

Huck finn college essay



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Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a good example of such piece of literature. The novel follows Huck, a white boy, and his friendship with Jim, a runaway slave, as they travel down the Mississippi River.

Within the story, Huck discovers the humanity that is inherent in all people, notes those of his own race. The big tort of society clouds Huck's perspective of Jim and although Huck eventually recognizes Jim as a fellow human being he doesn't ultimately acknowledge the abomination that is Slavery.

The novel begins with Huck's explanation of his circumstances. Huck lives in a world heavily influenced by the ideology of southern, slaving, Christians.

These values are exemplified by Ms. Watson and Widow Douglas who force Huck to adhere to strict rules. Widow Douglas even goes as far as to force Huck to read the Bible in order to show Huck proper morality. The culture of the south was very influential in the development of Huck's social awareness. In Huck's introduction of Jim, he very casually explains that Jim is 'Miss Watson big Nigger, named Jim' (Twain 5).

Huck believes Jim to be a simple asset of Ms. Watson and uses derogatory language to make that assertion. Huck also acknowledges Jim as a "Nigger" first and as "Jim" second. To Huck, Jim's name is secondary to the fact that he is black. The indifference and ease with which Huck speaks that sentence is a clear indication that the culture he lives in has impacted his views on blacks immensely. What is considered racism today is considered normal and appropriate for Huck.

He demonstrates his mentality again later in the book.

At one point, Hock argues with Jim over a minor issue. Hock eventually gives up trying to prove his point and simply thinks to himself, “ I see it warrant no use wasting woo arduous can’t learn a Nigger to argue” (75). Hock’s point here is that its useless to try and rag e with a black person.

He doesn’t attribute Jims inability to formulate an argument to his into elect but to his skin color and excuses him for it. Once again, Hock classifies Jim on his skin co lord. To Hock, Jim is someone to toy with, easy prey for practical jokes and silly arguments.

J m isn’t treated by Hock as an adult, he’s treated as though he were inferior. As the novel proper sees, Jim changes as a character, but not in a traditional sense.

Because the story is portrayed t wrought Hock’s mind, the reader doesn’t fully gain an understanding of Jims true character until Huh KC begins to acknowledge Jim as a person. Hock’s acknowledgement is a slow process, has tended by each event that occurs on the river. Each obstacle overcome solidifies their mutual friendship and widens the lens through which the reader sees Jim.

Initially, Hock defines Jim by his race, disregarding his actions and ignoring his true character, yet throughout the b ask and as Hock is forced to cooperate more and more with Jim, Hock begins to see through the racism of his culture and recognizes Jim to be a genuine person. Hock’s gradual change in heart slowly becomes apparent through his actions I n assisting Jim. Following the intense shootout as a result of a feud between the Granger

fords and the Sheepherders, Hock escapes to the river where Jim is waiting for him, ready to leave on the raft.

Jim is visibly anxious and nervous for Hock and once Hock arrives, Jim tells Huh KC, “ Laws bless you, Chile, I lug right down shop yoga’s dead again... Laws list mighty glad to kitty u back again, honey” (Twain 107).

Jim obviously cares for Hock greatly and talks to Hock in a paternal fashion, using the word “ child”. Jim takes Husk’s danger to heart and exhibits true concern. Husk’s response doesn’t outwardly reciprocate the feeling. Hock very flatly tells Jim, “ All rightist’s mighty good; they won’t find me, and they’ll think I’ve been killed, a ND floated down the river...

Onto lose no time, Jim, but just shove off for the big water” (107). Hock speaks very logically and without emotion, in order to secure their safety. His actions are very instinctual and without emotional outpour. Hock simply doesn’t show very much emotion towards others, mostly expressing his emotions through his thoughts. To other characters in the book, Husk’s concern only becomes apparent through the great lengths he takes to make sure Jim is safe.

Although Hock outwardly appears to support Jim throughout the majority of the book, internally Hock has difficulty shaking the influences of racism.

He wrestles with the thought of turning Jim in several times during the book and comes very close to divulging Jim’s true status as a runaway slave. Mostly, his motivation to do so comes from Mrs..

Watson. Hock feels guilty for his betrayal of her trust through his assistance of Jims escape. Hock thinks to himself, “ What had poor Miss Watson done to you, thou could see her Nigger go off right under your eyes..

. She tried to be good to you in every way she endowed how. That’s what she done” (Twain 82). Hock never expresses this internal conflict to Jim and decides to turn him in.

But, as Jim continues talking, saying “ I couldn’t ever be free if it had’ been for Hock... You us de Bess’ free’ Jims ever had; en you ; s de only free’ ole Jims got now” (83), Hock feels guilt for yet another source.

After Jim expresses his gratitude for Hock, Hock solidifies his decision to continue to assist Jim. Now he must consider the fact that there are negative effects regarding his actions. Hock comes very close to reverting all the progress he’s made in acknowledging Jim as a fellow human being, but ultimately does the right thing even in the face of legal issues and severe penalties.

The problem is that Hock continues to battle an internal conflict who is presenting a polar opposite appearance to Jim.

Hock continues his internal struggle in the events that occur on the Phelps farm. Hock must make a decision over whether or not to save Jim from the farm. Again, Hock feels the same guilt over his predicament between Jim and Mrs..

Watson. After deliberation, Hock once again decides to assist Jim and declares, “ All right, then, I’ll go to hell... It was awful the thought, and awful

words, but they was said” (Twain 195). This declaration is important for Huck’s character.

Hell is a concept taught to him by Mrs.. Watson, yet here he’s officially rejected it in favor for Jim. It symbolizes his rejection of a large portion of his ideologies up until that point. And although he no longer cares for the morality of his previous self, he still hasn’t once recognized the machine behind his entire predicament. Not once in the novel does he De Clare slavery to be a morally wrong thing.

He’s taken great strides to see through racism and see Jim as a human being but he is still blinded by a great deal Of his prior mentality.