

## 8TH GRADE SUMMER READING

***THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER***

BY MARK TWAIN

Samuel Clemmens had a favorite word whenever he described his boyhood home of Hannibal, Missouri: drowsing. He meant that it was a place halfway between sleeping and awake, a lazy outpost on the Mississippi River, where he and his friends lived in a world of straw hats, corn-cob pipes, trout fishing, playing hooky, and watching steamboats ply the river

Clemens would later call these days his “Tom Sawyer days,” a time when he himself pulled many of the pranks he later attributed to his young hero. He lived there from the age of four to fifteen, and he relived those days for the rest of his life in books like *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *Life on the Mississippi*.

—excerpt from “Mark Twain: Known to Everyone—Liked by All”

This summer you will need to read and annotate *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, a novel that celebrates the carefree days of childhood in a small, pre-Civil War Missouri town. The main character, Tom Sawyer, is at once mischievous and innocent, clever and naive. His adventures are legendary, fueled by a vibrant imagination.

Mark Twain meant for *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* to be seen as an idyll, or a remembrance of simpler “good old days” where “boys would be boys.” Think of this novel as a literary photograph or snapshot, capturing the essence of everything it meant to be a barefoot boy in the prime of his childhood: fishing, playing pranks, enduring school, creating adventures, and falling in love. As you read, be sure to annotate places where you think Twain’s tone leaks through the perspective of the boy. (Remember, tone is the author’s attitude about a particular topic.) For example, in the first chapter, notice how Twain characterizes Aunt Polly—the only adult in the chapter—as bumbling, gullible, and inept. Is this attitude Tom’s attitude or Twain’s? How can you tell? Look for other examples of tone throughout the novel and annotate those carefully.

As you read and annotate the novel, you will need to complete the “Seeking the Buried Treasure” Setting Chart. You will need to bring this to class the first day of school to turn in for your first daily grade. I expect you to be familiar with the novel. We will cover certain key lessons, take a test over the novel, and then write our first 8th grade essay all within the first few weeks of school. Eighth grade moves very quickly, so it is in your best interest to be ready to go when the new year begins. Just like Tom Sawyer, we have MANY adventures awaiting us!

♥ Mrs. Pitts

P.S. If you lose this assignment: email me, and I will send you another copy! [hpitts@chcslongview.com](mailto:hpitts@chcslongview.com)





# SEEKING THE BURIED TREASURE






## *THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER*

Directions: Much of the novel's appeal is directly related to the geographical settings that Twain uses. In each setting, whether it be in the formal, stuffy church, the dangerous, dark caves, or simply in the comfortable streets of the sleepy town, Twain builds a landscape that serves to enhance the novel's focus: the definition of boyhood. Think about each of the various settings listed below and comment on its significance. Write in complete sentences and reference the novel specifically whenever you can. You should use quotes and page numbers to help you explain your observations.

-----

PLACE	WHAT SORTS OF THINGS HAPPEN HERE?	WHAT DOES THIS PLACE REVEAL ABOUT THE HEART OF A YOUNG BOY?
CHURCH 		
SCHOOL 		

PLACE	WHAT SORTS OF THINGS HAPPEN HERE?	WHAT DOES THIS PLACE REVEAL ABOUT THE HEART OF A YOUNG BOY?
<p><b>TOWN (IN DAYTIME)</b></p> 		
<p><b>TOWN (IN NIGHTTIME)</b></p> 		

PLACE	WHAT SORTS OF THINGS HAPPEN HERE?	WHAT DOES THIS PLACE REVEAL ABOUT THE HEART OF A YOUNG BOY?
<p><b>JACKSON ISLAND</b></p> 		
<p><b>CAVE</b></p> 