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English Literature - Analytical Literature Review

TITLE: Huck Finn

AUTHOR: Mark Twain

<p>Historical context - what do you know about the author's time (political, social, philosophical) that is relevant to the text and its theme?</p> <p>Mark Twain wrote Huckleberry Finn two decades after the end of the civil war. Although it was written after slavery and the civil war, Huck Finn serves as an allegorical representation of the lives of black people even after slavery was abolished.</p>		
<p>Setting - location, region, country, historical period - how does setting influence characterization? How does setting influence theme?</p> <p>Huckleberry Finn takes place prior to the civil war in the south, where slavery is a way of life and racism is prominent.</p>	<p>Author Biography - what do you know about the author that gives information about the text, its themes, and its significance?</p> <p>Author grew up in a town situated on the Mississippi River. (Huck travels this during the book). Became one of the best storytellers in the West. (Tom Sawyer told a lot of stories). He was also a vocal opponent of racism and imperialism.</p>	
<p>Inciting Incident - what character and/or events cause the conflict? How does the inciting incident inform theme?</p> <p>Huck and Tom help Jim escape only to end up caught by a doctor that is helping heal Jim's wound. They help him gain his freedom, only for it to be taken away once again. This incident leads to the ultimate freedom of Jim with the help of Aunt Sally.</p>	<p>Internal Conflict - What characters struggle internally? How and why? Does this conflict inform theme?</p> <p>Huck Finn- struggles with what he thinks is morally right, help Jim, and what society says he should do, turn Jim in.</p>	<p>External Conflict- Between whom/what? Why? How does conflict inform theme?</p> <p>Conflict between Pap and Huck leads to Huck faking his death and running away. If it wasn't for this conflict Huck wouldn't of went on his journey and met Jim, only to later save him.</p>
<p>Symbolism - abstract or concrete? What are they? How does symbolism inform theme?</p> <p>The Mississippi River is a symbol of freedom. Throughout the story Jim struggles for freedom until he finally reaches his destination and his road to freedom is over. The river is like a metaphor for Jim's path to freedom.</p>	<p>Tone - How is the author's and/or speaker's attitude evident in the text?</p> <p>The author's constant use of the n word shows the reality of the time period and Twain's disapproval.</p>	

Characterization - Name & Analysis of major characters. how and what type - flat/round? Static/dynamic? Stock? Protagonist/Antagonist/Foil? Motivation? Attitudes? How does characterization inform theme?

Huck Finn- protagonist

Pap- Antagonist

Huck Finn is a child who comes from the lowest level of white society.

Huck is often homeless, and his father, an angry alcoholic, disappears

for months on end. Although the Widow Douglas attempts to reform

Huck, he remains independent and keeps his “uncivilized” ways.

Jim is a slave who is accompanied by Huck

Figurative language and literary devices - what devices are most prominent? What do they mean? How does the meaning relate to the theme?

Vernacular- informal speech

Dialect-variation of language spoken by a particular group

Picaresque Fiction- first-person narrative

Satire- Caricature, Parody, Hyperbole, Understatements (uses wit to attack human faults on something the author approves or disapproves of)

Universal application - What specific themes are relevant to life/the human condition beyond the pages of the text? Answer “so what?” for the themes—why does this text matter?

Freedom & Enslavement

Social Responsibility: Conformity & Civilization

Coming of Age and Search for Identity

Friendship & Betrayal

Christian Religion vs. Superstition

Individual vs. Society

Man and the natural world

Family