

Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum

Lesson Plan for *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and Elements of a Story

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School: Eureka Middle School Eureka, Illinois

July 26-30, 2010 – Teacher Workshop

Hannibal, Missouri

LESSON PLAN FOR *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

Concept or Topic: Elements of short story

Suggested Grade Level: 7 & 8

Subject: Language Arts

Suggested Time Frame: Three days

Objective(s):

Students will identify point-of-view, its purpose, and reliability by citing examples.

Students will define characters by citing the characters words, thoughts, and actions plus what the narrator or other characters say or think.

Students will identify the elements of setting.

Students will define a theme from the text.

Students will identify the plot and its five parts.

Students will discuss the conflict within the narrative story.

State Standards:

STATE GOAL 1: Read with understanding and fluency.

B. Apply reading strategies to improve understanding and fluency.

1. B.3b Identify text structure and create a visual representation (e.g., graphic organizer, outline, drawing) to use while reading.

C. Comprehend a broad range of reading materials.

1. C.3b Interpret and analyze entire narrative text using story elements, point of view and theme.

STATE GOAL 2: Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras and ideas.

B. Read and interpret a variety of literary works.

2.B.3a Respond to literary material from personal, creative and critical points of view.

Assessment Options:

Using the PowerPoint format, students will create a definition and example for each story element. Students will critique or create a PowerPoint of the story elements.

LESSON PLAN FOR *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

Vocabulary: Whitewash—a white paint-like substance used to coat fences
Rounded-to—(used with ships) means “turned”
Drawing nine feet of water—when a ship is...it means it requires a depth of nine feet of water in order to float
Hurricane-deck—of a passenger ship is its light upper deck
Gauge cock—is a valve used to determine the water level in a steam boiler
Up a stump—in a difficult situation
Planned the slaughter of more innocents—Tom planned to acquire the possessions of all other gullible, or easily fooled, boys who would arrive
Fagged out—tired out

Subject Area Integration:

Technology
Social Studies

Mark Twain Quotes: Found within *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*:

A great law of human action...in order to make a man or a boy covet a thing, it is only necessary to make the thing difficult to attain.

--Work consists of whatever a body is obliged to do, and that play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do.

Found in other Mark Twain writings:

--The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else up.

--There ain't no surer way to find out whether you like people or hate them than to travel with them.

--It takes me a long time to lose my temper, but once lost I could not find it with a dog.

--Out of the public school grows the greatness of the nation.

--When I am king, they shall not have bread and shelter only, but also teachings out of books, for a full belly is little worth where the mind is starved.

--It is amazing that God allows the human race to get away with what it does when lightning is so cheap.

--My books are water: those of the great geniuses are wine. Everybody drinks water.

--It's better to keep your mouth shut and appear stupid, than to open it and remove all doubt.

Background Information:

Students will have knowledge of PowerPoint. Students will have historical knowledge of the appropriate time period.

Materials:

Glencoe Literature Course 3 textbook “From Tom Sawyer” Pages 107-113

Copy of chapter one and chapter two for all students

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer for gifted students

Garage Sale items for bartering

Story elements definitions:

http://members.tripod.com/dscorpio/images/literary_elements.ppt

LESSON PLAN FOR *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

Pack of Post-it notes per student

PowerPoint Story elements rubric handout

Peer Review handout

Permission slip for Hannibal field trip handout

Letter to parents with NCTE rationale handout

Handout of possible concepts for developing story elements

Technology: LCD projector to research definitions of story elements and story elements examples

Lesson Sequence: (include approximate length of time for each part of the lesson)

DAY 1

Hook/Intro: (Five minutes) Bartering Demonstration between five students. Hand a garage sale item to each student. Have students barter until they get what they want. Obviously the students may add a promise of a favor such as cutting into lunch line to get what they want. Allow five minutes to show the class the power of bartering and the power of one individual to get his way.

Teaching of the Concept: (Twenty minutes) Discuss the story elements using the power point "Story Elements Definitions" with the link provided.

Suggested Questions: Who is your favorite character? Have you ever been bored in church? Have you ever had a friend your parents did not approve of? Have you ever been blamed for something you did not do?

Learning Activity: (Ten minutes) Hand out copy of chapter one to all students. Teacher will read chapter one from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* aloud. Students should listen for examples of the story elements as they highlight them.

Review/Closure: (Five minutes) Go through elements and have students provide examples from the reading of chapter one to support the elements.

Homework: Read chapter two and create one "I wonder" statement per page. Write the statement on a post-it note and stick it next to the appropriate text. Example: On page 1 in chapter two, "I wonder why Tom despised whitewashing." Students are not required to supply the answers to said

LESSON PLAN FOR *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

questions.

DAY TWO

Introduction: (Five minutes) Ask students to read their “I Wonder...” statements to themselves to review their thoughts from yesterday’s assignment.

Teaching of the concept: (Five minutes) Discuss how story elements are revealed through “I Wonder...” statements.

Suggested Questions: (Five minutes) Use the “I Wonder...” statement, “I wonder why Tom despises whitewashing?” Explore setting and characterization.

(Possible response) Tom does not want to be alone, he does not enjoy individual activities, and he is a social ringleader. As well, if working, he must watch other children play. Tom’s mood is affected by the activity. This can be supported from page 10 in chapter two: “He surveyed the fence and all gladness left him and a deep melancholy settled down upon his spirit.”

Learning Activity: (Twenty minutes) In small groups predetermined by the teacher, students will explore possible answers to the “I Wonder...” statements read aloud by each student in the group.

Review/Closure: (Ten minutes) Students will reconvene in whole group setting to discuss the events in chapter two and provide examples of story elements. As needed, use the story elements definition website used in yesterday’s lesson.

Homework: Encourage and recommend that students read the rest of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Students may take the Reading Counts test to help meet the nine-week requirement of 40 points.

Day Three (two weeks later)

Introduction: (Five minutes) Review the six elements of a story with the students.

Teaching of the Concept: Students will be teaching the six elements of a story through their PowerPoint presentations to their peers.

Suggested Questions: (Five minutes) Ask the audience if the presenter was successful in teaching all six elements. What elements were supported best with text support? What elements needed more text support? What reactions do the students have to the thoughts of the presenter?

Learning Activity: (Thirty-five minutes) Students who prepared power points will present to the entire class and entertain any questions from peers and teacher. Students in the audience will complete a “Peer Review” sheet to provide feedback to the presenters.

Review/Closure: Students will complete “Peer Review” sheets and will turn them in to the teacher who will then distribute them to the presenters.

Homework: Day One Homework: Read chapter two and create one “I wonder” statement per page. Write the statement on a post-it note and stick it next to the appropriate text. Example: On

LESSON PLAN FOR *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

page 1 in chapter two, "I wonder why Tom despised whitewashing." Students are not required to supply the answers to said questions.

Day Two Homework: Encourage and recommend that students read the rest of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Students may take the Reading Counts test to help meet the nine-week requirement of 40 points.

Strategies for Exceptional Students: Teacher will meet with gifted/talented students as identified by the 2010 ISAT Reading results to explain the requirements for the Hannibal field trip where students will visit the Mark Twain Museum, the Mark Twain Cave, the Mark Twain Riverboat, and the historical business district of Hannibal.

Students will be encouraged to complete a PowerPoint project after reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Upon completion of the project, students will be invited to participate in a field trip to Hannibal, Missouri. Teacher will provide the rubric for assessing the PowerPoint project and a field trip permission slip.

Suggested Follow-Up Activities: I

- Invite a Mark Twain impersonator to visit Eureka Middle School and Eureka Public Library in a joint partnership.
- Invite the "Tom and Becky" ambassadors from Hannibal to visit.
- View the 1938 film version of *Tom Sawyer* and compare to the book.

PowerPoint Story Elements in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	10	8	6	4
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Definition *Indirect and direct characterization *Physical appearance of character *Personality *Background/personal history *Motivation *Relationships *Conflict *Round and flat *Static and Dynamic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Some careful planning has gone into content. *Most content demonstrates an understanding of the person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Some information distracts from the content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Content has large gaps.
Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Definitions *Text information about weather, time, place mood, dialect, and customs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Missing one aspect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Missing more than one aspect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Numerous aspects of information are missing
Plot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Definitions *Text showing about exposition, rising actions, turning point, falling actions, and resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Missing one aspect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Missing more than one aspect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Numerous aspects of information are missing
Theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Definition *Note whether stated directly or implied *Show theme relevance to your own life. *Ethical dilemma discussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Missing one aspect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Missing more than one aspect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Numerous aspects of information are missing.
Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Define *External conflict *Internal conflict *Character vs. character *Character vs. self *Character vs. society *Character vs. nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Missing one aspect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Missing more than one aspect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Numerous aspects of information are missing.

Ten to twelve slides	*Presentation shows considerable originality and inventiveness.	*Presentation shows some originality and inventiveness.	*Presentation shows an attempt at originality and inventiveness.	*Presentation is a rehash of other people's ideas and/or graphics and shows little original thought.
Mechanics—spelling and grammar	*No misspellings or grammatical errors	*A few misspellings and grammatical errors	*Multiple misspellings and grammatical errors	*Too many misspellings and grammatical errors *Fragments and run-ons are obvious.
Use of Graphics	*All graphics are attractive (size and colors) and support the theme/content of the presentation.	*A few graphics are not attractive but all support the theme/content of the presentation.	*All graphics are attractive but a few do not seem to support the theme/content of the presentation.	*Several graphics are unattractive AND detract from the content of the presentation.
Text - Font Choice & Formatting	*Font and formats (e.g., color, bold, italic) have been carefully planned to enhance readability and content.	*Font and formats show some evidence of planning.	*Font and formats show little evidence of planning.	*Font and formatting show no evidence of planning.
Effectiveness	*Project includes all material needed to understanding of the topic. *It is a highly effective overview of the story elements.	*Project includes most material needed to gain an understanding of the story elements.	*Project is missing some aspects of the story elements.	*Project is missing many aspects of the story elements.

90-100 = A

80 - 89 = B

70 - 79 = C

60 - 69 = D

50 - 59 = F

Less = FFF

Field Trip Permission Slip Handout

A Unique Cultural Opportunity for a number of Eureka Middle School Students

Eureka Middle School is offering your child an extended opportunity to explore the history of Mark Twain. The Language Arts teachers from the seventh and eighth grade have designed a curriculum that begins with reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, creating a Power Point presentation of the story elements within the book, and then a field trip to visit the town where the story took place. We will tour the cave, the museum, the boyhood home of Mark Twain and ride the riverboat.

Your child _____ accepts the responsibility to read, react, and teach through this opportunity. We need your permission for your child to visit Hannibal, Missouri, on Friday, October 15. We will leave EMS at 6:30 AM and return at 8:00 PM. Your child is responsible for the \$30 fee to cover the trip. Please send the \$30 with this permission slip. Paying for food will be the child's individual responsibility. The other tour details will be provided later.

Letter to parents of rationale for teaching

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

by Mark Twain

Rationale by Jeremy Carter

Literary Qualities and Summary of Reviews

Mark Twain's classic novel *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Twain, 1876) has become one of the best known and best loved books for young adults. This novel gives readers a glimpse into the life of a young rambunctious boy living in the 1800s. This work has received praise from both young adults and experts in the field of literature.

Marks, (1959, November), a reviewer for *English Journal*, praised Twain's work and said, "The book is a song of praise and adoration—not only of the Mississippi Valley in the mid-nineteenth century but of life itself" (p. 443).

Messent (1983), a reviewer for *The Review of English Studies*, also gave the novel high marks. In his review he stated, "the imaginative power of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* . . . remains striking" (p. 354).

William Dean Howells (1876), one of America's most respected literary critics, in *Critical Essays on The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, also speaks highly of Twain's novel. In Howells's review of the book he says, "The tale is very dramatically wrought, and the subordinate characters are treated with the same graphic force that sets Tom alive before us" (p. 22).

Warner (1876), also gives a review for the novel in *Critical Essays on The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Warner praises *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* as one of Twain's greatest works. Warner suggests that, "Tom Sawyer is in some respects an advance on anything that Mr. Clemens has before done—an advance we mean as a piece of literary work, careful in finish, and thought out more maturely" (p. 6).

Theoretical Support and Redeeming Values

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer contains many themes that are relevant to young readers' lives. One common theme contained in great literature is the presence of moral development. According to the theorist Robert J. Havighurst (1953), adolescents go through a process of developing conscience, morality, and a scale of values. According to Havighurst, young

children first develop a conscience based on punishing acts by parents or guardians. It is not until adolescence that they begin identifying with parents or taking on the role of their parents. Once this occurs, they develop a conscience and begin choosing their own values (p. 36). *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* shows young readers the moral development of the protagonist Tom Sawyer. In the novel, Sawyer completely alters his values and beliefs by the end of the novel. His early actions in the story are influenced on how he might be punished. In the middle of the book his actions take a dramatic shift after he witnesses the murder of Dr. Robinson. With his conscience overwhelming him, Tom ignores his own personal safety and testifies against Injun Joe. Sawyer's changing scale of values serves as an important lesson for young adolescent readers.

Further evidence of the novel's theme of moral development can be seen by comparing the book to Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development (1969). In the beginning of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Tom fits Kohlberg's Preconventional Stage One: Avoid Punishment (p. 19). He selects his actions based on whether or not he will get caught and punished. After Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn witness the murder of Dr. Robinson, they decide to watch each other's backs. This results in Tom's transition into Kohlberg's Preconventional Stage Two: Self Benefit (p. 19). Towards the end of the book, Sawyer follows his conscience and testifies that Muff Potter did not murder the doctor. This action propels Tom to Kohlberg's Postconventional Stage Six: Ethical Principles (p. 19).

The theorist Rosenblatt (1983) also gives support for the value of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Rosenblatt believes that literature can become a means of escape from everyday life in the real world. She states, "There are useful and harmful forms of escape. Anything that offers refreshment and a lessening of tension may have its value in helping us to resume our practical lives with renewed vigor" (p. 39). *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* allows young readers to escape into a simpler world full of adventure. Through rich language and a twisting plot, readers are transported back in time and experience 1840s Mississippi river life.

Christenson (1988) describes several attitudes and values that need to be fostered in public schools. These values should be contained in literature that students are exposed to in the classroom. One of the values expressed by Christenson is being helpful to those less fortunate than ourselves. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* clearly addresses this value. For example, Tom and Huck visit Muff Potter, the wrongly accused murderer. Despite the danger to Sawyer's own life, he chooses to help Potter by testifying that Injun Joe is the real murderer.

Another value that Christenson believes should be fostered is conducting oneself calmly and responsibly in times of adversity. This value is apparent towards the end of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* when Tom and Becky wander off and get lost in a cavern. Even though they run out of light and food, Tom is able to keep his cool. Not only is he able to comfort the distraught Becky, but he also manages to find a secret passage leading out of the cave. By reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, young readers realize the importance of acting calm during times of distress.

Literature should contain examples of life skills that young readers will need to develop in order to excel in life. A. Ross & K. Olsen (1993) created a list of life skills that students should learn. Together, the characters in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* demonstrate all of these skills. For example, the protagonist Tom Sawyer alone demonstrates friendship, patience, cooperation, and caring. Throughout the novel, Tom develops a close friendship with Huck. As a result of their friendship, they work together and patiently wait for Injun Joe to appear before following him. Because of the boys' friendship, cooperation, and patience, they are able to find the murderer's hidden treasure. Tom's actions of befriending Muff Potter and taking Becky Thatcher's punishment shows adolescent readers what it means to care for others. The other eleven life skills listed by A. Ross & K. Olsen include integrity, initiative, flexibility, perseverance, organization, sense of humor, effort, common sense, problem-solving, responsibility, and curiosity (p. 256). Through the actions of either Tom or the other characters in the novel, each of these life skills is demonstrated.

Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) has sometimes been charged with being a racist. Jocelyn Chadwick (1999) refutes this claim in the following way. Chadwick believes that literature should raise human rights issues. In *Making Twain Work in the Classroom*, she points out that House Bill, 154, in the Texas legislature, sponsored by representative Ron Wilson, would require that all curricula include "human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide, slavery, and the Holocaust" (p. 169). Chadwick argues that great literature raises discourse about "human rights issues". Chadwick is a proponent of using Mark Twain's work in the classroom. She believes that Twain's work raises discourse of "not only the issue of slavery, but also about child abuse, greed, illiteracy, pride, honor, religious hypocrisy, loyalty, ethics, and morality" (p. 169). From Chadwick's argument, one can see that *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* was not written to degrade African Americans, but to point out the evils of slavery and racism.

According to *Beacham's Guide to Literature For Young Adults* (1990), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* contains literary quality as an adventure story. "The novel contains many qualities of the adventure story: villains menace the innocent, hide treasures in caves, and inhabit haunted houses; heroes rescue helpless victims, discover buried treasure, and gain recognition from the women they love and from their community" (p. 1388). The adventure story qualities that are contained in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* make the novel suitable for young adolescent readers.

Possible Objections

Potential objections to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* include:

- Racial comments
- Disrespectful attitudes towards adults in authority
- Suggesting vulgar language
- Drug and alcohol use and abuse
- Death and homicide
- Violence

Alternative Works

Conscience

Cormier, Robert. (1974). *The Chocolate War*. Pantheon.

Jerry Renault must follow his conscience by challenging a secret school society and by refusing to sell chocolates. His defiant act quickly escalates into an all-out war.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. (1989). *The Year of the Gopher*. Bantam.

In this coming-of-age novel, George follows his conscience and refuses to go to an Ivy League school and become a lawyer like his dad and grandfather. He listens to his heart and instead becomes a courier to earn money to attend a public university.

Taylor, Milfred. (1976). *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. Dial.

In this touching story, a young black girl follows her conscience and struggles for dignity and respect in the dismal poverty and discrimination of the 1930s.

Courage

Cormier, Robert. (1979). *After The First Death*. Pantheon.

A group of terrorists take over a school bus loaded with children. The children must keep their wits and remain brave despite their terrifying life-and-death situation.

Lipsyte, Robert. (1967). *The Contender*. Harper & Row.

In this captivating story, a young black teen picks up the sport of boxing. He then attempts to use the sport as a ticket out of the slums. The young boxer finds that he must be strong when he is faced with numerous opponents.

Sebestyn, Ouida. (1979). *Words by Heart*. Little, Brown.

Lena Sills uses love and forgiveness to conquer all of her fears and prejudice in this powerful novel.

Friendship

Bridgers, Sue Ellen. (1979). *All Together Now*. Knopf.

Young Casey Flanagan meets and develops a friendship with a retarded man. Her life is quickly changed for the good as a result of her friendship with the man.

Brooks, Bruce. (1987). *The Moves Make the Man*. Harper & Row.

A black basketball player by the name of Jerome Foxworthy befriends Bix Rivers, an excellent white athlete, and teaches him the fine points about playing ball. Foxworthy soon realizes that he cannot teach Bix what moves to make in his real life.

Greene, Bette. (1973). *Summer of My German Soldier*. Dial.

A young abused Jewish girl faces many hardships during World War II. Despite her many troubles, she meets a German POW and the two develop a binding friendship.

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Concepts for Developing Story Elements

Boredom

Slavery

Education

Vocabulary (dialect)

Death

Homelessness

Dehumanization

Treasure Hunting

Bugs

Superstitions

Disease

Ethical Dilemmas

Female Roles

Mississippi River

Conscience

Courage

Friendship

Peer review Handout

Peer Review Form

Use this form to provide feedback to the writer/presenter.

Presenter's Name _____

Two standing ovations: (Use a minimum of fifteen words per ovation.)

1. _____

2. _____

One polite clap: (Use a minimum of fifteen words.)

1. _____

My name _____