## Title
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

## Length of Lesson
One class period

## Grade Level
9-12

## Subject Area
Literature

## Materials
For this lesson, you will need:
- Mark Twain’s novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
- YouTube video of the first 10 minutes of the movie "Tom & Huck"

## URL:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spDHpt05my8

**NOTES:** Videos for this section sometimes go in and out of YouTube depending on copyright. This video, though not about *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* the book, it still contains the same characters and can be used as an excellent example for this lesson. This video has been up on YouTube for a while, but if it does become unavailable simply search Huckleberry Finn in the search bar and you will get a lot of other results that can be used for the exact same activity.

## Procedures
1. Explain that as a concluding activity after reading and discussing *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, your students must produce a paper in which they demonstrate their familiarity with the novel by writing at length about a quotation from it or a symbol in it.

2. To begin and introduce the topic, watch the YouTube video.

3. After the video, discuss a certain quote from the clip or a certain symbol.

4. Then explain to the students that they will be writing a paper based on a quote or symbol, just like the discussion that you had in class.

5. Give them the following advice for choosing a quotation to write about (this advice applies to any novel, not just to *Huckleberry Finn*):

   - Select a quotation that has already gained fame.
   - Select a quotation that contains strong emotion.


## Discussion Questions
1. Discuss how Huck exhibits his ingenuity. How does Huck’s cleverness compare with Ulysses’ ingeniousness?
2. Mark Twain, as well as other American authors, like Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes, used dialect as a literary tool in his writing. Authors use dialect to enhance the mood of a book and portray characters as real, genuine. Discuss how dialect effects the mood and characters in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
3. Discuss how the feud between the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons is symbolic of the Civil War. Do you agree that the novel is “a satirical treatment of the myth of romantic fiction, Southern chivalry, and witless honor?”
4. Discuss how an author’s “well of inspiration” can run dry. What can an author do to replenish himself? Ask students if they have ever experienced writer’s block and if so, share the ways they were able to overcome it.

## Evaluation
You can evaluate your students’ performances using the following three-point rubric: Three points clearly stated thesis statement supported by many specifics from the novel; paragraphs unified and coherent; no errors in grammar, usage, mechanics.

Two points adequately stated thesis statement supported by some specifics from the novel; paragraphs unified and coherent; some errors in grammar, usage, mechanics

One point: unclear or absent thesis statement; paragraphs lacking unity and coherence; many errors in grammar, usage, mechanics

You can ask your students to contribute to the assessment rubric by stating criteria for unity and coherence.

Jane Smiley, Harper’s, January 1996

## Vocabulary

**aversion**
A strong dislike for something, with a desire to turn away from it.

**ingenious**
Creative, imaginative and showing originality.

**cynicism**
The belief that all human conduct is motivated by self-interest.

**dialect**
A regional variety of a language, differing somewhat in pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary from other forms of the same language.

**determinism**
The philosophical belief that every event physical and mental has a cause and is never due to chance.

**denominational**
In the schoolboy days, I had no aversion to slavery, cynicism.

[Context: There was always a hint of cynicism at the far end of Twain’s comic genius.

[Context: The adventure is told in the dialect of the Mississippi valley before the Civil War.

[Context: The critical point of Huck’s transformation is his apology to Jim

**syllabification**
Syllabification is the process of dividing words into syllables.

[Context: We like him (Huck) because he is ingenious— as ingenious as Ulysses in many ways.

[Context: Some cite this fraud as a parable on the youth who slaughtered one another in the Civil War.

[Context: A distinct alteration in appearance, character, or condition.

**narrative**
A story that conveys a moral lesson, used extensively in the New Testament.

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[Context: The critical point of Huck’s transformation is his apology to Jim

**subordinate**
A clause that contains a subject and predicate.

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Academic Standards

Grade Level: 9-12
Subject Area: language arts
Standard:

Demonstrates competence in general skills and strategies for reading literature.

Benchmarks:
- Analyzes the effects of complex literary devices on the overall quality of this work.
- Identifies the simple and complex actions (e.g., internal/external conflicts) between main and subordinate characters in texts containing complex character structures.
- Makes abstract connections between one's own life and the characters, events, motives, and causes of conflict in text. Understands complex dialogues and analyzes the stylistic effect of those dialogues in the story.
- Analyzes the effectiveness of complex elements of plot (e.g., setting(s), major events, problems, conflicts, resolutions).

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