



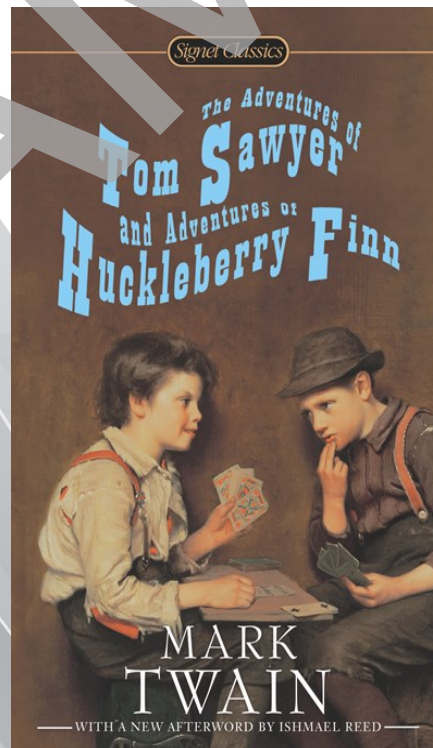
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 9-12

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

Mark Twain



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

Mark Twain

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Phone: 888.650.4224

3901 Union Blvd., Suite 155

St. Louis, MO 63115

sales@novelunits.com

novelunits.com

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Skills and Strategies

Literary Elements

Characterization, irony, slapstick, exaggeration, word play, just desserts, story elements

Comprehension

Predicting, comparison/contrast

Writing

Journaling

Vocabulary

Antonyms/synonyms, word mapping, context clues, prefixes/suffixes

Listening/Speaking

Discussion

Thinking

Brainstorming, sorting, decision-making, visualizing

Summary

The story of Tom Sawyer, his friends, and family is set in a small town along the Mississippi River in the early nineteenth-century. It is a happy, light-hearted story of summer-time fun, pranks, punishments, and adventures.

About the Author

Samuel Langhorne Clemens, known as Mark Twain, was born in Florida, Missouri in 1835, and died at Redding, Connecticut in 1910. As a person and author, he was a man of extraordinary contrasts. He became famous as a traveler, writer, lecturer, and humorist. His career included such varied occupations as prospector, printer, reporter, and riverboat pilot. He made these experiences a part of his stories, which added to their appeal. His nostalgia for the past helped produce some of his best books, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. He made fortunes from his writing, but, toward the end of his life, he had to resort to lecture tours to pay his debts. The works of his last years show his growing depression and skepticism, but he is remembered as a great artist and an American humorist.

Initiating Activities

1. What could the title of this novel mean? Brainstorm some adventures a 12-14-year-old boy could have.
2. Look at the cover. What significant things do you see? Make up some questions about the cover.
3. Read the Author's Preface at the beginning of the book. What does it tell us about the characters of the story?
4. Look at the chapter titles. Many stories have the same parts—a setting, a problem, a goal, and a series of events that lead up to an ending or conclusion. These story elements can be placed on a story map. Just as a road map leads a driver from one place to another, so, too, a story map leads a reader from one point to another. What kind of a story map do you think should be used? We may have to revise this map as we read because we may find other characters and problems. (See examples on page 7 of this guide.)
5. Read the back cover. Predicting is a very important part of reading. What did you learn about the characters? What is the setting? When and where do you think this novel took place? What do you think is the problem of the story? (See page 8 of this guide.)
6. What questions do you have about this story? Does the back cover make you want to read the book? Why or why not?

Story Map

Setting



Problem



Goal



Episodes



Resolution

Characters _____

Time and Place _____

Beginning → Development → Outcome

Chapter-by-Chapter Vocabulary, Discussion Questions, and Activities

Chapter 1

Pages 11-17

Vocabulary

perplexed 11	roundabout 11	peril 12	ruination 12
guile 13	endowed 13	forestalled 13	sagacity 14
loathed 14	diligence 14	unalloyed 14	vitals 15
astride 17	vicious 17	ambuscade 17	adamantine 17

Vocabulary Activities

1. Many of the words used in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* are not a part of standard English. This type of English was used by the people in the setting at the time of the novel. Make a list of these unusual words. Use context to define them.
2. The students will develop word maps. (See page 5.) They will use color to distinguish antonyms, synonyms, etc. This may be an individual or cooperative group activity. The word maps should be displayed.

Discussion Questions

1. What do we learn about Aunt Polly in this first chapter? Begin an attribute web for her. (See page 6 of this guide.)
2. Why is Aunt Polly taking care of Tom?
3. Many times an author shows what a character is like by using a contrasting character. Begin a T-chart to show differences in the character of Tom and Sid. An example follows below.

Quality	Tom	Sid
Looks		
Speech		
Behavior		
What others say about him		
What others think of him		
How others treat him		

4. If you were Aunt Polly, how would you try to manage Tom? How would you prevent him from playing hooky, lying, and fighting?

Prediction

What kind of punishment will Aunt Polly give Tom ? How will he outsmart her?

Chapter 2

Pages 18-22

Vocabulary

beguiled 18	insignificant 18	expeditions 19	straitened 19
tranquilly 19	gait 19	melodious 20	ponderously 20
alacrity 21	fagged 22	dilapidated 22	covet 22

Vocabulary Activity

Place the words for the day in categories, for example:

Feelings	Actions	Things	Person	Descriptive
tranquilly	covet	expeditions		dilapidated

Discussion Questions

1. Irony can mean a situation that is opposite of what is expected and opposite to the literal meaning of the words. Find an example of irony in this chapter. (*Aunt Polly meant to punish Tom by making him whitewash the fence, but he had a great time getting other boys to pay him for the privilege of painting.*)
2. Explain the statement: "...Work consists of whatever a body is obliged to do...Play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do." (page 22)
3. Why is the episode of whitewashing the fence funny?
4. Why would the boys trade their treasures for the privilege of working on the fence? How did Tom manage that? (page 21)
5. How could you use Tom's psychology of getting others to do the work? Is this wrong?

Prediction

How will Aunt Polly react to this deception?

Supplementary Activity

Writing

Begin a journal in which you react to each section of the story you read. Reactions might include: Questions you have about the story; memories the story evokes; people or other stories of whom characters remind you; judgments about whether you agree or disagree with what characters have done; your thoughts about topics which come up such as boys who tease, orders from your mother, etc. Try sometimes including vocabulary words from the story in your journal.