

## Lesson Plan – *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

**Concept: Is *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* a Classic?**

**Developed by: Betty Bloomfield, Carroll County Public Schools  
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**Suggested Grade Level:** Intermediate Gifted and Talented or Middle School

**Time Frame:** Four Weeks

### **Objectives:**

Students will justify the labeling of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as a literature classic by identifying and describing six examples in the established criteria provided by teacher.

### **State Standards:**

#### **Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Standard 1.0 General Reading Processes

E. General Reading Comprehension

1. Develop/Apply comprehension skills through exposure to a variety of print texts.
  - a. Listen to critically and critically read and discuss texts representing diversity in content, culture, authorship and perspective including such areas as race, gender, disability, religion and socio-economic background.
  - c. Discuss reactions to and ideas and information gained from reading experiences with adults and peers in both formal and informal situations

Standard 4.0 Writing

2. Compose oral, written, and visual presentations that express personal ideas, inform or persuade
  
6. Locate, retrieve and use information from various sources to accomplish a purpose.

#### **Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Standard 3.0: Comprehension of Literary Text

Indicator 3: Analyze and evaluate elements of a narrative text to facilitate understanding and interpretation.

**Assessment/Evaluation:** Gifted and Talented Resource Teacher will model how to create the first section of the rubric. The gifted and talented resource teacher will model how to create the first section of the rubric about the human condition. The students will then be given a choice of classic criteria from the predetermined list. Students may work alone or in a small group of two to three to produce their portion of the rubric. The final rubric will be used to assess the students' final product. The final product will be a collection of text support to justify whether *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* should be labeled a literary classic.

**Language/Vocabulary:** classic, human condition, adoration, perpetuation, universal, contemporary, mediation of childhood, maturation, freedom, duty, innocence, triumph, defeat,

wisdom, enduring dilemmas, endure, privileged, psychologically questionable, morally questionable, authority, cruelty, waterway

**Integrated Curriculum:** Social Studies-cultural study, slavery, history; critical thinking skills

**Background Information:**

The reading of *Huckleberry Finn* will be done with the regular classroom teacher. The teacher will be reading *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. The classroom teacher will use the “Checkpoint” lesson suggestions from the Mark Twain Boyhood Museum website: <http://marktwainmuseum.org/media/READING%20TOM%20SAWYER.pdf>. The classroom teacher will be teaching the students four of the five reading lessons during the week. The gifted and talented resource teacher will team teach with the regular classroom teacher during the fifth day of reading instruction for the gifted and talented students. The GT resource teacher will be responsible for leading the GT students in the analysis of the text to justify why the book is considered a classic.

**Materials:**

Criteria for Classic list  
Visual of Mark Twain Quotes About a Classic  
Chart for Criteria Text Support  
Copies of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: The Only Authoritative Text  
(ISBN 978-0-520-22838-2) University of California Press  
Examples of Text Support for Human Condition

**Technology Support**

Twain quotes online at <http://www.twainquotes.com/>  
Reading Comprehension Checkpoints on  
<http://marktwainmuseum.org/media/READING%20TOM%20SAWYER.pdf>.  
Maryland State Department of Education-Voluntary State Curriculum  
<http://mdk12.org/instruction/index.html>

**Related Twain Quotes/Other Readings:**

A classic is something that everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read.  
- The Disappearance of Literature speech, 1900

Classic: a book which people praise and don't read.  
- *Following the Equator*, Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar

“My books are water: those of great geniuses are wine. Everybody drinks water.”

**Lesson Plan Format –**

**A. Introduction:** Display a bottle of Coke, a model or picture of a classic car, copy of any children's classic in literature, a copy of a musical classic, and a copy of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Ask: What do all of these objects have in common?

**B. Lesson:**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Teacher Activity/Questions to be asked</b>	<b>Student Activity</b>
15 min.	Hook: Display a bottle of Coke, a model or picture of a classic car, copy of any children's classic in literature, a copy of a musical classic, and a copy of <u>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u> . Ask: What do all of these objects have in common?	Make connections and share thinking
10 min.	Students have completed reading the novel <u>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u> with the regular classroom teacher. The gifted and talented teacher will discuss how the students will begin to focus on predetermined criteria that a book possesses to become a piece of classic literature. The teacher will introduce the big picture of the project and the final product that will be constructed by the end.	Listen and question
5 min.	Introduce the handout Criteria of a Classic. Teacher will give the students time to preview the information about the criteria of a classic. (See Criteria for Classic Attachment)	Read to be informed
30 min.	Gifted and talented resource teacher will discuss the first five criteria on the list. These criteria do not involve text support from the novel, so teacher will be able to discuss these quickly.	Listen and respond
45 min.	Resource teacher will then introduce the idea that the students will be creating the rubric to assess the final product. The students will be responsible for analyzing the text and finding support for six other classic criteria. The resource teacher will model how to assess the "human condition" which will be the first classic criteria. The teacher will model how to set up a chart which will include an assessment scale and define the descriptions for each number on the scale. (See Human Condition Attachment)	Listen and question
30 min.	After modeling how to complete the first section on the rubric, the resource teacher will introduce the remaining criteria titles. Individuals or small groups of students will select an area of interest and complete their section of the rubric. The teacher will circulate and be available to support students.	Write
During the school day after lesson	The teacher will collect the rubric descriptions and display in a central location to share with the class members. Students may use Post-It notes to add suggestions or ask questions. Post-It notes should be placed on the display. The teacher will compile the information and construct a final rubric.	Read and respond.
40 min.	Teacher will explain that the students will choose six criteria on the rubric and find examples from the text. The rubric will give students the tools needed to determine if the book meets the criteria to be labeled a "literary classic".	Listen and question
180 min.	The students will use the rubric to rate the text support.	Read, analyze, evaluate
10 min. per presentation	The student or student groups will create and present a speech to the class. The purpose of the presentation is to share findings. A student will be appointed to record the ratings on a central rubric. The class will analyze and evaluate the final scoring of <u>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u> .	Synthesize, speech to present
30 min.	Student appointee will present the final results of the rubric.	

Culminating Activity: Teacher will give each student a copy of the rubric. Students will write a letter to the American Library Association ( ALA) persuading the members that Adventures of Huckleberry Finn should continue to be a literary classic. (See attachment)

**Strategies/accommodations to support students with exceptionalities:** The following lesson has included the following to accommodate the gifted and talented student: choice in topics and decisions about working independently or in a small group, advanced level of reading materials chosen, higher level thinking, complex assignment, independency, students designing rubric, integrated, subject matter that applies empathy for others and universal concerns.

**Possible Follow-up Activities:** Mock Trial for Jim or Huckleberry Finn, mock trial to defend The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn or Mark Twain's other books to justify whether or not it should be given the title classic.

**Possible Guest Speakers/Other Resources:** Librarian to discuss classic literature, lawyer to discuss the how to conduct a mock trial

# Criteria for Classics in Literature

The following is a list of common elements generally found in literature that has been designated as classic.

-The book must be able to stand the test of time. These stories have been around for at least thirty years or more.

-The story is kept alive from generation to the next by common consent of critics and children. The true classics never cease to excite young minds.

-Most everyone in a culture has heard of the story.

-The book must have achieved an honored position in children's literature through combination of adult adoration, parent perpetuation and teacher assignments.

-The book should compete favorably with contemporary books. These books should hold it's own amid today's ever-increasing number of new and beautiful books.

-The book uses a waterway as an escape way.

-The book has qualities to admire such as style in writing, structure, plot, and theme.

-Each classic has something very substantial to admire about it including style, plot, theme, or psychological insight that has made it endure and withstand the test of time.

-The book is a rich mediation on the meaning of childhood.

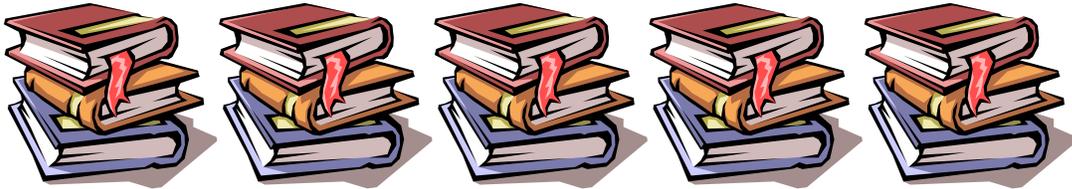
-The stories employ important themes that deal with real and important issues in life. These may include themes such as duty, freedom, work, play, fear, desire innocence, wisdom, and maturation.

-The book speaks to us across time. The content addresses universal concerns and the enduring dilemmas that are part of human existence?

-This type of story tends to see life from a privileged point of view.

You will find well-to-do people, white people, Christians, males, northern Europeans, and Americans in the story. The story includes psychologically or morally questionable attitudes towards woman, non-white races, authority, work, profit-taking, power and cruelty that one cannot and should not accept as right.

Created by Betty Bloomfield, July 31, 2008



# Rubric for Assessing Literary Classics

Criteria	4	3	2	1
<p><b>Human Condition</b> (encompasses the totality of experience of being human and living human lives)</p>	<p>The issues and topics in text address <b>all</b> cultures and genders.</p>	<p>The issues and topics in text address <b>most</b> cultures and genders.</p>	<p>The issues and topics in text address <b>several</b> cultures and genders.</p>	<p>The issues and topics in text address a small group of people in one culture.</p>

# **Model of Text Support in**

## **Adventures of**

## **Huckleberry Finn**

### **The Human Condition**

The following passage references provide textual support to help evaluate whether this novel addresses the human condition.

<b>Event or Scene in Book</b>	<b>Page Number in <u>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u></b>	<b>Description of Human Condition</b>
Miss Watson selling her slave Jim after promising not to do this	53	betrayal
Miss Watson prays for Huck	13	caring, love
Huck was living on the island alone	51	lonesome
Jim and Huck are living off the resources on the island	48-50 58-66	survival
Huck's father hits him, says harmful words to him	22-33	child abuse, neglect

## **Writing Prompt for Culminating Activity:**

The American Library Association (ALA) members have asked you to read and evaluate whether Adventures of Huckleberry Finn should still be considered a literary “classic”. Once you have evaluated the rubric scores and come to a conclusion, you are to write to persuade the ALA to continue or discontinue allowing Adventures of Huckleberry Finn to be labeled as a literary “classic”.

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Dear American Library Association Members,