

Compare and contrast huck and tom english literature essay

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



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Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer are both main characters in Mark Twain's novel Huckleberry Finn. They are best friends and have similarities but also many differences. Some things that Huck and Tom have in common are that they are both teenage boys that thirst for adventure. They are constantly play tricks on people and cause trouble in the town where they live. They both don't really have any parents in the picture. Huck's father is a drunkard and abusive so Huck is forced to live with the widow Douglas and Miss Watson. Tom's mom and dad died, so he is raised by his Aunt Polly. They are both liars. It seems like they are better at lying than telling the truth most times throughout the novel. When Huck is talking to the Wilks girls, he debates whether to tell the truth or not. 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.

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Well, I says to myself at last, I'm agoingtochance it; I'll up and tell the truth this time (Ch 28 Twain). Many times throughout the novel Huck lies about his name. First he lies Sarah Williams, then he lies MaryWilliams, then he lies George Jackson, and then Tom Sawyer. He even lies to Jim, his best friend attimes in the novel. Tom's biggest lie was revealed at the end of the novel, when he knew that Jim was a free slave but didn't say anything to Huck till then. Molly KalkwarfCollege American LitPeriod 8One of the ways that Huck and Tom are different are there upbringing. Huck grew up with an abusiveand alcoholic father, so he basically had to grow up fast and take care of himself. He grew up as the lowest member of society. These were the experiences that distanced him from the wellordereds civilization in which Tom was raised because Tom grew up wealthy as a high member of society. Tom is gullible and believes almost everything that someone tells him or reads in books. He doesn't question the authority or his faith and Huck has tendency to question authority and think for himself. Huck is skeptical of the world around him and the ideas it passes on to him so that is why he rejects religion. He also rejects it because when he prayed for what he wanted, he didn't get anything so he thinks Christian faith and praying is pointless. Tom is a leader and Huck is a follower. For example, when they were coming up with a plan to free Jim, Huck went along with Tom's idea even though he knew that his was better and would have been easier to accomplish. Another way that they are different is how they treat blacks, especially Jim. "All right, then, I'll GO to hell" and tore it up.... 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; as long as I was in, and in for good, I might as

well go the whole hog. This was the line that showed how much Huck cared about Jim. He saw him as a human being and not just as a slave. He cared enough about Jim to go against everything he had ever known and learned about what was right and wrong when it came to slaves. Tom is the complete opposite. He sees Jim as just a nigger, being lower than everyone else. At the end it seems like Tom was trying to help Jim but really he was pursuing his own adventure by prolonging Jim's captivity and basically torturing him, when Jim was already a free slave. The biggest difference between Huck and Tom are that Huck is a realist and Tom is an idealist and romanticist. Tom places special value on ideas and ideals as products of the mind, in comparison with the world as perceived through the senses (Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia). This difference occurs often in this book. The best place to see this difference is on the Phelps's farm when Huck and Tom are trying to find a way to free Jim. Huck presents a realistic and easy way to free Jim, but Tom thinks his plan is too boring. Tom's plan to free Jim is very outrageous and shows how Tom is a romanticist. "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 daytime and running nights, the way me and Jim used to do. 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 Molly Kalkwarf College American Lit Period 8 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 into a

soap factory. 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. (Ch 24 Twain) Tom's plan was that they must saw Jim's chain off or even his leg instead of just the easy way of lifting the chain off the bed's framework. His other ideas consisted of a rope ladder, a moat, and a shirt where Jim can keep a journal and write it in his blood. This was Tom's plan because his is a romanticist and that's how it's done in all the books that he reads.