

NAME: _____



Activity Two

1800s USA



The Mississippi River plays a significant role in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and shapes many of the book's towns and characters. Do some research on settlement along the banks of the Mississippi and how towns and cities would have been influenced by the river. **Be sure to comment on:**

- industry
- local economies
- means of travel
- construction of buildings
- social classes
- populations
- settlement patterns
- geography



Drawing of the Mississippi River in the 1800s.



Picture of the Mississippi River now.

Write an essay describing why the river would have played such a big role in people's lives and include at least a paragraph commenting on each of the items listed above. How has the region grown? How has use of the river changed?

Additionally, compare your findings to life along the Mississippi today. How is a regular person's connection to the river today different for how it would have been then? Compare them both to your own home town.

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Activity Three



Review

Now that you've finished reading *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, what did you think of it? In a book review of at least 700 words, describe why you did or didn't like the novel? What did you like about it? What didn't you like about it? What stood out the most about the book, both negatively and positively? If you were the author, how would you change things.



Scene from the 1993 film "The Adventures of Huck Finn"



Scene from the 1993 film "The Adventures of Huck Finn"

When you've finished writing your review, trade with a partner who has the opposite or differing opinion on at least one point. Together, use a venn diagram to illustrate where your opinions differed and where they were the same and present your diagram to the class.

As a class, discuss how the novel would be different if it were set today and how it would be the same. Discuss how perceptions of the novel changed or stayed the same after reading it. Would you recommend the novel to anyone else?



Scene from the 1993 film "The Adventures of Huck Finn"



Scene from the 1993 film "The Adventures of Huck Finn"

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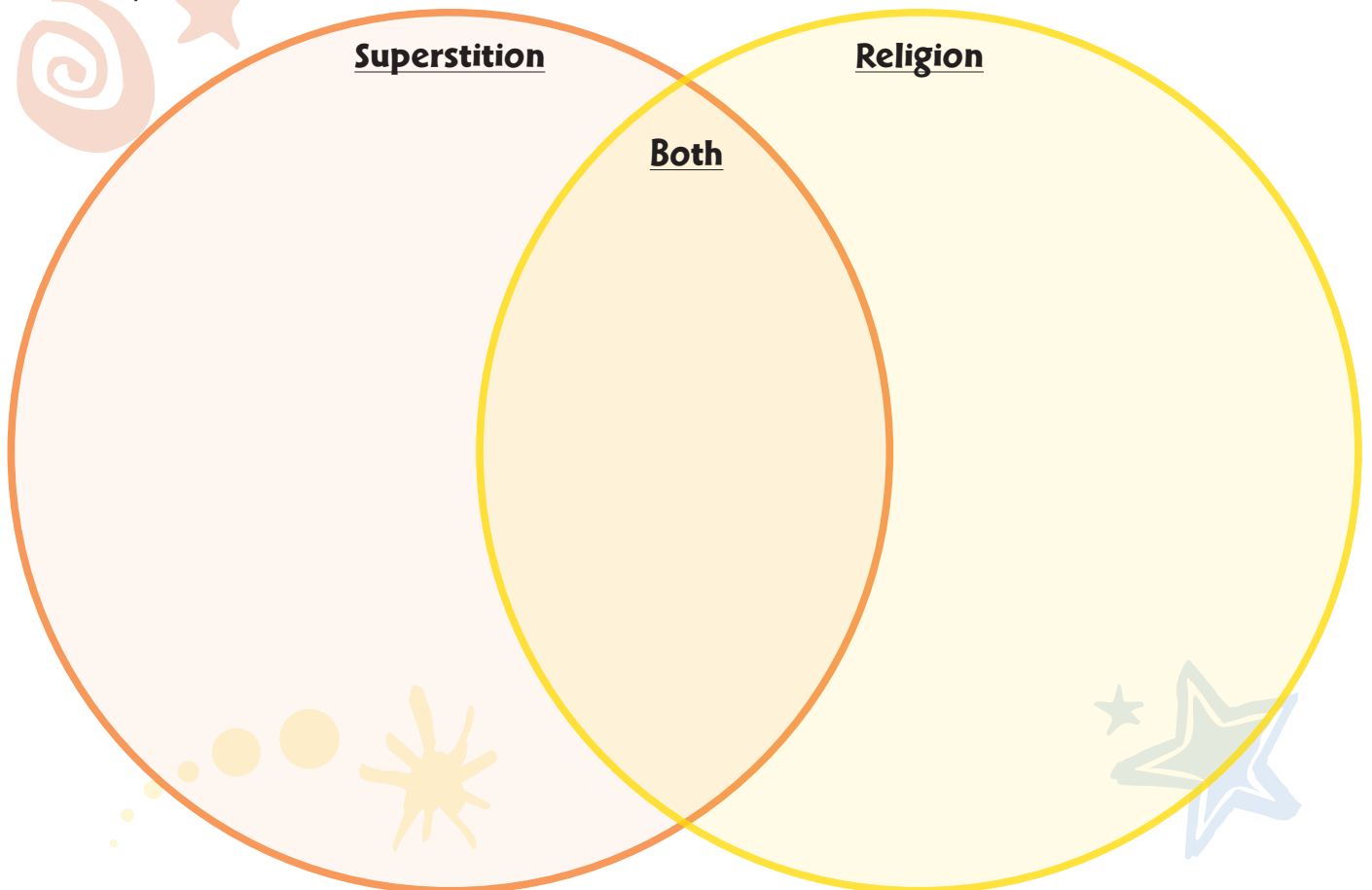
Activity Four

Superstition VS. Religion

Throughout the novel, several characters are guided at least in part by either religion or superstition. Go back through the novel and list incidents of characters being guided by superstition and those guided by religion. List the similarities and differences in a venn diagram. Also, compare them to Huck, who has experienced both ways of thinking.

In a class discussion, talk about how those who are guided by superstition are treated by the author. How does it compare with the depiction of those who are influenced most by religion?

In about 1,000 words, discuss the merits and drawbacks of each way of thinking. Compare them both to how Huck conducts himself throughout the novel. Be sure to comment on differences and similarities between each and how they can become intertwined.



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Activity Five

Tone VS. Message



The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn often has a comedic or light tone, but deals with several serious concepts such as slavery, abuse, and murder. Research Mark Twain and in about 700 words, describe how his experiences could have painted the novel. Include analysis of his childhood and life prior to writing the book.

Using what you've learned, why might Twain have wanted the novel to have a comedic tone? Do you believe there is an overarching moral to the novel? Do you believe this moral or message was intentional? Explain your reasoning.

Examine the notice at the beginning of the book. What is your impression of it? Does it change your opinion of the book? Explain why it does or doesn't. Do you think it's possible for a literary work to have a message if the author didn't intend it to?



Photo of young Mark Twain aged 15

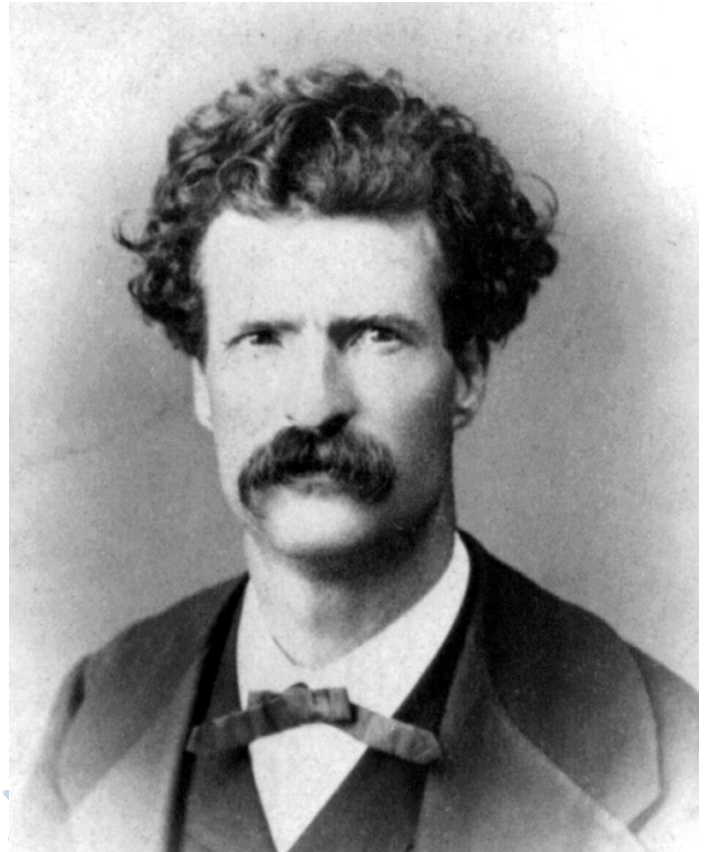


Photo of young Mark Twain aged 32

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Activity Six

Adventure Novel

Tom Sawyer is heavily influenced by the adventure novels he's read and because of that his actions often lead he and Huck into mischief or even dangerous situations.

With that in mind, choose to write from the perspective of either Tom or Huck and take him on another adventure. Write at least two double-spaced typed pages using the style Twain uses in the book. When you're finished writing your adventure, partner with a classmate who has written from the perspective of the opposite character.

Work with your partner to tie the two stories together with an exciting ending of at least two additional typed, double-spaced pages.

When you've finished your Tom and Huck adventure, take turns reading the finished product to the class.

