A nineteenth-century boy from a Mississippi River town recounts his adventures as he travels down the river with a runaway slave, encountering a family involved in a feud, two scoundrels pretending to be royalty, and Tom Sawyer’s aunt who mistakes him for Tom.

In this post, we will provide an in-depth summary of this book and also share all the necessary information about the book. Spoilers ahead, watch out and take care.

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Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Book Overview

Who doesn’t know this rebellious teenager with the big straw hat? But Mark Twain’s second book about the young Huckleberry Finn – *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is the sequel to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* – is much more than a children’s story full of adventure and excitement. It is dark in places, dealing with difficult topics such as slavery, lies, betrayal, moral actions and true friendship. It is a biting satire of American South romanticism and a poignant portrait of the pre-Civil War American society as the often naive but always perceptive perspective of Huckleberry Finn questions preconceived ideas.
and accepted prejudices. Yet at the end of his journey down the Mississippi River, he and the runaway slave Jim arrive at the epitome of the American dream: freedom!

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Book Detail

- **Publisher**: SeaWolf Press (February 25, 2021)
- **Language**: English
- **Paperback**: 358 pages
- **ISBN-10**: 1953649807
- **ISBN-13**: 978-1953649805
- **Item Weight**: 1.15 pounds
- **Dimensions**: 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

- **Best Sellers Rank**: #14,949 in Books ([See Top 100 in Books](#))
  - #1 in [Canadian Dramas & Plays](#)
  - #24 in [Classic Action & Adventure (Books)](#)
  - #330 in [Classic Literature & Fiction](#)

- **Customer Reviews**: 4.5 out of 5 stars 99 ratings
Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Book Spoilers and Summary

What Happened Before

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer ends with Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer finding a large amount of money that a band of robbers had hidden. They each get $6,000 – a huge sum for the boys – which Judge Thatcher invests for them at the bank. The Widow Douglas and her extremely conservative and religious sister Miss Watson adopt Huckleberry, but he struggles with their attempts to “sivilize” him and runs away. Tom persuades him to return. He does, but Huck isn’t happy.

Life at the Widow’s House

While Huckleberry likes some of the luxuries his new life offers, he misses the freedom of being able to do and wear what he wants. The new clothes make him feel “cramped up,” he struggles with the strict time schedule at the Widow Douglas’s house, and he doesn’t see the point of saying his prayers or reading the Bible. One night, just as Huckleberry is feeling low, Tom appears in the garden and together they steal away. Tom has great plans to start a band of robbers with Huck and a few other boys. Tom makes each of the boys swear an oath of allegiance, which he has cobbled together from a number of pirate and robber stories he has read. They all sign the oath with their blood and decide that their “line of business” will be robbery and murder.

A Body in the River

One day, some locals fish a body from the river that runs past the town. Even though it’s badly bloated, they think it might be Huck’s father, an alcoholic prone to violence, who never bothered with his son except to beat him viciously. Huck is relieved to hear the news, even though he isn’t fully convinced that the body is indeed that of his father. Meanwhile, the gang continues to meet, but they never move beyond “pretend” robberies fueled by Tom’s imagination. Soon, the band dissolves.

“Right is right, and wrong is wrong, and a body ain’t got no business doing wrong when he ain’t ignorant and knows better.” (Huck Finn)

Winter comes, and Huck goes to school fairly regularly, learning to spell, write and do math. One morning, he comes across footprints in the snow outside the Widow Douglas’s house. When he looks closer, he realizes that they’re his father’s footprints. Huck runs straight to Judge Thatcher and asks him to take all the savings from him. He’s afraid that his father has
only come back for the money but doesn’t tell Judge Thatcher of his suspicion. The judge, guessing the reason, makes a deal with Huck in which he pays him $1 for his property. Huck signs and returns home. When he gets to his room that evening, his father is there waiting for him.

**The Kidnapping**

Huck’s father wants Huck’s money, but Judge Thatcher refuses to hand it over. The judge and the Widow Douglas attempt to get custody for Huck, but a **new judge** in town, who knows nothing about Huck’s father, decides that it wouldn’t be good to separate father and son. The new judge takes in Huck’s father and tries to reform him but soon has to admit defeat. Huck’s father starts a lawsuit in order to get to Huck’s money. He also tries to stop the boy from going to school. When the widow tells him to stay away, he waits for Huck and kidnaps him. He takes him across the river to Illinois to an old wooden cabin. They live on what they can fish and hunt, and Huck enjoys the freedom of not having to wash, dress properly, eat from a plate, and so on. However, his father soon starts hitting him again. He also locks Huck into the cabin whenever he goes away – sometimes for several days.

**The Escape**

Huck can’t take it anymore, and he hatches a plan to escape. He finds a rusty saw and starts sawing a hole in the cabin wall while his father is gone. When the man returns, he’s in a foul mood because the lawsuit for Huck’s money is dragging on. Also, the judge and the widow have started another attempt to be made Huck’s guardians. The thought of going back to “civilization” doesn’t appeal to Huck, and he plans to run away that night once his father drinks himself into oblivion. However, Huck himself falls asleep with the gun across his lap and only wakes up late the next morning. To explain why he has the gun, he tells his father that he heard someone walking around the cabin. His father sends him off to fish, and Huck finds a canoe drifting down the river. He pulls it ashore and hides it. In the afternoon, his father heads back into town, and Huck sets to work. He takes all the provisions and tools from the cabin and loads them into the canoe, then shoots a wild pig and splatters its blood around the cabin, staging his own murder. He leaves an axe with blood and a bit of his hair stuck to it and sets off toward Jackson Island in his canoe.

**On Jackson Island**

Huck enjoys the solitude and freedom on the island, but three days after arriving, he comes across a still-smoking campfire. Scared, he packs all his possessions and decides to sleep in the canoe. Toward morning, he finally gathers enough courage to find out who is on the island with him. To his surprise and relief, it’s **Jim**, Miss Watson’s slave. Jim tells him that Miss Watson decided to sell him to a slave trader, so he has run away. Huck promises not to betray him. The two set up camp in a cave, where they sit out a storm that lasts over a week.
and floods parts of the island. Once the storm passes, they go exploring in Huck’s canoe. They come across a two-story wooden house floating past, and they climb into it. They find the **body of a man** who was shot in the back. Jim has a look at his face but tells Huck to stay away, saying that it’s “too ghastly.” Jim covers the body with some old rags. They take what they can from the boat and head back to the island.

**Flight South**

Huck is curious: He wants to find out what people are saying about him and his “death,” so he dresses up as a girl and heads into town. From a **woman** who only recently moved into town, he learns that initially, people suspected his father of his murder, but now they believe it was Jim since he disappeared at the same time. There is a reward of $300 for Jim’s capture. The woman tells Huck that her **husband** has decided to go and search Jackson Island the next day, because he has seen smoke on the island. Huck rushes back to the island, and he and Jim pack their belongings on a raft they found and set off. As they drift down the Mississippi River, they come across a stranded steamboat. They climb on board and run into **three criminals**, two of which have ganged up on the third and are about to shoot him. When Jim and Huck try to escape before the three men notice them, they find that their raft has come to lose and drifted off. They steal the criminals’ boat and soon catch up with their own raft.

**A Narrow Escape**

Jim and Huck’s aim is to get to Cairo, where the Mississippi River meets the Ohio River. Their plan is to sell their raft and take a steamboat up the Ohio River to the states where slavery has been abolished. One night, they get caught in thick fog and become separated, finding each other again only with great difficulty. As they continue to drift down the river, Jim talks about what he will do as a free man: work, save some money, and buy his **wife and children**. Huck starts to feel guilty; he is helping a slave escape. He decides he needs to tell someone, and so he takes the canoe and paddles off under the pretense of wanting to find out whether they have reached Cairo. As he sets off, Jim calls after him that Huck is the best friend that he has ever had. Huck is confused; he now feels as if he is betraying Jim. He isn’t far off the raft before **two men** in a boat stop him. They’re after **five runaway slaves** and start questioning Huck. He prevents them from searching the raft by telling them that his father is there and that he has smallpox. Afraid to catch the contagious disease, the men give Huck some money and advice on how to get to the nearest landing-place; the men then move on. Jim, who overheard the conversation, feels his trust in Huck is justified: his friend lied for him and saved him.

**A Deadly Feud**

Jim and Huck realize that, because of the fog, they have drifted past Cairo. They can’t go
back upriver because they’ve lost their canoe. To top it all off, a steamboat rams their raft and splits it in two. Huck manages to get to shore, but there is no sign of Jim. Huck is taken in by a local family, the Grangerfords. From their son Buck, Huck learns that the family has a long-standing feud with another local family, the Shepherdsons, which has led to several deaths on both sides. No one really knows what started the feud, but fighting between the families continues. One day, after Huck and the family return from church, Miss Sophie, one of the Grangerford daughters, asks Huck if he would go back to the church to pick up her Bible. He does so, but suspects something is up. When he picks up the Bible, he finds a note inside it that says “half-past two.” He is puzzled by what it could mean but gives the book and note to Miss Sophie without saying anything.

“Human beings can be awful cruel to one another.” (Huck Finn)

The slave who has been “assigned” to Huck comes to him with a strange request: He asks if he could show Huck a place where there are water moccasins (venomous snakes). Huck gathers that something is up and follows the slave. In the middle of a swamp, well-hidden by bushes and tree, he comes across the sleeping Jim. Huck wakes him up, and Jim reports what happened after the steamboat rammed them. He tried to follow Huck but had been too slow to catch up. Afraid that someone would capture him and force him back into slavery, Jim decided to hide. He met some other slaves who lived nearby and decided to send a message to Huck. The next morning, Miss Sophie is gone. She has eloped and married Harney Shepherdson. The Grangerfords swear revenge and go after the Shepherdsons. Buck is killed in the ensuing shooting. Huck and Jim escape.

Two Hustlers

Jim and Huck continue their journey down the river. They pick up two men who are on the run. The older man claims to be the Duke of Bridgewater and asks to be addressed as “Your Grace,” “My Lord” or “Your Lordship.” Not wanting to be outdone, the younger one says that he is a descendant of Louis XVI and therefore should be called “Your Majesty.” Huck realizes quickly that the two are nothing but frauds and hustlers who travel around trying to scam people. However, as free white men, they are in a better position than Jim and Huck, so Huck pretends to go along with their game. He tells them that Jim is his slave and that they are on their way to his uncle, who lives down south. Soon, the Duke and the King take control of the raft. They keep stopping along the way, coming up with ever new and outrageous schemes to swindle people out of their money. For example, in Parkville, the King goes to a church meeting and pretends to be a reformed pirate who now wants to take the gospel to other pirates. He ends up with $80 in donations to help him on his mission. At their next stop, the pair stage a ridiculous theater show and manage to get away with several hundred dollars in their pockets.
A Great Coup

A few days later, Huck and the King meet a young man who tells them about some recent events in the nearby village: A man called Peter Wilks has just died, leaving three orphaned nieces, a small fortune and property behind. The man had suffered from a long illness and had been hoping that his two remaining brothers William and Harvey would come over from England before his death. The King and the Duke see their chance to get their hands on the inheritance. They go into the village with Huck and pretend to be Wilks’s brothers. They’re welcomed with open arms, and soon the money ends up in their possession. Huck feels sorry for the three girls, so he decides to steal the money and give it back to them. However, his well-intentioned plan goes wrong. After he steals the money from the Duke and the King’s room, he almost gets caught and is forced to hide it in the deceased’s coffin, which is nailed shut and buried the next day. Huck convinces the Duke and the King that the slaves they sold the previous day stole the money. When Huck finds Mary Jane, the oldest of the girls, crying in her room, he decides to tell her everything. She agrees to stay at a friend’s for a day to give Huck and Jim the chance to escape before she exposes the two fraudsters. However, shortly after she leaves the next morning, Wilks’s real brothers turn up. In an attempt to prove that the King and the Duke are lying, the real Harvey Wilks asks the King if he knows what his brother had tattooed on his chest. The King quickly invents something, and it is his word against that of Harvey Wilks. The people of the village decide to dig up Peter’s body to determine who is right. When they open the coffin, they find the money. In the ensuing confusion, Huck manages to escape. He runs to the raft, where he and Jim set off, celebrating that they have finally gotten rid of the King and the Duke. But then they see a boat coming after them carrying the two fraudsters. Resigned, Jim and Huck take them back on board.

An Elaborate Plan

The four continue the journey south. They stop at a few villages, but all the King and the Duke’s schemes prove unsuccessful. Having lost all their money and not earning any either, they start making new plans. When they come to the next stop at Pikeville, the King sets off into the village. He asks the Duke and Huck to come after him if he isn’t back by lunchtime. When he doesn’t return, they follow him and finally find him, completely drunk in a tavern. The Duke and the King get into a fight, and Huck sees his chance to escape the two. He runs back to the raft, only to find that Jim has disappeared. The King has sold him to a local family, the Phelps. Huck goes in search of Jim. The Duke tells Huck where Jim is after Huck promises not to cross them as they go about their latest scheme.

“Jim said bees wouldn’t sting idiots; but I didn’t believe that, because I had tried them lots of times myself, and they wouldn’t sting me.” (Huck Finn)
Huck goes to the Phelps’s house. To his surprise, Mrs. Phelps, or “Aunt Sally,” welcomes him with open arms. She believes he is her nephew Tom Sawyer, whose arrival they have been expecting for days. Huck plays along. The next day, he heads into town to intercept Tom and let him in on his plan to free Jim. Tom agrees to play along and help Huck. They introduce Tom to Aunt Sally and her husband, Uncle Silas, as Tom’s brother Sid.

Tom insists that they need an elaborate plan to free Jim. So rather than just stealing the key and running away, the rescue plan gets more and more complicated. Inspired by all the adventure stories he has read, Tom decides that they need use a knife to dig a tunnel under the wall of the shed, make a rope-ladder from sheets that they steal from Aunt Sally and climb down a lightning pole at night instead of taking the stairs. He also thinks that Jim’s life as a prisoner is too easy, so he insists on bringing rats, snakes and spiders into the cabin. He also asks Jim to write a journal in his own blood on a shirt and to scratch “mournful inscriptions” into the walls of the cabin. It takes them three weeks to implement Tom’s elaborate and completely ridiculous plan.

Happy Ending

Tom is still not satisfied with their escape plan. To make things even harder, he decides to send anonymous notes to Aunt Sally and Uncle Silas, warning them that something is afoot. He even goes so far as to tell them the night and time when they are going to free Jim. A group of men armed with guns turn up to help Aunt Sally and Uncle Silas. Jim, Huck and Tom have to run for their lives as they try to get away. They make it onto their raft, but Tom is shot in the leg. Huck returns to the village to fetch a doctor and then hides in a lumber pile to wait and see what will happen. He falls asleep and wakes up late the next morning. As he emerges from his hiding place, he runs straight into Uncle Silas. When questioned where they have been, Huck tells Uncle Silas that he and Tom had decided to go after Jim, and that Tom had now gone to the post office to find out if there was any news. Together with Uncle Silas and Aunt Sally, Huck waits anxiously for Tom to appear. After two days, the doctor arrives with Tom, who is being carried on a mattress. He also has Jim with him, who is immediately put into chains. The doctor puts in a good word for Jim, who came out of hiding when he saw that the doctor needed help with Tom’s wound, thereby effectually giving up his freedom.

“You can’t pray a lie; I found that out.” (Huck Finn)

Tom recovers quickly. When he learns that Jim has been put back into chains, he is outraged and reveals what he had known for months: namely that Miss Watson died two months ago and decreed in her will that Jim should be set free. Immediately, Jim is released, given food and made a fuss over. Tom’s Aunt Polly appears and puts an end to the charade that Tom and Huck have been playing on the Phelps. Huck learns from Jim that the dead man they
found in the house on the river had been Huck’s father. Before Aunt Sally can attempt to adopt Huck and “sivilize” him, he heads off to the West.

**Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Book Take-Aways**

- *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is one of Mark Twain’s best-known and most important novels.
- The novel tells the story of Huckleberry Finn’s escape from his alcoholic and abusive father and Huck’s adventurous journey down the Mississippi River together with the runaway slave Jim.
- *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was an instant success, but it divided (and still divides) critics for its stance on racism and slavery.
- The novel is a mixture of adventure story, social satire and picaresque novel.
- The tale deals with difficult themes such as moral responsibility, and the question of right and wrong.
- The book was banned in some southern US states, removed from some libraries and, even today, is one of the most contested books on the American Library Association list.
- Mark Twain is the pseudonym for Samuel Langhorne Clemens. The term “mark twain” signifies the depth at which a Mississippi boat could make safe passage.
- In the 1860s, Twain worked as a pilot on a Mississippi steamboat. The experience he gained there would feed into the sections in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* that play on the Mississippi River.
- *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* influenced many modern writers, including Ernest Hemingway and J.D. Salinger.
- “All right, then, I’ll go to hell.” (Huck Finn)

**Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Book Theme**

- Huckleberry Finn is a complex and at times **contradictory character**. He is an outsider – a young vagabond who often acts irresponsibly and defies social conventions – but he also represents the moral conscience of the narrative. In his naive but also practical way, he grapples with questions of good and evil, racism, bigotry, and the value of life.
- Possibly harking back to Rousseau and Thoreau, the **contrast between nature and civilization** weaves its way through the novel. Huck feels constrained by society and tries to escape it, preferring his simple life in the wilderness.
- *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is as much a **satire** as it is an adventure novel, tackling deep social conflicts of a pre- and post-Civil War America.
- Society is very much the **antihero** in the novel. On his journey, Huck and Jim encounter numerous quintessential small-town American characters and communities.
that are defined by small-mindedness.

- *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a **reinvention of the American adventure novel** and is partly Twain’s reaction against specific writers – in particular James Fenimore Cooper, whose popular American adventure novels full of noble but two-dimensional “savages” confirmed the unthinking prejudices of racial superiority.

- The raft on the Mississippi River isn’t only where the majority of the action takes place but also represents a **symbol of freedom**. It takes Huck and Finn away from their captors into their new life of freedom.

**Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Book Review**

*For anyone who thinks this book is racist, I would say you missed the point. Huck struggles against what society tells him is the “right” thing to form a friendship with Jim and try to free him from slavery and captivity. He does the right thing, even though he’s been raised that it’s wrong. Twain was an abolitionist who wrote this after emancipation to address the negative feelings people had towards freed slaves. However, it is still very applicable today.*

Sybill Via Amazon

*One of my absolute favourite books, which I have read multiple times. A major classic. If at all possible, get an edition with the original illustrations.*

Manny Via Goodreads

*At the beginning of the book, Mr. Twain wrote that if we sought a moral, a plot, or anything else that makes a story a good story, we’d be punished. Instead, we got the story. Part way through, we were introduced to “The Royal Nonsuch” – I won’t bother to explain what that is, but when I read about it, I realized that the story itself was Twain’s “Royal Nonsuch,” and people have been responding just like the townsfolk ever since.*

Karen Via Amazon
About the Author

The author known as **Mark Twain** was born as Samuel Langhorne Clemens on November 30, 1835, in Florida, Missouri. He grew up in Hannibal, a small town next to the Mississippi River. The town became the blueprint for Tom Sawyer’s adventures. Clemens’s father died in 1847, and, at the age of 12, Clemens was forced to leave school and start an apprenticeship as a typesetter. In 1851, he got a job with the *Hannibal Journal*. He left when he turned 17, moving to New York and then Philadelphia, where he started writing his first travel accounts. From 1857 to 1860, he worked as boat pilot on the Mississippi River. It was from this job that he took his pseudonym. In piloting language, “mark twain” means the water depth at which a Mississippi boat could make safe passage.

The experience he gained during this time informed his writing. In 1861, he briefly served as a volunteer in the Civil War on the side of the Confederacy. One year later, he became a reporter for the *Territorial Enterprise* newspaper in Virginia City, Nevada, where he first used his pseudonym. In 1864, he moved to San Francisco. Two years later, his job as a
reporter took him to Hawaii, and in 1867, he traveled to Europe and Palestine. In 1870, Clemens married Olivia Langdon, and she started taking an active role in his writing, helping with editing.

The couple moved to Hartford, Connecticut, where Clemens wrote his best-known novels, including *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and his autobiography *Life on the Mississippi* (1883). Arguably, however, his most important work is *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). Clemens set up a publishing business, but its eventual collapse left him financially ruined. To earn money and pay off his debts, he went on an around-the-world lecture tour, which also provided him with material for his last travel book, *Around the Equator* (1897). While in London, Clemens learned that his daughter died from spinal meningitis. The family stayed in London for an extended period of mourning. They returned to America, but both Samuel and Olivia continued to struggle with health problems. Olivia died in 1904, followed six years later by Samuel on April 21, 1910.

**Conclusion**

hope you enjoyed this book summary which we have shared. If you enjoyed this book summary, make sure to purchase the book! Doing so will allow you get a firsthand experience of the book.