



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

based on the book by
Mark Twain

Written by
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ISBN 978-1-60249-187-8

TABLE OF CONTENTS - *Huckleberry Finn*

Introduction	6
Unit Objectives	8
Reading Assignment Sheet	9
Unit Outline	10
Study Questions (Short Answer)	13
Quiz/Study Questions (Multiple Choice)	21
Pre-reading Vocabulary Worksheets	37
Lesson One (Introductory Lesson)	57
Nonfiction Assignment Sheet	66
Oral Reading Evaluation Form	68
Writing Assignment 1	60
Writing Assignment 2	77
Writing Assignment 3	86
Writing Evaluation Form	82
Vocabulary Review Activities	78
Extra Writing Assignments/Discussion ?	80
Unit Review Activities	88
Unit Tests	91
Unit Resource Materials	125
Vocabulary Resource Materials	141

A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR MARK TWAIN

TWAIN, Mark (1835-1910). A onetime printer and Mississippi River boat pilot, Mark Twain became one of America's greatest authors. His *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *Life on the Mississippi* rank high on any list of great American books.

Mark Twain was born Samuel Langhorne Clemens on Nov. 30, 1835, in the small town of Florida, Mo. He was the fourth of five children. His father was a hard worker but a poor provider. The family moved to Hannibal, Mo., on the Mississippi, when young Clemens was 4 years old. It was in this river town that he grew up, and from it he gathered the material for his most famous stories. The character of Judge Carpenter is somewhat like his father; Aunt Polly, his mother; Sid Sawyer, his brother Henry; Huck Finn, a town boy named Tom Blankenship; and Tom Sawyer, a combination of several boys-including himself.

His father died when he was 12, and the boy was apprenticed to a printer. An apprentice works for someone in order to learn a trade. This was the first step toward his career as a writer. In 1857 he apprenticed himself to a riverboat pilot. He became a licensed pilot and spent two and a half years at his new trade. The river swarmed with traffic, and the pilot was the most important man aboard the boat. He wrote of these years in *Life on the Mississippi*.

The Civil War ended his career as a pilot. Clemens went west to Nevada and soon became a reporter on the Virginia City newspaper. Here he began using the pen name Mark Twain. It is an old river term meaning two fathoms, or 12 feet (4 meters), of water depth.

In 1864 he went to California. The next year he wrote his "Jumping Frog" story, which ran in many newspapers. He was sent to the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii) as a roving reporter, and on his return he began lecturing. He was soon on a tour of the Mediterranean and the Holy Land. From this came *The Innocents Abroad*, which made him famous.

In 1870 he married Olivia Langdon, daughter of a wealthy businessman of Elmira, N.Y. Olivia modified Twain's exaggerations, sometimes weakening his writings, sometimes actually making them more readable. They had three daughters.

Twain began turning out a new book every few years. William Dean Howells, editor of the Atlantic Monthly and a highly respected novelist, became his close friend and literary adviser. Twain bought a publishing firm in Hartford, Conn. He earned much money writing, lecturing, and in his publishing house, but he spent it on high living and unsuccessful investments. He lost a fortune promoting a typesetting machine. By 1894 his publishing company had failed and he was bankrupt.

Twain set out on a world lecture tour to retrieve his fortune, and by 1898 his debts were paid. In his last years he traveled and spoke much but wrote comparatively little. He died on April 21, 1910.

Twain was more than a humorist. Behind his mask of humor lay a serious view of life. Tragedy had entered his own life in the poverty and early death of his father, the loss of a daughter, and his bankruptcy. His short story, "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg", published in 1900, which showed greed at work in a small town, is an indication of Twain's dark side.

The controversial *Huckleberry Finn*, which is periodically banned in schools or libraries because of alleged racial overtones, can be read by children, but it is not a child's book. It has elements of heartbreak and wisdom that can be appreciated best by adults. On the other hand, *Tom Sawyer* is primarily a juvenile book but one that can be read with pleasure by adults.

Twain's chief works are: *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*, a collection published in 1867; *The Innocents Abroad* (1869); *Roughing It* (1872); *The Gilded Age*-with Charles Dudley Warner (1873); *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876); *A Tramp Abroad* (1880); *The Prince and the Pauper* (1882); *Life on the Mississippi* (1883); *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884); *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889); *The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson* (1894); and *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc* (1896). Printed posthumously were: *The Mysterious Stranger* (1916); *Mark Twain's Notebook* (1935); and *Autobiography* (1959).

---- Courtesy of Compton's Learning Company

INTRODUCTION - *Huckleberry Finn*

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain. It includes twenty-five lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to the idea of dialects through a game-type activity. Following the introductory activity, students are given a transition to explain how the activity relates to the book they are about to read. Following the transition, students are given the materials they will be using during the unit. At the end of the lesson, students begin the pre-reading work for the first reading assignment.

The **reading assignments** are approximately thirty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 minutes of pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for 8 to 10 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer or multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes. If your school has the appropriate equipment, it might be a good idea to make transparencies of your answer keys for the overhead projector.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately 8 to 10 vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II nails down the definitions of the words by giving students dictionary definitions of the words and having students match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

After students complete reading the work, there is a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the fragmented vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

Following the vocabulary review, a lesson is devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the novel.

There is a **Group Theme Project** in this unit. Students are divided into groups, one group for each major theme in the novel. Each group then has a series of assignments to do, all of which lead up to a class-period-long multi-media presentation about that theme. The actual presentation will have three parts: the theme in the novel, the theme in real life today, and a conclusion in which the first two parts are linked together if possible.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first assignment is to inform: students write compositions about their themes in the novel, based on the research they have done so far. The second assignment is to express personal opinions: students review the personality traits of the characters, pick which character they think they personally are most like, and write a composition explaining how they are like that character. The third assignment is to persuade: students evaluate the group theme projects and decide which they think was the best presentation. They then write a composition persuading the teacher that that presentation was, in fact, the best one.

The **nonfiction reading assignment** is tied in with the Group Theme Project. Students must read nonfiction articles, books, etc. to gather information about their themes in our world today. The information gathered while doing this reading is then incorporated into the students' theme presentations.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: multiple choice or short answer. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included. There is also an advanced short answer unit test for advanced students.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **extra activities packet** includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the novel, and extra vocabulary worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. **Answer keys** are located directly after the **reproducible student materials** throughout the unit. The student materials may be reproduced for use in the teacher's classroom without infringement of copyrights. No other portion of this unit may be reproduced without the written consent of Teacher's Pet Publications.

UNIT OBJECTIVES - *Huckleberry Finn*

1. Through reading Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, students will gain a better understanding of the themes of education, freedom/bondage, nature, religion, and superstition both in the novel and in our real world today.
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical and personal.
3. Students will define their own viewpoints for the aforementioned themes.
4. Students will be exposed to a different era of American life, showing many of today's conflicts are not new; they are rooted in our American past.
5. Students will read various American dialects which show the often forgotten or ignored differences between the spoken and written language.
6. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
7. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *Huckleberry Finn* as they relate to the author's theme development.
8. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.
9. The writing assignments in this unit are geared to several purposes:
 - a. To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, to persuade, or to express their own personal ideas
Note: Students will demonstrate ability to write effectively to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to persuade by selecting and organizing relevant information, establishing an argumentative purpose, and by designing an appropriate strategy for an identified audience. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to express personal ideas by selecting a form and its appropriate elements.
 - b. To check the students' reading comprehension
 - c. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
 - d. To encourage logical thinking
 - e. To provide an opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *Huckleberry Finn*

Date Assigned	Chapters Assigned	Completion Date
	1-3	
	4-7	
	8-11	
	12-14	
	15-18	
	19-25	
	26-31	
	32-39	
	40-43	

UNIT OUTLINE - *Huckleberry Finn*

1	2	3	4	5
Introduction PV 1-3	Read 1-3	Study ?s 1-3 PVR 4-7	Study ?s 4-7 PVR 8-11	Study ?s 8-11 Usage Worksheet PVR 12-14
6	7	8	9	10
Group Theme Project	Study ?s 12-14 PVR 15-18	Study ?s 15-18 Grammar Worksheet PVR 19-25	Study ?s 19-25 PVR 26-31	Study ?s 26-31 Group Theme Project (Library)
11	12	13	14	15
PVR 32-39	Study ?s 32-39 PVR 40-43	Study ?s 40-43 Group Theme Project (Class)	Writing Assignment 2	Vocabulary
16	17	18	19	20
Discussion Questions	Group Theme Project	Freedom	Religion	Superstition
21	22	23	24	25
Education	Nature	Theme Summary Writing Assignment 3	Review	Test

Key: P = Preview Study Questions V = Vocabulary Work R= Read

LESSON ONE

Objectives

1. To introduce the *Huckleberry Finn* unit.
2. To distribute books and other related materials
3. To preview the study questions for chapters 1-3
4. To familiarize students with the vocabulary for chapters 1-3

Activity #1

On the chalkboard write these words, "Hello! How are you? What is new?"

Have one student read the words on the board. Explain that he/she had no difficulty reading these words because they are in formal, written English. This is a common greeting one might read in a book or see in a letter.

Introduce the idea that there are, however, many variations on this same greeting. Different people in different parts of the country (or in other English-speaking countries) say the same thing differently. In Australia, for example, one might hear, "G'day, Mate! How's it goin'?"

Invite students to think of as many different ways of saying this same phrase as they can. Write each on the board. Spell the dialects as they sound. After you have written all the examples on the board, ask various students to read the examples. Some students will probably have trouble reading the dialects. Point out that this problem can be overcome by thinking as you read. What does this word *sound* like? What does the speaker probably mean?

Explain to students that there are hundreds of dialects (maybe thousands!) in the English language. Some dialects will be used in *Huckleberry Finn*, the book they are about to read.

Activity #2

Distribute the materials students will use in this unit. Explain in detail how students are to use these materials.

Study Guides Students should read the study guide questions for each reading assignment prior to beginning the reading assignment to get a feeling for what events and ideas are important in the section they are about to read. After reading the section, students will (as a class or individually) answer the questions to review the important events and ideas from that section of the book. Students should keep the study guides as study materials for the unit test.

Vocabulary Prior to reading a reading assignment, students will do vocabulary work related to the section of the book they are about to read. Following the completion of the reading of the book, there will be a vocabulary review of all the words used in the vocabulary assignments. Students should keep their vocabulary work as study materials for the unit test.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 - *Huckleberry Finn*

PROMPT

In your journal, you have kept two kinds of information: a list of references to your theme in the text and a list of ideas you have had about your theme. After you have finished reading the book and have finished making your journal entries, you are to write a composition about your theme as it relates to the book.

PREWRITING

Most of your prewriting has been done already through the work you did in your journal. Now it is time for you to analyze the data you have collected while you were reading. Go back and read through all of your journal entries.

- Freedom: Do all of your entries deal with the same kinds of freedom or are there examples of many kinds of freedom/bondage? What different kinds are there? Note which of your examples in your journal support which different aspects of freedom/bondage. After you have grouped them, look at your data for each set. What does each set of examples seem to be showing?
- Religion: If you look carefully at your journal entries, you will probably see that different characters in the book have different opinions about religion, and through those characters, Twain also gives his opinions. Categorize your data by characters. After you have done so, look at the examples of what each character says or does relating to the theme of religion. Jot down your notes about each character's views on the topic. What do you think Twain's view is?
- Superstition: Most of the references to superstitions in the book are put forth by Huck and Jim. Group your examples accordingly. Look at your examples, then, for each character. What are Huck's attitudes towards superstitions? What are Jim's?
- Education: As you look at your examples in your journal, you will probably see that there are two main ideas presented about this topic. Some characters think book learning is more important than practical knowledge from/about life experiences, and some characters think vice versa. Group your data into these two categories. Then, make notes about which characters believe schooling is more important and which characters believe practical knowledge from life experiences is more important. What do you think Twain believed?