

2013–2014 Season

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PLAYGUIDE

The ADVENTURES of TOM SAWYER



October 4–13, 2013, Studio Two, Riffe Center

Adapted by Steven C. Anderson
from Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

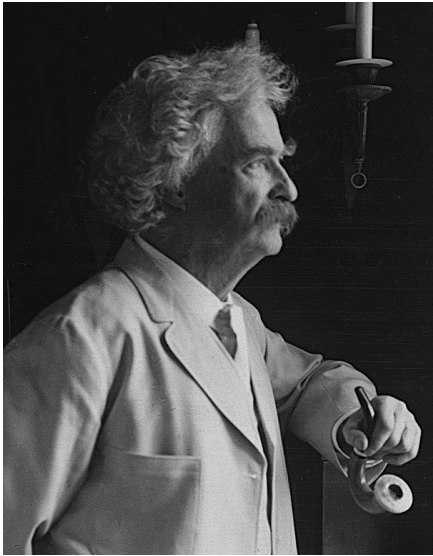


The Story

Perhaps you've heard of a certain clever and witty author named Samuel Clemens? Well, if you haven't, don't worry. Most folks know him by his pen name of Mark Twain. Twain introduces our play by stirring up a chance meeting between two of his well-loved characters—Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. The play proceeds as Tom and Huck delightfully reminisce about their zany adventures as boys. Recounting episodes of their boyhood prattles, Tom re-lives his rascally and mischief-maker ways only to be accompanied by the best friend a boy could ever have—Huck Finn. Whether Tom and Huck are using 'punk water' for removal of the common wart, trying to spot a ghost lurking in a graveyard, or searching for a buried treasure, they are sure to stir up some mischief. The story continues to unfold as the two roguish adventurers plot against the villainous Injun Joe. Join CATCO is Kids as Tom and Huck are brought to life in this loving tribute to Mark Twain's classic.



Mark Twain, Master Storyteller



Samuel Clemens was born on November 30, 1835, in Florida, Missouri, and was the sixth of seven children. At age four, Sam and his family moved to the small frontier town of Hannibal, Missouri, on the banks of the Mississippi River. Missouri, at the time, was a fairly new state (it had gained statehood in 1820) and comprised part of the country's western border. It was also a slave state. Sam's father owned one slave and his uncle owned several. In fact, it was on his uncle's farm that Sam spent many boyhood summers playing in the slave quarters, listening to tall tales and the slave spirituals that he enjoyed throughout his life.

Sam left Hannibal when he was 18 and moved to St. Louis, Missouri. He became a steamboat pilot, steering boats up and down the Mississippi River. That was where he first heard the words "mark twain" which were code words that told pilots how deep the river was. He remembered the phrase later when he needed a pen name for his books. (That's how he came to be known as "Mark Twain" instead of "Samuel Clemens.")

After Sam left the river, he went west and spent many years in Nevada and California looking for gold and silver. He started writing for newspapers to earn money. Sam found that people liked to read about exotic places, so he began to write about places he visited like the Sandwich Islands (which we now know as the Hawaiian Islands).

He eventually returned to the east and married Olivia Langdon, a young lady from Elmira, New York. They lived in Hartford for many years, then left America and traveled all over the world, as far away as India and Australia.

Did you know? Twain used two different pen names before deciding on "Mark Twain." He signed humorous and imaginative sketches "Josh" until 1863, and he also used the pen name "Thomas Jefferson Snodgrass" for a series of humorous letters.

Selected Works of Mark Twain: *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*
The Innocents Abroad Roughing It
The Prince and the Pauper
Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court

Online Resources: www.pbs.org/marktwain
www.marktwainmuseum.org/index.php/education/for-teachers/lesson-plans

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About the Playwright



Steven C. Anderson has created plays for and with central Ohio children for the past 29 years, first at the Leo Yassenoff Jewish Center, then at Players Theatre Columbus, and finally with The Phoenix Theatre for Children. His most recent position is Producing Director for CATCO. He is the recipient of the Ohio Theatre Alliance Lifetime Achievement Award, the Southside Settlement Arts Freedom Award, a Certificate of Achievement from the Community Center for the Deaf, and a Central Ohio Critics Circle Award for "a decade of respectful and exhilarating theatrical adaptations of works of literature from around the world and for using a diverse array of theatrical styles to challenge and delight children." His work has been nominated five times for the prestigious Greater Columbus Arts Council's Excellence in the Arts Award. His work as a director includes *Candide* and *Hair* at The Ohio State University Theatre Department; *Love! Valour! Compassion!* and *The Taste of Sunrise* at CATCO; *Big River* and *Pippin* for Actors Theatre; *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* at New Harmony Theatre; and *Greater Tuna*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *Assassins* for the former Players Theatre Columbus where he served as Associate Producing Director. He is particularly proud of the 2006 collaboration with BalletMet of *Alice in Wonderland*, the 2007 collaboration with CAPA and Opera Columbus on *The Secret Garden* that paired deaf and hearing actors on stage together, and the 2009 Phoenix Theatre for Children production of *The Miracle Worker* that incorporated the talents of deaf and blind actors.

Curriculum Connections

You can use this Playguide and your visit to CATCO is Kids to help your students meet the curriculum standards required in schools by the Ohio Department of Education. Look throughout our Playguide for the icon

Curriculum
Connection

and you will find academic standards that correspond with the different activities listed.

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Vocabulary Section

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.4: Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.

Remember that dead cat you was a **toting**?

That's why at midnight they come back as ghosts and walk the earth in **agony**.

My Aunt Polly was watching me that time, but I won't give her no cause to be **suspicious** tonight and I'll come right away.

The boys present for all that are present and dare to hear: A **solemn** situation in which **grave** subjects are introduced.

We don't **stir** or **budge**. If'n we move they might hear us.

You are the most prepared and **equipped** boy I ever knowed.

It's a **stray** dog, I never seen it afore.

That why you went soft and broke our **oath**?

Where'd we get **doubloons**?

Now, **hoist** the sail.

Anyway it lays there a long time and gets rusty and by and by somebody finds an old yellow paper that tells how to find the marks—a paper that's got to be ciphered over about a week because it's mostly signs and **hieroglyphics**.

With each footstep, their other foot was **poised** to run away.



Fix It!

Twain wrote the dialogue in his books just the way it would have sounded in real life, and many of his characters have (let's face it) terrible grammar! Look at the lines listed above and see if you can fix them so that they are grammatically correct.

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THINGS TO THINK ABOUT AND DO



Before the Show

1. Read or have a parent read to you Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. (Pay special attention to chapters 9, 10, 13, 14, 25, and 26—these are the chapters featured in the play.)

- Who are the characters featured in these chapters?
- What are the events that take place?
- When and where is the story set?
- How would you describe the characters' personalities?
- What are some of the ways in which life in Tom and Huck's world is different from your own?
- What things are the same?

Write down or share your thoughts out loud with a parent or friend.

Curriculum
Connection

CCSS. ELA-Literacy. RL 2.7

Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

2. Although Tom and Huck are the same age, Huck has never been to school and doesn't know how to read, write, or do math. After reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, refer to the text to see if you can find evidence of the above statement.

- Imagine not being able to go to school—how would your life be different?
- Do you like school?
- What would you do if you couldn't go to school and learn?



Curriculum
Connection

CCSS. ELA-Literacy. RL 3.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

3. Tom and Huck believe in ghosts. Do you? Can you think of any scientific evidence that might prove or disprove the existence of ghosts? Conduct some research on ghosts using different media sources. See if you can uncover evidence through research findings that will support your conclusions.

Curriculum
Connection

CCSS. ELA-Literacy.
RL 6–8.8

Distinguish among facts, reasoned judgment based on research findings, and speculation in a text.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT AND DO

After the Show

1. Mark Twain was a very good storyteller. Do you know what it takes to write an outstanding story? Make up a story of your own. Who are the main characters? What kind of adventures might they have? You may wish to write about a real or imagined experience. Make sure your story has descriptive details and a clear sequence of events. If you like, you can draw illustrations to go with it!

Curriculum
Connection

CCSS.ELA-W.4.3a: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
(Grade 4)

2. Imagine, like Tom and Huck, that you're a pirate. Choose a friend to help you brainstorm ideas for writing a story about pirates. Take suggestions from your friends to help strengthen the ideas for your story. Allow your friends to help you add details to your story to make it clearer. Ask an adult to help you edit your story.

Curriculum
Connection

CCSS.ELA-W.1.5: With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.
(Grade 1)

3. After seeing the performance of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, talk with your class or peers about the performance. Discuss certain elements of the play such as the characters, props, or set pieces. How did these elements enhance your understanding of the story? Share your opinions and make sure to respectfully consider the opinions of others.

Curriculum
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Drama/Theatre: Share personal opinions about a play or theatre experience and respectfully consider the opinions of others.
Responding and Reflecting (4RE)
(Grade 3)



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THINGS TO THINK ABOUT AND DO



ARR! Pirates!

Ever wonder why pirates always seem to be missing one eye? Maybe they all got an eye poked out in a fight, but here's another theory: What if they weren't missing an eyeball at all, but had found a particular use for those eye patches? Try this exercise, and you'll SEE what we mean.

Go into a room that has one strong light source, but will be relatively dark if you turn the light out. Place one hand over your right eye, as if you had an eye patch on. Stare at the light source (don't use the sun!) with your left eye for about one minute. Then turn the light off. You probably won't be able to see anything at all with the left eye...but try moving your hand to cover the eye, and look around the room with your right eye. Wow! You can see!

Some Pirate Lingo from the Play

- Hoist the sail and bring her to wind
- Let her go off a point
- To port
- Shiver me timbers
- Walk the plank
- Man your battle stations

Here's how pirates may have used eye patches to their advantage: They could board a ship at night, wearing eye patches. The ship would probably be lit by lanterns. If the pirates blew out the light in the lanterns and then moved their eye patches to the opposite eye, they would be able to see in the dark. The ship's sailors would not be able to see anything at all because both of their eyes were accustomed to the light. Guess who would win the fight... the pirates of course! (Of course this doesn't explain all the peg legs and hook hands...)



X Marks the Spot

You don't have to wait until "Talk like a Pirate Day" to have a pirate party! Here are some ideas for your own personal Pirate Day:

- Talk like a pirate, of course—you'd be amazed at how funny the most ordinary sentence can sound if you stick an "arr!" in it.
- Make an eye patch out of felt, paper, or whatever you have handy. (We don't recommend trying to fashion a hook hand yourself, lest you need a real eye patch.)
- Make a play-safe pirate sword out of a cardboard box. Simply draw the shape of the sword, then have an adult help you cut it out.
- Have a treasure hunt! Hide some "loot" (candy and toy money make great pirate loot) and draw a map or write instructions for how to find it. Your instructions might look something like this:

"Start by tree with the dead limb and face west. Walk straight forward until you reach the fence. Turn right and follow the fence post, then turn right and take nine big steps. Turn left and take three steps. Look under the round rock for your next clue."

You can also make the game a little harder by giving code names to places and landmarks like "The Home of Man's Best Friend" for the doghouse. Your treasure hunt can take place inside or outside.



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT AND DO



The Quotable Twain

Mark Twain was famous for his funny and thought provoking words. Here are just a few tidbits of wisdom from one of the most quotable men in American history:

- "It is better to keep your mouth shut and appear stupid than to open it and remove all doubt."
- "When in doubt, tell the truth."
- "Never put off until tomorrow that which could be done the day after tomorrow."
- "Always do right. That will gratify some of the people, and astonish the rest."
- "Comedy keeps the heart sweet."
- "Whatever you say, say it with conviction."
- "I like a good story well told. That is the reason I am sometimes forced to tell myself."
- "When we remember we are all mad, the mysteries of life disappear and life stands explained."
- "I have never let my schooling interfere with my education."
- "Action speaks louder than words but not nearly as often."
- "Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it."
- "Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."



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