



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

BY MARK TWAIN



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Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters I – II**Characterization**

Objective: Interpreting the thoughts and language of a character

Activity

As part of belonging to Tom Sawyer's gang, each boy must agree that the families of anyone who tells the gang's secrets must be killed.

Everybody said it was a real beautiful oath, and asked Tom if he got it out of his own head. He said, some of it, but the rest was out of pirate-books, and robber-books, and every gang that was high-toned had it.

Some thought it would be good to kill the families of boys that told the secrets. Tom said it was a good idea, so he took a pencil and wrote it in. Then Ben Rogers says:

"Here's Huck Finn, he hain't got no family; what you going to do 'bout him?"

"Well, hain't he got a father?" says Tom Sawyer.

"Yes, he's got a father, but you can't never find him these days. He used to lay drunk with the hogs in the tanyard, but he hain't been seen in these parts for a year or more."

They talked it over, and they was going to rule me out, because they said every boy must have a family or somebody to kill, or else it wouldn't be fair and square for the others. Well, nobody could think of anything to do—everybody was stumped, and set still. I was most ready to cry; but all at once I thought of a way, and so I offered them Miss Watson—they could kill her.

Huck is nearly rejected from the gang because of his lack of family, but he saves the day when he decides to let the gang kill Miss Watson should he tell any secrets.

Write a letter from Huck to Miss Watson explaining to her why he offered the gang her as a victim, instead of the Widow. Try to capture Huck's way of thinking in the letter.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters I – VII**Superstition and Characterization**

Objectives: Recognizing superstitions and their place in the lives of characters in the novel
Relating literature to life by writing about life experience

Activity

1. Superstitions are beliefs or attitudes based on fear or ignorance and are inconsistent with the known laws of science. Today, we still adhere to superstitions. For example, many people believe it is bad luck to break a mirror. List five common superstitions that are part of our modern culture whether or not you believe in them.

Students can share their lists of superstitions to see the variety or consistency of modern superstitions.

2. Write a 100 – 125 word paragraph about a personal experience you had where it seemed as if superstition had a part in the incident.

Find five examples of Huck's superstitious beliefs in Chapters I – VII. Each group should record the chapter where the superstitions are found.

Oral presentations and discussion of the superstitions found by the groups should include what the superstition means to Huck and what part of his life the superstition may help him understand.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters IX – XII**Team Work**

Objectives: Reading for details and applying them to a team project
Recognizing the historical importance of rafting in the mid-1800s

Activity

In the mid-1800s, large rafts commonly floated up and down the Mississippi River. They were used to transport goods from place to place and were a key part of the Southern economy until railroads slowly took their place as the most cost-effective way to move goods.

Twain apprenticed on a riverboat and earned his pilot's license. He worked as a riverboat pilot for two and a half years. The name "Twain" is an old riverboat term for two fathoms or twelve feet deep. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the information in this novel about rafting and traveling on the Mississippi River is accurate.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters IX – XVI**Theme and Characterization**

Objectives: Interpreting the thoughts and the actions of a character
Linking characterization and themes

Activity

The following is a list of incidents from Chapters IX – XVI. Each incident reveals something significant about Huck and Jim's relationship. Complete the following chart by noting what character trait you believe the incident helps to define and what it reveals about Huck and Jim's bond. The first one is done for you as an example.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters V – XXIII**Characterization and Satire**

Objective: Creating a cartoon based on details from the story

Activity

Draw a cartoon of one of the following incidents from the story. Reread the description of the character in the text so that your drawing accurately reflects the details from the story. Be sure to include a satirical caption. One example might be a caricature of Miss Watson telling Huck not to smoke while hiding a box labeled SNUFF on her lap.

- Pap arrives at the widow's house and tells Huck that education is harmful. (Chapter V)
- The two con men join Huck and Jim on the raft and pretend to be a duke and a king. (Chapter XIX)
- Huck fools two slave hunters by hinting that his family has small pox. (Chapter XVI)
- Colonel Granger dresses beautifully but condones a feud that kills his sons. (Chapter XVIII)
- The king pretends to be a reformed pirate to get money from a gullible congregation. (Chapter XX)
- The king and duke put on The Royal Nonesuch play for foolish people. (Chapter XXIII)

In this chapter, Twain includes the text of the playbill the king and duke design advertising The Royal Nonesuch play. Create a similar playbill advertising a play or movie based on this novel. You can use fictional names and places in your playbill.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters XV – XXXI**Theme**

Objective: Recognizing incidents in the story supporting the theme, Huck grows up

Activity

In Chapters XV – XXXI, Huck and Jim travel down the Mississippi on their raft. Along the way they have adventures and meet interesting characters. Huck is the protagonist of the story and the narrator, who comments on the action from his own perspective. As Huck matures, his comments reflect his newfound wisdom.

In small groups, complete the chart to use as the basis for class discussion on the coming-of-age theme in the novel.

For each of the incidents listed on the following chart, note Huck's actions in the story and find a quotation from the text demonstrating Huck's growing maturity.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters XXXII – XLIII**Plot and Writing**

Objective: Evaluating the credibility of the plot line and/or a character's actions

Activity

For a plot to be believable, the reader must accept the actions of the characters based on the knowledge he or she has concerning a character's motivations. For example, in this novel it is consistent with Tom Sawyer's character to want to complicate Jim's escape with elaborate intricacies that he has read about in books. Therefore, his ability to concoct these schemes and desire to execute them is believable.

In each of the following events from chapters XXXII – XLIII, indicate whether you think that the incident is believable or not.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Wrap-Up

Book Review

1. Write a book review stating what you liked and did not like about this book. Go to www.amazon.com for examples of book reviews.
2. Research Mark Twain's life story. Write a three or four paragraph essay comparing Huck's life story with Twain's. In what ways are they similar? Different?
3. After escaping to freedom or after emancipation, many former slaves changed their names. Some adopted the last name of their former masters while others selected names from the Bible or from history. In *The Narrative Life of Frederick Douglass*, Mr. Douglass recalls that after escaping slavery a friend suggested that Frederick Bailey change his name to Frederick Douglass. The name Douglass came from the "Lady of the Lake." Based on the information in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, what name do you think Jim might select? Write a paragraph offering support for your choice.
4. Write a two or three paragraph persuasive essay based on incidents from the text supporting or repudiating one of the following thesis statements.
 - *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a novel about prejudice and intolerance.
 - The chapters in the book in which Jim is absent are less interesting than those chapters in which he is present.
5. Use the following as a thesis statement for a two or three paragraph essay:
 - The river in this story represents peace, happiness, and freedom while the towns represent rules, boredom, and cruelty.
 - Cite incidents from the novel to support this thesis.