

ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

1 After all this long journey, and after all we'd done for them scoundrels, here it
2 was all come to nothing, everything all busted up and ruined, because they
3 could have the heart to serve Jim such a trick as that, and make him a slave
4 again all his life, and amongst strangers, too, for forty dirty dollars.

5 Once I said to myself it would be a thousand times better for Jim to be a slave
6 at home where his family was, as long as he'd got to be a slave, and so I'd
7 better write a letter to Tom Sawyer and tell him to tell Miss Watson where he
8 was. But I soon give up that notion for two things: she'd be mad and
9 disgusted at his rascality and ungratefulness for leaving her, and so she'd
10 sell him straight down the river again; and if she didn't, everybody naturally
11 despises an ungrateful black man, and they'd make Jim feel it all the time,
12 and so he'd feel ornery and disgraced. And then think of me! It would get all
13 around that Huck Finn helped a black man to get his freedom; and if I was
14 ever to see anybody from that town again I'd be ready to get down and lick
15 his boots for shame. That's just the way: a person does a low-down thing, and
16 then he don't want to take no consequences of it. Thinks as long as he can
17 hide it, it ain't no disgrace. That was my fix exactly. The more I studied about
18 this the more my conscience went to grinding me, and the more wicked and
19 low-down and ornery I got to feeling. And at last, when it hit me all of a sud-
20 den that here was the plain hand of Providence slapping me in the face and
21 letting me know my wickedness was being watched all the time from up there
22 in heaven, whilst I was stealing a poor old woman's black man that hadn't ever
23 done me no harm, and now was showing me there's One that's always on the
24 lookout, and ain't a-going to allow no such miserable doings to go only just so
25 fur and no further, I most dropped in my tracks I was so scared. Well, I tried
26 the best I could to kinder soften it up somehow for myself by saying I was
27 brung up wicked, and so I warn't so much to blame; but something inside of
28 me kept saying, "There was the Sunday-school, you could a gone to it; and if
29 you'd a done it they'd a learnt you there that people that acts as I'd been
30 acting about that black man goes to everlasting fire."

31 It made me shiver. And I about made up my mind to pray, and see if I couldn't
32 try to quit being the kind of a boy I was and be better. So I kneeled down.
33 But the words wouldn't come. Why wouldn't they? It warn't no use to try and
34 hide it from Him. Nor from *me*, neither. I knowed very well why they wouldn't
35 come. It was because my heart warn't right; it was because I warn't square;
36 it was because I was playing double. I was letting *on* to give up sin, but away
37 inside of me I was holding on to the biggest one of all. I was trying to make my

ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

38 mouth say I would do the right thing and the clean thing, and go and write to
39 that black man's owner and tell where he was; but deep down in me I knowed
40 it was a lie, and He knowed it. You can't pray a lie—I found that out.

41 So I was full of trouble, full as I could be; and didn't know what to do. At last I
42 had an idea; and I says, I'll go and write the letter—and then see if I can pray.
43 Why, it was astonishing, the way I felt as light as a feather right straight off,
44 and my troubles all gone. So I got a piece of paper and a pencil, all glad and
45 excited, and set down and wrote:

46 Miss Watson, your runaway black man Jim is down here two mile below
47 Pikesville, and Mr. Phelps has got him and he will give him up for the
48 reward if you send.

49 *Huck Finn.*

50 I felt good and all washed clean of sin for the first time I had ever felt so in my
51 life, and I knowed I could pray now. But I didn't do it straight off, but laid the
52 paper down and set there thinking—thinking how good it was all this
53 happened so, and how near I come to being lost and going to hell. And went
54 on thinking. And got to thinking over our trip down the river; and I see Jim
55 before me all the time: in the day and in the night-time, sometimes moonlight,
56 sometimes storms, and we a- floating along, talking and singing and laughing.
57 But somehow I couldn't seem to strike no places to harden me against him,
58 but only the other kind. I'd see him standing my watch on top of his'n, 'stead
59 of calling me, so I could go on sleeping; and see him how glad he was when
60 I come back out of the fog; and when I come to him again in the swamp, up
61 there where the feud was; and such-like times; and would always call me
62 honey, and pet me and do everything he could think of for me, and how good
63 he always was; and at last I struck the time I saved him by telling the men we
64 had small-pox aboard, and he was so grateful, and said I was the best friend
65 old Jim ever had in the world, and the *only* one he's got now; and then I
66 happened to look around and see that paper.

67 It was a close place. I took it up, and held it in my hand. I was a-trembling,
68 because I'd got to decide, forever, betwixt two things, and I knowed it. I
69 studied a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then says to myself:

70 “All right, then, I'll go to hell”—and tore it up.

ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

71 It was awful thoughts and awful words, but they was said. And I let them stay
72 said; and never thought no more about reforming. I shoved the whole thing
73 out of my head, and said I would take up wickedness again, which was in my
74 line, being brung up to it, and the other warn't. And for a starter I would go to
75 work and steal Jim out of slavery again; and if I could think up anything worse,
76 I would do that, too; because as long as I was in, and in for good, I might as
77 well go the whole hog.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- 1** Which of the following is true
- A** The scoundrels tricked Jim into giving them \$40
 - B** The scoundrels sold Jim to his old owner for \$40
 - C** The scoundrels sold Jim to a stranger for \$40
 - D** The scoundrels gave Jim \$40 to leave
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- 2** Who are the scoundrels?
- A** Slave catchers
 - B** Strangers
 - C** People Huck and Jim had done in
 - D** People Huck and Jim had helped
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- 3** Which of the following must be false?
- A** Huck knows Tom Sawyer
 - B** Tom Sawyer knows Miss Watson
 - C** Jim wants to be home with his family
 - D** Miss Watson was Jim's family
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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

4 How does Huck feel about having helped Jim get his freedom?

- A** Proud
 - B** Embarrassed
 - C** Confused
 - D** Brave
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5 Why was Huck scared?

- A** He thought he had done something evil
 - B** He thought someone had been watching him
 - C** He thought God was watching all the time
 - D** He thought he would be slapped
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6 Which of the following is a reason why Huck thinks it isn't his fault that he's wicked?

- A** He didn't go to Sunday-school
 - B** He was brought up badly
 - C** Owning slaves is wrong
 - D** Jim was very kind to him
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7 What is the 'everlasting fire' (line 30)?

- A** Prison
 - B** Heaven
 - C** Hell
 - D** Purgatory
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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- 8** Why did Huck shiver (line 31)?
- A** Thinking of fire made him cold
 - B** Being brought up badly made him scared
 - C** He didn't want to pray
 - D** He was scared he was to blame for skipping Sunday-school
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- 9** Huck uses a lot of incorrect grammar. What is the correct past tense of 'kneeled down'?
- A** knelt down
 - B** knelt down
 - C** kneeld down
 - D** kneled down
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- 10** Why couldn't Huck pray?
- A** He didn't know what to say
 - B** He knew he wasn't telling the truth
 - C** He wanted to try hiding
 - D** He didn't know how to be a better boy
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- 11** What was Huck going to pray about?
- A** Asking God to set Jim free
 - B** Asking God not to send him to hell
 - C** Telling God that it wasn't his fault
 - D** Telling God that he was going to write a letter to Miss Watson
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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- 12** How does Huck feel immediately after writing the letter?
- A** glad and excited
 - B** good and washed clean of sin
 - C** thoughtful
 - D** afraid
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- 13** Why did Huck start thinking after writing his letter?
- A** He thought giving Jim up was wicked
 - B** He was scared of hell
 - C** He wasn't sure what to do
 - D** He was glad he had done the right thing
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- 14** What best describes Huck's opinion on slavery?
- A** He thinks all black people must be slaves
 - B** He thinks it's evil
 - C** He just accepts that it's normal
 - D** He doesn't understand it
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- 15** Which of the following best describes Huck and Jim's relationship?
- A** They have travelled together for a long time but aren't very fond of one another
 - B** Jim is very caring towards Huck, but Huck doesn't like him
 - C** They get along very well but would feud and strike each other at times
 - D** They are close friends and Jim looks out for Huck
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