from civilization). Jim needed Huck's help. Perhaps Jim felt that if Huck knew Pap was dead, he would return to St. Petersburg.

This second interpretation may be wrong. Huck was running away from civilization in the form of the Widow Douglas, and he would not have returned to St. Petersburg even if he knew that Pap were dead. (Huck doesn't care about money, so he doesn't mind leaving the money behind.)

Another reason why the second interpretation may be wrong is that Jim certainly shows that he is kind by the way that he treats Tom and Huck.

### **Who is a better parent for Huck to have: Pap or Jim?**

Obviously, Jim is a much better parent than Pap for Huck to have.

### **What will happen to Jim after the novel ends?**

Tom has given Jim \$40, so Jim can take a steamboat up north to the free states. In addition, Jim is legally free, so he can get documentation that shows he is free.

However, Jim is black in a racist society, so he may have a hard time of it. He is uneducated, so he will have to work at manual labor. He will try to save enough money so that his wife and children can join him.

### **Huck thinks about running away to the Indian Territory. What would he find there if he went there?**

Here are two interpretations:

1) Huck would find freedom in the Wild West. Civilization has not yet reached it.



2) Huck would find exactly the same kind of prejudice and ignorance that he has found along the shores of the Mississippi River.

### **Why does Huck hate civilization?**

This should be obvious. Look at what we have seen of civilization as it appears along the river banks:

- The Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons.
- The king and the duke.
- Colonel Sherburn.
- The lazy young men.
- The Phelps, who are racist, although they are good in other ways.

### **At the end of the novel, is Huck still prejudiced?**

It is at least true that Huck has made major strides toward overcoming prejudice, at least toward one particular black man. Huck has learned much about Jim.

For example, after Tom and Huck help free Jim, Huck says to him, “*Now*, old Jim, you’re a free man *again*, and I bet you won’t ever be a slave no more” (340). Note that Huck uses the word “man” here.

In my opinion, Huck is still a racist. What he feels about Jim does NOT apply to all other black people.

## **Appendix A: Mark Twain's Exposure of the Lies that Bind**

### **Summary**

As a Realist writer, Mark Twain exposes lies. Explain how Twain exposes the lies of Romantic literature (e.g., robbers are heroes; prisoners take years to escape), how he exposes the lies of slavery (e.g., black people don't have deep feelings, black people don't care about their children as much as white people, black people ought to obey white people, black people can be property; black people can't be heroes), and how in the final third of the novel he exposes the lies that followed the freeing of the slaves (e.g., now that the slaves are free by law, they are free in fact).

### **What kinds of lies from Romantic literature does Mark Twain as a Realist writer criticize in this novel?**

*First Third of the Novel: Twain Exposes the Lies of Romantic Literature*

Example: Robbers are heroes.

Twain knows that robbers are not good people, as shown by the robbers that appear in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

*Final Third of the Novel: Twain Exposes the Lies of Romantic Literature*

Example: Adventure Novels and Great Escapes.

Twain shows us how ridiculous are Tom's ideas about escapes.

**What kinds of lies about black people does Mark Twain as a Realist writer criticize in this novel?**

*Middle Third of the Novel: Twain Exposes the Lies of Slavery*

Example: Black people don't care about their families as much as white people.

Twain knows that blacks do care about their families. We see that in the scene in which Jim mourns because he hit his daughter Elizabeth when he did not realize that she was deaf after being ill with scarlet fever.

Another lie: Whites are better than black people.

We greatly prefer Jim to the king and the duke — and to Pap. Also, we greatly prefer the black professor to Pap.

Another lie: Blacks don't have self-respect.

Jim stands up for himself after Huck plays a dirty trick on him after they are separated in the fog.

*Final Third of the Novel: Twain Exposes the Lies of Slavery*

Example: White people should control black people.

Twain shows us what happens when Tom controls Jim when Jim is a prisoner.

Another lie: Owning slaves is not dehumanizing to the white slave-owning society.

In Ch. 32, Mrs. Phelps and Huck think that no one is hurt when a slave is killed.

Another lie: Blacks can't be heroes.

Jim is a hero when he insists that Huck find a doctor for Tom. He is also a hero when he comes out of hiding to assist the doctor in helping Tom.

**What kinds of lies about the freedom of black people does Mark Twain as a Realist writer criticize in this novel?**

*Final Third of the Novel: Twain Exposes the Lies of Black “Freedom”*

Example: Now that the slaves are legally free, they are free in fact.

Twain knows that more than legal “freedom” is needed. To be really free, blacks need an education, and they need to be able to make a living. Twain shows these things by having Jim be a prisoner even though he is legally free.

In addition, Twain shows that white people still order blacks around. This is shown by the silly things that Tom makes Jim do.

In addition, Twain realizes how foolish it is to keep blacks prisoners. That is why Tom is so foolish in making Jim conform to the Romantic notions of his adventure books. Just because slaves are legally free does not mean that they are really free. Tom keeps Jim a prisoner although he has no right to keep Jim a prisoner.

In addition, Twain is aware that good people often stand by and do little to help people in need. Twain shows this especially in the final third of the novel: Huck lets Tom torture Jim.

In the final third of the novel, Twain also exposes the lie that black people can’t be heroes.

## Appendix B: Bibliography

*The American College Heritage Dictionary*. 4th edition. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002.

Capp, Al. *My Well-Balanced Life on a Wooden Leg*. Santa Barbara, CA: John Daniel and Company, Publishers, 1991.

*The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Sixth Edition, 2001.

Holman, C. Hugh, and William Harmon. *A Handbook to Literature*. 6th edition. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992.

Railton, Stephen. *Mark Twain: A Short Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004. Highly recommended.

Strunk, Jr., William, and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th edition. New York: Longman, 2000.

Twain, Mark. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001. Edited by Walter Blair and Victor Fischer.

---. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Berkeley: University of California Press, [1982] c1980. Foreword and notes by John C. Gerber; text established by Paul Baender.

---. *The Annotated Huckleberry Finn*. Ed/ Michael Patrick Hearn. New York: Norton, 2001.

### WWW Sources on Twain:

<http://etext.virginia.edu/railton/>

Go to this WWW site and if necessary click on the photograph of Mark Twain.

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/railton/index2.html>

Lots of info on Twain at this site.

*<http://etext.virginia.edu/railton/tomsawye/tomhomp.html>*

About *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

*<http://www.kids.state.ct.us/kidsmemory/twain.htm>*

A Tom Sawyer Memory Game (Concentration).

*<http://etext.virginia.edu/railton/huckfinn/huchomp.html>*

About *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

*<http://etext.virginia.edu/railton/yankee/cyhomp.html>*

About *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.

*<http://www.boondocksnet.com/twainwww/>*

Much information about Mark Twain.

### Appendix C: Topics for Papers

- To what extent does Huck become free of racism and prejudice?
- Compare and contrast how Jim is depicted in the beginning section of the novel, in the middle section of the novel, and in the concluding section of the novel.
- Describe Huck's education about black people in the middle section of the novel.
- Is *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* a racist novel?
- Trace the process by which Huckleberry Finn goes from treating Jim as a slave to treating Jim as a person.
- Write a character analysis of Jim. To what extent is he a living character? To what extent is he a stereotype?
- Huck's society tells him that slavery is morally right and that he — Huck — is low down and ornery. Does Huck ever escape from these beliefs?
- Huck and Jim are likable, positive characters, but what about the characters on the riverbanks? Describe the novel's treatment of the upper class (Colonel Sherburn, the Grangerfords and Shepherdsons, the widow Douglas), the lower class (Pap, the lazy young men in Ch. 21, the King and the Duke), and the people in the middle (the villagers who crowd around to see Boggs' body, the villagers who want to see the scene of Huck's "murder"; Aunt Polly, Aunt Sally, and the Phelpses). Add other examples if you wish.
- As a Realist writer, Mark Twain exposes lies. Explain how Twain exposes the lies of Romantic literature (e.g., robbers are heroes; prisoners take years to escape), how he exposes the lies of slavery (e.g., black people don't have deep feelings, black people don't care about their children as much as white people, black people ought to obey white people, black

people can be property, black people can't be heroes; owning slaves is not dehumanizing to the slave-owner), and how in the final third of the novel he exposes the lies that followed the freeing of the slaves (e.g., now that the slaves are free by law, they are free in fact).

- The final third of the novel is problematic for many critics because in it Huck treats Jim badly. Discuss Twain's serious purposes in writing the final third of the novel.



## Appendix D: Paper Hints

If you are a student reading the novel for the first time, or for the first time in a while, you may find it difficult to remember in which chapters important events occur. Following are a few notes on the paper topics, including a few important points and important events that you may wish to mention in your paper.

If you are a teacher, you may want to bring up some of these points in class, or perhaps give your students a handout of some of this information.

### • **How does Mark Twain criticize society in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*?**

Ch 17-18: Feuds: The Shepherdsons and the Grangerfords

Ch. 21-22: Murder: Colonel Sherburn

Slavery: Everybody believes in it, except the slaves

Uncle Silas and Aunt Sally: Christians, but they believe in slavery

Ch. 37: Reading of Acts 17 (Uncle Silas)

Ch. 21: The Lazy Young Men

Ch. 8: People of St. Petersburg Don't Help Huck Enough; They Want to See The Place Where He Was Murdered

### • **To what extent does Huck become free of racism and prejudice?**

Chances are, not much.

Apparently, Huck comes to regard Jim as a friend, but Huck never stops believing that slavery is morally right.

Evidence: "All right, then, I'll go to Hell." (Ch. 31)

Evidence: “No’m. Killed a nigger.” (Ch. 32)

**• Contrast and contrast Huck’s two father figures: Pap and Jim.**

Ch. 3: Huck is glad that Pap is dead (but then he thinks that the dead body is really that of a woman)

Ch. 5: Pap can’t reform

Ch. 5: Pap doesn’t want Huck to go to school or to church

Ch. 6: Pap’s drunken speech

Ch. 9: Floating House of Death — Jim protects Huck by not letting him know that Pap is dead

Ch. 15: Jim worried about Huck when they were separated in the fog

Ch. 23: Jim mourns for his children

Ch. 31: Jim often takes Huck’s watch as well as his own, so Huck can sleep

Ch. 42: Jim is also a father-figure to Tom. He gives up his freedom to help Tom after Tom is wounded.

**• Compare and contrast how Jim is depicted in the beginning section of the novel, in the middle section of the novel, and in the concluding section of the novel.**

*the beginning section of the novel*

Jim is mainly a stereotype. Tom tricks him. Jim is superstitious (witches and hairball).

*the middle section of the novel*

Jim is a human being.

Ch. 15: Jim worried about Huck when they were separated in the fog

Ch. 23: Jim mourns for his children

Ch. 31: Jim often takes Huck's watch as well as his own, so Huck can sleep

*the concluding section of the novel*

Mainly, Jim is a stereotype until right at the end, when he becomes a human being and a hero again

At the end of the novel, Jim sacrifices — or thinks he is sacrificing his freedom in order to help Tom and save his life. Jim is a hero when he does this.

*Other Notes*

- Jim wants to work within the system. He wants to go to work to buy his wife and children. If that doesn't work, he will pay an abolitionist to steal them.
- Jim never steals the raft from Huck (and the Duke and King) when he is pretending to be a sick Arab. He could have easily done that.
- **Describe Huck's education about black people in the novel.**

Ch. 15: Jim worried about Huck when they were separated in the fog

Huck apologizes to Jim; he learns that Jim is a human being (Compare with Ch. 10, where Huck doesn't apologize to Jim after he thinks that he has caused Jim to get bit by a rattlesnake.)

Ch. 23: Jim mourns for his children

Huck learns that Jim, although he is black, loves his children as much as white parents love their children

Ch. 31: Jim often takes Huck's watch as well as his own, so Huck can sleep

Huck learns that he is willing to go to Hell to help Jim escape from slavery

• **Trace the process by which Huckleberry Finn goes from treating Jim as a slave to treating Jim as a person.**

Ch. 15: Jim worried about Huck when they were separated in the fog

Huck apologizes to Jim; he learns that Jim is a human being (Compare with Ch. 10, where Huck doesn't apologize to Jim after he thinks that he has caused Jim to get bit by a rattlesnake.)

Ch. 23: Jim mourns for his children

Huck learns that Jim, although he is black, loves his children as much as white parents love their children

Ch. 31: Jim often takes Huck's watch as well as his own, so Huck can sleep

Huck learns that he is willing to go to Hell to help Jim escape from slavery

• **Write a character analysis of Jim. To what extent is he a living character? To what extent is he a stereotype?**

In the great middle section of the novel, Jim is a living character. In the beginning and especially at the end of the novel, he is a stereotype.

*the beginning section of the novel*

Jim is mainly a stereotype. Tom tricks him. Jim is superstitious (witches and hairball).

*in the middle section of the novel*

Jim is a human being.

Ch. 15: Jim worried about Huck when they were separated in the fog

Ch. 23: Jim mourns for his children

Ch. 31: Jim often takes Huck's watch as well as his own, so Huck can sleep

*the concluding section of the novel*

Mainly, Jim is a stereotype until right at the end, when he becomes a human being and a hero again

At the end of the novel, Jim sacrifices — or thinks he is sacrificing his freedom in order to help Tom and save his life.

**• Huck's society tells him that slavery is morally right and that he — Huck — is low down and ornery. Does Huck ever escape from these beliefs?**

No. I don't think so.

Huck thinks that he will go to Hell for helping Jim.

Evidence: "All right, then, I'll go to Hell." (Ch. 31)

Ch. 33: Huck doesn't respect Tom as much as before when he finds out that Tom is willing to help him steal Jim out of slavery.

**• Huck and Jim are likable, positive characters, but what about the characters on the river banks? Describe the novel's treatment of the upper class (Colonel Sherburn, the Grangerfords and Shepherdsons, the Widow Douglas), the lower class (Pap, the lazy young men in Ch. 21, The King and the Duke), and the people in the middle (the villagers who crowd around to see Boggs' body, the**

**villagers who want to see the scene of Huck's "murder"; Aunt Polly, Aunt Sally, and the Phelpses). Add other examples if you wish.**

*Everybody*

Slavery: Everybody believes in slavery, except the slaves

*Upper Class*

Feuds: The Shepherdsons and the Grangerfords

Murder: Colonel Sherburn

*Middle Class*

Uncle Silas and Aunt Sally: Christians, But They Believe in Slavery

People of St. Petersburg Don't Help Huck Enough; They Want to See The Place Where He Was Murdered

Note: "Middle class" is a relative term here. These people are better off than some, worse off than others.

*Lower Class*

The Lazy Young Men (Ch. 21)

The King and the Duke (The middle section of the novel)

Pap (The early part of the novel)

**• As a Realist writer, Mark Twain exposes lies. Explain how Twain exposes the lies of Romantic literature (e.g., robbers are heroes; prisoners take years to escape), how he exposes the lies of slavery (e.g., black people don't have deep feelings, black people don't care about their children as much as white people, black people ought to obey white people, black people can be property), and how in the final third of the novel he exposes the lies that**

**followed the freeing of the slaves (e.g., now that the slaves are free by law, they are free in fact).**

*the lies of Romantic literature*

e.g., robbers are heroes

genies and magicians exist

prisoners take years to escape

*the lies of slavery*

e.g., black people don't have deep feelings or self-respect

black people don't care about their children as much as white people

black people (Jim) ought to obey white people (Tom and Huck)

black people can be property

black people can't be heroes

white people are better than black people (Pap's drunken speech; King and Duke, Pap compared to Jim)

*the lies that followed the freeing of the slaves*

e.g., now that the slaves are free by law, they are free in fact

Important: Good people stand around and do nothing while bad people oppress other people.

*First Third: Lies of Romantic Literature*

Example: Robbers are heroes.

Twain knows that robbers are not good people, as shown by the robbers that appear in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

*Middle Third: Lies of Slavery*

Example: Black people don't care about their families as much as white people.

Huck learns that blacks do care about their families. We see that in the scene in which Jim mourns because he hit his daughter Elizabeth when he did not realize that she was deaf following being ill with scarlet fever.

Another lie: Whites are better than black people. We greatly prefer Jim to the King and the Duke.

Another lie: Blacks don't have self-respect. Jim stands up for himself after Huck plays a dirty trick on him after they are separated in the fog.

*Final Third: Previous Lies*

Example: Adventure Novels and Great Escapes.

Twain shows us how ridiculous are Tom's ideas about escapes.

Example: White people should control black people.

Twain shows us what happens when Tom controls Jim when Jim is a prisoner.

*Final Third: Lies of "Freedom"*

Example: Now that the slaves are legally free, they are free in fact.

Twain knows that more than legal "freedom" is needed. To be really free, blacks need an education, and they need to be able to make a living.

Good people stand around and do nothing while bad people oppress other people.



Ch. 3: Huck is glad that Pap is dead (but then he thinks that the dead body is really that of a woman)

Ch. 5: Pap can't reform

Ch. 5: Pap doesn't want Huck to go to school or to church

Ch. 6: Pap's drunken speech

Ch. 9: Floating House of Death — Jim protects Huck by not letting him know that Pap is dead

Ch. 10: Jim bit by rattlesnake

Ch. 15: Jim worried about Huck when they were separated in the fog

Ch. 16: Slavehunters and smallpox

Ch. 17-18: Shepherdsons and Grangerfords

Ch. 21: The lazy young men

Ch. 21-22: Colonel Sherburn

Ch. 23: Jim mourns for his children

Ch. 31: Jim often takes Huck's watch as well as his own, so Huck can sleep

Ch. 31: "All right, then, I'll go to Hell."

Ch. 32: "No'm. Killed a nigger."

Ch. 33: Huck doesn't respect Tom as much as before when he finds out that Tom is willing to help him steal Jim out of slavery.

## Appendix E: Short Reaction Memos

The questions in this short guide can be used in discussions; however, they can also be used for short reaction memos. For example, I do this at Ohio University. See below for the assignment and sample short reaction memos.

### *How Do I Complete the Reaction Memo Assignments?*

During the quarter, you will have to write a series of short memos in which you write about the readings you have been assigned.

Each memo should be at least 250 words, not counting long quotations from the work of literature. Include a word count for each memo, although that is not normally part of the memo format.

Following the memo heading (To, From, Re, Date, Words), write the question you are answering and the part of the book that the question applies to.

You may answer one question or more than one question. I will supply you with a list of questions that you may answer

Note that a Works Cited list is needed if you use quotations.

For examples from my Great Books courses at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, see the following pages.

**To: David Bruce**

**From: Jane Student**

**Re: *Odyssey*, Book 12 Reaction Memo**

**Date: Put Today's Date Here**

**Words: 323**

***Odyssey*, Book 12: Is Odysseus a bad leader?**

This is an important question in the *Odyssey*. After all, Odysseus leads 12 ships and many men to Troy, but the ships are all destroyed and all of his men die and he returns home to Ithaca alone. Who is responsible for the deaths of Odysseus' men? Is Odysseus responsible for their deaths, or do the men bear some responsibility for their own deaths? Many readers prefer Odysseus, the great individualist, to Aeneas, the man who founds the Roman people, but then they realize that all of Odysseus' men died, while Aeneas succeeded in bringing many Trojans to Italy. When readers think of that, they begin to have a greater respect for Aeneas.

From the beginning of the *Odyssey*, this has been an issue. The bard says that the men perished because of the "recklessness of their own ways" (1.8). However, we notice that Odysseus is asleep at odd times. In Book 10, Aeolus gives Odysseus a bag in which the contrary winds have been tied up. This allows Odysseus to sail to Ithaca safely. However, they reach the island and see smoke rising from the fires, Odysseus goes to sleep and his men open the bag, letting the contrary winds escape, and the ship is blown back to King Aeolus' island. Similarly, in Book 12, on the island of the Sun-god, Odysseus is asleep when his men sacrifice the Sun-god's cattle.

It does seem that Odysseus does not bear the blame for his men's death. In many cases, they do perish through their own

stupidity. In other cases, of course, they die during war or during adventures, but in those times, Odysseus was with them, and he could have died, too.

One other thing to think about is that Odysseus is telling his own story. Could he be lying? After all, some of the adventures he relates are pretty incredible. (Probably not. The gods vouch for some of what he says.)

### **Works Cited**

Homer. *The Odyssey*. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin Books, 1996. Print.

**To: David Bruce**

**From: Jane Student**

**Re: *Inferno*, Canto 1 Reaction Memo**

**Date: Put Today's Date Here**

**Words: 263**

***Inferno*, Canto 1**

**• What do you need to be a member of the Afterlife in Dante's *Inferno*?**

To be a member of the afterlife in Hell, you must meet a number of criteria:

- 1) You must be dead.
- 2) You must be an unrepentant sinner.
- 3) You must be a dead, unrepentant sinner by 1300.

Of course, only dead people — with a few exceptions such as Dante the Pilgrim — can be found in the *Inferno*.

Only unrepentant sinners can be found in the *Inferno*. Everyone has sinned, but sinners who repented their sins are found in Purgatory or Paradise, not in the *Inferno*.

Dante set his *Divine Comedy* in 1300, so the characters who appear in it are dead in 1300.

***Inferno*, Canto 1**

**• What does it mean to repent?**

A sinner who repents regrets having committed the sin. The repentant sinner vows not to commit the sin again, and he or she does his or her best not to commit the sin again.

***Inferno, Canto 1*****• What is the geography of Hell? In *The Divine Comedy*, where is Hell located?**

Hell is located straight down. We will find out later that when Lucifer was thrown out of Paradise, he fell to the Earth, ending up at the center of the Earth. The center of the Earth is the lowest part of Hell. Lucifer created the Mountain of Purgatory when he hit the Earth.

**To: David Bruce**

**From: Jane Student**

**Re: *Candide*, Ch. 26-30**

**Date: Today's Date**

**Words: 368**

**Ch. 30: Write a brief character analysis of the old man and his family.**

When Candide and his friends meet the old man, the old man is “sitting in front of his door beneath an arbor of orange trees, enjoying the fresh air” (119). The old man basically ignores politics that he cannot influence. Some people have recently been killed in Constantinople, and the old man does not even know their names. However, the old man does enjoy some material things, including good food, and he enjoys hospitality.

The old man invites Candide and his friends to enjoy some refreshments inside his house. They are served with “several kinds of fruit-flavored drinks” and “boiled cream with pieces of candied citron in it, oranges, lemons, limes, pineapples, pistachio nuts, and mocha coffee” (119). The old man and his family have an abundance of food, but although Candide wonders if the old man has an enormous farm, the old man tells him, “I have only twenty acres of land, which my children and I cultivate. Our work keeps us free of three great evils: boredom, vice, and poverty” (119).

From this brief encounter, we learn several things:

- The old man and his family are content — even happy.
- The old man and his family ignore the wars and murders and crimes that happen elsewhere.

- The old man and his family have enough. They work hard on their little farm, and they have plenty of food and good things to eat.
- The old man and his family have only 20 acres, but 20 acres are enough.

Candide and his friends decide to emulate the old man and his family. Each of them begins to work hard on their little farm. Cunegonde learns to make pastry, Paquette begins to embroider, and the old woman does the laundry and repairs the linen. Brother Giroflée becomes a carpenter, and Candide and the others grow “abundant crops” (120). At the end of the short novel, the group of friends seem to have come the closest they can to happiness in a world filled with evil, but it does take an effort on their part. As Candide says in the short novel’s last words, “... we must cultivate our garden” (120).

#### Works Cited

Voltaire. *Candide*. Trans. Lowell Bair. New York: Bantam Books, 1981. Print.



**To: David Bruce**

**From: Jane Student**

**Re: *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, Ch. 1-4 Reaction Memo**

**Date: Put Today's Date Here**

**Words: 286**

### **CH. 3: "KNIGHTS OF THE TABLE ROUND"**

**• What hints do we have of the relationship between Queen Guenever and Sir Launcelot?**

Some hanky-panky is going on between Sir Launcelot and King Arthur's wife, Queen Guenever. Some six or eight prisoners address her, and they tell her that they have been captured by Sir Kay the Seneschal. Immediately, surprise and astonishment are felt by everybody present. The queen looks disappointed because she had hoped that the prisoners were captured by Sir Launcelot.

As it turns out, they were. Sir Launcelot first rescued Sir Kay from some attackers, then he took Sir Kay's armor and horse and captured more knights. All of these prisoners were actually captured by Sir Launcelot, not by Sir Kay at all.

Two passages let us know that something is going on between Sir Launcelot and Queen Guenever:

1. The first is subtle; she looks disappointed when Sir Kay says that he captured the knights: "Surprise and astonishment flashed from face to face all over the house; the queen's gratified smile faded out at the name of Sir Kay, and she looked disappointed ..." (503).
2. The other is much more overt and occurs after Guenever learns that the knight who really captured the prisoners was Sir Launcelot: "Well, it was touching to see the queen blush

and smile, and look embarrassed and happy, and fling furtive glances at Sir Launcelot that would have got him shot in Arkansas, to a dead certainty” (503).

#### Works Cited

Twain, Mark. *Four Complete Novels*. New York: Gramercy Books, 1982. Print.

## Appendix F: Mark Twain: His Life

### What was Mark Twain's real name?

Mark Twain's real name was Samuel Langhorne Clemens.

### What is one story of how Mark Twain got his pseudonym?

Of course, a pseudonym is a fictional name. Many writers publish works of literature using a fictional name or pseudonym.

When Sam Clemens was a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River, he liked the words that rivermen called when they measured 12 feet of water. This much water had a depth of two fathoms, so the rivermen called out, "Mark twain." The phrase meant, "Note that (or mark) there are two (or twain) fathoms of water." Since two fathoms of water was deep enough to be safe for the steamboat, the pilot could heave a sigh of relief.

Mr. Twain once took his family for a trip on a steamboat, and he stood on the deck listening to the cries of "Mark twain" coming from the rivermen. His daughter Clara came up to him and said, "I have hunted all over the boat for you. Don't you know they are calling for you?"

Twain scholar Stephen Railton points out that the phrase "Mark twain" can be either good news or bad news. River steamboats needed a certain level of water in order to stay afloat — between 9 ½ and 10 ½ feet. If the water was getting shallower when the person measuring the level of water shouted "Mark twain," that was bad news. If the water was getting deeper when the person measuring the level of water shouted "Mark twain," that was good news.

Similarly, in much of Twain's writing is an ambiguity. His writing can be very funny, but it is also sharply satiric. He

uses satire to criticize the bad parts of being human beings. Satire is humorous criticism. The humor makes you laugh, but the criticism can make you cry.

### **What is the other, less known story of how Mark Twain got his pseudonym?**

When Sam Clemens was a newspaper reporter working in the Nevada Territory, he used a variety of pseudonyms, including Mark Twain.

The second story of how he got his pseudonym was that he drank a lot, and he enjoyed drinking a lot although he didn't have much money. Sam Clemens always ordered two drinks when he walked into the saloon either because he was powerful thirsty, or because he wanted to treat a friend.

Therefore, he opened up a tab in the saloon. When he walked into the saloon, he would call out, "Mark twain." This meant, "Mark (or write down) two more drinks on my tab."

In time, he adopted the pseudonym "Mark Twain."

Mark Twain and Bill Nye journeyed to Nevada, where the frontiersmen tried to drink them under the table. However, after a night of hard drinking, the only people still conscious were Mr. Twain and Mr. Nye. Finally, Mark Twain told his friend, "Well, Bill, what do you say we get out of here and go somewhere for a drink?"

### **What does the phrase "mark twain" mean?**

The phrase means "note the two." Of course, many two's appear in Mark Twain's writings. The major two that appears in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* is Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, and of course another notable two appears in *The Prince and the Pauper*. In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, another notable two, besides Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, is the King and the Duke.

### **Which is the best biography of Mark Twain?**

The best biography of Mark Twain is probably Justin Kaplan's *Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain*, which won the Pulitzer Prize. Mr. Kaplan focuses mainly on Mark Twain and his life in 1865 and after. Of course, 1865 is the year the Civil War (1861-1865) ended.

### **What happened to Sam Clemens from 1835-1955 (His Birth and Youth)?**

On November 30, 1835, Samuel Langhorne Clemens was born in a very small village named Florida in Missouri. He was the sixth child among seven children, but only three of his siblings survived to become adults. In those days, death during childhood was common because antibiotics and other modern medicines had not been discovered. His older siblings were his brother Orion and his sister, Pamela. He also had a younger brother named Henry. Sam was born when Halley's Comet was very visible from the Earth.

When Sam was four years old, his family moved to Hannibal, Missouri. This is the village that Mark Twain writes about as St. Petersburg in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. This is where Sam grew up among other children and had many experiences such as exploring a cave that appear in his novels.

As a young schoolboy, Sam got into trouble with his teacher, and she sent him outside to find a switch that she could use to hit him. Young Sam returned with a wood shaving that would definitely not hurt if it were used as a switch.

When Sam was 11, his father, John Marshall Clemens, died of pneumonia acquired while riding in the rain as he sought to be elected to public office to support his family. John was a big dreamer, but his dreams never came to fruition. His businesses tended to fail, and his family was impoverished.

In his book *Roughing It*, Mark Twain wrote:

He left us a sumptuous legacy of pride in his fine Virginia stock and his national distinction, but I presently found I could not live on that alone without occasional bread to wash it down with.

His family needed money, so Sam went to work as a typesetter in printing offices. This, of course, involved working with words, although other people wrote the words.

One important fact of Sam's early life is that Missouri was a slave state. This meant that slaves surrounded Sam when he was growing up, and it meant that people who supported slavery surrounded him when he was growing up. As a result, he accepted slavery when he was young. He once wrote, "In church we were told, 'God approved it. Slavery was a holy thing.'"

However, Sam did see slaves being mistreated — even killed — when he was growing up. He also saw slaves waiting to be taken down the Mississippi River to be sold to plantation owners.

But at the same time he played with young slave children when he was growing up. In addition, he listened to stories told by elderly slaves. In particular, he listened to stories told by an elderly slave named Dan'l, who told him the story about "The Golden Arm," a story that Mark Twain told often during lectures and a story that actor Hal Holbrook tells in his one-man show *Mark Twain Tonight*.

When Sam was 17 or 18 years old, he ran away from Hannibal, Missouri, and he went to New York to see the World's Fair there. He never lived in Hannibal again.

### **What happened to Sam Clemens from 1855-1865 (Mark Twain is born)?**

Sam did return to the Mississippi River, however, becoming a riverboat pilot after being apprenticed under pilot Horace Bixby. He wrote about his time of his life in his fictionalized autobiography titled *Life on the Mississippi*.

As a cub steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River, Mark Twain was taught a valuable, but embarrassing, lesson by an experienced pilot, Mr. Bixby. Mr. Bixby asked Mark if he knew enough to take the steamboat across the next crossing. Aware that there was plenty of water in the channel and no chance of running aground, Mark replied that of course he could, since “I couldn’t get bottom there with a church steeple.” Mr. Bixby replied, “You think so, do you?” Something in Mr. Bixby’s voice shook Mark’s confidence, which Mr. Bixby’s leaving Mark alone in the pilothouse did nothing to restore. The crossing did not go smoothly. Mark imagined shallow water and reefs everywhere, and eventually had to be rescued by Mr. Bixby, although there was absolutely no danger of grounding the steamboat. After the ordeal, Mr. Bixby told his protégé, “You shouldn’t have allowed me or anybody else to shake your confidence .... Try to remember that. And another thing: when you get into a dangerous place, don’t turn coward. That isn’t going to help matters any.”

Mark Twain told this story in *Life on the Mississippi*: A riverboat pilot named Stephen was out of money and in New Orleans. Aware of Stephen’s plight, a steamboat captain offered him the job of piloting a steamboat up the Mississippi — but at a salary of \$125 instead of Stephen’s usual salary of \$250. Having no choice, Stephen accepted the offer, but he piloted the boat up the middle of the river so that it had to fight the current instead of seeking the stiller water nearer the shore. Much slower boats sped past the steamboat

Stephen was piloting. When the captain remonstrated with Stephen, he replied, "I know as much as any man can afford to know for \$125." On hearing this, the captain raised Stephen's salary to \$250, and Stephen began to make that steamboat fly upstream.

In 1859, Sam received his riverboat license. He served as a riverboat pilot on the Mississippi River until 1861, when the Civil War broke out.

Sam could have served either the North or the South as a riverboat pilot, but he briefly served as a Confederate irregular on horseback before going west. He wrote about this part of his life in "The Private History of a Campaign that Failed." Of course, after the Civil War both the North and the South could have been angry at him. The North could have been angry at him because he fought briefly for the South, and the South could have been angry at him because he served only briefly and went West quickly. However, neither side became angry at him. Humor is an excellent way of deflecting anger, and both the North and the South laughed at his explanation of why he went West: He got tired of constantly retreating.

Sam's older brother, Orion, had been appointed Secretary of the Nevada Territory, and Sam went West with Orion. Many prospectors were searching for and finding silver, which they mined, and Sam was hopeful — or even certain — that he would become rich as a prospector.

Sam never did find silver — or gold — metal. However, he did find lots of humor. The miners amused themselves by telling tall tales, and Sam listened to those stories, and later he retold them in his books. His first important story, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," is one he heard out West. In Sam's hands, these stories became silver and gold of a different sort.



Because Sam had no luck as a prospector, he decided to make a living with words. He had been making money by publishing articles — in the form of letters — in newspapers, and he got a job as a reporter at the *Virginia City Enterprise*.

Because Sam had no money, he walked 120 miles to get to his new job.

In her book *Mark Twain in Nevada*, Effie Mona Mack wrote about the cheapness of life in the frontier. In 1863, a man who was shot and died in Virginia City, Nevada, remained under a billiards table from 4 a.m. until noon while frontiersmen continued to shoot billiards above him. The coroner was too busy to come and take away the corpse.

Still, humor existed out West, and Sam provided some of it. Early in 1863, he started using the pseudonym “Mark Twain,” and this is the pseudonym that stuck. Many of his articles were humorous, and the name “Mark Twain” became associated with humor, especially in 1865, when he published “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County,” the story that made him nationally famous after it was published in the east and in newspapers across the country. The Civil War was over, people were tired of suffering, and they were eager to laugh at Mark Twain’s story.

### **What happened to Mark Twain from 1865 to 1875 (Sam comes east)?**

Mark Twain went East, and in 1867, he took a trip to Europe and the Holy Land. His expenses were paid by a California newspaper for which he worked.

Mark had earlier published a book titled *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County and Other Stories*, but the book was badly proofread and did not sell many copies, so he regarded his first real book as *Innocents Abroad*, which was written about his trip to Europe and the Holy Land. This book was his best-selling book during his life — his best-

selling novel during his life was *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. *Innocents Abroad* is well worth reading today; in it, Mark Twain criticizes both Europe and the Holy Land. The United States comes off well by comparison.

One other important thing happened to Mark Twain during his trip abroad. He saw an ivory miniature portrait of Olivia Langdon, the sister of fellow traveler Charles Langdon, and he fell in love. Eventually, he married her, but it took some persuasion.

Olivia's family was wealthy, in contrast to Mark Twain's family. She was 10 years younger than he was, and Mark Twain's manners were much rougher than those of Olivia and her family. One of the things that Mark Twain did was to ask her to help him reform. He called her "Livvy."

When Mark Twain wanted to marry Olivia Langdon, the daughter of a wealthy family in Connecticut, her father asked him to provide character references. Mr. Twain gave him the names of some prominent men, including ministers, whom he had known in the West. Unfortunately, the men reported that Mr. Twain was "born to be hung" and would end up in a "drunkard's grave." Nevertheless, Mr. Langdon allowed Mr. Twain to marry his daughter, saying, "Take the girl. I know you better than they do."

As you may expect, Mark Twain was a hard man to reform, and his reformation was a work in progress:

- Mark Twain liked to visit neighbors informally — without wearing a collar or tie. This upset his wife, Livvy, so Mr. Twain wrapped up a package which he sent to his neighbors along with a note that read: "A little while ago, I visited you for about half an hour minus my collar and tie. The missing articles are enclosed. Will you kindly gaze at them for 30 minutes and then return them to me?"

- Mark Twain enjoyed reading and writing in bed. One day, a reporter was coming over to interview him, so his wife, Livy, said, “Don’t you think it would be a bit embarrassing for the reporter — your being in bed?” Mr. Twain replied, “Why, Livy, if you think so, we might have the other bed made up for him.”

- Mark Twain believed that vigorous cussing was one of the greatest joys of life; unfortunately, his wife, Livy, disagreed. One morning, Mr. Twain cut himself while shaving, so he vigorously shouted a long stream of cuss words. Livy, in an attempt to shock him, calmly repeated each word he had said. Mr. Twain smiled at his wife, then said, “You know the words, dear Livy, but you don’t know the tune.”

Mark Twain and Livy got married in 1870, and immediately Mark became a member of the upper class as a result of marrying well. Livy’s father even gave them a house in Buffalo, New York. It was a surprise. Mark Twain was expecting to have to stay in a hotel, but instead his father-in-law presented him and Livy with a house. Mark Twain joked that his father-in-law could stay there anytime he wanted to — and he wouldn’t have to pay anything, either.

Eventually, Mark Twain and Livy moved to Hartford, Connecticut, where he had built a house. The house was lavish, and it required seven servants to run. Mark Twain had to work very hard to pay the bills. In fact, sometimes he and his family lived in Europe to cut down on living expenses.

Mark Twain was a true original. He lived for years in Hartford, Connecticut, whose most learned citizen was J. Hammond Trumbull. Mr. Twain was very impressed by him — because he knew how to use profanity in 27 languages. While Mr. Twain was living in Hartford, he attended a baseball game at which a boy stole his umbrella. Mr. Twain

offered two rewards: \$5 for the umbrella, and \$200 for the boy's corpse.

### **What happened to Mark Twain from 1875 to 1885 (productivity and happiness)?**

From 1875 to 1885, Mark Twain was at his happiest and his most productive. This is when he published the novels he is most remembered for.

Twain published *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* in 1876.

He published *The Prince and the Pauper* in 1881.

He published *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in 1885.

During this time, a son named Langdon was born, but the child died when he was two years old. Mark Twain felt guilty because he had taken his son out for a ride in a carriage and had not noticed that the furs keeping his son warm had fallen from around his legs. The son died of diphtheria in 1872.

Mark Twain also had three daughters, all of whom he loved deeply. In 1872, Susy was born. As a young girl, she wrote a book, the first sentence of which stated, "We are a very happy family." Daughter Clara was born in 1874, and daughter Jean was born in 1880.

However, Mark Twain needed money. His elaborate house required \$100,000 annually to maintain, and he once wrote in a letter to one of his friends, "My household expenses are something ghastly."

In part because of this, Mark Twain was always in search of ways to make money — lots of money. He invested in many inventions that he hoped would make his fortune, but unfortunately these inventions seldom worked out and ended up costing him money instead of making him money.

### **What happened to Mark Twain from 1885 to 1895 (bankruptcy)?**

Mark Twain wrote two important novels during this time: He published *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* in 1889, and he published *Pudd'nhead Wilson* in 1894.

Unfortunately, much of the money he made was going into keeping his speculative ventures afloat. He invested a fortune into perfecting the Paige typesetting machine, but the machine was never perfected. This machine was supposed to do mechanically what Sam had done as a teenager: set type so it could be printed. (The Duke sets type in one of his scams in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.) Unfortunately, this machine and its failure bankrupted Mark Twain.

In 1894, he found that he was bankrupt, and that he owed \$100,000 — a lot of money now, and a great fortune at the time.

### **What happened to Mark Twain from 1895 to 1910 (the last 15 years of his life)?**

Mark Twain did not stiff his creditors. He got financial advice from Henry Rogers, a Standard Oil executive, and he set out on an around-the-world lecture tour to earn money to pay off all his debts. He did pay off his debts, and in his old age he actually had lots of money.

Mark Twain was a lecturer for a long time. He did not always enjoy it, but the audience did. He was able to draw humor from his life of lecturing:

- Mark Twain understood small print and advertising. One of his advertisements for a lecture tour consisted of the huge words “MAGNIFICENT FIREWORKS” followed by the small print “were in contemplation for this occasion, but the idea has been

abandoned.” Another of his advertisements read, “The doors open at 7; the trouble begins at 8.”

- While on a lecture tour, Mark Twain got a shave in a local barber shop. The barber knew that he was shaving a stranger, but he didn’t recognize Mr. Twain, so he said, “You’ve come into town at the right time. Mark Twain is lecturing tonight.” When Mr. Twain said that he was planning to attend the lecture, the barber asked if he had bought his ticket yet. Hearing that he had not, the barber said that he would have to stand, as most of the tickets were already sold. Mr. Twain sighed, then said, “That’s my luck. Whenever that fellow gives a lecture, I always have to stand.”

- When Mark Twain was scheduled to speak at a small town, he would often enter a store and ask if people knew about his lecture being scheduled that night. Once he entered a grocery store and asked if there were anything special going on that evening. The grocer replied, “I think there’s a lecture tonight — I’ve been selling eggs all day.”

Of course, Mark Twain was widely loved, and his books were widely loved. He also earned a large amount of respect because he had paid all his debts.

However, Mark Twain suffered in his old age because of deaths in the family.

First Susy died in 1896 of spinal meningitis, an infection. This hit Mark Twain hard. He loved his daughter, and he did not get to see her before she died. The last time he saw her was when he set off on his around-the-world lecture tour. She died at the end of the tour, but before Mark Twain made it home again.

His wife, Livy, died in 1904. For much of the time Mark Twain was not allowed to see her, as the doctors thought that seeing him might excite Livy and that would be bad for her. They often exchanged affectionate notes, however.

His daughter Jean died on December 24, 1909. She had an epileptic seizure when taking a bath and drowned to death.

Mark Twain was often depressed and unhappy at the end of his life. He wrote dark stories such as *The Mysterious Stranger*. Much of his writing remained unfinished and unpublished.

He also worked on his *Autobiography*, which remained unfinished at the time of his death.

Still, Mark Twain retained his humor:

- When Mark Twain was very old, he sometimes would reach for a doorknob but miss it. He then would turn to his secretary and say, “Just practicing.”
- When his wife, Livy, worried that his spending lots of time in bed reading and writing might sap his strength, she had their daughter Clara read him a biographical passage about the poet William Cullen Bryant, who at age 80 was still taking vigorous and invigorating early-morning walks. Mr. Twain said, “Mr. Bryant was wonderful to do those early risings, and all that at eighty. If ever I get to be eighty, I mean to do them, too.”
- When he was even older, and a widower, he built and lived in a house he called Stormfield. Quickly, burglars stole the silverware from the house. Also quickly, Mr. Twain posted this note on the front door of the house: “To the next burglar. There is nothing but plated ware in this house, now and henceforth. You will find it in that brass thing in the dining-room

over in the corner by the basket of kittens. If you want the basket, put the kittens in the brass thing.”

- Before he died, he felt ill. Of course, he was widely loved by the reading public, and many fans sent him home remedies in hopes that they would make him feel better. He replied using this letter: “Dear Sir (or Madam). I try every remedy sent to me. I am now on no. 67. Yours is 2,653. I am looking forward to its beneficial results.” In his old age, Mr. Twain was also still capable of savage satire: He advocated the passing of a law that would forbid white people from lynching black people on Christmas.

Mark Twain died on April 21, 1910, of a heart attack. A nation mourned him. Halley’s Comet was visible from the earth that year.



## Appendix G: Some Mark Twain Anecdotes

### Spelling

When Samuel Langhorne Clemens was a schoolboy, he was very good at spelling and usually won the Friday afternoon spelling bee in his class. However, one Friday he deliberately misspelled a word so a young girl he liked would win. As an adult writer, Mr. Clemens used the pseudonym “Mark Twain.”

### Name

Mark Twain’s real name was Samuel Langhorne Clemens. When he was a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River, he liked the words that rivermen called when they measured 12 feet of water. This much water had a depth of two fathoms, so the rivermen called out, “Mark twain.” The phrase meant, “Note that (or mark) there are two (or twain) fathoms of water.” Since two fathoms of water was deep enough to be safe for the steamboat, the pilot could heave a sigh of relief. Mr. Twain once took his family for a trip on a steamboat, and he stood on the deck listening to the cries of “Mark twain” coming from the rivermen. His daughter Clara came up to him and said, “I have hunted all over the boat for you. Don’t you know they are calling for you?”

### Steamboat Pilot

As a cub steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River, Mark Twain was taught a valuable, but embarrassing, lesson by an experienced pilot, Mr. Bixby. Mr. Bixby asked Mark if he knew enough to take the steamboat across the next crossing. Aware that there was plenty of water in the channel and no chance of running aground, Mark replied that of course he could, since “I couldn’t get bottom there with a church steeple.” Mr. Bixby replied, “You think so, do you?” Something in Mr. Bixby’s voice shook Mark’s confidence, which Mr. Bixby’s leaving Mark alone in the pilothouse did nothing to

restore. The crossing did not go smoothly. Mark imagined shallow water and reefs everywhere, and eventually had to be rescued by Mr. Bixby, although there was absolutely no danger of grounding the steamboat. After the ordeal, Mr. Bixby told his protégé, “You shouldn’t have allowed me or anybody else to shake your confidence . . . . Try to remember that. And another thing: when you get into a dangerous place, don’t turn coward. That isn’t going to help matters any.”

### **Shoddy Contractors**

While anchored before Constantinople (an adventure he described in *Innocents Abroad*), Mark Twain read up on the history of the Hellespont, a narrow channel of water over which the Persian king Xerxes ordered a bridge of ships to be built that his armies could cross on their way to attack Greece. The first bridge was destroyed, Mr. Twain writes, so Xerxes ordered the contractors to be rebuked — in other words, he had them beheaded. The second bridge was much more sturdy. According to Mr. Twain, “If our Government would rebuke some of our shoddy contractors occasionally, it might work much good.”

### ***Innocents Abroad***

While Mark Twain was traveling in Europe (an adventure he wrote about in *Innocents Abroad*), a number of tour guides made his life miserable, so with the help of a few friends, he decided to make the tour guides’ lives miserable. For the duration of the trip, Mark Twain and his friends refused to be impressed by anything a tour guide showed them. Once, a tour guide showed them a letter handwritten by Christopher Columbus. One of Mark Twain’s friends looked at the letter and complained about the sloppy penmanship, “Why, I have seen boys in America only fourteen years old that could write better than that.”

## **Irritating Tour Guides**

While traveling, Mark Twain and his friends tortured irritating tour guides by constantly asking if someone was dead. Thus, when a tour guide showed them a bust of Christopher Columbus, they would ask, “Is he dead?” Once, Mr. Twain and friends visited the Capuchin Cemetery, where the bones of dead monks were used to make arches and other ornaments. One of the exhibitions of the cemetery was the corpse of a monk who had been dead for 150 years. Mr. Twain decided to cut the tour short because he could tell that his friends were tempted to ask, “Is he dead?”

## **Climbing Stairs**

While visiting the cathedral at Milan, Italy, Mark Twain and a friend wished to go aloft. A sacristan told the party “to go up one hundred and eighty-two steps and stop till he came.” According to Mr. Twain, “It was not necessary to say stop — we should have done that anyhow. We were tired by the time we got there.”

## **David and Goliath**

In *The Innocents Abroad*, Mark Twain wrote about visiting the Mosque of Omar and other interesting sites in the Holy Land. He writes, “Just outside the mosque is a miniature temple, which marks the spot where David and Goliath used to sit and judge the people.” In a footnote, Mr. Twain explains, “A pilgrim informs me that it was not David and Goliath, but David and Saul. I stick to my own statement — the guide told me, and he ought to know.”

## **Adam’s Grave**

While on a trip to the Holy Land, Mark Twain visited the reputed grave of Adam. In *Innocents Abroad*, Mr. Twain writes, “There is no question that he is actually buried in the grave which is pointed out as his — there can be none —

because it has never yet been proven that that grave is not the grave in which he is buried.”

### **Hotels**

Mark Twain once stayed in a hotel where the person before him had signed the register, “Countess X — and suite.” Mr. Twain therefore signed the register, “Mark Twain — and valise.”

### ***Zwei Glas***

While traveling abroad, Mark Twain heard of an American student who had struggled to learn German for three whole months, but who had learned to say only “*zwei glas*,” which means “two glasses” (of beer). Still, the student reflected, he had learned those words very thoroughly.

### **Class Attendance**

In his book *A Tramp Abroad*, Mark Twain wrote about the lecture system at Heidelberg, where attendance was not mandatory. Often, only a few students showed up for especially arcane lectures. Mr. Twain told of a lecturer who spoke day after day to an audience consisting of three students. One day, two of the students were away, and only one student showed up for the lecture. The lecturer began his remarks as usual by saying, “Gentlemen,” corrected himself and said, “Sir,” then went on with his lecture.

### **Learning French**

While in San Francisco, Mark Twain undertook to learn French. One day, a Frenchman who knew no English started asking questions of a group Mr. Twain was in. Because Mr. Twain was the only person in the group who had studied French, he listened to the Frenchman. However, before Mr. Twain had said a half-dozen words of French in reply, the Frenchman fainted, possibly from hunger. Mr. Twain said

later, “I’ll learn French if it kills every Frenchman in the country.”

### **Learning German**

When Mark Twain decided to take his family to Germany, his family started to study German. He even instructed Rosa, his German maid, to speak only German to his children. His daughter Susy tried to learn the language, but she said to her mother, “I wish Rosa was made in English.”

### **Language**

Mark Twain wrote in *Innocents Abroad* that when he was in Paris, he fell into the trap of thinking that no one around him could speak English. He told a friend, “Dan, just look at this girl — how beautiful she is!” The “girl” turned to him and said, “I thank you more for the evident sincerity of the compliment, sir, than for the extraordinary publicity you have given to it!”

### **Travel**

“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things can not be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one’s lifetime.” — Mark Twain.

### **Profanity**

Mark Twain believed that vigorous cussing was one of the greatest joys of life; unfortunately, his wife, Livy, disagreed. One morning, Mr. Twain cut himself while shaving, so he vigorously shouted a long stream of cuss words. Livy, in an attempt to shock him, calmly repeated each word he had said. Mr. Twain smiled at his wife, then said, “You know the words, dear Livy, but you don’t know the tune.”

## More Profanity

“When angry, count to four; when very angry, swear.” — Mark Twain.

## Yet More Profanity

The Reverend Joseph Twichell taught Mark Twain how to ride a bicycle. When they were taking a bicycle ride one day — Mr. Twain somewhat unsteadily — they came to a large stone in the middle of the road. Mr. Twain headed right toward the rock and didn’t know what to do to avoid hitting it and crashing. Reverend Twichell offered advice, but Mr. Twain replied, “Shut up, Joe. You ride ahead. I’m going to swear like hell in a minute.”

## Work

In *Roughing It*, Mark Twain wrote about working as a common laborer in a quartz mill, where he refined silver ore into silver bricks. After a week of backbreaking labor, he went to his employer and said that although he had come to love the work, he felt that he could not continue working without a raise. The employer countered by saying that he was paying Mr. Twain \$10 a week, which he felt was a fair sum, and just how much of a raise did Mr. Twain want? Mark Twain replied that \$400,000 a month, and board, was all he could reasonably ask, considering the hard times. Of course, Mr. Twain was then ordered off the premises of the quartz mill.

## Advertising

As the editor of a Western newspaper, Mark Twain once received a letter from one of its readers: “Dear Sir: When I opened my newspaper this morning, there was a spider inside; does this mean good luck or bad for me?” Mr. Twain replied, “Finding a spider in your paper did not mean either good luck or bad luck for you. He was merely looking to see which merchants advertised, so that he could go to the store

of one who did not do so, build his web over the door, and remain peaceful and undisturbed for the rest of his days.”

### ***Mark Twain in Nevada***

In her book *Mark Twain in Nevada*, Effie Mona Mack wrote about the cheapness of life in the frontier. In 1863, a man who was shot and died in Virginia City, Nevada, remained under a billiards table from 4 a.m. until noon while frontiersmen continued to shoot billiards above him. The coroner was too busy to come and take away the corpse.

### **Alcohol**

Mark Twain and Bill Nye journeyed to Nevada, where the frontiersmen tried to drink them under the table. However, after a night of hard drinking, the only people still conscious were Mr. Twain and Mr. Nye. Finally, Mark Twain told his friend, “Well, Bill, what do you say we get out of here and go somewhere for a drink?”

### **Rare Women**

Women were a rare sight in the western frontier. Mark Twain relates in *Roughing It* that “once in Star City, in the Humboldt Mountains, I took my place in a sort of long, post-office single file of miners, to patiently await my chance to peep through a crack in the cabin and a sight of the splendid new sensation — a genuine, live Woman! And at the end of half of an hour my turn came, and I put my eye to the crack, and there she was, with one arm akimbo, and tossing flap-jacks in a frying pan with the other. And she was one hundred and sixty-five years old, and hadn’t a tooth in her head.” (In a footnote, Mr. Twain says that since he is now in a calmer mood, he would knock 100 years off her age.)

### **No Place for a Presbyterian**

Mark Twain, during his travels as a young man, went to Virginia City, Nevada, where a mining boom had brought in saloons, gambling places, and brightly painted women. Mr. Twain said, "It was no place for a Presbyterian, and I did not long remain one."

### **Begging**

Mark Twain was once down on his luck in San Francisco and almost resorted to begging. Here's how he tells it: "I remember a certain day in San Francisco, when, if I hadn't picked up a dime that I found lying in the street, I should have asked someone for a quarter. Only a matter of a few hours and I'd have been a beggar. That dime saved me, and I have never begged — never."

### **Snoring**

Mark Twain was in a sleeper on a train, snoring loudly, when a porter awoke him to say that his snoring was keeping the other passengers awake. Mr. Twain said that he never snored, but the porter insisted that he had heard him. Mr. Twain replied, "You shouldn't believe all you hear."

### **Traveling by Train**

Mark Twain was riding on a train from Hartford, Connecticut, to New York City when a woman asked him if the train would stop at Grand Central Station. Mr. Twain replied, "I hope it will, madam, for if it does not there will be the devil of a smash."

### **An Eccentric Friend**

Mark Twain was at the races outside London, where he met a friend who had lost all his pocket money gambling and who asked if Mr. Twain would buy him a ticket back to London. "I'm nearly broke myself but I'll tell you what I'll do,"



Mr. Twain replied. “You can ride under my seat and I’ll hide you with my legs.” The friend agreed, but unknown to the friend, Mr. Twain bought two train tickets. When the train inspector came by to collect the tickets, Mr. Twain handed him the two tickets, then said, “My friend is a little eccentric and likes to ride under the seat.”

### **Noisy Clocks**

Humorist Mark Twain, author of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, once stayed at the home of political cartoonist Thomas Nast, who first used the images of an elephant and a donkey to represent the Republican and the Democratic parties. During the night, Mr. Twain was bothered by the sounds of the Nast family’s clocks, so he got up and stopped all of them. The next morning, everyone overslept. Mr. Twain explained what had happened and stated that the clocks had been working too hard, so they should benefit from a good night’s rest.

### **Practical Jokes**

Mark Twain was addicted to practical jokes — especially when they were jokes he played on other people. One day, when he was looking out the window of an editor’s office on the third floor of a building, he noticed a friend of his standing immediately below. Unfortunately for his friend, Mr. Twain had just been made the recipient of the gift of a watermelon by the editor. You can guess what happened to the friend and the watermelon. Still, Mr. Twain reflected, the friend came out ahead because the practical joke spoiled the watermelon, making it unsuitable for eating.

### **Beds**

Mark Twain enjoyed reading and writing in bed. One day, a reporter was coming over to interview him, so his wife, Livy, said, “Don’t you think it would be a bit embarrassing for the reporter — your being in bed?” Mr. Twain replied, “Why,

Livy, if you think so, we might have the other bed made up for him.”

### **An Interview**

Edgar White, a reporter, was once asked to interview Mark Twain on a certain subject. He went to Mr. Twain’s hotel close to midnight, and was shown to Mr. Twain’s room. Mr. Twain was in bed, reading and smoking. Unfortunately, Mr. Twain announced that he couldn’t talk about the reporter’s proposed topic, as a contract he had signed forbade it. Mr. White was understandably disappointed and said in that case he had nothing to write about. “I’ve been in that fix many and many a time,” Mr. Twain said. “Now if I were the reporter and you were the man in bed I’d tell how, over the vigorous remonstrances of the clerk I’d come up here in the dead hour of the night and aroused you from a sound sleep to ....” Mr. White interrupted to point out that that was not the truth — the clerk had politely shown him to the room and Mr. Twain had not been asleep. Mr. Twain sighed, then said, “If you’re going to let a little thing like that stand in the way, I’m afraid I can’t help you. Good night.” Mr. White decided to write an article stating the absolute truth, just as it is related here. The newspaper ran his article under a big headline.

### **Photograph**

A man was repeatedly told that he looked just like Mark Twain, so he finally sent Mr. Twain a photograph and asked if it were a good resemblance. Mr. Twain wrote back, saying that the photograph was such a good resemblance that he was using it instead of a mirror to shave by.

### **Lecture Tour**

While on a lecture tour, Mark Twain got a shave in a local barbershop. The barber knew that he was shaving a stranger, but he didn’t recognize Mr. Twain, so he said, “You’ve come

into town at the right time. Mark Twain is lecturing tonight.” When Mr. Twain said that he was planning to attend the lecture, the barber asked if he had bought his ticket yet. Hearing that he had not, the barber said that he would have to stand, as most of the tickets were already sold. Mr. Twain sighed, then said, “That’s my luck. Whenever that fellow gives a lecture, I always have to stand.”

### **No Visit**

Mark Twain wrote a letter to a friend, asking him to visit. The friend wrote back, “God be with you, for I cannot.” Mark Twain wrote this note at the bottom of his friend’s letter, then sent it back: “He didn’t come. Next time please send someone we can depend upon.”

### **Birthday Letter**

Some friends of Mark Twain wrote him a humorous letter for his birthday, but then discovered that they did not have his address, because he was so often globetrotting. So the friends addressed the letter: “MARK TWAIN. LORD KNOWS WHERE.” A few months later, one of the friends in the group received a note from Mr. Twain: “HE DID.”

### **Letters**

Sometimes Mark Twain was slow in answering letters. Once a friend wanted a quick reply from Mr. Twain, so he enclosed in his letter some paper and a stamp. Very quickly, a postcard arrived from Mr. Twain: “Thanks for the sheet of writing paper and the stamp. Please send an envelope.”

### **A Thank-You Letter**

In December 1908 Mark Twain received a gift of tobacco and whiskey from some family friends. In his thank-you letter, he wrote, “I had just reformed, but it is not too late to rearrange that.”

## Angry Letters

When Mark Twain got angry, he used to write a letter denouncing the person who had made him angry, but he wouldn't mail the letter right away. He waited three days, and if he was still angry at the end of that time, he mailed the letter. But if he had stopped being angry, he would burn the letter.

### An Angry Letter

Mark Twain once wrote this letter to the gas company: "Some day you will move me almost to the verge of irritation by your chuckle-headed Goddamned fashion of shutting your Goddamned gas off without giving any notice to your Goddamned parishioners. Several times you have come within an ace of smothering half of this household in their beds and blowing up the other half by this idiotic, not to say criminal, custom of yours. And it has happened again today. Haven't you a telephone?"

## Jokes

Many people who tell stories have the bad habit of stopping repeatedly to ask the listener if he or she has heard the story before. Henry Irving was one such person. In telling a story to Mark Twain, he stopped three different times to ask if Mr. Twain had heard the story before. Finally, Mr. Twain could stand it no longer and said, "I can lie once, I can lie twice for the sake of politeness, but there I draw the line. I not only heard the story — I invented it."

## Sholom Aleichem

Sholom Aleichem (1859-1916) was a Yiddish humorist. Among the characters he created in his stories were those that became the basis of *Fiddler on the Roof*. In 1906, he came to the United States, where he met Mark Twain, to whom he was introduced as the "Jewish Mark Twain." Mr.

Twain then said that he would like to be introduced in Yiddish to Mr. Aleichem as the “American Sholom Aleichem.”

### **Introductions**

A boy named Pat, comic writer H. Allen Smith’s nephew, had a unique way of introducing his uncle to his friends. One of Mr. Smith’s many books was on the coffee table, and whenever one of Pat’s friends came by, Pat would pick up the book, read one of the blurbs on the cover, then use the blurb as an introduction; for example, “Meet my uncle. He’s a screwball” or “Meet my uncle. He’s another Mark Twain.”

### **Insults**

While in the company of Mark Twain, the French author Paul Bourget insulted all Americans by saying, “When an American has nothing else to do, he can always spend a few years trying to discover who his grandfather was.” Mr. Twain replied, “And when all other interests fail for a Frenchman, he can always try to figure out who his father was.”

### **Tobacco**

Mark Twain constantly smoked cigars. Sometimes, he visited his friend and fellow novelist William Dean Howells, who declared that after Mr. Twain had stayed with him for a few days, he had to air out his entire house because Mr. Twain smoked from the time he got up to the time he went to bed — and sometimes later. Often, Mr. Howells would go to Mr. Twain’s bedroom at night and find him in bed asleep with a lit cigar in his mouth. (According to Mr. Twain, moderate cigar smoking consists of smoking “only one cigar at a time.” He also said that the first cigar he had smoked was probably not a good one — “or the previous smoker would not have thrown it away so soon.”)

### **Smoking Cigars**

“More than one cigar at a time is excessive smoking.” — Mark Twain.

### **Invitations**

Enrico Caruso was multi-talented — in addition to being the best tenor of his time, he was a skilled caricaturist. When Mark Twain invited a number of cartoonists to a dinner, but did not invite him, Mr. Caruso was disappointed and said, “Perhaps he knows me only as a tenor.”

### **Life on the Mississippi**

Mark Twain told this story in *Life on the Mississippi*: A riverboat pilot named Stephen was out of money and in New Orleans. Aware of Stephen’s plight, a steamboat captain offered him the job of piloting a steamboat up the Mississippi — but at a salary of \$125 instead of Stephen’s usual salary of \$250. Having no choice, Stephen accepted the offer, but he piloted the boat up the middle of the river so that it had to fight the current instead of seeking the stiller water nearer the shore. Much slower boats sped past the steamboat Stephen was piloting. When the captain remonstrated with Stephen, he replied, “I know as much as any man can afford to know for \$125.” On hearing this, the captain raised Stephen’s salary to \$250, and Stephen began to make that steamboat fly upstream.

### **Money**

People thought that Mark Twain received a dollar a word for his writing. Someone once sent him a dollar and requested, “Please send me a word.” Mr. Twain wrote back, “Thanks.”

### **“Take the Girl”**

When Mark Twain wanted to marry Olivia Langdon, the daughter of a wealthy family in Connecticut, her father asked him to provide character references. Mr. Twain gave him the

names of some prominent men, including ministers, whom he had known in the West. Unfortunately, the men reported that Mr. Twain was “born to be hung” and would end up in a “drunkard’s grave.” Nevertheless, Mr. Langdon allowed Mr. Twain to marry his daughter, saying, “Take the girl. I know you better than they do.”

### **Gifts**

Mark Twain married a woman from a wealthy family. Arriving in Buffalo, New York, Mr. and Mrs. Twain were driven to a house, where his new wife told Mr. Twain that house mansion was a gift to them from her father. Mr. Twain shook hands with his father-in-law, then said, “If you ever come to Buffalo, bring your grip [suitcase] and stay all night — it won’t cost you a cent.”

### **Clothing**

Mark Twain liked to visit neighbors informally — without wearing a collar or tie. This upset his wife, Livy, so Mr. Twain wrapped up a package which he sent to his neighbors along with a note that read: “A little while ago, I visited you for about half an hour minus my collar and tie. The missing articles are enclosed. Will you kindly gaze at them for 30 minutes and then return them to me?”

### **Help Yourself**

In his book *Roughing It*, Mark Twain tells a story that was old in 1872. A traveler sat down at a table on which was nothing but mackerel and mustard. The traveler asked, “Is that all there is?” The landlord replied, “*All!* Why, thunder and lightning, I should think there was mackerel enough there for six people.” The traveler said, “But I don’t like mackerel.” The landlord paused a moment, then said, “Oh — then help yourself to the mustard.”

## **Golf**

Mark Twain once golfed with a very bad player who constantly missed the golf ball, striking the ground instead and throwing dust into the air where it settled on Mr. Twain's hair and clothes, and in his mouth. When the very bad player asked Mr. Twain for his opinion of the golf course, he replied, "The best I've ever tasted."

## **Hot Soup**

Mark Twain once put a spoonful of very hot soup in his mouth, then turned his head and spit it out. He then remarked to his friends, "Some darn fools would have swallowed that."

## **Fishing**

A man once asked Mark Twain if he had caught any fish lately. Mr. Twain said that he had caught 12 trout the day before. Hearing this, the man said, "Obviously, you don't know who I am. I am a game warden, and the season for catching trout is over." Mr. Twain replied, "Obviously, you don't know who I am. I am the biggest liar in the world."

## **Cloves**

At one time, people chewed cloves to make their breath smell good. Once, a melancholy man who was depressed by statistics regarding death told Mark Twain, "Do you realize that every time I breathe an immortal soul passes into eternity?" Mr. Twain replied, "Have you ever tried cloves?"

## **Friends**

Mark Twain attended a large dinner where the topic of conversation was Heaven and Hell. Mr. Twain remained quiet — something very uncharacteristic of him. When a woman asked him, "Why don't you say something? I would like to



hear your opinion,” he replied, “Madam, you must excuse me. I am silent of necessity — I have friends in both places!”

### **Pun**

Because of his white hair and large moustache, Mark Twain resembled Melville Fuller, the Chief Justice of the United States. While Mr. Twain was visiting Washington, D.C., a little girl saw him, mistook him for Mr. Fuller, and asked, “Mr. Chief Justice Fuller, won’t you write something for me in my autograph book?” Mr. Twain agreed, wrote “It’s glorious to be full but it’s heavenly to be Fuller,” and then signed his own name.

### **Autographs**

A nine-year-old boy knocked on Mark Twain’s hotel door to get an autograph, not knowing that Mr. Twain was very ill. The boy was about to be sent away when Mr. Twain called from his sickbed and asked that the boy be sent in to see him. He then wrote in the boy’s autograph book, “So live, that when you come to die, even the undertaker will be sorry.”

### **Mark Twain and a Preacher**

Humorist Mark Twain once attended a sermon that he listened to very intently. After church was over, he told the preacher, “I have a book at home that has every word of your sermon in it.” The preacher was astonished because he thought that he had written his sermon without plagiarism. The preacher was also worried because he thought that he had perhaps read a sermon at seminary, then unconsciously plagiarized it while writing his sermon. Therefore, the preacher asked Mr. Twain to send him the book to look at. Mr. Twain did send him the book — it was a dictionary.

## Dictionaries

While speaking at a graduation class at a grammar school, Mark Twain awarded one of the students a dictionary. As he gave it to the boy, Mr. Twain said, “This is a very interesting and useful book, my son. I have studied it often but I never could discover the plot.”

## Printers

Mark Twain was once upset with the way that the printers of one of his books had changed his punctuation, so he said, “In the beginning God Almighty made men, and then He made damn fools, and when He got His hand in He must have made printers.”

## Punctuation

Books should be properly edited and punctuated. When sending a book to his publishers, Mark Twain added this note: “Gentlemen: .,?!“ — \*’;,: Please scatter these throughout according to your taste.”

## Book Shelves

Mark Twain once showed a visitor his library. The visitor commented on the large numbers of books piled everywhere — on the floor, in chairs, everywhere handy. Mr. Twain explained, “It’s next to impossible to borrow shelves.”

## Dedication

Mark Twain dedicated his first book — *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, and Other Sketches* — to “John Smith” because he had heard that people always buy a copy of any book that is dedicated to them. Mr. Twain wrote, “It is said that the man to whom a volume is dedicated, always buys a copy. If this prove true in the present instance, a princely affluence is about to burst upon the author.”

## **Publisher**

A man had the opportunity to publish Mark Twain's first book, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, and Other Sketches*, but declined it. Years later, the man chanced to meet Mr. Twain, and told him, "I refused a book of yours and for this I stand without competitor as the prize ass of the nineteenth century."

## **Lawyers**

After Mark Twain had finished a humorous after-dinner speech, a lawyer stood up, put his hands in his pockets, then said, "Doesn't it strike this company as a little unusual that a professional humorist should be so funny?" Mr. Twain replied, "Doesn't it strike this company as a little unusual that a lawyer should have his hands in his own pockets?"

## **Introduction**

Before giving a speech, Mark Twain once introduced himself in this way: "I know of only two important facts about the man I am introducing. First, he has never been in a state prison, and second, I can't imagine why."

## **Punishment**

As a young schoolboy, Samuel Langhorne Clemens got into trouble with his teacher, and she sent him outside to find a switch that she could use to hit him. Young Samuel returned with a wood shaving that would definitely not hurt if it were used as a switch. Later in life, Samuel became better known to the world as the celebrated humorist Mark Twain.

## **High Praise**

The writer J.I.C. Clarke once introduced Mark Twain and very highly praised the stories Mr. Twain had set in Yuba Dam, saying that they were the best things Mr. Twain had ever written. Mr. Twain then stood up and enthusiastically

praised a German girl for 10 minutes — to no point, it seemed. Finally, Mr. Twain said, “Gentlemen, I suppose you are wondering what my story of that German girl has to do with Mr. Clarke’s speech and his reference to Yuba Dam. Well, nothing at all, and that’s just it. I never wrote about Yuba Dam. Mr. Clarke is thinking of Bret Harte.” Everyone, including an embarrassed Mr. Clarke, laughed, then Mr. Twain and Mr. Clarke shook hands.

### **Advertising**

Mark Twain understood small print and advertising. One of his advertisements for a lecture tour consisted of the huge words “MAGNIFICENT FIREWORKS” followed by the small print “were in contemplation for this occasion, but the idea has been abandoned.” Another of his advertisements read, “The doors open at 7; the trouble begins at 8.”

### **Public Speaking**

When Mark Twain was scheduled to speak at a small town, he would often enter a store and ask if people knew about his lecture being scheduled that night. Once he entered a grocery store and asked if there were anything special going on that evening. The grocer replied, “I think there’s a lecture tonight — I’ve been selling eggs all day.”

### **More Public Speaking**

On a voyage, Mark Twain and Chauncey Depew were asked to speak after dinner. Mr. Twain spoke for 20 minutes and was a huge hit with the audience. Mr. Depew then arose and said, “Mr. Toastmaster and Ladies and Gentlemen, before this dinner Mark Twain and I made an agreement to trade speeches. He has just delivered my speech, and I thank you for the pleasant manner in which you received it. I regret to say that I have lost the notes of his speech and cannot remember anything he has to say.” Mr. Depew then sat down to much laughter. The next day a passenger on the ship said

to Mr. Twain, “I consider you were much imposed upon last night. I have always heard that Mr. Depew is a clever man, but really, that speech of his you made last night struck me as being the most infernal rot.”

### **Speech**

Mark Twain once attended a dinner with the understanding that he would not make a speech. Near the end of the dinner, Mr. Twain arose and everyone applauded. Mr. Twain then said, “Waiter, please pass the bread.”

### **Speakers Should Be Brief**

Mark Twain once told a story that illustrated why speakers should be brief: Mr. Twain said he attended a church when a missionary began to speak. At first Mr. Twain was fired up with enthusiasm for the missionary’s work and wanted to donate the \$400 he had and borrow all he could to give to the missionary. However, the missionary kept talking, and the longer the missionary talked, the less enthusiastic Mr. Twain became — when the offering plate was finally passed around, Mr. Twain stole ten cents from it.

### **“To Hell With! To Hell With!”**

In his sketch “‘Party Cries’ in Ireland,” Mark Twain tells of the conflict between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. Commonly, according to Mr. Twain, Irishmen would cry out either “To hell with the Pope” or “To hell with the Protestants,” depending on the religion of the crier. This became so common that a law was passed attempting to stop the custom by imposing a fine and court costs on anyone found guilty of giving a party cry. Once, a drunk was found lying in an alley, shouting, “To hell with! To hell with!” A police officer found the drunk and asked him, “To hell with what?” But the drunk replied, “Ah, bedad ye can finish it yourself — it’s too expinsive for me!”

### **Family Prayers**

Mark Twain once stayed over at the house of a friend. The next morning, he was seen standing at the top of the staircase. His friend said, "What's the matter? Why not come on down?" Mr. Twain asked, "Family prayers over yet?" Hearing that they were over, Mr. Twain said, "All right then, I'll come down."

### **Attending Church**

Mark Twain attended the church of his friend, the Reverend Joseph Twichell, and he became very interested in the sermon. After the church service was over, Mr. Twain told Reverend Twichell, "Joe, this mustn't happen again. When I go to church, I go for a good rest and quiet nap. Today I haven't been able to get a single wink. I tell you it won't do; and it must not happen again."

### **Request for a Donation**

Andrew Carnegie was a very wealthy man who had a reputation for donating money to charitable causes. Mark Twain wrote him to say that he wanted to buy a \$2 hymn-book, pointing out that "I will bless you, God will bless you and it will do a great deal of good." Mr. Twain then added a post-script: "Don't send me the hymn-book — send me the two dollars."

### **Politics**

George Haven Putnam was Executive of the Copyright League from 1886-1891 and worked for the passage of bills to protect the copyrights of authors. Often he testified before Congress, sometimes taking along an author to buttress his arguments about the importance of a bill to provide copyright protection. Once he took along Mark Twain, but as soon as the members of Congress saw Mr. Twain, they immediately cried out for a story. For the next hour, Mr. Twain

told anecdotes. Finally, the members of Congress had to leave, although no testifying had been done about the bill before Congress. After that experience, Mr. Putnam was careful not to take Mr. Twain along when he went to Congress.

### **More Politics**

President Woodrow Wilson liked to tell a story of his incognito visit to Hannibal, Missouri, famous for its association with Mark Twain, who grew up there. President Wilson fell into conversation with a native and asked, “Have you ever heard of Tom Sawyer?” The native had not, so President Wilson asked, “Have you ever heard of Huckleberry Finn?” Again, the native had not, so President Wilson asked, “Do you know of Pudd’nhead Wilson?” This time, the native recognized the name and said, “Sure do — voted for him twice.”

### **The Damned Human Race**

In his personal copy of Charles Darwin’s *Journal of Researches* (1890), Mark Twain wrote, “Can any plausible excuse be furnished for the crime of creating the human race?”

### **Ulysses S. Grant**

When Ulysses S. Grant was dying of cancer of the throat, he knew he needed money to provide for his family after he died. Mark Twain came to the rescue. He had recently become a publisher, and he agreed to pay Mr. Grant the huge royalty of 20 percent for his memoirs, much more than authors usually received. In July 1885, only three days after he had completed the second volume of his memoirs, Mr. Grant died. His family received more than enough money to take care of their needs, collecting over \$400,000 from the sale of his book.

## Mark Twain in Old Age

When Mark Twain was very old, he sometimes would reach for a doorknob but miss it. He then would turn to his secretary and say, “Just practicing.”

## A Funeral

A few days before Christmas, a man named Smith at the Players Club asked Mark Twain to lend him his long-tailed black coat, as he needed something suitable to go to a funeral and he hadn't a long-tailed black coat himself. Mr. Twain agreed, but told Smith to take good care of the contents in the pockets. Smith found an assortment of junk in the pockets, which he wrapped up and gave to the clerk at Mr. Twain's hotel. When Mr. Twain was given the wrapped-up package later, he remarked that he must be getting an early Christmas present. After unwrapping the “present” and realizing where the junk had come from, he remarked, “I hope that damned Smith's funeral will be a failure.”

## Reports of Mark Twain's Death

While travelling abroad, Mark Twain read newspapers reports that he had died, so he sent this telegram to the Associated Press: “The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated.”

## Joan of Arc

When he was a young boy, Samuel Langhorne Clemens saw a piece of paper flying down the street. He chased after it, caught it, and discovered that the page came from a biography of Joan of Arc. He asked his brother who she was, discovered that she was a French heroine who had died by being burned at the stake, and started reading as much as he could about her. As an adult, he wrote a book titled *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*, using his world-famous pseudonym, Mark Twain.



### **More Joan of Arc**

Among Mark Twain's favorites of the books he had written was *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*, about a French heroine for whom Mr. Twain had enormous respect. Mr. Twain met the Archbishop of Orléans, who told him that St. Joan (aka the Maid of Orléans) would no doubt see to it that anyone who wrote so beautifully about her would get into Heaven. Mr. Twain replied that he would be "perfectly satisfied" in the next life if he were near Joan of Arc and as far away as possible from her enemies.

### **Cremation**

Mark Twain once remarked that when his time came, he wanted to be cremated. His pastor replied, "I wouldn't worry about that, if I had your chances."

### **Deep Pleasure**

When Mark Twain was dying, a relative wrote him to say that she had asked some nuns to pray for him. Mr. Twain wrote back, "I am grateful for the prayers of those good nuns and for yours; they have already answered themselves in giving me a deep pleasure."

## Appendix H: Some Mark Twain Quotations

It is better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to open one's mouth and remove all doubt.

Go to Heaven for the climate, Hell for the company.

Suppose you were an idiot, and suppose you were a member of Congress; but I repeat myself.

Get your facts first, then you can distort them as you please.

If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.

Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.

Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect.

A man who carries a cat by the tail learns something he can learn in no other way.

A person who won't read has no advantage over one who can't read.

Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear.

Truth is stranger than Fiction, but it is because Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; Truth isn't.

In the first place, God made idiots. That was for practice. Then he made school boards.

Giving up smoking is the easiest thing in the world. I know because I've done it thousands of times.

A man is never more truthful than when he acknowledges himself a liar.

To succeed in life, you need two things: ignorance and confidence.

The lack of money is the root of all evil.

The only way to keep your health is to eat what you don't want, drink what you don't like, and do what you'd rather not.

It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so.

Do the right thing. It will gratify some people and astonish the rest.

Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence on society.

The secret of getting ahead is getting started.

It could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly native criminal class except Congress.

Don't let schooling interfere with your education.

Patriot: the person who can holler the loudest without knowing what he is hollering about.

If the world comes to an end, I want to be in Cincinnati. Everything comes there ten years later.

It ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it is the parts that I do understand.

There are lies, damned lies, and statistics.

Against the assault of laughter nothing can stand.

It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog.

When your friends begin to flatter you on how young you look, it's a sure sign you're getting old.

Honesty is the best policy — when there is money in it.

Never put off till tomorrow what you can do the day after tomorrow.

I can live for two months on a good compliment.

Cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education.

It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare.

Man was made at the end of the week's work when God was tired.

It is better to deserve honors and not have them than to have them and not deserve them.

If it's your job to eat a frog, it's best to do it first thing in the morning. And if it's your job to eat two frogs, it's best to eat the biggest one first.

The first of April is the day we remember what we are the other 364 days of the year.

Under certain circumstances, profanity provides a relief denied even to prayer.

By trying we can easily endure adversity. Another man's, I mean.

Everything has its limit — iron ore cannot be educated into gold.

Many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising.

I was gratified to be able to answer promptly, and I did. I said I didn't know.

Man is the only animal that blushes — or needs to.

There are times when one would like to hang the whole human race, and finish the farce.

The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.

There is no sadder sight than a young pessimist, except an old optimist.

Never pick a fight with people who buy ink by the barrel.

Familiarity breeds contempt — and children.

Good breeding consists in concealing how much we think of ourselves and how little we think of the other person.

Part of the secret of a success in life is to eat what you like and let the food fight it out inside.

Truth is the most valuable thing we have. Let us economize it.

Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example.

No sinner is ever saved after the first twenty minutes of a sermon.

I was seldom able to see an opportunity until it had ceased to be one.

Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits.

It usually takes me more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech.

I have never taken any exercise except sleeping and resting.

Truth is mighty and will prevail. There is nothing wrong with this, except that it ain't so.

Work consists of whatever a body is obliged to do. Play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do.

Thousands of geniuses live and die undiscovered — either by themselves or by others.

Let us not be too particular; it is better to have old secondhand diamonds than none at all.

I have made it a rule never to smoke more than one cigar at a time.

George Washington, as a boy, was ignorant of the commonest accomplishments of youth. He could not even lie.

I make it a rule never to smoke while I'm sleeping.

To be good is noble; but to show others how to be good is nobler and no trouble.

Humor must not professedly teach and it must not professedly preach, but it must do both if it would live forever.

There are basically two types of people: people who accomplish things, and people who claim to have accomplished things. The first group is less crowded.

Go to heaven for the climate and hell for the company.

A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.

Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint.

Never tell the truth to people who are not worthy of it.

Classic — a book which people praise and don't read.

The fear of death follows from the fear of life. A man who lives fully is prepared to die at any time.

Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.

In a good bookroom you feel in some mysterious way that you are absorbing the wisdom contained in all the books through your skin, without even opening them.

Don't go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first.

But who prays for Satan? Who, in eighteen centuries, has had the common humanity to pray for the one sinner that needed it most?

God created war so that Americans would learn geography.

Heaven goes by favor. If it went by merit, you would stay out and your dog would go in.

I would rather have my ignorance than another man's knowledge, because I have so much more of it.

It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either.

We ought never to do wrong when people are looking.

Be good and you will be lonesome.

Books are the liberated spirits of men.

A full belly is little worth where the mind is starved.

Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits.

I was born modest, but it didn't last.

All good things arrive unto them that wait and don't die in the meantime.

Never tell the truth to people who are not worthy of it.



## Appendix I: About the Author

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly a cry rang out, and on a hot summer night in 1954, Josephine, wife of Carl Bruce, gave birth to a boy — me. Unfortunately, this young married couple allowed Reuben Saturday, Josephine’s brother, to name their first-born. Reuben, aka “The Joker,” decided that Bruce was a nice name, so he decided to name me Bruce Bruce. I have gone by my middle name — David — ever since.

Being named Bruce David Bruce hasn’t been all bad. Bank tellers remember me very quickly, so I don’t often have to show an ID. It can be fun in charades, also. When I was a counselor as a teenager at Camp Echoing Hills in Warsaw, Ohio, a fellow counselor gave the signs for “sounds like” and “two words,” then she pointed to a bruise on her leg twice. Bruise Bruise? Oh yeah, Bruce Bruce is the answer!

Uncle Reuben, by the way, gave me a haircut when I was in kindergarten. He cut my hair short and shaved a small bald spot on the back of my head. My mother wouldn’t let me go to school until the bald spot grew out again.

Of all my brothers and sisters (six in all), I am the only transplant to Athens, Ohio. I was born in Newark, Ohio, and have lived all around Southeastern Ohio. However, I moved to Athens to go to Ohio University and have never left.

At Ohio U, I never could make up my mind whether to major in English or Philosophy, so I got a bachelor’s degree with a double major in both areas, then I added a Master of Arts degree in English and a Master of Arts degree in Philosophy. Yes, I have my MAMA degree.

Currently, and for a long time to come (I eat fruits and veggies), I am spending my retirement writing books such as *Nadia Comaneci: Perfect 10*, *The Funniest People in Dance*, *Homer’s Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*, and *William Shakespeare’s Othello: A Retelling in Prose*.

By the way, my sister Brenda Kennedy writes romances such as *A New Beginning* and *Shattered Dreams*.

## Appendix J: Some Books by David Bruce

### Discussion Guides Series

*Dante's Inferno: A Discussion Guide*

*Dante's Paradise: A Discussion Guide*

*Dante's Purgatory: A Discussion Guide*

*Forrest Carter's The Education of Little Tree: A Discussion Guide*

*Homer's Iliad: A Discussion Guide*

*Homer's Odyssey: A Discussion Guide*

*Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice: A Discussion Guide*

*Jerry Spinelli's Maniac Magee: A Discussion Guide*

*Jerry Spinelli's Stargirl: A Discussion Guide*

*Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal": A Discussion Guide*

*Lloyd Alexander's The Black Cauldron: A Discussion Guide*

*Lloyd Alexander's The Book of Three: A Discussion Guide*

*Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: A Discussion Guide*

*Mark Twain's The Adventures of Tom Sawyer: A Discussion Guide*

*Mark Twain's A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court: A Discussion Guide*

*Mark Twain's The Prince and the Pauper: A Discussion Guide*

*Nancy Garden's Annie on My Mind: A Discussion Guide*

*Nicholas Sparks' A Walk to Remember: A Discussion Guide*

*Virgil's Aeneid: A Discussion Guide*

*Virgil's "The Fall of Troy": A Discussion Guide*

*Voltaire's Candide: A Discussion Guide*

*William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV: A Discussion Guide*

*William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Discussion Guide*

*William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Discussion Guide*

*William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet: A Discussion Guide*

*William Sleator's Oddballs: A Discussion Guide*

(*Oddballs* is an excellent source for teaching how to write autobiographical essays/personal narratives.)

### **Philosophy for the Masses Series**

Philosophy for the Masses: Ethics

Philosophy for the Masses: Metaphysics and More

Philosophy for the Masses: Religion

### **Retellings of a Classic Work of Literature**

*Ben Jonson's The Alchemist: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Bartholomew Fair: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Case is Altered: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Catiline's Conspiracy: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Devil is an Ass: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Epicene: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Every Man in His Humor: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The New Inn: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Staple of News: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Volpone, or the Fox: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's Complete Plays: Retellings*

*Christopher Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus: Retellings of the 1604 A-Text and of the 1616 B-Text*

*Christopher Marlowe's Edward II: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's The Massacre at Paris: A Retelling*

- Christopher Marlowe's The Rich Jew of Malta: A Retelling*
- Christopher Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Parts 1 and 2: Retellings*
- Dante's Divine Comedy: A Retelling in Prose*
- Dante's Inferno: A Retelling in Prose*
- Dante's Purgatory: A Retelling in Prose*
- Dante's Paradise: A Retelling in Prose*
- The Famous Victories of Henry V: A Retelling*
- From the Iliad to the Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose of Quintus of Smyrna's Posthomerica*
- George Peele: Five Plays Retold in Modern English*
- George Peele's The Arraignment of Paris: A Retelling*
- George Peele's The Battle of Alcazar: A Retelling*
- George's Peele's David and Bathsheba, and the Tragedy of Absalom: A Retelling*
- George Peele's Edward I: A Retelling*
- George Peele's The Old Wives' Tale: A Retelling*
- George-A-Greene, The Pinner of Wakefield: A Retelling*
- The History of King Leir: A Retelling*
- Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*
- Homer's Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose*
- Jason and the Argonauts: A Retelling in Prose of Apollonius of Rhodes' Argonautica*
- The Jests of George Peele: A Retelling*
- John Ford: Eight Plays Translated into Modern English*
- John Ford's The Broken Heart: A Retelling*
- John Ford's The Fancies, Chaste and Noble: A Retelling*
- John Ford's The Lady's Trial: A Retelling*

- John Ford's The Lover's Melancholy: A Retelling*
- John Ford's Love's Sacrifice: A Retelling*
- John Ford's Perkin Warbeck: A Retelling*
- John Ford's The Queen: A Retelling*
- John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore: A Retelling*
- John Webster's The White Devil: A Retelling*
- King Edward III: A Retelling*
- The Merry Devil of Edmonton: A Retelling*
- Robert Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay: A Retelling*
- The Taming of a Shrew: A Retelling*
- Tarlton's Jests: A Retelling*
- The Trojan War and Its Aftermath: Four Ancient Epic Poems*
- Virgil's Aeneid: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 5 Late Romances: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 10 Histories: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 11 Tragedies: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 12 Comedies: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 38 Plays: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 2 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 1 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 2 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 3 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 3: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's All's Well that Ends Well: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's As You Like It: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Coriolanus: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Cymbeline: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Henry V: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Henry VIII: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's King John: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's King Lear: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Love's Labor's Lost: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Measure for Measure: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Othello: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Pericles, Prince of Tyre: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Richard II: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Richard III: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Tempest: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Timon of Athens: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Two Gentlemen of Verona: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Two Noble Kinsmen: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale: A Retelling in Prose*

### **Children's Biography**

*Nadia Comaneci: Perfect Ten*

### **Personal Finance**

*How to Manage Your Money: A Guide for the Non-Rich*

### **Anecdote Collections**

*250 Anecdotes About Opera*

*250 Anecdotes About Religion*

*250 Anecdotes About Religion: Volume 2*

*250 Music Anecdotes*

*Be a Work of Art: 250 Anecdotes and Stories*

*Boredom is Anti-Life: 250 Anecdotes and Stories*

*The Coolest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Coolest People in the Arts: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Coolest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Coolest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes*

*Create, Then Take a Break: 250 Anecdotes*

*Don't Fear the Reaper: 250 Anecdotes*

- The Funniest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Books, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Books, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Dance: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families, Volume 4: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families, Volume 5: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families, Volume 6: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Movies: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Music: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Music, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Music, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Neighborhoods: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Relationships: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Sports: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Sports, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Television and Radio: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Theater: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People Who Live Life: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People Who Live Life, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds, Volume 1: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*



*Maximum Cool: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Movies: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Politics and History: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Politics and History, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Politics and History, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Religion: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Sports: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People Who Live Life: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People Who Live Life, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

*Reality is Fabulous: 250 Anecdotes and Stories*

*Resist Psychic Death: 250 Anecdotes*