

Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum
Lesson Plan for *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

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Hannibal, Missouri

Huck Finn's Conscience

LESSON PLAN FOR ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN	
Concept or Topic: Investigating Huck's conscience	Suggested Grade Level: 11
Subject: English	Suggested Time Frame: One class period (50 minutes)
<p>Objective(s): After reading the quote by Mark Twain: "It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare," students will define the word "conscience." Each student will share one example (with a quote from the text) of how Huck's conscience makes him a caring person. Afterwards, each student will write a well-developed essay discussing Huck's conscience (using at least five quotes from the text to back his/her ideas).</p>	
<p>State Standards: Communications Arts CA: 1 (speaking and writing standard English) CA: 2 (reading and evaluating fiction) CA: 4 (writing formally (essay)) CA: 5 (comprehending and evaluating the content and artistic aspects of oral presentations) CA: 6 (participating in formal and informal presentations and discussions) Goal 1 Students will: evaluate information, comprehend and evaluate written works, organize data and information. Goal 2 Students will exchange information. Goal 4 Students will recognize and practice honesty and integrity in academic work .</p>	
<p>Assessment Options: Students will choose one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students will write a well-developed essay using five quotes discussing Huckleberry's conscience or one of the other topics written about in their journal (see background information). Students will write a paper focusing on a personal experience of "moral courage in their life." (300-500 words/relate to Huck's dilemma). Students may memorize a passage from the novel that depicts one of the topics covered. This presentation should be 6-8 minutes in length. 	
<p>Vocabulary: "huckleberry" "pariah" "tow-head" Conscience "physical courage" "moral courage"</p>	

LESSON PLAN FOR ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

Subject Area Integration: Communication Arts (speech, reading, and writing)

Background Information: Students will read the novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. During their reading, they will take notes in their journal discussing their reactions to: “the value of friendship throughout the novel,” “the influence of superstition in the novel,” “Huckleberry’s conscience,” the absurdity of “feuds,” and the impact people can have on one’s behavior.

Materials: *ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN*

Technology: Google quotes by Mark Twain (twainquotes.com to verify authenticity)

Related Twain Quotes/Passages: “It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare.” (This quote will be used to introduce the topic. Then we will discuss “conscience,” the difference of “physical courage” and “moral courage,” and then students will begin sharing their quotes with the class.

Lesson Sequence:

Hook/Intro: Read the students Twain’s quote: “It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare. Discuss the meaning (5-10 minutes)

Teaching of the Concept: Define “conscience.” (5 minutes)

Suggested Questions: (15 minutes) What causes you to feel “guilty?” Why?

How do you deal with this guilt?

How influential are peers in your reactions?

Learning Activity: Students will share their quotes with the class and explain how this quote shows moral courage in Huck’s make-up. (25-30 minutes)

Review/Closure: Repeat the quote emphasizing “moral courage.”

Homework: The students were given an overview of the entire unit on the first day of the introduction of *ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN*. They are to have the essays and/or memorization done two days after this discussion.

(see Assessment Options)

Scoring Guide for written essays

A and B=	Introduction	4	3	2	1
	Organization of ideas	4	3	2	1
	Use of quotes to back ideas	4	3	2	1
	Grammatical/spelling	4	3	2	1
	Closure	4	3	2	1

C Memorization

Introduction of the oral presentation	4	3	2	1
Vocal expression	4	3	2	1
Interpretation of character	4	3	2	1
Overall presentation	4	3	2	1

Worksheet---ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

“It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare.” Mark Twain

What is “physical courage?”

What could “moral courage” be?

I love the following passage because, in my opinion, it is when Huck realizes Jim is a “human being” I believe Huck chooses moral courage over physical courage and in his own words “and I warn’t every sorry for it afterwards, neither.”

“So Jim went to work and told me the whole thing right through, just as it happened, only he painted it up considerable. ...It had clouded up pretty dark just after I got onto the raft, but it was clearing up again, now.

“O, well, that’s all interpreted well enough, as far as it goes, Jim,’ I says, ‘but what does these things stand for?’”

It was the leaves and rubbish on the raft, and the smashed oar. You could see them first rate, now.

Jim looked at the trash, and then looked at me, and back at the trash again. He had got the dream fixed so strong in his head that he couldn’t seem to shake it loose and get the facts back into its place again, right away. But when he did get the thing straightened around, he looked at me steady, without ever smiling, and says,

“What do dey stan’ for? I’s gwyne to tell you. When I got all wore out, wid work, en wid de callin’ for you, en went to sleep, my heart wuz mos’ broke bekase you wuz los’, en I didn’ k’yer no mo’ what become er me en de raf’. En when I wake’ up en fine you back agin all safe en soun’, de tears come en I could a got down on my knees en kiss’ yo’ foot I’s so thankful. En all you wuz thinkin’ bout, wuz how you could make a fool uv ole Jim wid a lie. Dat truck dah is trash, en trash is what people is dat puts dirt on de head er dey fren’s en makes ‘em ashamed.”

Then he got up, slow, and walked to the wigwam, and went in there, without saying anything but that. But that was enough. I t made me feel so mean I could almost kissed his foot to get him to take it back.

It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger---but I done it, and I warn’t ever sorry for it afterwards, neither. I didn’t do him no more mean tricks, and I wouldn’t done that one if I’d a knowed it would make him feel that way.”

Your job is to find another incident in this book where Huck makes a moral choice that shows his courage.