

# Mark twain

Business



Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known by his pen Mark Twain, was an American author and humorist that lived through the literary period known as the realism period. Realism focused on the actual nature of life, and provided factual descriptions of ordinary characters and events rather than larger than life heroes. Also the period's writers expressed life as it is actually lived. Therefore, Mark Twain's humoristic and biting social satirical writing has made him an internationally acclaimed and beloved author. Mark Twain had a peculiar but interesting life.

Twain was born in Florida, Missouri on November 30, 1835. He was the son of Jane and John Marshall Clemens. Twain came from a large family. He was the sixth out of seven children, but only three of his siblings survived childhood. His father John Clemens, a lawyer in Hannibal, Missouri, died when Twain was only twelve years old which caused Twain to drop out of school and work as a printer's apprentice in his brother's newspaper the Hannibal Journal. Twain later followed his dream job of being a steamboat pilot.

Later on in his life, he met his wife Olivia Langdon who belonged to a wealthy family. Twain had three daughters: Susie, Clara, and Jean. He also had a prematurely born son who died. Twain had an inconsistent life that was always changing which inspired his writing greatly. Twain's life was greatly reflected on his writing. Twain's time of being a steamboat captain gave him inspiration and ideas to write about.

Through his travels through the different ports of the Mississippi river, he met a throng of colorful people. The people later became characters in his

writings. Also the places Twain traveled through his steamboat years also gave ideas on settings for his stories. The port town of Hannibal, Missouri inspired the fictional town of St. Petersburg in his novel Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. He captured the images from his youth to write stories that appeal to the common man.

Being an apprentice for his brother's printing press exposed him to start writing. Also after becoming an editor for local newspapers, after moving to San Francisco, Twain started to write stories that appealed to people. One particular story involved a man who killed his family and cut his throat. This appealed to people even though they thought the story was true at first. After this story he decided that he wanted to become an acclaimed writer.

Other aspects of his life also influenced him. Twain was influenced by the tragedies in his families to write certain stories. Twain wrote about the depression he faced in a story. Twain's early lifestyle also influenced his writing. Twain's middle class life during his childhood inspired the background of the characters in his books such as Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.

These books depicted how Twain grew up as a child even though some parts were exaggerated. Twain's writing directly reflects the realism period in which he lived through. The dialect chosen by Twain reflects the dialects based on the character's background. An example of this would be how the character Jim in his novel Adventures of Huckleberry Finn talks. Jim talks in an illiterate way because he was a black slave which represented the true way

of how black slaves used to speak showing that Twain expressed life as it appears.

Twain also used real life occurrences to express the problems with society. Twain was an abolitionist who wrote about the slavery in negative way to gain attention to the problem with it. Also he uses examples of social shortcomings such as lynch mobs and tar and feathering to discourage these things from happening. Another problem he focused on was child abuse and neglect. Even though he only lightly mentioned it, he still wanted to bring aware to the problem. Twain's writing is a perfect representative of the realism literary period in which he lived in.

Twain's most important work of literature is his novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. This story reflects aspects of his life that emphasizes its importance. Twain's adventures as a steamboat pilot has influenced the characters of the story and also provided him with specific details for Twain to write. Also His childhood experiences and places Twain has visited have also been used in the book. Therefore the book depicts Twain's life in many ways, making it his most important story. Also Twain gives his perspectives on moral problems concerning him through this book.

Twain stands against the idea of having slaves by writing about it negatively, even though he doesn't say it clearly. He also expresses that white people are not living morally. In a satirical tone he questions the purity and morals of Christians who believe that slavery is a justified action. Mark Twain's most influential book is *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* due to its close reflection of its author. Mark Twain received both positive and negative literary

criticism. Mark Twain was very well beloved by other authors and received great amounts of positive criticism.

Ernest Charles said that, “ Twain’s humor was painful, his fantasies dense and difficult to follow. By them, one may estimate the exact distance which separates the Yankee country from the civilized world”. Another example of positive criticism includes H. I. Mencken saying, Twain, “ was the first American author of world rank to write a genuinely colloquial and native American”.

Also Twain was also called “ the father of American Literature” by William Faulkner. Even with all the positive comments, some people did not have the same attitude towards Twain’s writing. There was much controversy over the publishing of the book Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and how it talks about slavery. Some people believe that the book should be banned due to the use of the “ n” word and other indecent behavior. Even with these troubles Mark Twain became one of the most internationally known and praised authors.

Throughout Twain’s life there are interesting facts and coincidences that occurred. Mark Twain was born and died on the years of the Haley’s comet’s return close to earth. Another interesting fact is that the pen name Mark Twain came from his steamboat years of marking the depth of the river and “ mark twain” is a unit of measurement. Twain also helped president U. S. Grant regain his wealth for Grant’s family before Grant passed away by helping him write an autobiography of Grant’s life.

Twain also volunteered to join the Confederate army because he doesn’t want to give the Union a chance to win. Twain also traveled across Europe  
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and wrote of his adventures in *Innocents Abroad* which served as humor for the American public. Twain also went on countless lectures around the world to countries including New Zealand and Australia. Twain also almost went bankrupt after investing heavily on the page set typewriter. Twain's life was filled with excitement but also tragedy and sorrow.

In conclusion, Mark Twain was an outstanding writer whose comedic humor and perspective on social shortcomings have earned him a place in the category of the most profound and influential authors of all time. Twain's life defines the meaning of American dream because he went from being a boy from a middle class family into being a world famous author. Mark Twain will forever be the father of American Literature. Works Cited Dendinger, Lloyd N. " Mark Twain.

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