

**American Literature and Composition**  
**Ms. Sengstock**  
**Summer Reading: 2022**  
**Assignment 2 | Mark Twain, *Huckleberry Finn***

I am very excited about teaching this class and meeting you next year. My hope is that through our study of American literature, both fiction and nonfiction, you will discover a new love for reading by diving into a text to discover the beauty of its depth. In order to prepare for the rigor of this course, please see the following information about your summer reading. All summer assignments are due on Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Mark Twain *Huckleberry Finn***

**Assignment:** Respond to the following questions and prompts in *crisp, concise, and coherently articulated sentences*. Provide quoted textual evidence where necessary. Avoid long quotations by reducing quotes to the most salient ideas. Compile these responses in a typed, double-spaced document, in 12-point font, MLA format. Be prepared to submit this assignment to TURNITIN once you've been assigned a class ID.

**Note on plagiarism:** you are expected to do your own work on summer reading assignments. Do not consult outside sources. It is perfectly acceptable to discuss these books with your peers. However, you should neither share responses with nor accept responses from other students.

Chapters I-IV

1. Consider Huck's view of religion in these chapters. Write a brief paragraph about his view, using two quotes from the book.
2. In 2011, this novel was revised so that the word "slave" replaces the word "nigger." There are schools in the United States that do not teach the book because of this word. Write a paragraph that discusses the use of this word in the book. What connotations does it have? Is it appropriate to use this word in this novel, or do you agree that it should have been revised or that it should be censored?

Chapters V-VII

3. Consider the various descriptions of setting in these chapters. Select one that you find particularly effective. Explain why it is effective and/or how it is effective.
4. Describe the relationship between Huck and Pap. Then, describe someone you know or a character in a book or a movie who has a similar relationship with his/her parent (you may change the names of the people that you are describing.) Explain the similarities.
5. Consider Huck's description of the river. Write a paragraph describing a place that you have been to that affected you in a similar way. Try to model your description on Huck's; for example, you might try to think about the size of the place that you are describing.

Chapter VIII-XI

6. List three superstitions in these chapters.

7. What are Huck's mistakes when he tries to pretend that he is a girl? What do these mistakes say about traditional gender roles in the novel?

#### Chapters XII-XVI

8. Find three examples of colloquial language in the novel, and paraphrase each one.
9. Huck's apology to Jim can be viewed as a particularly important moment. What does Huck's apology say about his attitude toward Jim? How is his apology an example of the theme of racism in the novel?

#### Chapters XVII-XVIII

10. Emmeline Grangerford's art and poetry are examples of satire in this novel. Write a paragraph about what is being satirized by her pictures and poetry. Explain Huck's reaction to her poem.

#### Chapters XIX-XXIV

11. What do the situations involving the Grangerfords and Colonel Sherburn have in common? What is similar about the way that people behave in both of these situations? What do these situations suggest about human nature?
12. Why are the Duke and the King able to fool people? Consider and explain at least two aspects of human nature that help them to be able to con people. Do you think that it is as easy to trick people in today's world?
13. List three different examples in which literature is presented or alluded to in the novel so far. In general, how is literature presented or regarded in these examples?

#### Chapters XXV-XXXI

14. At this point in the novel, a number of moral issues have been presented. List five of these issues. For each moral issue, briefly explain one situation that illustrates the issue.
15. Do you think that Huck learns anything from his experience with the king and the duke? Explain, using specific examples.

#### Chapters XXXII-XXXIX

16. Describe the character of Tom Sawyer using two specific examples from the beginning of the novel, and two from these chapters. Do you think that Tom has changed?
17. Explain Huck's reaction to seeing the Duke and the King tarred and feathered and rode out on a rail.
18. Some readers are uncomfortable with the idea that Tom makes a game of setting Jim free. What do you think? What does this suggest about Tom or Huck? Should we see this as simply an aspect of the time period, or does it have a larger significance?

#### Chapters XL-XLII

19. Define "paradox." List and explain two examples of paradoxes in human behavior in the novel.

20. Huck finishes the narrative of the novel by saying that he is leaving so that Aunt Sally can't "sivilize" him, and that he has "been there before." Considering this, and the novel as a whole, do you think that Huck has changed?