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HUCK'S MY NAME!

From the very first words of what is considered by many to be the greatest American novel, Mark Twain makes it clear that the narrator • is Huckleberry Finn: a poor, young, uneducated • boy from Missouri. The author wants the reader to know that Huck is going to tell the story in his own way, using his own words, and giving his own point of view. His language is often incorrect, and he uses words and expressions from the local dialect •. This allows the readers to identify with Huck and to experience the story through his eyes. It is partly thanks to this original narrative style called **first-person narrative** that the novel has continued to be popular since its publication in 1885.

Look through books that you have read. Which ones include first-person narrative?

GLOSSARY

- **banned:** officially not allowed
- **contradictions:** difference between one's facts and their actions
- **conventions:** rules
- **dialect:** form of a language spoken in one place



HUCK'S LANGUAGE

Mark Twain's choice of language in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* freed American literature from the conventions of British English. The language he chooses is that of a poor young boy. Huck sees the society of that time through the innocent eyes of a child, and he describes everything he sees, including racial prejudice, unfair moral codes and religious traditions. Huck never laughs at the contradictions he describes. He accepts them, without judging. This allowed Twain to show the problems in society through Huck's voice.

Can you think of another advantage of seeing everything through Huck's eyes?

BANNED!

When the book was first published, many schools and libraries did not understand Twain's masterpiece, and they banned the book. They said the book was 'immoral' and used 'bad grammar' and 'inelegant expressions'. They didn't understand that Huck's imperfect words were the perfect way to show the contradictions and hypocrisy in society.

- **moral codes:** unspoken rules in a society for how people must act
- **narrator:** person who tells a story
- **racial prejudice:** unfair ideas and treatment of people because of the colour of their skin
- **uneducated:** who hasn't been to school

THE ADVENTURES OF



'HUCK'
HUCKLEBERRY FINN



JIM



WIDOW DOUGLAS



PAP

HUCKLEBERRY FINN



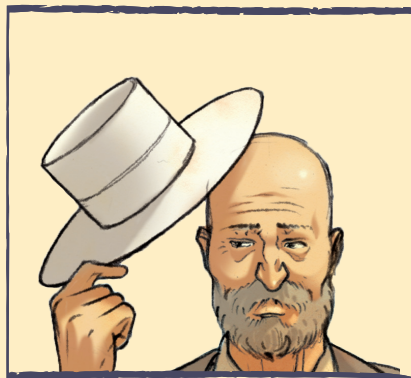
TOM SAWYER



**AUNT SALLY & UNCLE SILAS
(WITH HUCK!)**



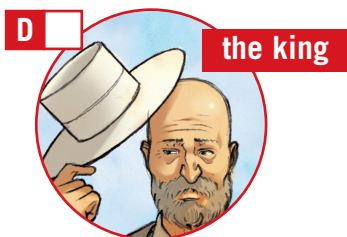
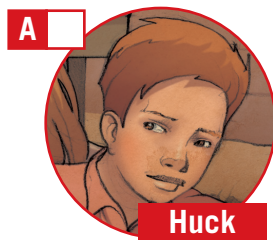
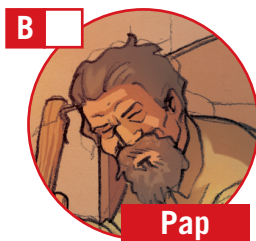
THE DUKE




THE KING

BEFORE READING

-  **1** Listen to descriptions of four of the characters in the story. Match the descriptions to the characters.



-  **2** Listen to the descriptions from Exercise 1 again. Choose an adjective from the list below that best describes each character. Match the adjectives to the characters.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| a hard-working | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> the king |
| b violent | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Huck |
| c clever | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Pap |
| d dishonest | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Jim |

- 3** What do you think? Read the questions and choose the correct name. In the story, which character in Exercise 1...

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| a locks Huck in a cabin in the woods? | Jim / Pap |
| b dresses up in girl's clothes? | Huck / Jim |
| c appears in a show? | the king / Huck |
| d is sold for \$40? | Jim / the king |



4 Compare your ideas with a partner.



5 Listen to three extracts from three different chapters of the story. Match the extracts to the pictures.



6 Now look at the titles of the chapters on the contents page. Listen to the three extracts from Exercise 5 again. Which chapters do you think they come from? Write the title of the chapter.


a

b

c

7 Which words in the recordings helped you to decide? Compare your ideas with a partner.

1 FOOTPRINTS • IN THE SNOW

 Huck's my name, Huckleberry Finn. I live in the town of St Petersburg, in the state of Missouri. It's a small town, but it's near a very big river called the Mississippi. This is the story of a journey that I made down that river on a raft •, and the adventures I had on the way.

It all started when my best friend, Tom Sawyer, and I found \$12,000 in a cave. That money made us rich. We got \$6,000 each. Judge Thatcher, an important man in St Petersburg, put it in the bank, and now we're getting a dollar a day interest •.

Then a kind old lady called Widow Douglas invited me to live with her, because I haven't got a family or a home. My mother died a long time ago, and then my dad, Pap, disappeared. He was a violent man, especially when he was drunk •, which was most of the time, and he often beat • me. I was scared of him. I didn't go to school like the other boys of my age. I lived on the streets, and in the woods.

My life changed after I went to live with the widow. She gave me a bed to sleep in and bought new clothes for me. She read stories to me, and taught me how to eat at a table.

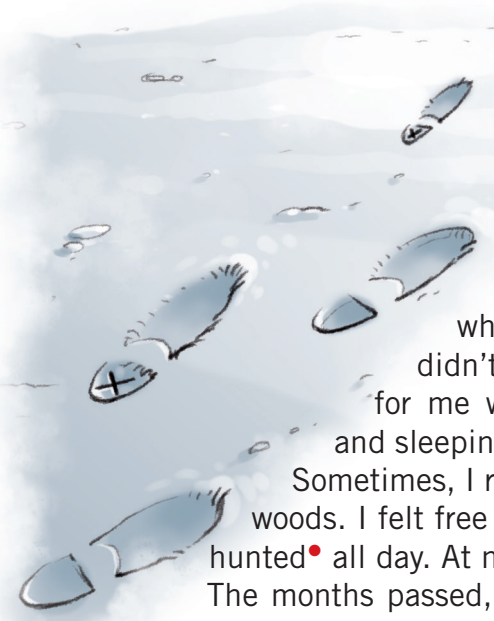
But then her sister, Miss Watson, arrived. She brought her black slave, Jim, with her. I liked Jim, but I didn't like Miss Watson very much. She was very strict •. She shouted • at me a lot.

'Don't put your feet on the table, Huckleberry! Sit up straight! Why don't you try and behave • well, Huckleberry?'

GLOSSARY

- **beat:** hit
- **behave:** act in a certain way
- **drunk:** with too much alcohol
- **footprints:** marks left by feet or shoes
- **interest:** (here) extra money paid by a bank

- **raft:** 
- **shouted:** spoke loudly and angrily
- **strict:** not tolerating bad behaviour; severe



Widow Douglas sent me to school every day. I didn't like going there at first because learning was very difficult. But when I could read and write a bit•, I didn't mind• going. The hardest things for me were eating my meals at the table and sleeping in a soft bed. I missed my old life. Sometimes, I ran away and spent a few days in the woods. I felt free there and I was happy. I fished and hunted• all day. At night, I slept under the stars.

The months passed, and winter came. The weather got cold. One morning, I woke up and there was snow on the ground. On my way to school, I saw some footprints outside the widow's house. There was a cross on the heel• of the left one. My heart jumped. Only one person wore boots with a cross on the left heel! Pap!

He's heard about my money, I thought. And he wants it!

That night, I went to see Jim. Jim had a magic ball made of animal hair. There was a spirit• inside the ball that could answer people's questions about the future.

THE SPIRIT

Huck asks the spirit two questions.
What do you think he asks?

GLOSSARY

- **a bit:** a little
- **crept:** moved quietly
- **heel:** 

- **hunted:** killed animals for food
- **I didn't mind:** it wasn't a problem for me
- **spirit:** supernatural being like a ghost

‘I have two questions, Jim,’ I said. ‘What is Pap going to do? And, is Pap going to stay?’ Jim whispered to the ball and rolled it on the floor. Then he put his ear next to it, and listened.

‘Your father doesn’t know what he’s going to do yet,’ Jim said. ‘Maybe he’ll stay, or maybe he’ll go.’

I picked up my candle and went back to the house. I crept quietly upstairs because it was late, and I didn’t want to wake Widow Douglas up. The door of my bedroom was open. I went in. A man with dirty black hair and a long black beard was sitting on the bed. It was Pap.



AFTER READING VOCABULARY

1 Use five of the words in the box to complete the sentences.

dozen couple trader sight
politely float relief halfway

- a A is a person who buys and sells things.
- b If you on water, it means you stay on it and don't go under.
- c is an adverb meaning 'in a nice way'.
- d 'A ' does not always mean exactly two.
- e 'Thank goodness!' is an expression of

2 Write three sentences with the words left out in Exercise 1.

3 Complete the sentences with *neither*, *no*, *somebody*, *anybody* or *nobody*. Two sentences have more than one possible answer.

- a I looked at him, and he looked at me. of us spoke for several minutes.
- b The adventure will be more exciting if tries to stop us.
- c I ran as fast as I could. Luckily, I didn't meet on the road.
- d We had a few adventures on the way, but caught us.
- e has seen your father for a long time.
- f Can tell me where Mr Peter Wilks lives?
- g We heard unlocking the door of the hut.
- h I ran through the woods shouting his name, but there was answer.
- i Pap gave me his gun and said, 'If tries to get into the cabin, use it!'

K A2 Key English Test Reading and Writing Part 4

1 Complete the following paragraphs by choosing the correct answer (A, B or C).

In chapter two, Pap appears on the scene, **(1)** mean and as drunk as before. Instead of looking at Huckleberry's progress in school as beneficial, his father has **(2)** but disdain for it and tries to get Huck back under his thumb again.

For many generations, one of the great images of adventure **(3)** Huck and old Jim floating down the Mississippi on a raft.

The main difference **(4)** Huck and Tom Sawyer is that Huck hates attention. This way, he offered Twain an opportunity for freedom that Tom, dependent **(5)** he was on his audience, could not give him.

Huck sees slavery in the way his society **(6)** : as right, as approved by God.

The novel's reputation has had a conflicted nature – it has always been **(7)** Twain's most popular novel and his most frequently attacked one.

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| 1 A more | B as | C only |
| 2 A nothing | B only | C all |
| 3 A has | B were | C was |
| 4 A of | B between | C from |
| 5 A like | B on | C as |
| 6 A as | B lives | C does |
| 7 A the | B both | C also |