

Study Questions

Chapter 1-4

1. What does Twain accomplish by using Huck as narrator?
2. What is significance of the chapter title, "I Discover Moses and the Bulrushers"?
3. How is Jim introduced?
4. What contrast between Huck and Tom is established?
5. What humor is involved in the use of the word "ransom"?
6. What is the meaning of Huck's remark that rubbing the "magic" lamp and ring had "all the marks of a Sunday school"?
7. What ironic use of superstition is presented?

Chapter 5-7

8. What is significant in the new judge's treatment of Pap?
9. What mixed emotions does Huck feel about life with his father?
10. What is the irony in Pap's fury about the educated black?
11. What poignancy is evoked in the conversation Huck overhears on the river?

Chapter 8-11

12. What is the importance of the chapter title, "I Spare Miss Watson's Jim"?
13. What is implied in Jim's belief that Huck is a ghost?
14. Why does Huck use the phrase "lowdown Abolitionist"?

15. What is significant about "the floating house of death"?
16. The last line of Chapter 9 says, "We got home all safe." What is home?
17. Why does Huck return to the town?

Chapter 12-16

18. What is the irony of the "Walter Scott"?
19. What is Jim's attitude toward Solomon?
20. In Chapter 15 several death images strike the reader at once. Examples are: "I hadn't no more idea which way I was going than a dead man." "You feel like you are laying dead still on the water" etc. What is the significance of these images?
21. Why does Huck feel free to tease Jim?
22. What is the significance of Jim's lecture to Huck?
23. How does Huck battle with his conscience?
24. What is ironic about Jim's plans?
25. What is the irony of Huck's statement, "I won't let no runaway niggers get by me if I can help it."?

Chapter 17-20

26. Why does Huck take a new name?
27. What is the significance of the remark that Buck will get enough of the battle "in all good time"?
28. Why does Twain describe with such detail the physical setting of the Grangerford home?

29. Who are the only members of the feuding families specifically mentioned as saved from the massacre?
30. Note the descriptive passages about the river which occupy the first few pages of Chapter 19.
31. Huck accepts the outsiders, “for what you want, above all things, on a raft, is for everybody to be satisfied, and feel right and kind toward the others.” Why?
32. What is the significance of Huck’s knowing all along that the two are frauds?

Chapter 21-23

33. Why is the town at the beginning of Chapter 21 described so carefully?
34. How is Colonel Sherburn described?
35. What is Twain’s purpose in inserting Sherburn’s address?
36. What is significant in the title, “The Orneriness of Kings”?
37. What further aspects of Jim’s character emerge in Chapter 23?

Chapter 24-29

38. What contrast emerges immediately?
39. What does Dr. Robinson represent?
40. Why does Huck refuse to expose the frauds at once?
41. Why does Huck say at the end of Chapter 28, “Tom Sawyer couldn’t ‘a’ done it no neater himself. Of course he would ‘a’ throwed more style into it, but I can’t do that very handy, not being brung up to it”?
42. What disappointment does Huck face at the end of Chapter 29?

Chapter 30-32

43. What is the implication of the King's false "confession" to the Duke?
44. What is the significance of the chapter title, "You Can't Pray a Lie"?

Chapter 32-33

45. What is the significance of the title, "I Have a New Name"?
46. How does Tom accept the truth about Huck's disappearance?
47. Why does Tom fall in Huck's esteem?
48. What is Huck's reaction to the punishment of the King and Duke?

Chapter 34-39

49. Why does Huck allow Tom to lead in the escape plot?
50. In Chapter 39 the boys argue about details of their plot. What further revelations of their characters emerge?
51. What is Twain's purpose in including Tom's plans?

Chapter 40-43

52. Why was Tom "the gladdest of all because he had a bullet in the calf of his leg"?
53. What is the irony of the doctor's comment about Jim?
54. What is significant in Tom's revelation of Jim's freedom?
55. What is Huck's reaction to the news?
56. What is the significance of the final chapter title, "Nothing More to Write"?
57. What does Jim's revelation of Pap's death mean?