

Life and times of mark twain

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known as his pseudonym Mark Twain, implements a myriad of his life experiences and details about the time in which he lived in his writings, most notably, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. To begin, Mark Twain grew up during the latter two-thirds of the eighteenth century in a small town on the Mississippi River. This town is named Hannibal, Missouri which provides the basis for the setting in which the novel takes place. Hannibal Missouri is actually the primary influence Mark Twain used when he was composing the city, St. Petersburg, on the Mississippi River for his character, Tom Sawyer, to live in. Mark Twain lived in a time of slavery and racial segregation throughout the entire nation. This racial inequality is highlighted in his novels, specifically *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, but with racial undertones evident throughout *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. One key example is the use of Injun Joe as the main villain. This man is half Indian blood and half white blood and due to his 'Injun' blood, he is apparently full of evil. Many of the characters in Mark Twain's novel, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, are based on people who were prevalent in Mark Twain's life throughout his early years. Mark and Tom both grew up without a father. Mark Twain's father passed away when he was at the young age of twelve and grew up with his mother for the rest of his childhood. His mother was the springboard Mark Twain used in order to develop his character Aunt Polly who was the main maternal role in Tom Sawyer's life. Mark Twain also used his brother, Henry, and sister, Pamela, to portray the characters of Tom Sawyer's younger brother, Sid, and sister, Pamela. Mark Twain, it is said, even used a young crush, Laura Hawkins, as his inspiration for Tom's girl friend, Becky Thatcher. A poor city boy by the

name of Tom Blankenship, who was a childhood friend of Mark Twain was the inspiration for the famous character, Huckleberry Finn who will later have his own controversial adventure tale written about him by Twain. Mark Twain, himself was most of the character behind Tom Sawyer, although there were traces of John Briggs who later became Joe Harper and another friend, Will Bowen. This clearly shows that a majority of the story was based on real life events and Mark Twain even wrote that, " Most of the adventures in this novel happened in real life." These adventures were completed by Mark Twain and his character counterparts who loved to explore and fantasize. Lastly, the way in which Tom Sawyer spoke, and the dialect which persisted throughout the entire novel so directly related to the way in which in which the mid-western part of the country spoke during the latter half of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century. The use of diction so common and easily used by Twain and the people of that time was a stellar contribution to the story line for it drew the audience in and compelled them to read more and more because of how easily they were able to relate. The novel, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and the life of Mark Twain relate for the novel is based directly on his real life experiences. Additionally, the times in which they lived influences the story in regards to dialect, moral and social norms, and the controversy of slavery.