

◆◆◆ **THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER** ◆◆◆

COURSE PLAN METHODOLOGY: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain is represented by the abbreviation **TS**. Each weekly assignment is summarized in the first line of the week's daily course plan. The specific daily assignments are outlined in the following lines indicated by the **MON, TUES, WED, THUR** and **FRI** abbreviations.

Discuss the Setting, Theme, and Characters with the student. Each week's introduction includes the chapters that will be read that week, instructions for literary devices and elements of fiction that the student will encounter during the week, and a written assignment. **The chapter study questions, chapter vocabulary and glossary are located in the Junior High Literature Study Question booklets available for purchase from Kolbe Academy.** Discuss the literary devices and elements of fiction with the student **using the worksheets included with these junior high literature course plans.** We suggest reading the weekly written assignment to the student at the beginning of the week. The student should write the assignment down on a note card (to be used as a bookmark) so that he can think about the assignment as he reads. The written assignments are suggested to be completed by the following Monday. As the teacher, be sure to review the final exam **now** to ensure all concepts are covered with your student as he reads the book.

ELEMENTS OF FICTION:

Setting—Time: Since Twain wrote the preface in 1876 and says that the story takes place thirty or forty years ago, then the novel is set thirty or forty years prior to 1876, during the 1830's-1840's; **Place:** American West

Theme—Twain wants children to just enjoy the book (This idea was an unusual concept at that time; books were supposed to be for learning only; the concept of children reading books for enjoyment did not really exist.). He wants adult readers to remember what it was like to be a child, perhaps so that they will be more sympathetic to their own children.

Characters

Tom Sawyer – Our hero; mischievous and prone to adventure, though not all bad, sees things from a **boy's** single-minded perspective.

Huckleberry Finn – Tom's cohort in "crime," a local homeless, motherless boy who is admired for his freedom and sense of adventure, but viewed as an outcast because of his social situation.

Aunt Polly – Tom's aunt, who provides a home for Tom. Easily deceived by Tom's pranks but loves him dearly and worries about his upbringing.

Becky Thatcher – Tom's sweetheart and "pledged wife" who lives with her aunt to attend school; gets lost in the cave with Tom and nearly dies from starvation and sadness.

Joe Harper – Tom's proclaimed best friend, who goes on the first adventure with Tom and Huck to Jackson Island; a good boy who enjoys adventure but cares what his family thinks.

Injun Joe – A local scoundrel, a half-breed believed to be vicious, who has murdered at least five people in the village and stolen a large amount of money; dies alone in a cave.

Muff Potter – An accomplice of Injun Joe's who is wrongly accused of murdering the local doctor when Injun Joe sets him up; a drinker but nevertheless good to Tom, Huck and other local boys.

The Welshman – the person to whom Huck runs in order to save the Widow Douglas from being tortured by Injun Joe and his partner.

Sid – stepbrother of Tom who lives with Aunt Polly as well. We are not told how the two boys are related; they are not friends, but act as brothers; Sid tells on Tom on more than one occasion.

Widow Douglas – The object of Injun Joe’s revenge since her husband, now passed, had tortured him; takes Huckleberry in to raise him properly.

WEEK 1	
TS	<p>Read the Introduction and Chapters 1-8 this week. Have the student look up all the vocabulary words for Chapters 1-8 in the glossary prior to reading. Study questions may be completed as the student reads or at the end of the week when reading has been completed.</p> <p>Literary Devices used this week: discuss definitions of genre, protagonist, antagonist, cause and effect, dialect, dialogue, allusion, and frame story with the student (use literary device worksheet included in the syllabus). Students will encounter questions on these devices in the study question booklet.</p> <p>Written Assignment: The genius of this book is that we see life through the eyes of a young boy, and only occasionally through the eyes of an omniscient, adult author. One boyish aspect is the presence of superstition or “charms” that are sure to produce particular cures or results. These superstitions play a huge role in the lives of Tom and his friends. Pick a few of these incidents from this section and illustrate how they play a role in how Tom thinks and acts.</p>
MON	<p>Introduction. Do study questions for the Preface. Mark Twain, a pseudonym (pen name) for Samuel Langhorne Clemens, piloted river boats on the Mississippi River before becoming a writer. The pseudonym he chose, “Mark Twain”, is a phrase meaning the river is safe for the river boat to pass through because the river is two (twain) fathoms (twelve feet) deep at that spot. Spent in a small Midwestern town situated on the Mississippi River, Clemens’ boyhood significantly influenced his writing, especially <i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i>, which takes place in a similar small town during the 1830’s, before the American Civil War. Written for the “entertainment of boys and girls” (Mark Twain’s Preface), it uses dialect and detailed descriptions to tell the tale of an adventurous boyhood. It would be wise for the student to re-read this introduction when he is finished with the novel in order to help clarify the novel’s purpose and to bring it full circle in his mind.</p>
TUES	<p>Read Chapters 1-2 and do Study Questions. Chapter 1. We are introduced to a high-spirited boy prone to pranks, and the Aunt Polly whom he can easily trick. We learn that he lives with her and that she is trying her best to raise him properly though his adventures often lead him into mischief. Tom plays hooky and that night, Aunt Polly tries to trick him into admitting it. She fails, and Tom’s half-brother Sid reveals it. Tom is troubled by this, but gets over it soon when he figures out how to whistle. He comes across another boy his age all dressed up, and Tom and he are determined to beat each other up. Tom wins the fight, and then follows the defeated boy home, taunting him all the way into his house. Tom returns home to a mad Aunt Polly who is determined to ruin his Saturday into a day of hard labor. Chapter 2. Saturday morning arrives and Tom dejectedly begins his assigned chore of whitewashing the fence. He ponders sorrowfully his loss of freedom until he realizes how he can get out of his job. When various boys from the neighborhood walk by, Tom paints with such care that he convinces each boy what a privilege it would be to paint the fence, then “reluctantly” lets them take over. In this way, Tom gets out of painting, and the fence gets three coats of paint! Tom learns from this experience a great law of human action, that, in order to “make a</p>

	man or a boy covet a thing, it is only necessary to make the thing difficult to attain.”
WED	<p>Read Chapters 3-4 and do Study Questions. Chapter 3. Tom reports the completion of his project to Aunt Polly, who has fallen asleep over her knitting. Astonished that he has actually done the job, Polly rewards him with an apple and an “improving lecture” about how sweet the reward is for being virtuous. Tom steals a donut while she’s doing this. He then settles the score with Sid for telling on him, and heads to a battle among the neighborhood boys. Leaving the battle, Tom spies a beautiful new girl, and falls in love instantly, but pretends not to notice her. He proceeds to show off to her with various gymnastic feats until she walks into the house, but not without first tossing him a pansy. At dinner that night, Sid breaks the sugar bowl when Aunt Polly’s head is turned, and she punishes Tom for it. She is full of remorse when she learns the truth but won’t show it; Tom amuses himself with a vision of his funeral and the torture it would inflict upon his aunt. He goes out later to look longingly at the new girl’s home, and is drenched by water thrown out the window by a maidservant. Chapter 4. Sunday morning finds Tom memorizing the shortest bible verses he can find with his cousin Mary. Afterward, Mary makes sure he is clean and dressed properly in his “other clothes” and on his way to Sunday school, which he despises. The new girl comes in with her father, and Tom begins acting up to get her attention. His previous love, Amy Lawrence, looks on jealously. Tom trades the “treasures” he had gained from the boys who had whitewashed the fence, for tickets, which state he has learned two thousand verses and now will earn a Bible. He presents his tickets to the Sunday School teacher, who is astonished. Tom gets to meet “her” father and is praised for being a “manly little fellow.” Her father asks Tom who the first of the twelve disciples appointed was, and when the girl prompts him, he answers “David and Goliath.”</p>
THUR	<p>Read Chapters 5-6 and do Study Questions. Chapter 5. A dull and predictable Sunday sermon ensues, and Tom, as well as other church members, amuse themselves by watching a dog and a beetle interact. Tom knows the sermon by heart, and faintly listens. He notices when the minister sometimes diverges a bit, and resents this. Chapter 6. Tom awakens Monday morning, dreading another long week of school. He comes up with an “ailment” to keep him home – a sore toe – and pretends he is dying from it. In fright, Sid jumps from bed and gets Aunt Polly, who is not convinced. Tom mistakenly informs her that his tooth is hurting as well, and she has it pulled before breakfast. On the bright side, Tom becomes the new “star” on the way to school because of it. Tom meets up with Huckleberry Finn, son of the town drunkard. Huckleberry, we learn, is the envy of every good boy in town, because he comes and goes as he pleases and has no one to look after him. Tom and Huck agree to meet up at midnight to test out a dead cat for healing warts, but not before Tom trades Huck his tooth for a tick. When Tom gets to school, he admits to his teacher that he is late because he stopped to talk with Huck. He is punished for this by being sent to sit with Becky Thatcher, his new love interest. They talk and he reveals to her that he loves her, and then is picked up by his ear and sent back to the boys’ side.</p>
FRI	<p>Read Chapters 7-8 and do Study Questions. Chapter 7. Tom and his best friend Joe Harper are punished for playing with the tick during reading time. At noon, Tom and Becky meet up and talk. They tell each other that they love each other and agree to be “engaged,” which Tom explains means pledging to love no one but each other, and dance only with each other, and walk together home from school. He then accidentally lets it slip that he and Amy Lawrence were engaged before he met Becky. Becky is crushed and won’t talk to him anymore, even though Tom declares he no longer loves Amy. Tom skips the afternoon at school. Chapter 8. Tom goes into the woods and broods over his bad luck in Becky being upset; he doesn’t think he did anything wrong, and</p>

imagines how sad Becky would be if he ran away. He decides to become a pirate the next day. Soon, Joe Harper shows up, and the two boys play Robin Hood. Upon leaving, they grieve that there are no more outlaws in real life.

Notes