

Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum
 Lesson Plan for *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*
 Created by: Amy Schroer
 Cole County R-I Elementary, Russellville, MO
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 Hannibal, Missouri

The Making of a Tom Sawyer Newspaper

LESSON PLAN FOR <i>Tom Sawyer</i>	
Concept or Topic: Newspapers/News Travel	Suggested Grade Level: 3-5 (can be modified for other levels)
Subject: English, History, Current Events, Literature	Suggested Time Frame: 6 Days
Objective(s): Students will list three ways in which news travelled in the setting of Tom Sawyer and compare/contrast with five news reporting sources from today. Students will learn how today's newspaper would differ and be similar to a newspaper from the Mark Twain/Samuel Clemens era. Students will identify important Mark Twain events within the design of a newspaper.	
State Standards: This unit can be used to reference many objectives that touch on the GLEs for Reading (1I "text to world" and 2C "cause and effect" and "story events") and Writing (2B "capitalization", 2C "punctuation", 2D "parts of speech", 2E "spelling", 2F "sentence construction", 3C "write expository text", 3D "summarize events", and 3E "audience and purpose"). The main standard to accomplish in this unit is relating the text to the world (R1I).	
Assessment Options: Each student's job for the newspaper will be assessed by a teacher-developed rubric with the newspaper graded as a whole. Be sure to explain to class that the entire group is responsible for the newspaper. For example, even if you are in charge of graphics, you still have to proofread articles after your job is finished. Knowledge of the comparisons and contrasts of newspapers will be assessed through a mini-quiz. Please see attached.	
Vocabulary: Vocabulary words will be introduced on Day 1 with definitions and restated as needed throughout other lessons to ensure student understanding of the newspaper business. The following words are vocabulary: type (a metal rectangular block with a character from which an inked print can be made), typesetter (a person that sets type), handbills (a small printed sheet to be distributed by hand), editor/editorial duties (person who decides what goes into the paper, reviews, and corrects reporters' work and writes headlines), edition (one of several issues of a newspaper), and circulation (the number of copies of a newspaper sold).	

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Subject Area Integration:

History (the making and circulating of newspapers), Art (the homemade process of making paper), Language (editing and proofreading skills, especially with capitalization, punctuation, and spelling)

Background Information:

The teacher should summarize *Tom Sawyer* briefly before beginning the project. Ideally, the teacher will have read *Tom Sawyer* aloud to/with the class. The teacher will also be providing information on current and past newspapers throughout the lessons. The teacher should also give the following information about Mark Twain...Sam Clemens had to stop going to school at the age of 11. He then began working various jobs at different newspapers. "First he was a [printer's devil](#) for the [Missouri Courier](#). In 1851 he became a typesetter and editorial assistant at the [Western Union](#), a local paper owned by his older brother, Orion. Sam published his first known sketch, "A Gallant Fireman," in this paper. In 1853 Sam left Hannibal to work at a series of typesetting jobs in various cities including St. Louis, New York City, and Philadelphia. Then he returned to the Midwest in 1854, working in St. Louis again, Keokuk, and Cincinnati. In Keokuk, Iowa, he worked with Orion at his new paper, the Keokuk Journal." (taken from <http://shs.umsystem.edu/famousmissourians/writers/clemens/clemens.shtml>) Students' prior knowledge will be activated in the first lesson. See lesson plan.

Materials:

Book: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain

Current copies of the local newspaper

Scoring rubric (provided)

Quiz (provided)

Materials to make homemade paper:

- One cup of torn pieces of scrap paper
- Kitchen blender
- Metal wire screen
- Wool
- Tub and water
- Kitchen rolling pin
- Laundry line and clothes pins

Technology:

Websites:

- <http://shs.umsystem.edu/famousmissourians/writers/clemens/clemens.shtml> (information on Mark Twain as a journalist)
- http://www.visithannibalmo.com/visit/cp_history.shtml (facts on the history of newspapers in the Hannibal area)
- <http://www.madehow.com/Volume-2/Newspaper.html> (facts on how the newspaper is made today)
- http://hannibal.lib.mo.us/historic_hannibal_newspapers.htm (archived images of past Hannibal newspapers)
- <http://www.tutorials.com/06/0697/0697.asp> (directions on how to make homemade paper)

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Related Twain Quotes/Passages:

“It has become a sarcastic proverb that a thing must be true if you saw it in a newspaper. That is the opinion intelligent people have of that lying vehicle in a nutshell. But the trouble is that the stupid people--who constitute the grand overwhelming majority of this and all other nations--do believe and are molded and convinced by what they get out of a newspaper, and there is where the harm lies.”

- "License of the Press" speech

“Necessarily we are all fond of murders, scandals, swindles, robberies, explosions, collisions, and all such things, when we know the people, and when they are neighbors and friends, but when they are strangers we do not get any great pleasure out of them, as a rule. Now the trouble with an American paper is that it has no discrimination; it rakes the whole earth for blood and garbage, and the result is that you are daily overfed and suffer a surfeit. By habit you stow this much every day, but you come by and by to take no vital interest in it -- indeed, you almost get tired of it. As a rule, forty-nine-fiftieths of it concerns strangers only -- people away off yonder, a thousand miles, two miles, ten thousand miles from where you are. Why, when you come to think of it, who cares what becomes of those people? I would not give the assassination of one personal friend for a whole massacre of those others. And to my mind, one relative or neighbor mixed up in a scandal is more interesting than a whole Sodom and Gomorrah of outlanders gone rotten. Give me the home product every time.”

- "Italian Without a Master"

“How often we recall, with regret, that Napoleon once shot at a magazine editor and missed him and killed a publisher. But we remember with charity, that his intentions were good.”

- Letter to Henry Mills Alden, published in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 11, 1906, pg. 3.

“I hate editors, for they make me abandon a lot of perfectly good English words.”

- *Abroad with Mark Twain and Eugene Field*, Fisher

Lesson Sequence:

Introduction: Tell students they are living in Tom Sawyer’s neighborhood and the trial of Muff Potter just happened. You were not there, but you absolutely have to find out what happened. You will be the outcast of the classroom if you do not know the details of the trial. How will you find out what happened? Lead a discussion on how they could come across the details of the trial (word of mouth, letter from someone who was there, newspaper, etc.) Ask students if the trial was set in today’s world how we would get details of the event (internet, text update, radio, TV, newspaper). Emphasize that the newspaper is still an important source so we will be doing a unit to learn more about the newspaper business.

Lesson: Introduce vocabulary for the unit. Go over definitions of the words and use in context. Activate prior knowledge by asking students to list things they know about newspapers. Explain the newspaper process in the 1800s. The newspaper was weekly,

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18 inches by 24 inches, and cost \$2.50 per year. People believed what they saw in print (same is true today). The *Missouri Courier* was the newspaper of the time. The first daily newspaper became available in 1858 and was four pages long. Next, take a look at examples of the old newspapers. Have students make a list of what they see in descriptive words of what stories they see, the wording used, pictures/graphics incorporated, etc. Explain the newspaper process in today's world. Use the websites to share examples. Look at current newspapers and comment on the language/wording, graphics, types of stories, number of sections, etc. that are in the current issue. Compare and contrast newspapers from past and present. Explain project and assign groups.

Closure: Students will share their group projects and participate in making a real homemade piece of paper.

Scheduled Use of Time:

Time	Teacher Activity/Questions to be Asked	Student Activity
Day 1 15 min.	Hook: Tell students they are living in Tom Sawyer's neighborhood and the trial of Muff Potter just happened. You were not there, but you absolutely have to find out what happened. You will be the outcast of the classroom if you do not know the details of the trial. How will you find out what happened? Facilitate conversation.	Listening and formulating responses to prompt.
10 min	Lead a discussion on how the students could come across the details of the trial (word of mouth, letter from someone who was there, newspaper, etc.) Ask students, "If the trial were set in today's world how we would get details of the event?" (internet, text update, radio, TV, newspaper) Emphasize that the newspaper is still an important and main source of information so we will be doing a unit to learn more about the newspaper business.	Listen and respond to questions.
10 min	Introduce vocabulary for the unit. Go over definitions of the words and use in context.	Take notes and study words. Vocabulary development.
Day 2 5 min	Review vocabulary and activate prior knowledge by asking students to list things they know about newspapers.	Think about th newspaper business.
10 min	Explain the newspaper process in the 1800s. The newspaper was weekly, 18 inches by 24 inches, and cost \$2.50 per year. People believed what they saw in print (same is true today). The <i>Missouri Courier</i> was the newspaper of the time. The first daily newspaper became available in 1858 and was four pages long.	Take notes.

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10 min.	Assign groups and look at examples of old newspapers from the Hannibal area. (See website resource.)	Exploring primary sources.
10 min	Have students make a list of what they see in descriptive words of the type of stories used, the wording/language in the articles, pictures/graphics incorporated, etc.	Brainstorming and descriptive writing.
Day 3 5 min	Do a quick review of vocabulary words and facts learned from yesterday's class.	Activating prior knowledge and class warm-up.
10 min	Explain the business and making of newspapers in today's world. Use the websites to help you and show examples.	Note taking.
10 min	Assign groups and look at examples of current newspapers from your area.	Exploring primary sources.
10 min	Make a list of descriptive words on what students are seeing, exploring the language/wording, graphics, types of stories, number of sections, etc. that are in the current issue.	Brainstorming and descriptive writing.
Day 4 20 min	Have students use their list of descriptive words to make a class Venn diagram that compares and contrasts the older Hannibal newspapers with the current area newspapers.	Interactive student learning/cooperative learning strategy
10 min	Explain class project and assign groups.	Listen and choose a specialty for group project.
Day 5 10 min	Take vocabulary mini-quiz.	Assessment of vocabulary.
40 min	In-class time to research and do group project.	Complete group project.
Day 6 30 min	Have each group present their project by explaining their articles, graphics, etc.	Presentations
20 min	Make homemade paper.	Hands-on activity with teacher in small groups.

Homework: Students will divide into groups for a newspaper project. Groups should have approximately 4 people each. Each group will be producing their own newspaper. The events for the articles of the newspaper must be taken from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Students will have to determine what events would be newsworthy in a town like St. Petersburg. (For example, a child memorizing 2000 Bible verses today probably would not have made the newspaper, but it might in the days of Tom. A better example of a newsworthy story is the murder of Doc Robinson, grave robbing in the area, the trial of Muff Potter, or the finding of buried treasure.) Students will also have to keep in mind the newspaper only comes out once a week. The paper should be one page (front and back). Each student must pick one of the following jobs: reporter, editor, graphics/design, and special section (political cartoon, advice column, etc.). Duties for

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reporter: write two articles on the events. Duties for editor: proofread all sections and meet deadlines. Duties for graphics/design: match clip art or photographs for articles (keeping in mind the time era) and compiling the newspaper to print (filling all pages-adding advertisements if needed). Duty for special section: composing a half-page special section (see examples for above). All group members are responsible for making sure the paper is completed on time, historically accurate, and proofread/edited.

Strategies for Exceptional Students:

Hands-on

Working collaboratively

Students, for the most part, should be able to participate in all activities. For the project, students can be assigned a job that would be able to meet their needs. For the quiz, students may use a resource teacher to script their answers. Gifted students will find opportunities for creativity and critical thinking.

Suggested Follow-Up Activities:

- Plan a field trip to their local newspaper to allow students to see how a newspaper works.
- Guest speakers, such as a local news reporter, editor, journalist, etc., also provide a valuable resource to the room.
- Plan and publish a monthly school newspaper.
- Investigate the changing format of the news “paper” – the online versions, which are now more widely read.
- Investigate the number of newspapers that have closed because of the Internet.
- Discuss how technology might affect other institutions.
- Research the life of a typesetter (Sam Clemens) and allow students to set type (one letter at a time); investigate terms that originated in this field (e.g., Mind your Ps and Qs; out of sorts; upper case/lower case; justify type).
- Investigate the term “Poor Boys’ College” and study other typesetting apprentices: Ben Franklin and Walt Whitman; how did their lives compare to Sam Clemens’?

Scoring Rubric for Newspaper Project

Newspaper: Tom Sawyer

Name: _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Knowledge Gained	All students in the group can accurately answer all questions related to a) stories in the newspaper and b) technical processes used to create the newspaper.	All students in the group can accurately answer most questions related to a) stories in the newspaper and b) technical processes used to create the newspaper.	Most students in the group can accurately answer most questions related to a) stories in the newspaper and b) technical processes used to create the newspaper.	Several students in the group appear to have little knowledge about the facts and the technical processes used for the newspaper.
Articles - Interest	The articles contain facts, figures, and/or word choices that make the articles exceptionally interesting to readers.	The articles contain facts, figures, and/or word choices that make the articles interesting to readers.	The article contains some facts or figures but is marginally interesting to read.	The article does not contain facts or figures that might make it interesting to read.
Use of Primary Sources	Inclusion of primary source material was comprehensive. (5+ sources)	Inclusion of primary source material was adequate. (3-4 sources)	Inclusion of primary source material was incomplete. (1-2 sources)	Inclusion of primary source material was not evident. (0 sources)
Spelling and Proofreading	No spelling or grammar errors remain after one or more people (in addition to the typist) read and correct the newspaper.	No more than 3 spelling or grammar errors remain after one or more people (in addition to the typist) read and correct the newspaper.	No more than 5 spelling or grammar errors remain after one or more people (in addition to the typist) read and correct the newspaper.	Many spelling or grammar errors remain in the final copy of the newspaper.
Articles - Purpose	90-100% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.	80-89% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.	70-75% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.	Fewer than 70% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.
Graphics	All graphics are in focus, are properly cropped, and are clearly related to the articles they accompany.	Most of the graphics are in focus and are clearly related to the articles they accompany.	Many of the graphics are clearly related to the articles they accompany.	Graphics are not clearly related to the articles OR no graphics were used.

Additional Comments:

Grade:

