

# 1800s author studies

Business



During the 1800s, many authors wrote newspaper articles and novels under pseudonyms. Two examples are Samuel Clemens and Charles Dickens. Their works have many similarities and differences, but they both wrote masterpieces that the literary world will remember for a long time. Samuel Clemens was born in Florida, Missouri to John Marshall Clemens and Jane Lampton. He was the sixth of seven children.

In 1839, when he was four years old, his family moved to Hannibal, Missouri. In 1849, his father died, leaving his family with little money. Clemens worked at several odd jobs while he continued learning. His career focused on writing from the very beginning. He first worked as a printer's devil for the Missouri Courier.

In 1851, he got a job setting type for the Western Union, a newspaper owned by his older brother, Orion. When Clemens was twenty-two, he was apprenticed to be a riverboat captain, and spent the next four years traveling up and down the Mississippi River. In 1861, Clemens moved west with Orion, who had gotten a job as territorial secretary in Nevada. He tried his luck with many other careers, including mining, but kept coming back to writing. He joined the Virginia City Territorial Enterprise in 1862 and was paid twenty-five dollars a week for any articles he wrote. He began signing his name with the pseudonym Mark Twain, a riverboat term meaning two fathoms deep.

The piece that first made him famous was The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, published in 1865. This piece made him a nationally known humorist. In 1870, Clemens married Olivia Langdon and moved to

Hartford, Connecticut. They had four children; three girls named Susy, Clara, and Jean, and one son named Langdon, who died as an infant. In 1872, he published his first novel, *Roughing It*, an account of the time he spent in the West.

Clemens published *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* in 1876, and his best known piece, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, in 1884. Both books take place in his hometown of Florida, Missouri and use many of his childhood memories in these works. In 1851, the Clemens family moved to Europe where his novels were widely known and praised. For the next several years, Clemens gave many lectures. Unfortunately, he experienced several tragedies in this period of his life.

One of his daughters, Susy, died of spinal meningitis while he was in England. His wife, Olivia, died in 1904 and his second daughter, Jean, died in 1909. He continued to give lectures and write novels, even though he was deeply grieved by the loss of his family. On April 21, 1910, Clemens died at the age of 74. Charles Dickens was born in Portsmouth, England, to John and Elizabeth Dickens.

John Dickens was a naval clerk, but he had a poor head for finances and soon found himself in deep debt. He was sent to the Marshalsea Prison, along with the rest of his family except for Charles. Charles was sent to work at Warren's Blacking Factory, where he was psychologically scarred by the horrible experience. After his father paid his debt, Dickens was sent to school from 1824 to 1827. At the age of fifteen, he was employed as an office boy,

where he studied shorthand at night. This skill enabled him to become a free-lance reporter for Parliament in 1829.

Dickens adopted the pseudonym Boz, which was soon to become famous. In 1836, the first series of Sketches by Boz was published. This gave Dickens sufficient income to marry Catherine Hogarth, but they later separated. He never married again, however, he fathered numerous children. The success of *The Pickwick Papers* clinched Dickens' fame. Dickens published fourteen books throughout his career, including *Oliver Twist*, *A Christmas Carol*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *Great Expectations*.

Dickens died of a stroke in 1869, while he was writing his fifteenth novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. Charles Dickens and Samuel Clemens have many similarities in their writings. These similarities are apparent when comparing two of each of their most famous works, *Great Expectations* and *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Samuel Clemens. One of the most essential qualities that helped these two authors write transcendent novels is that they used their own life experiences and memories in their writing. For example, in the introduction of *Great Expectations*, it says that “ Dickens does draw on the experiences of his life, but in *Great Expectations* he does this very obliquely, capturing some of the intense feelings of his childhood rather than its actual incidents” (VI). In the introduction of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, it says that “ As Twain himself says: ‘ Most of these adventures really occurred; one or two were experiences of my own, the rest those of boys who were schoolmates of mine’” (8).

Also, these authors both use first-person point of view in their books because they each have the main character telling the story. “ I had no time for verification, no time for selection, no time for anything, for I had no time to spare” (Great Expectations, 13). “ I laid there in the grass and the cool shade, thinking about things and feeling rested and rather comfortable and satisfied” (The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, 40). Both authors use more action verbs than “ be” verbs, probably because there is a plentiful amount of action in their novels. “.... two men who watched the light had made a fire, that through the loophole in the thick stone wall shed out a ray of brightness on the awful sea” (A Christmas Carol, 95).

“ Old Hundred swelled up with a triumphant burst, and while it shook the rafters Tom Sawyer the Pirate looked around upon the envying juveniles about him and confessed in his heart that this was the proudest moment of his life” (The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, 186). Although these authors have several similarities, they also have some differences. One of these is that Samuel Clemens uses dialects in his dialogue. He makes it sound as it would if those people were actually saying the words. ““ Say-who is you? Whar is you? Dog my cats ef I didn’ hear sumf’n!” (The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, 5-6). Charles Dickens uses the proper language and spelling in his writing, not how the words actually sound.

““ How it is that I appear before you in a shape that you can see, I may not tell. I have sat invisible beside you many and many a day!” (A Christmas Carol, 31). Also, Samuel Clemens uses many fragments in his writing, mostly for his dialogue. This is justified because the nature of the characters he is

describing is to just say what they think, even if it's not thought out completely. “‘ Say, Billy, got a yaller ticket?’ ‘ Yes.

‘ ‘ What'll you take for her?’ ‘ What'll you give?’ ‘ Piece of lickrish and a fishhook.’ ‘ ‘ Less see ‘ em’ (The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, 50). Charles Dickens does not use fragments, even in his dialogue, because for him it was not proper to use them in writing in the 1800s. “‘ Come, Mr. Drummle, since we are on the subject, I'll tell you what passed between Herbert and me, when you borrowed that money’” (Great Expectations, 174).

Another difference between these two authors is that Samuel Clemens is famous for his humor by irony, while Charles Dickens is a rather melancholy writer, and doesn't use much humor. “ Some thought it would be good to kill the families of boys that told the secrets (of the gang). Tom said it was a good idea, so he took a pencil and wrote it in” (The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, 8). “ Scrooge crept towards it, trembling as he went; and, following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name, Ebenezer Scrooge” (A Christmas Carol, 133). Even though their biographies are very different, Samuel Clemens and Charles Dickens have several similarities in their writing.

Both authors use their own experiences and memories in their stories. They are both 19th century authors, but their writings are also unique. The presence of fragments in Samuel Clemens work and the absence of the same in Charles Dickens' works exemplify this. No matter how they wrote, their wonderful works of art will be classics for a long time to come. Works Cited  
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