

The adventures of huckleberry finn

Literature, American Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a timeless American classic which set the tone for all other American literature to follow. The story opens up a window into the life of the American People before the Civil War. The lessons that this book presents can give the reader a deeper understanding of what existence was like along the Mississippi River over two hundred years ago. This is a novel which is full of thrilling adventure; personally, I enjoy adventure, which is the reason why I chose this book. Throughout the story there is constant exciting activity, there simply is never a dull moment in this book. Friendship, honesty, deceitfulness, and racism are all main issues all through this book. The characters face problems with ethics and morals along with the stereotypes of their society. The complex connections between race, culture, politics, and morality are made vivid in this story. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn starts out with a brief description of the previous book, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Both boys stole twelve thousand dollars in the previous book; each boy got six thousand a piece. Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer are both young boys growing up before the Civil War along the Mississippi. Both boys are mischievous but Tom is the one with all the plans, he reads a lot which gives him these ideas, which are fairly eccentric. Huck Finn does not live with either his mother or his father, in fact he seems to fear his father which he refers to as 'pap', he lives with a widow who takes care of him and makes him act very proper. It is thought that Huck's pap is dead but Huck believes that he is alive and will come get him eventually. The first adventure that Huck has is with Tom Sawyer and a group of other young boys who band together to form a robber gang, all under the influence of Tom Sawyer. Their mission is to rob people and then

kill them, however none of this ever happens and the gang soon breaks up. Shortly after the gang splits, Huck's evil father comes back and takes him away from the widow. Pap takes Huck into the woods and makes desperate attempts to get the six thousand dollars which Huck owns. Luckily however, Huck gave it the bank manager, Mr. Thatcher for safe keeping. The beatings that Huck's father gives him become unbearable, so Huck finally decides to run away. However, he does not merely jump in a raft and float down the river. He sets up an elaborate scene; killing a hog and smearing its blood around the cabin, stealing corn and whiskey, which makes everything look like the house had been robbed and Huck had been killed. Huck floats down the river till he gets to a nearby island, called Jackson's Island, where he hides and keeps cover from the search party which is looking for his dead body. One day, when Huck was wondering around exploring his island, he happens upon a Negro friend named Jim. Jim and Huck Finn are good friends and Jim is on the run too, so they both team up and build a more substantial fort on the island. They catch fish for food and lead a fairly good life for a little while. They even robbed a house which was floating down stream; they got eight dollars and some supplies. However, eventually the people of St. Petersburg get a clue and go after Jim, who ran away from his owner. The two boys are forced off their island and drift down the river on a raft which was made out of odds and ends they got out of the river. The two boys float down the river by night and hide when the day breaks. They continued catching fish and lived a pretty decent life, until one day. It was a fairly heavy storm and the boys were caught in the middle of it. As they floated around, they spotted a fairy boat which had run aground. They boarded the

ship with plans to rob it, however plans changed when two men are discovered on the boat who want to kill this other man. The boys get off the boat as fast as possible and continue down stream to a city that's far enough from St. Petersburg so Jim would be safe. One night, Huck goes into a small town and sneaks around someone's back yard but was caught. He lies and lies till the people accept that he wasn't trying to hurt anyone, they even go as far as opening their doors to him and letting him stay for an extended period. Huck stays with the family who is undergoing a family feud with another family, a violent feud. The family is very nice and Huck goes into great detail about how great the family really is. Eventually Huck gets out of the situation and meets up with Jim again. They continue their journey down the river until, they help two men by letting them raft with them. One man claims he's a Duke while the other claims he's the rightful King of France, Huck can see right through their lies but Jim is fascinated and gives both men tremendous respect. The Duke and Kings turn out to be great con men, conning every town that they pass in some way. Tricking people is their specialty, and they are very good at it. Huck and Jim go along with their cons until one goes too far. The men plan on robbing a dead mans inheritance by claiming they were his brothers, but Huck luckily pulls the plug on them and foils their plans. Huck tries desperately too lose the liars but is stuck with them for a short while longer until they finally get caught and the boys are rid of them. However, things are not good at all, for Jim got kidnapped. Huck looks for Jim until he finds out where he is staying. However, when he gets there, the people mistake him for Tom Sawyer, of all people. So Huck lets on that he is Tom Sawyer until the real Tom Sawyer shows up and everything

gets really crazy. Huck continues to pretend that he is Tom Sawyer, and Tom pretends that he is Huck's friend, Sid. Jim is locked up in a small hut where all the other slaves live, and Tom and Huck set out to free him. However, instead of simply unlatching the door, Tom insists on making the escape look really genuine. So they dig a tunnel underneath the hut and make Jim carve all these things on the wall. Until finally, Tom tells the family that some Indians are planning on stealing Jim. That same night, they plan the escape; it all goes smooth until Tom gets shot. So when Tom was getting better, he told his Aunt that they were the ones that stole Jim, not the Indians. After a long argument the family accepts the truth and everyone is happy. Jim is freed, Huck's pap was killed and he gets the six thousand dollars back, and Tom remains the mischievous boy he always was. Aunt Sally adopts Huck and that is the end of the story. Samuel Langhorne Clemens', latter naming himself Mark Twain, life became the basis for *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Memories from Twain's childhood were combined with his experiences on the Mississippi working as a pilot. He grew up in Florida, Missouri along the Mississippi, but later moved to Hannibal, from which he based the fictional town of St. Petersburg on. Jim, a Negro character in the story, was based on a Negro Twain had known as a boy while working on a farm. Mark Twain was a philosopher of the human condition; he saw his ideas deep within himself, from the powerful to the weak, from the rich to the poor, both extremes of what we are as people. Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was the first true great piece of American Literature. As Ernest Hemingway once said, " All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*." His statement was less

then an overstatement, it was the truth. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is written in the first person narrative style with Huck Finn narrating, it is set in the past tense as a tale which Huck has already experienced. The storyteller, Huck Finn, is the central character and is the main focal point of the whole story. Frequently, Twain uses the book, and Huck's personality, to voice his own ideas about humanity. For instance, he represents slavery and what an evil it really is and demonstrates how black people have equal emotions of white people, for instance when Jim is talking about freedom when looking for the city of Cairo. Twain condemns organized religion in the beginning of the book with the attack on the Sunday school picnic. Twain also demonstrated his dislike for royalty with the adventures with the duke and the king, and expresses his feelings about the government through the experiences of Pap and his confrontations with the law. The themes in the story are complex and describe a lot of hidden meanings. Huck Finn experiences a constant period of growth all the way through the story. Preceding each experience along the great river, Huck learns a lesson and becomes a better person because of them. There is an important stress on the river as a refuge from civilization and a place to find adventure. Huck travels down the river and is provided tools, such as the raft, and, in turn, the river also provides him with adventure. It is different from the towns and villages and represents a freedom from the burdens of society. Twain expresses his opinion on how backwards society really is. As Huck travels down the river, his decisions and experiences are the opposite of what society would tell him to do. For instance, in those days black people were slaves and were to have no respect, however Huck did respect his Negro

friend Jim, and therefore opposing society. Imagery is used throughout the story to create a deeper understanding of the setting. The Mississippi river is described in great detail to the reader. The river symbolizes the person that Huck Finn really is; untamed, free, and wild. However, the river also represents some more tranquil and relaxing qualities of the young boy, and from time to time even mystifying. The river can also be seen as a time measuring tool for the reader, as the boys float further and further down it, the story progresses with them. The childish writing style conveys Twain's purpose in trying to tell a story through a young southern boy. The whole story is somewhat ironic, all these complex ideas and morals being told in such a simple, easy to understand language. The tone is not limited to one style through the whole book, Huck, and Jim have very different speaking styles. " Doan' you member de house dat was float'n down de river, en day wuz a man in dah, kivered up, en in en unkivered him.....", this is an example of the way that Jim talks. Notice how broken down and shortened Jim's speech is, this is very typical of the southern ' jaw'. This is contrasting to the way that others talk throughout the book, for instance, Huck Finn. " Then he showed us another little job he'd printed and hadn't charged for, because it was for us." This is an example of the way that Huck talks. Although his style is even close to formal writing, it still is very distinct from the way that his friend Jim talks. This is an effective tool which creates a mixed feeling in the book and makes it more interesting. The story is organised into three main sections; the first being when Huck is living with Miss Watson, and the widow, the second being when Huck and Jim are living on a floating raft down the Mississippi, and finally the third being the ending with Tom Sawyer,

Jim and Huck Finn all on a farm with Tom's Aunt Sally. The story itself does not have a single climax, nor is there only one for each section. The many adventures that the boys have each consist of a visible rising and falling action, however, the end of the book when Tom and Huck are breaking Jim free is defiantly a main climax. The main climax at the end of the book forces the reader to continue to think what else is going to happen after the story ends, luckily however Twain does give a short little window into what things are to come. As I read through this book I noticed a few examples of American history being added into the story. For example, Huck speaks of the Boston Tea Party and how the people that participated were idols that didn't take anything from anyone, especially the English. He talked about independence and how the Americans 'dared' the English to do something about it. Another historical event which was mentioned was the ship, Mayflower. It was only talked about briefly but it shows how Twain does try to make this fictional story a little more believable with real events. The relevance to history is very evident in many aspects of the book. Racism is a subject which is carried throughout the whole story. Huck has conflicting opinions on Jim, who is black, whether or not it was right for him to help steal someone's slave. Also, the southern culture in those days is represented very well, which gives us deep understanding of what life was like there so long ago. I personally believe that this is an exciting book to read. It has great educational value to go along with its interesting plot and characters. Before I read this book, I didn't really have a good picture in my mind of the old Mississippi lifestyle was really like. However, now that I have read The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, I can see a very distinct image in my mind.

In conclusion, I really enjoyed this novel and found that it taught me a great deal about American history.