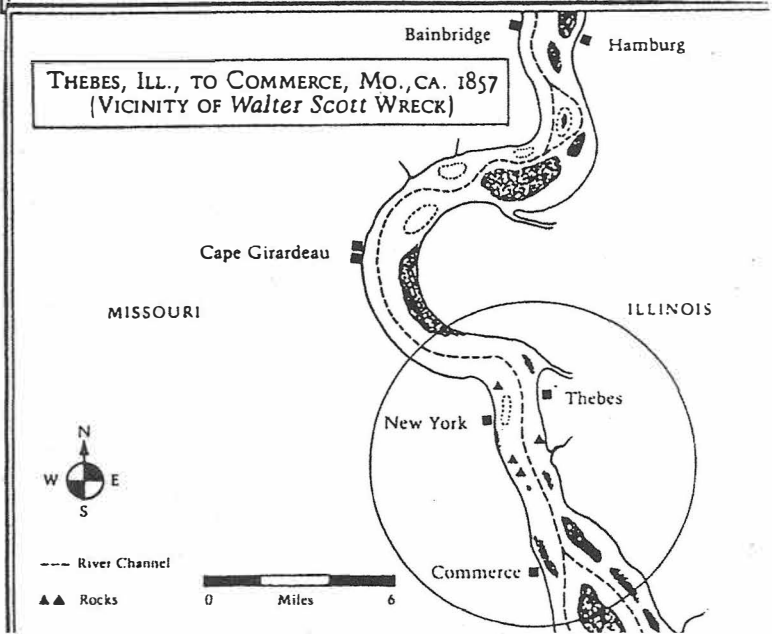
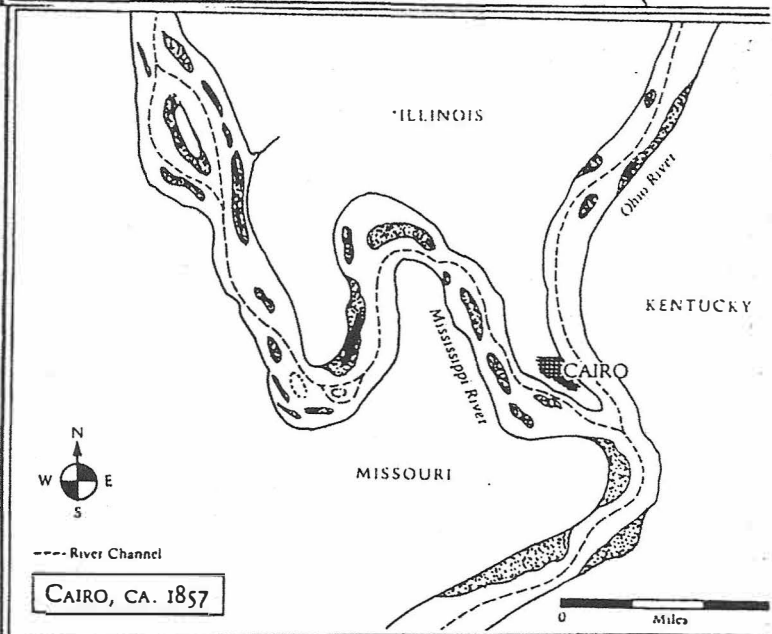
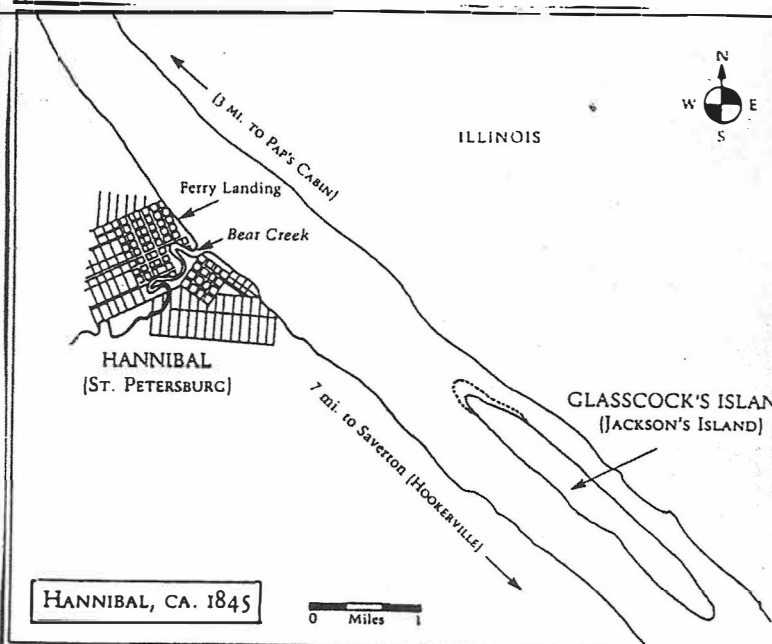
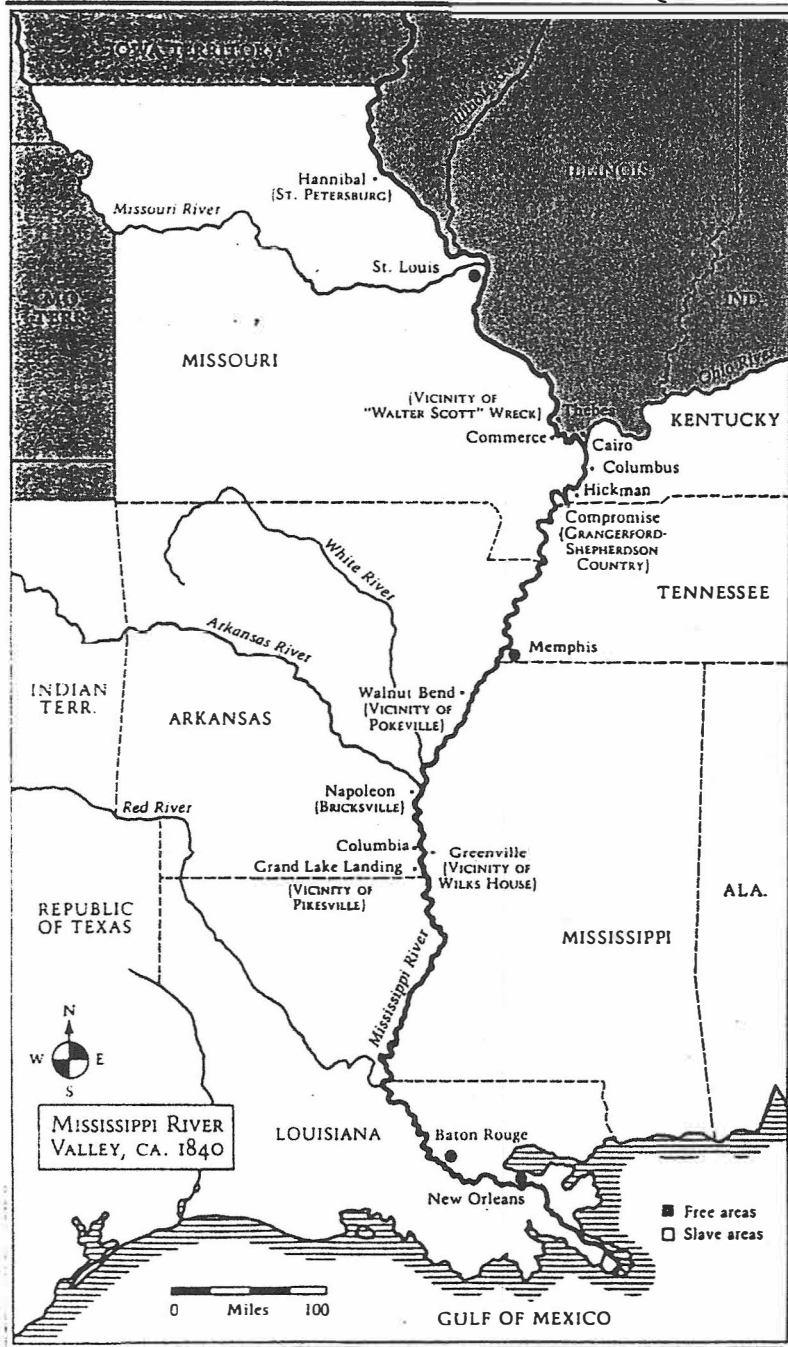


A Guide to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS



Learning Goals: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

You will demonstrate your understanding of:

- why *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is considered an important novel in the cadre of American Literature;
- how a novel written at the end of the 19th Century remains relevant today;
- numerous literary themes that have universal ramifications, themes you typically find developed in other pieces of literature, particularly the concept of the “deformed conscience” as well as the conflict between the individual and society (see page 3);
- common themes; how you can easily connect Huck to other pieces of literature as well as your own experience;
- how to improve your analytical skills;
- the definition and concept of satire;
- how satire can be an effective tool in bringing human behaviors to light and/or precipitating change in human behavior;
- how authors develop satire, how they address serious issues with humor;
- the characteristics of Realist and Romantic literature; Mark Twain as a Realist as opposed to a Romantic; Twain’s disdain for Romantic literature; Huck as the Realist / Tom Sawyer as the Romantic;
- the definitions and use of the following literary devices: symbolism, metaphor, motif, foreshadowing, irony, allusion, imagery, tone, character, vernacular, diction, syntax – and more;
- how to successfully summarize a text, then respond to it by interacting with it, by having the conversation;
- how thinking critically about literature can increase its value to you;
- the controversy surrounding the novel as well as other “banned books.”

Not every assignment in the packet will be assigned. Refer to the lesson plans and the teacher's discretion to which assignments from the packet will be mandatory.

From **"The Damned Human Race"**
by Mark Twain

I have been studying the traits and dispositions of the "lower animals" (so-called), and contrasting them with the traits and dispositions of man. I find the result humiliating to me. For it obliges me to renounce my allegiance to the Darwinian theory of the Ascent of Man from the Lower Animals; since it now seems plain to me that that theory ought to be vacated in favor of a new and truer one, this new and truer one to be named the Descent of Man from the Higher Animals.

In proceeding toward this unpleasant conclusion I have not guessed or speculated or conjectured, but have used what is commonly called the scientific method. That is to say, I have subjected every postulate that presented itself to the crucial test of actual experiment, and have adopted it or rejected it according to the result. Thus I verified and established each step of my course in its turn before advancing to the next. These experiments were made in the London Zoological Gardens, and covered many months of painstaking and fatiguing work. ...

Some of my experiments were quite curious. In the course of my reading I had come across a case where, many years ago, some hunters on our Great Plains organized a buffalo hunt for the entertainment of an English earl -- that, and to provide some fresh meat for his larder. They had charming sport. They killed seventy-two of those great animals; and ate part of one of them and left the seventy-one to rot. In order to determine the difference between an anaconda and an earl -- if any -- I caused seven young calves to be turned into the anaconda's cage. The grateful reptile immediately crushed one of them and swallowed it, then lay back satisfied. It showed no further interest in the calves, and no disposition to harm them. I tried this experiment with other anacondas; always with the same result. The fact stood proven that the difference between an earl and an anaconda is that the earl is cruel and the anaconda isn't; and that the earl wantonly destroys what he has no use for, but the anaconda doesn't. This seemed to suggest that the anaconda was not descended from the earl. It also seemed to suggest that the earl was descended from the anaconda and had lost a good deal in the transition.

I was aware that many men who have accumulated more millions of money than they can ever use have shown a rabid hunger for more, and have not scrupled to cheat the ignorant and the helpless out of their poor servings in order to partially appease that appetite. I furnished a hundred different kinds of wild and tame animals the opportunity to accumulate vast stores of food, but none of them would do it. The squirrels and bees and certain birds made accumulations, but stopped when they had gathered a winter's supply, and could not be persuaded to add to it either honestly or by chicane. In order to bolster up a tottering reputation the ant pretended to store up supplies, but I was not deceived. I know the ant. These experiments convinced me that there is this difference between man and the higher animals: He is avaricious and miserly; they are not.

In the course of my experiments I convinced myself that among the animals man is the only one that harbors insults and injuries, broods over them, waits till a chance offers, then takes revenge. The passion of revenge is unknown to the higher animals. ...

Indecency, vulgarity, obscenity -- these are strictly confined to man; he invented them. Among the higher animals there is no trace of them. They hide nothing; they are not ashamed. Man, with his soiled mind, covers himself. He will not even enter a drawing room with his breast and back naked, so alive are he and his mates to indecent suggestion. Man is "The Animal that Laughs." But so does the monkey, as Mr. Darwin pointed out; and so does the Australian bird that is called the laughing jackass. No -- Man is the Animal that Blushes. He is the only one that does it -- or has occasion to. ...

The higher animals engage in individual fights, but never in organized masses. Man is the only animal that deals in that atrocity of atrocities, War. He is the only one that gathers his brethren about him and goes forth in cold blood and with calm pulse to exterminate his kind. He is the only animal that for sordid wages will march out, as the Hessians did in our Revolution and as the boyish Prince Napoleon did in the Zulu war, and help to slaughter strangers of his own species who have done him no harm and with whom he has no quarrel.

Man is the only animal that robs his helpless fellow of his country takes possession of it and drives him out of it or destroys him. Man has done this in all the ages. There is not an acre of ground on the globe that is in possession of its rightful owner, or that has not been taken away from owner after owner, cycle after cycle, by force and bloodshed.

Man is the only Slave. And he is the only animal who enslaves. He has always been a slave in one form or another, and has always held other slaves in bondage under him in one way or another. In our day he is always some man's slave for wages, and does that man's work; and this slave has other slaves under

him for minor wages, and they do his work. The higher animals are the only ones who exclusively do their own work and provide their own living.

Man is the only Patriot. He sets himself apart in his own country, under his own flag, and sneers at the other nations, and keeps multitudinous uniformed assassins on hand at heavy expense to grab slices of other people's countries, and keep *them* from grabbing slices of *his*. And in the intervals between campaigns he washes the blood off his hands and works for "the universal brotherhood of man" -- with his mouth.

Man is the Religious Animal. He is the only Religious Animal. He is the only animal that has the True Religion -- several of them. He is the only animal that loves his neighbor as himself, and cuts his throat if his theology isn't straight. He has made a graveyard of the globe in trying his honest best to smooth his brother's path to happiness and heaven. He was at it in the time of the Caesars, he was at it in Mahomet's time, he was at it in the time of the Inquisition, he was at it in France a couple of centuries, he was at it in England in Mary's day, he has been at it ever since he first saw the light, he is at it today in Crete -- as per the telegrams quoted above -- he will be at it somewhere else tomorrow. The higher animals have no religion. And we are told that they are going to be left out, in the Hereafter. I wonder why? It seems questionable taste.

Man is the Reasoning Animal. Such is the claim. I think it is open to dispute. Indeed, my experiments have proven to me that he is the Unreasoning Animal. Note his history, as sketched above. It seems plain to me that whatever he is he is *not* a reasoning animal. His record is the fantastic record of a maniac. I consider that the strongest count against his intelligence is the fact that with that record back of him he blandly sets himself up as the head animal of the lot: Whereas by his own standards he is the bottom one.

In truth, man is incurably foolish. Simple things which the other animals easily learn, he is incapable of learning. Among my experiments was this. In an hour I taught a cat and a dog to be friends. I put them in a cage. In another hour I taught them to be friends with a rabbit. In the course of two days I was able to add a fox, a goose, a squirrel and some doves. Finally a monkey. They lived together in peace; even affectionately.

Next, in another cage I confined an Irish Catholic from Tipperary, and as soon as he seemed tame I added a Scotch Presbyterian from Aberdeen. Next a Turk from Constantinople; a Greek Christian from Crete; an Armenian; a Methodist from the wilds of Arkansas; a Buddhist from China; a Brahman from Benares. Finally, a Salvation Army Colonel from Wapping. Then I stayed away two whole days. When I came back to note results, the cage of Higher Animals was all right, but in the other there was but a chaos of gory odds and ends of turbans and fezzes and plaids and bones and flesh -- not a specimen left alive. These Reasoning Animals had disagreed on a theological detail and carried the matter to a Higher Court.

One is obliged to concede that in true loftiness of character, Man cannot claim to approach even the meanest of the Higher Animals. It is plain that he is constitutionally incapable of approaching that altitude; that he is constitutionally afflicted with a Defect which must make such approach forever impossible, for it is manifest that this defect is permanent in him, indestructible, ineradicable.

I find this Defect to be *the Moral Sense*. He is the only animal that has it. It is the secret of his degradation. It is the quality *which enables him to do wrong*. It has no other office. It is incapable of performing any other function. It could never have been intended to perform any other. Without it, man could do no wrong. He would rise at once to the level of the Higher Animals.

Since the Moral Sense has but the one office, the one capacity -- to enable man to do wrong -- it is plainly without value to him. It is as valueless to him as is disease. In fact, it manifestly is a disease. Rabies is bad, but it is not so bad as this disease. *Rabies* enables a man to do a thing which he could not do when in a healthy state: kill his neighbor with a poisonous bite. No one is the better man for having rabies. The Moral Sense enables a man to do wrong. It enables him to do wrong in a thousand ways. Rabies is an innocent disease, compared to the Moral Sense. No one, then, can be the better man for having the Moral Sense. What, now, do we find the Primal Curse to have been? Plainly what it was in the beginning: the infliction upon man of the Moral Sense; the ability to distinguish good from evil; and with it, necessarily, the ability to *do* evil; for there can be no evil act without the presence of consciousness of it in the doer of it.

And so I find that we have descended and degenerated, from some far ancestor -- some microscopic atom wandering at its pleasure between the mighty horizons of a drop of water perchance -- insect by insect, animal by animal, reptile by reptile, down the long highway of smirchless innocence, till we have reached the bottom stage of development -- namable as the Human Being. Below us -- nothing. ...

Discussion Question: How does Twain use satire in this essay? Be specific.

Summary/Response Assignment

Directions: You are to write a *summary/response* paper on Twain's essay, "The Damned Human Race."

- In the first part of your paper, *the summary*, you should summarize the essay by discerning the most significant points Twain makes. Summarize his assertions objectively. Do not attempt to analyze, interpret, evaluate or inject your opinion. In other words, **report** on his essay. Use academic voice in this section of your paper.
- In the second section, *the response*, comment on Twain's essay. How do you interpret it? What do you think about it? With which points do you agree? Disagree? Why? Evaluate it. Is this an effective essay? Why? You should use first person ("I") in this section of the paper because I am specifically asking for your opinion.

Huck Discussion Questions

INTRODUCTION

Major Themes: Mark Twain described the major theme of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as an irony: "A sound heart and a deformed conscience come into collision and conscience suffers defeat." We can define the "deformed conscience" as a conscience influenced by the laws of society and a sense of duty toward those laws. The laws of society at the time of Huck's journey considered people of African descent as property and, therefore, less than human. Huck's struggle with his "deformed conscience" represents a major conflict in the novel. Furthermore, the novel is rich in common themes, themes that we will discover in many other pieces of literature.

1. The conflict between the individual and society – Huck's struggle with his "deformed conscience"
2. The conflict between the emotional and the rational
3. Appearance vs. reality – hypocrisy and "phoniness"
4. Superstition – as a method of explaining and understanding
5. Tolerance vs. prejudice
6. Dehumanization – dehumanizing human beings to oppress them
7. Death and rebirth
8. Coming of age – the hero's journey
9. The role of the outsider
10. The nature and significance of the following human traits: gullibility, ignorance and naïveté

Other significant themes include: the feeling of loneliness and isolation; the quest for freedom; romantic vs. real; implied vs. literal; the role of women; the concept of family.

The River: In *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the river symbolizes life's journey, and it becomes symbolic of Huck's natural virtue. The current determines the direction of the raft as well as Huck's life. There is a major contrast between life on the river and life on the shore because life on the river (uncivilized) is peaceful and easy, yet not totally without danger; however, life on the shore (civilized) can be cruel, authoritarian, hypocritical, and reflective of the "Damned Human Race." Life on the raft is paradoxical. Even though confined to a small space, Huck et al. experience greater freedom on the raft.

Satire: At the beginning of this unit, we discussed an essay, "**The Damned Human Race**," in which Twain utilizes satire to reveal human follies. Satire is a style of writing using humor and hyperbole to ridicule some aspect of human behavior in order to draw attention to it or initiate change. The behaviors Twain satirizes include: greed, racism, bravado, Southern chivalry and aristocracy, gullibility, lack of altruism, "obituary" poets, romanticism, "religious" people (not religion), naïveté, and many more.

The Issue of the “N-word”: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been consistently criticized and even banned for what many perceive to be the overuse of the pejorative, “nigger.” Dr. Randall Kennedy, Harvard University Professor of Law, addresses the issue in *Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word*:

“A second, and achingly poignant, example of mistaken protest is the widespread repudiation of *Huckleberry Finn*, now one of the most beleaguered texts in American literature. Monthly, it seems, someone attacks Mark Twain’s most famous book on the grounds that it is racist. The novel’s most energetic foe, John H. Wallace, calls it ‘the most grotesque example of racist trash ever written.’ For many of *Huckleberry Finn*’s enemies, the most upsetting and best proof of the book’s racism is the fact that *nigger* appears in the text some 215 times. At one point, for example, Huck’s Aunt Sally asks him why he is so late arriving at her house:

‘We blowed a cylinder head.’

‘Good gracious! Anybody hurt?’

‘No’m. Killed a nigger.’

‘Well, it’s lucky; because sometimes people do get hurt.’

Wallace asserts that this exchange, within the context of the novel as a whole, strives to make the point that blacks are not human beings. That interpretation, however, is ludicrous, a frightening exhibition of how thought becomes stunted in the absence of any sense of irony. Twain is not willfully buttressing racism here; he is seeking ruthlessly to unveil and ridicule it. By putting *nigger* in white characters’ mouths, the author is not branding blacks, but rather branding the whites.

There was a time when Twain’s own use of *nigger* signaled contempt. As a young man inculcated with white-supremacist beliefs and sentiments, he viewed blacks as inferior and spoke of them as such. As he matured and traveled and became more cosmopolitan, however, Twain underwent a dramatic metamorphosis. He grew to hate slavery and the brutality of Jim Crow and began to express his antiracist perspective satirically through his writings. *Huckleberry Finn* is the best fictive example of Twain’s triumph over his upbringing. In it he creates a loving relationship between Huck and Jim, the runaway slave, all the while sardonically impugning the pretensions of white racial superiority. Among Twain’s nonfiction, a striking example of his revolt against bigotry is his piece ‘Only a Nigger,’ in which he speaks in the voice of an apologist for a lynching:

Ah, well! Too bad, to be sure! A little blunder in the administration of justice by southern mob-law: but nothing to speak of. Only “a nigger” killed by mistake—that is all. ... But mistakes will happen, even in the conduct of the best regulated and most high-toned mobs, and surely there is no good reason why Southern gentlemen should worry themselves with useless regrets, so long as only an innocent “nigger” is hanged, or roasted or [] to death now and then. ... What are the lives of a few “niggers” in comparison with the impetuous instincts of a proud and fiery race? Keep ready the halter, therefore, o chivalry of Memphis! Keep the lash knotted; keep the brand and the [last cigarettes] in waiting, for prompt work with the next ‘nigger’ who may be suspected of any damnable crime!

Wallace, I suppose, would read this as an endorsement of lynching. But obviously it is intended to be just the opposite. The same holds true for *Huckleberry Finn*, which Twain designed to subvert, not to reinforce, racism” (137-141).

The discussion questions will be used in different ways, as Reading Notes, Socratic Circle talking points, Reading Quizzes, group activities, full class discussions, or individual assignments.

Discussion Questions Notice – IV

1. Describe the Widow Douglas. How does Huck respond to the Moses story? What does this tell the reader about Huck's character?
2. Discuss superstition as a motif. Provide examples.
3. Discuss Huck's view of death and the afterlife. Death is mentioned frequently in Chapter I. Why?
4. Comment on the trick Tom and Huck play on Jim.
5. "Jim was most ruined for a servant ..." Discuss the significance.
6. Considering the themes listed above, comment on Tom's decision to leave 5 cents for the candles. Do you think Huck would have done the same thing? Why or why not?
7. Compare and contrast the characters of Tom and Huck.
8. Why does Tom think it important that the gang be considered "highwaymen" rather than burglars?
9. Discuss Huck's conflict over Miss Watson's view of prayer.
10. Why does Tom Sawyer call Huck a "numskull"? Significance?
11. Comment: "I reckoned he believed in the A-rabs and the elephants, but as for me I think different. It had all the marks of a Sunday school."
12. Why does Huck want to give all the money to Judge Thatcher? Significance?

Huck Discussion Questions: V – XI

1. Pap: "I won't have it. I'll lay for you, my smarty; and if I catch you about that school I'll tan you good. First you know you'll get religion. I never seen such a son." Discuss the meaning and irony.
2. How does the refusal of the court to grant custody of Huck to the Widow Douglas and Judge Thatcher reflect on society?
3. Even though Huck is regularly beaten, he prefers to stay at the shanty. Why? How does this reflect one of the major themes?
4. Comment on Pap's drunken tirade over the "govment." What message is Twain sending?
5. What major theme is reflected by Huck's escape from his father and his discovery of Jim?
6. What is ironic about Huck wishing Tom were there to help plan the escape? How do you think the plan would have developed had Tom been there? Would it have been successful?
7. Discuss the irony in Huck's finding bread to eat. He also seems to modify his position on prayer. Discuss.

8. Discuss Jim's actions after meeting Huck.
9. Discuss how running into Jim represents Huck's rebirth. Discuss the resulting conflict in Huck's mind.
10. Significance: "People would call me a lowdown Abolitionist and despise me for keeping mum."
11. Even though Jim seems to rely on superstition, many of his predictions are rooted in knowledge. Explain the significance.
12. Discuss the trick that Huck plays on Jim. Is that typical of Huck's character? What does he learn?
13. What do we learn about Huck's character from his trip to shore?
14. When Mrs. Loftus discusses the money that Tom had found, a common human trait emerges. Discuss.
15. Discuss the satire revealed in the amounts of the rewards.

Huck Discussion Questions: XII – XIV

1. Discuss Huck's logic in differentiating between borrowing and stealing.
2. What does Huck's insistence on boarding the wrecked steamboat tell us about him?
3. What is the significance of the name of the steamboat, *The Walter Scott*?
4. Why does Huck try to save the murderers, and how does this reflect on his character?
5. Discuss the satire in the scheme Huck devises to rescue the murderers. How is he able to enlist the aid of the boatman?
6. Why did Jim feel that "it was all up with HIM anyway it could be fixed"?
7. How accurate is Huck's information about dukes and kings? Why?
8. Why is Jim so vehement in his dislike of King Solomon? Through the stand Jim takes, Twain is making a statement concerning antebellum society's common stereotype of the slave. Discuss and elaborate on the style in which the scene is written.

Huck Discussion Questions: XV – XX

1. Discuss the significance of the fog incident and Jim's interpretation of it. "The lot of towheads was troubles we was going to get into with quarrelsome people and all kinds of mean folks, but if we minded our business and didn't talk back and aggravate them, we would pull through and get out of the fog and into the big clear river, which was the free states, and wouldn't have no more trouble" (64). Consider the major themes as well as foreshadowing.
2. How does Huck feel about playing the trick on Jim? Comment: "It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up and humble myself to a nigger; but I done it, and I warn't sorry for it afterwards, neither" (65). How does this statement contribute to the overall meaning of the novel?

3. Discuss the significance of the following quotes from Chapter XVI:

"Jim said it made him all over trembly and feverish to be so close to freedom. Well, it made me all trembly and feverish, too, to hear him because I begun to get it through my head that he *was* most free -- and who was to blame for it? Why *me*. I couldn't get it out of my conscience, no how nor no way." (66).

"Here was this nigger which I as good as helped to run away, coming right out flat-footed and saying he would steal his children -- children that belonged to a man I didn't even know; a man that hadn't ever done me no harm." (67). Explain the irony in this quote as well as the significance.

"Well, then, says I, what's the use you learning to do right, when it's troublesome to do right and ain't no trouble to do wrong, and the wages is just the same?" (69).

"Doan' less' talk about it, Huck. Po' niggers can't have no luck. I awluz 'spected dat rattle-snake skin warn't done wid its work." (70).

4. Why do the bounty hunters give Huck money? What is ironic about their reaction to Huck's story?
5. What does the destruction of the "naturally" created raft by the "industrially" created steamboat symbolize?
6. Speculate on why Twain put *Huckleberry Finn* aside for a few years at the end of XVI?
7. Describe the Grangerford house. What is satirical about the furnishings, art, and poetry? What does this description say about the Grangerfords?
8. The first part of Chapter XVII reveals an example of the theme of Huck playing on Buck's gullibility. Discuss this example as well as other examples of the novel's major themes evident in Chapters XVI & XVII.
9. What does Huck's reaction to "Moses and the candle" indicate? Discuss the meaning of "Moses" as a motif in the novel.
10. What does Twain satirize in his description of the church service and the hogs that sleep under the floor?
11. What does the feud symbolize? Does this remind you of another famous piece of literature? Explain. Through the feud incident, Twain satirizes human traits and behaviors. Discuss.
12. "I was powerful glad to get away from the feuds, and so was Jim to get away from the swamp. We said there warn't no home like a raft, after all. Other places do seem so clamped up and smothery, but a raft don't. You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft"(88). Discuss the paradox. Furthermore, this excerpt from the final paragraph of Chapter XVIII is significant in that it pertains to the major themes of the novel. Explain.
13. Huck and Jim's manner of dress on the raft is symbolic. What do clothes represent?
14. Why doesn't Huck expose the Duke and the King (Dauphin) as frauds?
15. Who is the most shrewd, the King and the Duke or Huck? Why? Give some examples.

16. What does Twain satirize in the plan to present *Romeo and Juliet*? Discuss *Romeo and Juliet* as a motif.
17. Discuss the significance of the pirate and the revival meeting. What is Twain satirizing?
18. Is Twain making a statement about society through the antics of the King and Duke? Explain.

Huck Discussion Questions: XXI - XXIII

1. "Of all the animals, man is the only one that is cruel. He is the only one that inflicts pain for the pleasure of doing it. It is a trait that is not known to the higher animals." This quote is from Twain's essay, "**The Damned Human Race**." How is this contempt for certain aspects of human behavior evident in the description of the Arkansas town in Chapter XXI? How does he describe the residents?
2. Why does Huck observe but does not participate in the schemes of the duke and king?
3. Through the Grangerford episode, Twain was able to criticize the myth of Southern honor. What myth of Southern life does Twain satirize in the Sherburn / Boggs incident (which, by the way, was based on a true incident)? What aspect of human nature does Twain satirize through the scene in the drugstore?
4. Compare the circus with the entertainment supplied by the duke and king?
5. What does Huck's reaction to the circus incident tell us about him? Whom does he think was most deceived?
6. What is Twain implying about human nature through the advertising for the "Royal Nonesuch"?
7. "What was the use to tell Jim these warn't real kings and dukes? It wouldn't a done no good; and besides, it was just as I said; you couldn't tell them from the real kind." (117). What does Twain imply?
8. What is significant about the story of 'Lizabeth'?
9. Be ready to tell Huck's story so far. Develop a chronology of events – the more detailed the better!

Huck Discussion Questions: XXIV – XXVII

1. As we have discussed, clothes can play a symbolic or thematic role in the novel. Huck even says that he "never knowed how clothes could change a body before." Discuss the thematic role of clothes in these chapters.
2. Comment on the last paragraph of Chapter XXIV. Make a connection to Twain's description of the Arkansas town. Why is Huck's response to the Peter Wilks incident so strong? Why does Huck make moral evaluations now (you'll recall that he remained morally neutral concerning the prior schemes of the duke and king)?
3. What qualities do the Wilks girls have that allow them to be fooled so easily?

4. Why is it significant that Joanna eats in the kitchen? What is the significance of her nickname? What themes are revealed?
5. What statement about the behavior of people does Twain make through the Dr. Robinson incident?
6. Previously Huck has refused to hinder the antics of the king and duke. Now he attempts to foil their scheme. Why? What theme(s) from the novel can you apply to Huck's change in attitude?

Huck Questions XXVIII - XXX

1. Twain was heavily criticized for bad taste due to his description of the funeral toward the end of Chapter XXVII. Why do you think he was criticized, and do you think the criticism justified?
2. On page 141 Huck says, ". . . here's a case where I'm blest if it don't look to me like the truth is better, and actuly *safer*, than a lie." Explain.
3. In these three chapters Huck finds himself having to lie for various reasons. How do his motives differ?
4. Why doesn't Twain involve Jim more in these chapters?
5. Does Huck's escape from Hines say anything about Hines' character?
6. How does Huck feel about Mary Jane? Why does Huck tell her to go away? Significance?
7. Discuss the significance of Huck's statement, ". . . anybody but a lot of prejudiced chuckleheads would a *seen* that the old gentlemen was spinning truth and t'other one lies."
8. What does the doctor represent?
9. By the end of Chapter XXX, do you think Twain vindicates the characters of the duke and king or does he have them remain as villains? Explain.

Huck Discussion Questions XXXI - XXXV

1. Would you say that Chapter 31 represents the climax of the novel? Why or why not?
2. Huck says, "All right, then, I'll go to hell." (162). Explain the irony in that statement.
3. Discuss the symbolism of the imagery at the beginning of Chapter 32.
4. Discuss Huck's understanding of Providence (bottom of 165)? Would Miss Watson agree?
5. How does Twain use irony in the discussion between Huck and Mrs. Phelps about the "steamboat accident."
6. One of the recurring themes becomes apparent when Huck discovers that the Phelps are expecting Tom Sawyer. Which theme comes to mind and why?
7. Huck and Tom both agree to help Jim escape; however, their motives are different. Explain.

8. "...and as they went by I see they had the king and duke astraddle of a rail – that is, I knowed it WAS the king and the duke, though they was all over tar and feathers. ...Well it made me sick to see it; and I was sorry for them poor pitiful rascals. ...Human beings CAN be cruel to one another" (174).
Comment. What does this reveal about Huck's character? How does Huck's reaction to the demise of the duke and king relate to Twain's essay "The Damned Human Race"?
9. Discuss the irony in Tom's reaction to the stealing of the watermelon.
10. Why does Huck let Tom take control?

Huck Discussion XXXVI-XXXIX – Written Assignment

Directions: Please write a *minimum* of three paragraphs on the following topic. **Supply evidence from Chapters 35 - 39 to support your answer.** It is due next class period. Think carefully about your answer.

The Background: As we have discussed in class, Mark Twain wrote in the *Realist* tradition. Realist authors attempt to portray life accurately. Furthermore, Twain reflects *Regionalism* in his writing. Regionalists depict particular geographical areas in their literature through settings, character attitudes and behavior as well as dialogue. Eudora Welty ("The Worn Path") also wrote in the Regionalist tradition.

As a Realist, Twain criticizes the *Romantics*. The Romantics based their literature on the conviction that imagination and emotion were superior to reason. You will recall that in Chapters 12 & 13, Twain names the wrecked steamboat *The Walter Scott* after a Romantic author, metaphorically relating it to the demise of Romanticism. Obviously, Twain was not a fan of Romantic fiction.

The Question: How was Twain's disdain for Romantic fiction evident in Chapters 36-39?

Hint – Think about:

1. Tom's character as symbolic of the Romantic;
2. how Huck has changed since Tom arrived;
3. the practicality of the plans for Jim's escape;
4. the consideration for Jim's welfare in these plans.

Huck Discussion Questions XL-Chapter the Last

1. What do we learn about Jim in these chapters?
2. What effect does the Doctor's speech in support of Jim have? How do you feel about that?
3. What is the significance of the bullet?
4. Where is Huck going at the end of the novel? What does this imply about his view of the world in which he lives?
5. Comment on the style of the novel. Do you feel it represents the Realist tradition as we have discussed it? What aspects of Huck's character make him a good narrator? What problems did you encounter (if any) due to Huck's narration? Speculate on how a different narrator or a third person omniscient narrator would impact the story.
6. Do you think that some critics of the novel are justified in saying that it is a racist novel and should be removed from required reading lists? Support your response.