

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Lesson Plan
Developed by: Fielding Poe, Eureka High School, Eureka, Missouri
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Concept: Point-Of-View

Suggested Grade Level: Secondary

Time Frame: 1-2 days

Objectives: Students will write from the perspective of a character from the novel (Tom Sawyer, Pap, Widow Douglass, Miss Watson, Jim, etc.).

Missouri State Standards:

- reading and evaluating fiction, poetry, and drama
- writing formally and informally
- participating in formal and informal presentations and discussions of issues and ideas

Assessment/Evaluation: After students choose an event from the school year and rewrite that event from the perspective of a different character, they will share their descriptions with other students. Those students who are listening to the descriptions will carefully evaluate them and decide which character is narrating. The written descriptions must employ language that is appropriate for the particular character who is narrating the event.

Language/Vocabulary: characterization, point-of-view, dialect

Background Information: Students must read at least a portion of the novel and be familiar with its characters.

Materials: *Huck Finn* novels, paper, pens

Lesson Plan Format-

- A. Introduction (5 min.): Have you ever attended an exciting sporting event or concert? How would your description of the event be different from those performing on stage or the athletic field? How would the event be told from your best friend's perspective or that of a family member? What advantages does a spectator have in describing this event? How about the advantages of the performer? Is one perspective better than the other or just different? You will notice that personality and character qualities greatly influence someone's point-of-view. When listening to someone's perspective regarding a certain event, you must be careful to consider his/her motives, background, personality, etc.

B. Lesson (20 min.): We are going to apply our understanding of point-of-view to the characters in *Huck Finn*. Your first task is to choose a character from the novel and to describe a brief event from that character's perspective. When choosing a character, you must ask yourself the following questions: What dialect does this character use? How does this character act? What is this character's personality? For instance, Tom is a mischievous, animated, larger-than-life character. We know that he loves to be entertained by acting out the events from the stories that he reads. Also, he is educated. It will be necessary to analyze the dialogue of your character and to emulate those speech patterns. Tom's speech will obviously be much different from that of an uneducated slave (Jim). You may decide to choose from the following events: a school dance, sporting event, pep assembly, drama production, talent show, etc. How would Tom describe his experience of prom? Think of how different this would be from Huck's description. After your point-of-view assignment is complete (should be at least one written page), you will read your description to a small group (3-4), and the group will decide which character is narrating.

C. Closure (15-20 min.): After students have shared their descriptions in small groups, you may choose to lead a class discussion. It would be a good idea to have students choose the best description from each group and explain why that particular description was successful. Each group will then appoint a member to share that description with the class. After each group has shared their best narration, the class will decide which one is the best overall. The teacher will facilitate a discussion pointing out the effectiveness of that description. The class will ultimately make a list of those effective devices/elements that were employed and will walk away with a better understanding of the significance of point-of-view.