

# Huck finn essay

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Drew Shunkwiler Mr. Hall American Literature 11 November 2011 Huck Finn Essay The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain was the first great American novel. Ernest Hemingway went as far as to say that " All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called Huckleberry Finn". Mark Twain used literature to express his beliefs about American life and society. Huck Finn is a story of a young boy named Huckleberry Finn finding himself while traveling down the Mississippi River. Mark Twain uses Huck's journey towards maturity to convey his belief in the importance of being independent. Huck's journey to maturity begins with Huck displaying adolescent and dependent behavior. Huck is very immature at the beginning of the novel in the sense that he is reliant on the actions of others in order to dictate the decisions he makes. When Huck asks Tom Sawyer about how they should go about being a gang of robbers, Tom comes up with crazy ideas that do not make sense, but defends himself by saying; " I've seen it in books; and so of course that's what we've got to do"(10). At this point, the gang that Tom Sawyer started is following everything he says. Huck and the rest of the boys are not thinking for themselves, but are doing what they are told, even though what they are doing is ridiculous. This demonstrates Huck's dependence on others to make his decisions and his immaturity. Later on, the boys are discussing when they should go out and rob people, but " all the boys said it would be wicked to do it on Sunday"(11). Huck and the boys started a gang to rob and murder people, but are reluctant to do it on a Sunday because that would be wrong. This is a prime example of adolescent behavior. The main goal of the gang was to rob and murder which is wrong but they contradict themselves by saying that it would be

wrong to do something that is already evil on a Sunday. Huck begins to mature but is hindered by the Duke and Dauphin. As Huck and Jim are traveling down the river they get lost in a fog but eventually find each other. Huck tries to play a trick on Jim, but Jim gets upset about it and feels bad: " It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger; but I done it, and I warn't ever sorry for it afterward, neither"(84). Huck starts to develop a conscience and take responsibility for his actions. He makes a great stride towards maturity, apologizing for making someone feel bad. His development of maturity is nullified by the presence of the Duke and Dauphin. Huck helps the Duke and Dauphin scam people out of their money for awhile, but realizes that it is immoral and wrong. The actions of the Duke and Dauphin were " enough to make a body ashamed of the human race"(157). Huck does not like the fact that the Duke and Dauphin are taking advantage of people and swindling their money away from them. He is maturing and becoming a more independent person, but is still slightly influenced by the Duke and Dauphin. Huck achieves maturity and displays Mark Twain's emphasized independence. Huck becomes more independent as he treks down the river. Jim had been caught and Huck was going to set him free even though it was illegal to do so. He did not care about the consequences, he decided; " All right, then, I'll go to hell"(206). Huck displays Mark Twain's prized attribute of independence. He stands up for what he believes in and does not care about the consequences. Huck has almost achieved maturity. Jim goes on to get captured again and Huck reunites with Tom Sawyer who devises ludicrous plans to break Jim out. Finally, Huck gets annoyed and stands up for himself: " your head gets

leveler and leveler all the time, Tom Sawyer, . . . Picks is the thing, moral or no moral; and as for me, I don't care shucks for the morality of it, nohow . . . I don't give a dead rat what the authorities thinks about it nuther"(237).

Huck finally stands up to Tom and his foolish plans because they are absurd and completely illogical. He displays his maturity by standing up to Tom. Huck's maturity is evident in this statement and his independent spirit is exhibited. Huck's journey towards maturity conveys Mark Twain's belief in the importance of independence. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a tale of developing independence and maturity. Huck achieves maturity in the end and displays Twain's principle of independence. Mark Twain exhibits his value of importance and ultimately brings up a tangible point about the lack of independence of American society.