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American Studies English

**Webquest: *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

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Directions: Before we begin reading Mark Twain’s classic novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, it is essential for you to gain some background knowledge. Follow the directions below to obtain insight into the author and his text.

Go to each website listed. Read the information and answer the questions provided.

**Part I: Background on the Author**

<http://www.cmgww.com/historic/twain/about/bio.htm>

1. What was Mark Twain’s real name?
2. What year was he born?
3. Where did Twain and his family move to when he was four years old?
4. What river was this town located on?
5. List two things that happened to Twain when he was between the ages of twelve and thirteen.
6. Where did Twain derive inspiration for his pen name (Mark Twain)?
7. During the time of the Civil War, how did Twain make a living?
8. What year was *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* published?

<http://www.pbs.org/marktwain/learnmore/chronology.html>

1. After reading the timeline, construct your own timeline of Mark Twain’s life (on a separate piece of paper) with ten significant events on it.

<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/m/mark_twain.html>

1. Write down a quotation by Mark Twain that you find to be meaningful.

**Part II: Background on the Novel**

*While the book was published in 1885, the setting is pre-Civil War.*

<http://www.americanwriters.org/works/finn.asp>

1. Who is the narrator of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn?*
2. Why does Huck go on a journey down the Mississippi River?
3. Who does he go with?

**Part III: Historical Context**

<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/usstates/artwork/rivers/mississp.htm>

1. On a separate sheet of paper, draw and label a map of the Mississippi River.
2. Where does the Mississippi River begin?
3. Where does the Mississippi River end?

<http://www.ushistory.org/us/23c.asp>

1. What was the problem in 1819 with Missouri entering the Union?
2. Who negotiated the Missouri Compromise?
3. List the two solutions for the Missouri Compromise.

a.

b.

<http://www.ushistory.org/us/30d.asp>

1. What did the Fugitive Slave Law require?
2. How did the North react to the Fugitive Slave Law?

**Part IV: Reactions to *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/cultureshock/teachers/huck/aboutbook.html>

1. What did the Concord Library do to *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in 1885?

1. Why did the library feel it was necessary to do this?
2. In 1980, what did John Wallace do?

23. How do “champions of the novel” defend the book?