

# STUDY GUIDE - Huckleberry Finn

## Short Answer Questions

### Chapters 1-3

1. Identify: Huck Finn, Tom Sawyer, Jim, Miss Watson and Widow Douglas.
2. Why doesn't Huck get along with Miss Watson and Widow Douglas?
3. What does Huck think about religion -- specifically the good place, the bad place and prayer?
4. Give at least two examples of superstition in this section of the novel.
5. Contrast Huck and Tom. What are their main differences?

### Chapters 4-7

1. Why did Huck give his money to Judge Thatcher?
2. Describe Pap Finn. What kind of a person is he?
3. What is Huck's attitude towards his father?
4. Why does Pap yell at Huck for becoming civilized? Is he right?
5. What was Huck's plan of escape from his father?
6. How do you know that material things don't matter to Huck?

### Chapters 8 - 11

1. What purpose(s) does Huck's death serve?
2. How does Huck meet Jim on Jackson's Island? Why is Jim there?
3. What is in the two story house that floats by?
4. Give three examples of Man vs. Society in this section.
5. How are the townspeople superstitious? Jim? Huck? Give examples.
6. Compare/contrast Huck & Jim.
7. Why does Huck dress as a girl to go ashore? Why does he go? What does he find out?
8. How do you know Huck and Jim are friends by the end of Chapter XI?

### Chapters 12-14

1. Why do Huck and Jim begin their journey down the Mississippi?
2. Why do Huck and Jim board the Walter Scott?
3. Why does Huck want to save Jim Turner?
4. How does Huck send help to the Walter Scott?
5. What do we learn about Jim from his talking about "King Sollermun"?

### Chapters 15-18

1. What trick does Huck play on Jim?
2. Why doesn't Huck turn in Jim?
3. Why don't the slave hunters get Jim?
4. Explain the differences between Huck and the hunters.
5. What is the bad luck in Chapter 16?
6. How does Huck get to the Grangerfords?
7. Why did Twain include this adventure with the Grangerfords?

### Chapters 19-25

1. How did Jim and Huck meet the king and duke?
2. Does Huck believe their story?
3. Give two examples of the "cleverness" of the king and duke.
4. Why did the people return to the show?
5. What's the point of the incident of the shooting of Boggs?
6. Why do we hear about Jim's daughter "Lizabeth"?
7. Where did the king and duke get their plan about being the Wilks brothers?

### Chapters 26-31

1. How do the king and duke get the money?
2. Why does Huck steal the money from the mattress?
3. Why doesn't Huck's conscience bother him when he lies so much?
4. What things give away the king and duke?
5. Why is Huck upset when Jim is sold?
6. Why is it important that Huck says, "All right, then, I'll go to hell."?

### Chapters 32-39

1. Why does Huck assume Tom Sawyer's identity?
2. What happens when Tom appears on the scene?
3. What's the difference between Tom's plan for freeing Jim and Huck's?
4. How does Huck change when Tom comes?
5. Tom's plan is actually cruel. Why?
6. What more do we learn about Tom in these chapters?

### Chapters 40-43

1. How does Huck appear to be superior to Tom?
2. What happens to Jim? Huck? Tom?
3. Is there anything left undecided at the end of the novel?

### VOCABULARY – MATCHING

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. victuals     | A. free from captivity for a price       |
| 2. commenced    | B. food                                  |
| 3. dismal       | C. magic; sorcery                        |
| 4. ransomed     | D. gloom or depression                   |
| 5. lath         | E. began                                 |
| 6. enchantment  | F. building material                     |
| 1. raspy        | A. fake; not real                        |
| 2. counterfeit  | B. grating; harsh                        |
| 3. temperance   | C. to call to                            |
| 4. stanchion    | D. post of timber or iron for support    |
| 5. wadding      | E. moderation; sobriety                  |
| 6. hail         | F. material for stopping charge in a gun |
| 1. brash        | A. mercury                               |
| 2. lolled       | B. person against slavery                |
| 3. abolitionist | C. uninhibited, tactless, impudent       |
| 4. quicksilver  | D. make a risky financial transaction    |
| 5. speculate    | E. relaxed                               |
| 6. abreast      | F. side by side                          |
| 1. solemn       | A. a crane                               |
| 2. mournful     | B. having a respectful calm              |
| 3. rummaging    | C. a place to sleep                      |
| 4. derrick      | D. sad                                   |
| 5. berth        | E. searching                             |

1. staving
2. petrified
3. bygones
4. lamented
5. pensive
6. disposition

- A. grieving
- B. thoughtful
- C. past happenings
- D. inclination
- E. turned to stone
- F. put-off; delaying

1. feud
2. ransacked
3. cavorting
4. mesmerism
5. phrenology
6. encores
7. soliloquy
8. sublime

- A. extravagant behavior
- B. calls for repeat performances
- C. reading a person's future by examining their skull
- D. dramatic monologue
- E. a hereditary quarrel
- F. hypnotism
- G. searched thoroughly but hurriedly
- H. excellent, having a sense of grandeur

1. yawl
2. sanctified
3. pious
4. afflicted
5. obsequies

- A. holy
- B. infirmed; handicapped
- C. small boat
- D. funeral rites; solemnities
- E. religious; reverent

1. frock
2. pallet
3. shroud
4. stealthy

- A. a temporary bed
- B. a cloth used to wrap a body for burial
- C. having the ability to move in secret
- D. a woman's dress

1. fagged
2. collar
3. warbling
4. prejudiced
5. candid
6. admirable

- A. having a preconceived preference or idea
- B. deserving admiration
- C. characterized by openness and sincerity of expression
- D. exhausted
- E. singing
- F. hold onto

1. impudent
2. mortification
3. amputate
4. distracted
5. waylay

- A. death of part of a body while the rest is alive
- B. impertinent, offensively forward
- C. to cut off
- D. pulled in conflicting emotional directions
- E. to lie in wait for and attack from ambush

1. distinctions
2. conveniences
3. confound
4. coaxing
5. insurrection
6. addled
7. tedious
8. evade

- A. confused
- B. to obtain by persistent persuasion
- C. the act of open revolt
- D. tiresome by reason of length, slowness or dullness
- E. to avoid performing
- F. differentiation
- G. things that increase comfort or save work
- H. to cause to become confused or perplexed

1. unfurled
2. faculties
3. huffy
4. sultry

- A. a fit of anger or annoyance
- B. very humid and hot
- C. spread or opened something out
- D. any of the power or capacities possessed by the human mind

## **THEMATIC ESSAYS – AT LEAST 2 PAGES EACH**

**1.) Freedom:** There are many kinds of freedom and bondage. What different kinds are there? Note which different aspects of freedom/bondage appear in the novel. After you have grouped them, look at your data for each set. What does each set of examples seem to be showing?

Introductory paragraph :explain that there are several different kinds of freedom/bondage shown in the novel Huckleberry Finn. Specify what they are.

Write one paragraph for each of the different types you found. As a format for each paragraph, you could make a statement about the kind of freedom/bondage you will discuss in the paragraph and then use the examples you found in the book to support and explain your statement.

After you have completed the paragraphs in the body of your composition concluding paragraph (based on the information you have just presented) explaining what you think Twain intended to point out about the theme of freedom.

**2.) Religion:** Different characters in the book have different opinions about religion, and through those characters, Twain also gives his opinions.

Categorize the opinions by character. After you have done so, look at the examples of what each character says or does relating to the theme of religion. Jot down your notes about each character's views on the topic.

What do you think Twain's view is?

Introductory paragraph: explain that religion is one of the major themes in the novel Huckleberry Finn and point out that Twain has given the characters in the book definite opinions on the subject through which Twain's own opinions can be heard.

Write one paragraph for each character who has opinions about religion. Write a topic sentence stating who the character is and what his/her opinion of religion seems to be. Use the specific examples you found in the text to support your statements.

Concluding paragraph: tell what you think Twain's opinion was, based on the information you have just set forth.

**3.) Superstition:** Most of the references to superstitions in the book are put forth by Huck and Jim. Group examples from the novel per character. What are Huck's attitudes towards superstitions? What are Jim's? Compare and Contrast the views Huck and Jim have of superstitions.

Introductory paragraph: introduce the idea that superstition is one of the themes in the novel and that most of the theme is developed through Huck and Jim. State briefly the main way(s) their attitudes towards superstitions are different.

Explore Jim's attitudes towards superstitions and Huck's attitudes about it. Use the specific examples you have gathered to support your statements.

Concluding paragraph: in which you tell what you think Twain was trying to point out through his use of superstition in the book.

**4.) Education:** There are two main ideas presented about this topic. Some characters think book learning is more important than practical knowledge from/about life experiences, and some characters think vice versa. Group data into these two categories. Then, make notes about which characters believe schooling is more important and which characters believe practical knowledge from life experiences is more important. What do you think Twain believed?

Introductory paragraph: introduce the idea that one of the conflicts the story is book learning versus practical knowledge from life experiences and that Twain uses his characters to set forth his views on this topic.

Write one paragraph for each character about whom you have collected data. Write a topic sentence telling that character's views about education and then use examples from the text you have collected to support your statement.

Concluding paragraph: tell what you think Twain's point was about education, based on the information you have just compiled.

**5.) Nature:** There is a basic conflict between nature and civilization. Look at references to nature. What kinds of things happen when the characters are in nature, away from civilization? Think back to the story and jot down a few notes about what things happen when the characters are back in "civilization." Judging from this data, what do you think Twain was perhaps trying to tell us about nature, civilization, and people?

Introductory paragraph: introduce the idea that nature versus civilization is one of the main conflicts in Huckleberry Finn. Detail what kinds of events take place in nature in the story and detail what kinds of things happen in civilization.

Concluding paragraph: explain what you think Twain was trying to tell us through the actions of his characters.

**JOURNAL ENTRIES – AT LEAST 1 PAGE EACH – Choose 10**

1. Explain why Mark Twain used Huck as the narrator.
2. What are the main conflicts in the story? Are all the conflicts resolved? Explain how those that are resolved are resolved, and explain why those that are not resolved are not.
3. Explain the importance and influence of the setting(s) in the novel.
4. Which characters are "good guys" and which characters are "bad guys"? Explain your choices.
5. Using a Venn Diagram: Compare and contrast Huck's relationship with Pap with his relationship with Widow Douglas. Compare and contrast Tom and Huck.
6. Are Huck's actions believably motivated? Explain why or why not.
7. Does Huck develop or change as a result of his adventures? Explain how he does if he does, or why he does not if he does not.
8. Describe Huck's relationship with Jim
9. The King and Duke figure prominently in a whole section of the book. Why did Twain include them?
10. Explain Tom's role in the novel. Why was he included?
11. Is the story of Huckleberry Finn believable? Explain why or why not.
12. Do you think the relationship between Huck and Jim is realistic? Explain why or why not.
13. Are there people like the King and Duke in our world today? If so, what are some examples of their types?
14. Did you enjoy reading Huckleberry Finn? Why or why not?
15. If Huck were living today, where would he live and what would he be doing?
16. What does it mean to be "educated"? Which, if either, do you think is more important: book learning or practical life experiences?
17. What is freedom? Is anyone really, truly free?
18. Do you believe in superstitions? If so, what kinds? If not, why not?
19. What is the point of Huckleberry Finn? When we read books, we usually come away from our reading experience a little richer, having given more thought to a particular aspect of life. What do you think Mark Twain intended us to gain from reading his novel?
20. Mark Twain wrote Huckleberry Finn about a hundred years ago and here we are reading it so many years later. Why? What makes this book a classic?