



Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Mark Twain



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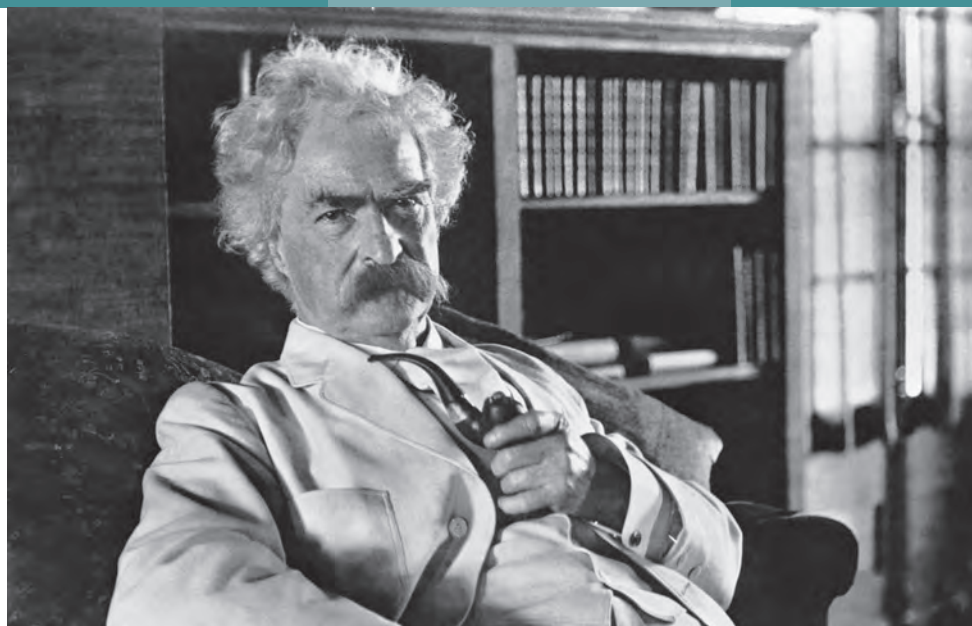
The text is recorded in full.



These symbols indicate the beginning and end of the passages



linked to the listening activities.



About the Author

 Mark Twain, whose real name was Samuel Clemens, is often called the father of American literature. He was the first author to change the American way of writing with his lively humor and simple language.

He was born in Florida, Missouri on November 30, 1835, but his family moved to Hannibal, Missouri when he was four years old. In 1857 he started working as a steamboat ¹ pilot on the Mississippi River and he enjoyed traveling on America's biggest river.

After the discovery of gold in California, Mark Twain decided to join thousands of other people who were going West to look for gold. In 1861 he crossed the American continent by stagecoach ² and settled in the mining town of Virginia City in Nevada. Here he worked as a miner and also as a newspaper reporter.

In 1864 Mark Twain decided to travel to San Francisco, where he started writing for an important newspaper, *The Morning Call*. However, he

1. steamboat :



2. stagecoach :



often went to the California Gold Country and looked for gold in several mining towns like Angel's Camp, Auburn and Placerville. At Angel's Camp he met a miner called Jim Smiley. Smiley told him a funny story about his jumping frog, which became Mark Twain's famous short story, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County". This short story was published in a New York weekly newspaper and became a great success in 1865. He was now a famous writer!

Mark Twain left California and went to the East coast, where he married Olivia "Livy" Langdon in 1870. They had three daughters, Susan, Jean and Clara. He and his family lived in Hartford, Connecticut, where he wrote his three great books, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *Life on the Mississippi* (1883) and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884).

The character Huckleberry is based on a boy Twain knew during his childhood in Hannibal. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is considered Twain's masterpiece because of its unforgettable characters and its exciting adventures. The story is told in the first person, by Huckleberry Finn. The famous American writer Ernest Hemingway declared that "all modern American literature stems from this one book."

Twain's other important works include *The Prince and the Pauper* (1880), *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) and many entertaining short stories. He died in 1910 at the age of seventy-four.

1 COMPREHENSION CHECK

Answer the following questions.

- 1** Why is Mark Twain considered the father of American literature?
- 2** What was his job on the Mississippi River?
- 3** Why did he decide to go to the West?
- 4** What did he do in San Francisco?
- 5** Where did Mark Twain meet Jim Smiley and how was this meeting important?
- 6** Where did Mark Twain live after he got married?
- 7** Where did he write many of his great books?
- 8** Which book is considered Mark Twain's masterpiece and why?
- 9** What did Ernest Hemingway think about *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*?

The story you are going to read takes place along the Mississippi River during the 1800s. The places in *italics* are fictional. The real name of St Petersburg is Hannibal, the town where Mark Twain grew up.





From left to right: Huck's father, the king, the duke, Jim, Miss Watson, Widow Douglas, Huck Finn, Tom Sawyer.

BEFORE YOU READ

1 VOCABULARY

Match the words (1-3) with their meanings (A-C).

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | ☐ widow | A a person who is not free |
| 2 | ☐ slave | B afraid, frightened |
| 3 | ☐ scared | C a woman whose husband is dead |

SLAVES

Slavery was practiced in the South of the United States of America during the 17th, 18th and part of the 19th centuries. Black slaves were brought from Africa and sold at slave markets. These slaves worked on the cotton and sugar plantations in the southern states. They belonged to the plantation owner and he could sell them whenever he wanted to.

PRELIMINARY

2 LISTENING



Listen to Chapter One and choose the correct answer—A, B or C.

- 1 Who does Tom Sawyer live with?
A ☐ Miss Watson
B ☐ Aunt Polly
C ☐ Widow Douglas
- 2 Who does Huck Finn live with?
A ☐ Judge Thatcher
B ☐ His father
C ☐ Widow Douglas
- 3 What are Huck Finn's clothes like?
A ☐ uncomfortable
B ☐ comfortable
C ☐ old and ugly
- 4 Whose footprints did Huck see in the garden?
A ☐ Tom Sawyer's
B ☐ Judge Thatcher's
C ☐ His father's
- 5 Who is Jim?
A ☐ Tom's brother
B ☐ Miss Watson's black slave
C ☐ Huck's father



CHAPTER ONE

Huck and his friends



My name is Huckleberry Finn and I live on the Mississippi River in a small town called St Petersburg. My good friend Tom Sawyer lives there, too, and we have a lot of exciting adventures together. We never get bored because we're friends with Joe Harper, Ben Rogers and two or three other boys here in St Petersburg. We all belong to the Tom Sawyer Gang that meets by the river and does all kinds of fun things. Sometimes we take somebody's boat and go down the river to Jackson's Island. Other times we just go fishing, swimming or climbing trees. We always have fun together.

Tom lives with his Aunt Polly and I live with the Widow Douglas and her sister, Miss Watson. I have to live with them because my mother's dead and nobody knows where my father is. He never worked and he was always drunk.¹

1. **drunk** : when a person had a lot of alcohol to drink and behaves strangely.



Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Before I came to live with Widow Douglas and her sister I didn't have a home, so I was outdoors most of the time and no one told me what to do. But now the two women always tell me what to do and I don't like it. I have to wear new clothes that are uncomfortable and I have to be polite at the dinner table. And sometimes I have to listen to Widow Douglas read stories to me.

Widow Douglas always says, "Go to school, Huck! It's good for you. You must learn to read, write and spell."

I've never liked school, because it's difficult, but I'm slowly learning a few things, like math.

Miss Watson, who's a thin woman with glasses, always says, "Don't put your feet up there! Sit up straight! Do your spelling lessons, Huck!"

Widow Douglas says my behavior is improving, and she always tells the truth.

I'm just a boy but I've got a lot of money, because Tom and I found \$12,000 in a cave once. It's ours now and we each have \$6,000. A man called Judge Thatcher is keeping the money for me since I'm still a boy. He's a good, honest man.

I know that my father wants my money, so it's a good thing he isn't here. When he lived here he often beat me and I ran to the woods and hid there. My life was much better without my father.

However, one day my father returned and that's when my new adventures started.

One winter morning after breakfast I went into the garden and was very surprised. I saw my father's big footprints ² in the snow. I knew those footprints well and I was scared. I didn't know what to do – I needed help.

2. footprint :







Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

There was only one person I could ask, and that was Jim, Miss Watson's slave. Jim was a tall black man who had a magic ball made of animal hair, and it knew everything about the future. I wanted to ask Jim about my father and his plans.

That night I went to see Jim in his room.

"Jim, I need your help," I said, looking at his friendly face. "My father's here again, and I'm really scared."

"How do you know he's here?" asked Jim, who was worried.

"I saw his footprints in the snow this morning," I said.

"I'll get my magic ball, Huck," he said kindly.

Jim got the strange ball made of animal hair and dropped it on the floor. Then he dropped it again and again. He got down on his knees and put his ear near it and listened.

"The ball isn't talking," he said. "Perhaps it wants some money."

"Oh, I've got a coin in my pocket," I said, and pulled out a shiny little coin.

Jim put the shiny little coin under the ball and got down and listened again. This time the ball talked to Jim and then Jim talked to me.

"Hmm," said Jim, slowly, "your father doesn't know what to do. Sometimes he wants to go away and sometimes he wants to stay."

"And what about me?" I asked.

"The ball says your future will be difficult, but also very happy," answered Jim smiling. "You'll get sick but then you'll get better. And don't go near the river because there's lots of trouble there."

When I got back to my room I lit a candle and opened the door... and there was my father, sitting on my bed!

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

1 COMPREHENSION CHECK

Match the phrases 1-10 to the phrases A-M to make complete sentences about Chapter One. There are three phrases you do not need to use.

- 1 ☐ Huck, Tom, Ben and Joe
 - 2 ☐ Huck had to live with Widow Douglas and Miss Watson
 - 3 ☐ Widow Douglas and Miss Watson always
 - 4 ☐ Huck said that
 - 5 ☐ Huck and Tom once found \$12,000
 - 6 ☐ Huck was afraid
 - 7 ☐ Miss Watson had
 - 8 ☐ Jim had a magic ball
 - 9 ☐ When Jim put a coin under the magic ball
 - 10 ☐ When Huck returned to his room
-
- A told Huck what to do and he didn't like it.
 - B on Jackson's Island.
 - C his father was sitting on his bed.
 - D of Judge Thatcher.
 - E of his father, who beat him in the past.
 - F it started to talk to him.
 - G Widow Douglas always told the truth.
 - H because his mother was dead.
 - I that knew everything about the future.
 - J belonged to the Tom Sawyer gang.
 - K made of glass.
 - L in a cave.
 - M a black slave named Jim.

I'VE NEVER LIKED SCHOOL BECAUSE IT'S DIFFICULT.

We often use **ever/never** with the Present Perfect.

We use **ever** in questions; it means "at any time up to now".

*Have you **ever** studied French? Has he **ever** fished in the river?*

We also use a superlative with **ever** + the Present Perfect.

*It is the longest story I've **ever** read. This is the best film I've **ever** seen.*

Never means "not ever" and we use it with a positive verb.

*I've **never** studied French. He's **never** fished in the river.*

Remember to avoid this mistake: She's ~~not~~ never seen an English film.

2 GRAMMAR – PRESENT PERFECT

Complete the sentences with *ever* or *never* and the correct form of the verbs in the box.

have	learn	travel	see	buy	talk
------	-------	--------	-----	-----	------

- 1 Is Judge Thatcher a friendly man? I don't know, I've to him.
- 2 Did you enjoy your vacation in the mountains? It was the best vacation I've !
- 3 Huck doesn't like reading, so he's a book at Mr Karl's bookshop.
- 4 Has Aunt Polly to New York City by train?
- 5 Jim has to read and write, because slaves don't go to school.
- 6 Look at the *Natchez*! It's the biggest steamboat we've

3 WORD SQUARE

A	S	A	V	O	U	H	K	R	O	M	E	D	C
R	J	U	D	G	E	T	H	A	T	C	H	E	R
W	B	N	S	O	B	A	K	G	H	B	C	D	S
E	O	T	F	R	C	L	P	E	I	F	O	I	G
F	X	P	M	I	S	S	W	A	T	S	O	N	B
V	N	O	W	M	G	F	I	M	K	A	B	D	I
U	I	L	D	R	D	S	I	D	M	V	E	T	J
K	C	L	E	P	F	J	I	M	N	W	A	P	Y
R	K	Y	F	V	I	K	V	A	O	B	C	D	O
E	W	I	D	O	W	D	O	U	G	L	A	S	Z
S	M	A	T	D	G	M	C	H	E	P	U	O	A
N	C	I	T	S	E	B	T	P	C	A	S	G	F

Find the names of the five adults in Chapter One and circle them. Use the names to complete the sentences below.

- 1 is thin and wears glasses.
- 2 looks after Tom Sawyer.
- 3 tells Huck to go to school.
- 4 is a good and honest man.
- 5 has a magic ball made of animal hair.



America's Great River: The Mississippi

4 When Mark Twain was a boy he lived on the Mississippi River and he had a lot of fun adventures here. Many of his novels and short stories take place on this river, which is a symbol of America.

This great river is born in Lake Itasca, in Minnesota, and it goes down to the Gulf of Mexico. The Mississippi is about 2,300 miles long (3,700 km). Although the longest river in America is the Missouri River, about 2,500 miles long (4,000 km), the biggest and deepest river with the most water is the Mississippi. The name Mississippi comes from the Indian words "Misi" and "Sipi" which mean *big water*.

In the past many American Indian tribes lived on the Mississippi: the Fox, Winnebago, Ojibwa, Choctaw, Chicksaw, Natchez and Yazoo. They traveled on the big river in their canoes¹ for centuries. Hernando de Soto, a Spanish explorer of the 1500s, was the first white man to see and explore the Mississippi, and the French were the first white people

1. canoe :





A Native American village on the banks of the Upper Mississippi (circa 1860).

to live on the river. They founded the city of New Orleans, on the Gulf of Mexico, in the early 18th century.

American explorers traveled on the Mississippi and explored new lands during the early 1800s. New towns and cities such as Baton Rouge, Memphis, St Louis, Minneapolis and St Paul were born on the river. Today millions of Americans live here.

In the 1800s the steamboat became the best way to travel on this great river; it carried people and cargo. ² Before becoming a famous writer, Mark Twain worked as a steamboat pilot on the river and he loved his job. Steamboats are still popular today and are a special attraction for tourists who want to travel on the Mississippi. *The American Queen* and *The Natchez* are two famous steamboats that offer interesting cruises to historical places along the Mississippi. You can take a one-day, two-day or eight-day cruise on America's greatest river – an unforgettable adventure!

1 COMPREHENSION CHECK

Answer the following questions.

- 1 How did the Mississippi River get its name?
- 2 Who was Hernando de Soto?
- 3 Where did the first French people settle?
- 4 How did people travel on the Mississippi during the 19th century?
- 5 How can you travel on the river today?

2. cargo : products, goods.