

The controversy over huckleberry finn

[Education](#)



The Controversy Over Huckleberry Finn Huckleberry Finn is a novel written in 1884 by Mark Twain at the end of the American reconstruction era. During this time there blacks were still treated unequally, and a large amount of ignorance between the races was present. As a child Mark Twain often witnessed the harsh cruelty slaves had to endure and as he grew older began to empathize with them, and through those emotions he created this novel. He created a book from the view point of a young boy who was considered white trash at the time and kept true to the accents and phrases the different races used at the time. This included the word nigger which although today is considered extremely inappropriate, in the past it was a common term used by whites to label blacks. Using satire to show how absurd racism and prejudice was. Over a hundred years later this novel is still considered a classic, however, a controversy has arisen over the harsh language often used in the novel. In Cherry Hill, NJ at a local high school a large confrontation arose between the teachers and students over the novel Huckleberry Finn. Many students argued that the book was offensive and hurtful. Raquel Pantan a student who was against the teaching of Huckleberry Finn stated, " I don't go to school nine months out of the year to be put down and to be made feel bad. " The student's main argument Huckleberry Finn was that they believed it was racist and that teachers should have been more aware of the impact such a book would have on the racially diverse students. To the black students especially, the novel was another frustrating instance where there was a lack of multicultural content in the district's curricula; with the support of their parents they decided it was time to act. It was a different story from the teacher's point of view though. Teachers already knew that the Adventure of Huckleberry Finn had <https://assignbuster.com/the-controversy-over-huckleberry-finn/>

been shrouded in controversy from the beginning. When the novel was first published, the words used in the book, though not uncommon, were considered inappropriate for civil men and women to use. Mark Twain used these terms and a great deal of satire to show the reality and stupidity of racism at the time. Jocelyn Chadwick-Joshua stated that “ parents feel that twain wrote the word nigger because he was racist, but it’s not so, he was just trying to show the reality of the time. ” The question here is what to teach, if the teachers grant the students wishes and remove The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn from their curriculum they would only be sparing the feelings of a few people. Doing this would mean that the school would only be avoiding the harsh reality of the past. Mark Twain wasn’t intending to be racist; he was only showing what was really happening back when he lived. The real controversy comes down to where we should draw the line about how honest we should be about the past and how much honesty is going too far.