

# **Week 12: The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County**

**by Mark Twain**



# What We'll Do Today



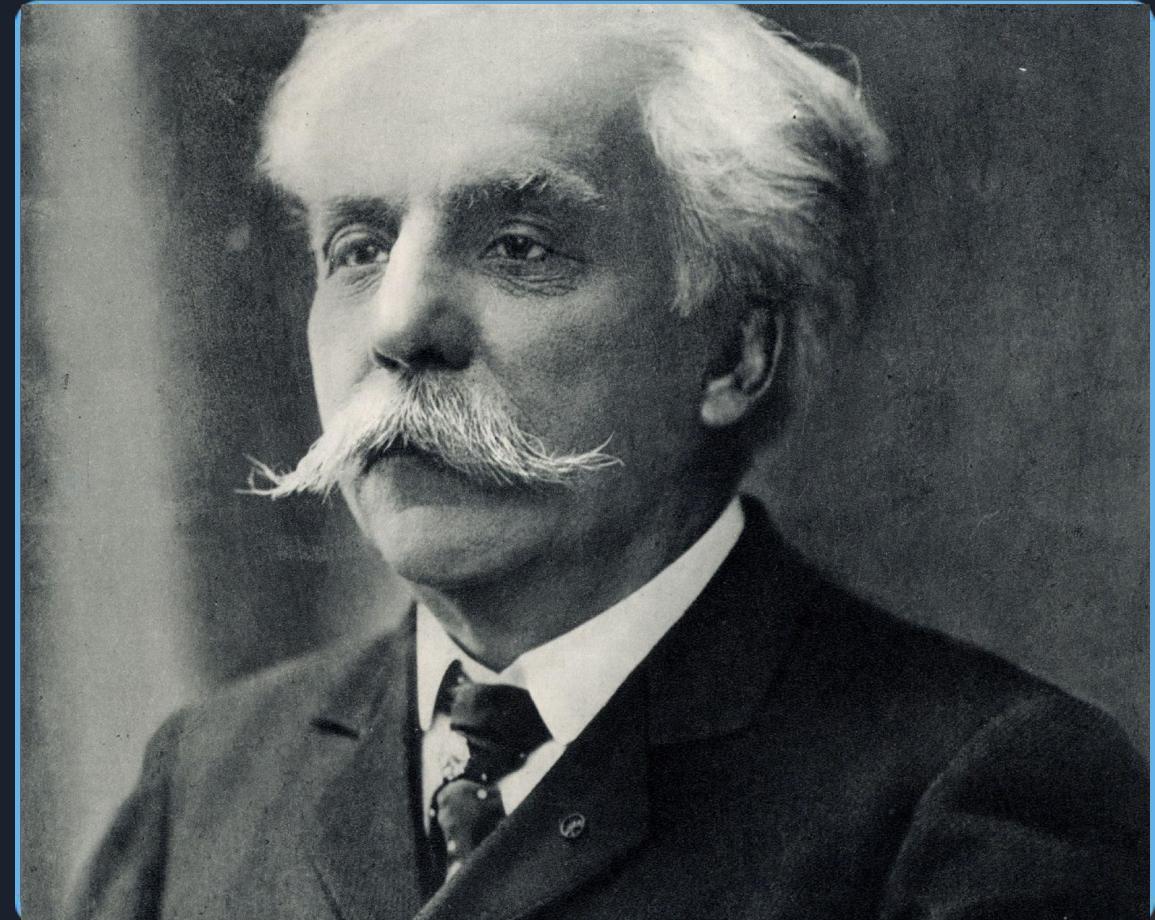
- We will read about a man who bets on everything, including a frog-jumping contest.
- We are going to learn about FRAME NARRATIVE and TALL TALE structures.
- You will complete a text evidence activity.
- We will practice using conjunctions (FANBOYS).



# Meet the Author: Mark Twain

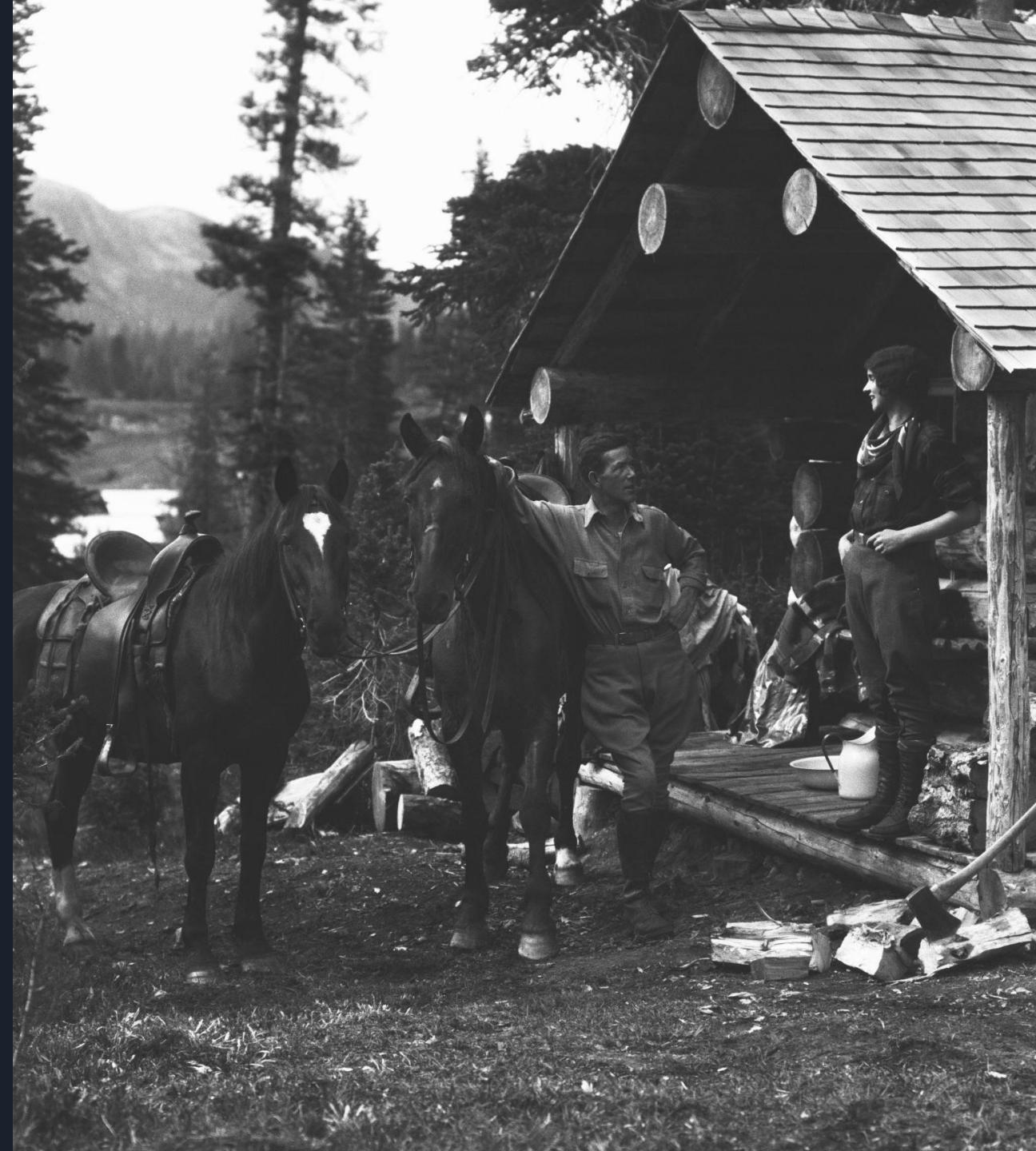


- Mark Twain was born on November 30, 1835, in Florida, Missouri.
- His real name was Samuel Langhorne Clemens; "Mark Twain" was his pen name.
- He grew up along the Mississippi River and worked as a riverboat pilot.
- Twain is considered "the father of American literature."



# Story Summary: The Setup

- An educated narrator from the East arrives in a mining camp looking for Leonidas W. Smiley.
- An old-timer named Simon Wheeler traps him and tells a long story about Jim Smiley.
- Jim Smiley was a man who would bet on absolutely anything.



# Story Summary: The Bet 🐸

- Smiley catches a frog, names it Dan'l Webster, and trains it to jump.
- He bets a stranger \$40 that his frog can outjump any frog in the county.
- While Smiley is gone, the stranger fills Dan'l Webster with heavy shot.
- The stranger's frog wins, and Smiley realizes too late that he was cheated.

# Discussion Questions

- Why does the narrator think Simon Wheeler's story is boring, while we think it is funny?
- Was the stranger wrong to cheat, or was he just beating a gambler at his own game?
- What does this story suggest about people who think they are smarter than everyone else?

# Literary Device: Frame Narrative



A **Frame Narrative** is a story structure where one story is told inside another story, like a picture frame around a painting.

- **Outer Frame:** The narrator meets Simon Wheeler.
- **Inner Story:** Wheeler tells the tale of Jim Smiley.

# Why Use a Frame Narrative?

- It allows the author to create a strong contrast between the two narrators (the formal narrator vs. the folksy Simon Wheeler).
- It creates distance, making the inner story seem less reliable and more like a legend.
- The "frame" can comment on the "inner" story (the narrator thinks Wheeler is boring, which is humorous).

# Frame Narrative Examples



You already know this structure from movies:

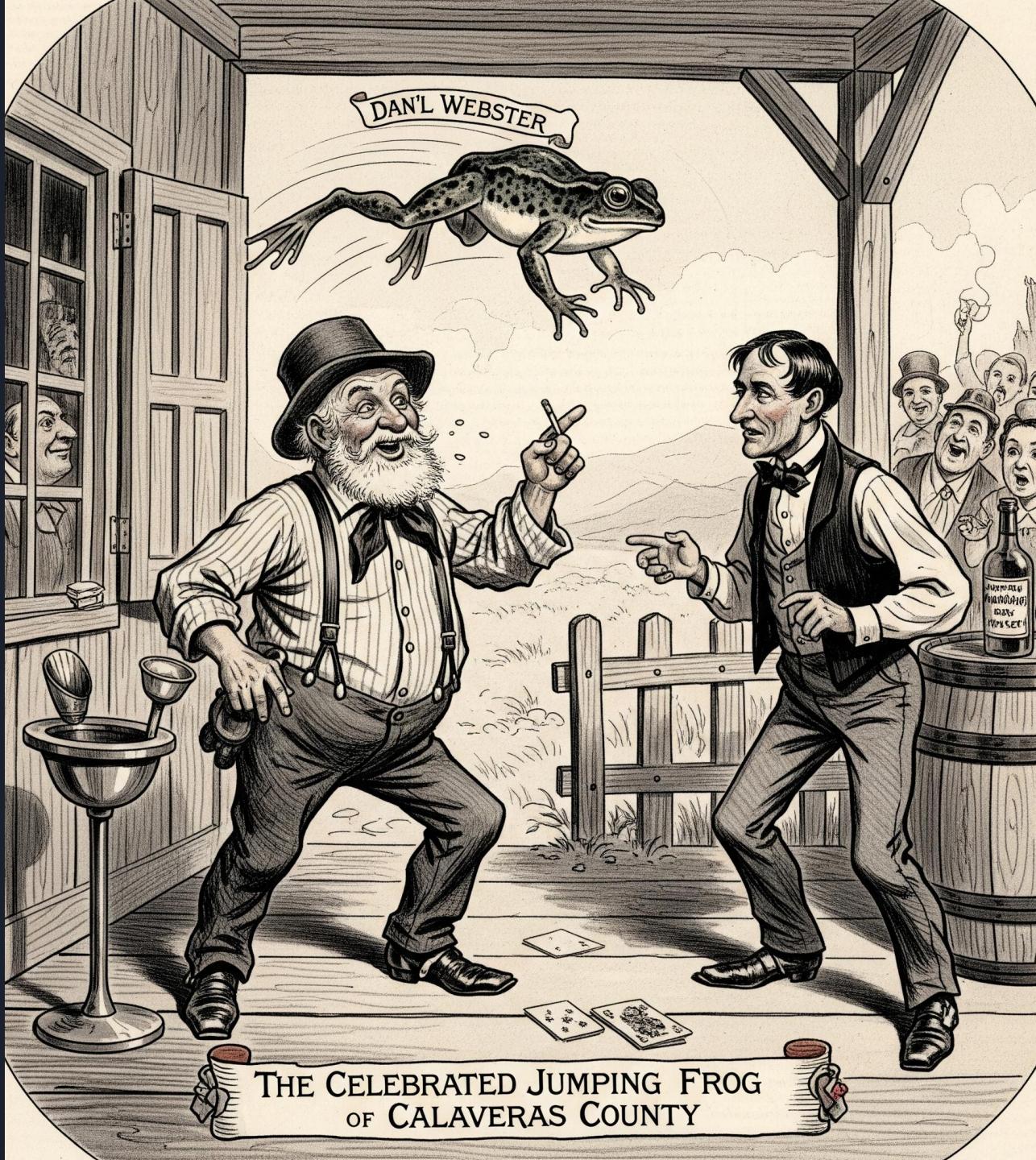
- **The Princess Bride:** The grandfather reading the story to his sick grandson is the "outer frame."
- **Titanic:** Old Rose telling her story to the treasure hunters is the "outer frame."
- **The Sandlot:** The adult Scotty Smalls remembering his childhood summer is the "outer frame."



# Literary Device: Tall Tale

A **Tall Tale** is an exaggerated, humorous story that is hard to believe.

- It features larger-than-life characters.
- It has humor based on absurd situations.
- It is always told with a "straight face," as if it were completely true.



# Why Use a Tall Tale?

- **Entertainment:** To make people laugh by exaggerating everyday life to an impossible degree.
- **Coping:** In the 1800s, frontier life was hard and dangerous. Tall tales were a way to feel powerful and make sense of a wild world.
- **Identity:** They helped create a unique "American" sense of humor, separate from formal European traditions.



# Tall Tale Examples



You may know these famous legends:

- **Paul Bunyan:** A giant lumberjack whose blue ox, Babe, created the Grand Canyon.
- **Pecos Bill:** A cowboy who was raised by coyotes and once lassoed a tornado.
- **Modern Examples:** "The fish that got away" stories, or when sports legends grow over time.



# Grammar Focus: Conjunctions



- Conjunctions are connecting words that join two ideas together.
- We use the acronym **FANBOYS** to remember the main ones.

## F-A-N-B-O-Y-S

**For** (Reason), **And** (Add info), **Nor** (Negative)

**But** (Contrast), **Or** (Choice), **Yet** (Contrast),

**So** (Result)

# When to Use a Comma



## ✓ USE A COMMA

When joining two **complete sentences**.

*"Smiley trained his frog, **and** he won many bets."*

Sentence + , + FANBOYS + Sentence

## ✗ NO COMMA

When joining just **words or phrases**.

*"Smiley trained his frog **and** won many bets."*

Sentence + FANBOYS + Phrase

# Let's Practice!

Choose the correct conjunction (AND, BUT, SO) for these sentences.

1. Jim Smiley loved gambling, \_\_\_\_\_ he would bet on anything.
2. The frog was well-trained, \_\_\_\_\_ the stranger cheated.
3. Dan'l Webster couldn't jump, \_\_\_\_\_ Smiley lost his money.

# Practice Answers



1. Jim Smiley loved gambling, **AND** he would bet on anything.

**AND = Adds Information**

2. The frog was well-trained, **BUT** the stranger cheated.

**BUT = Shows Contrast**

3. Dan'l Webster couldn't jump, **SO** Smiley lost his money.

**SO = Shows Result**

# Classwork: Text Evidence Hunt



## Text Evidence Hunt

- You will receive a handout for classwork.
- **Task:** Read the story text provided.
- Find 3 examples of FRAME NARRATIVE.
- Find 3 examples of TALL TALE elements.
- Write the quote and explain what it shows.



# Homework Overview



## Mandatory Items:

- Guided Notes (Completed in class).
- Grammar Worksheet (Conjunctions).
- Classwork (Text Evidence Hunt).

## Choose ONE Option:

- **Option A:** Literary Analysis Essay.
- **Option B:** Modern Tall Tale Story.
- **Option C:** Text Evidence Worksheet.



# Option A: Literary Analysis Essay

- Write a 3-paragraph essay analyzing FRAME NARRATIVE or TALL TALE.
- **Paragraph 1:** Introduce the literary device and explain what it is.
- **Paragraph 2:** Provide 2-3 specific examples from the story.
- **Paragraph 3:** Explain how this device creates humor and meaning.
- *Requirements: Typed/neat, proper grammar, cite quotes.*



# Option B: Modern Tall Tale Story

- Write a creative tall tale set in modern times.
- **Requirements:** Minimum one full page (250-300 words).
- Use exaggeration and absurdity for humor.
- Include a larger-than-life character.
- *Ideas: Social media obsession, video games, sports, viral fame.*



# Option C: Guided Analysis Worksheet

- Complete a guided worksheet with scaffolded questions.
- **Sections include:**
- Frame narrative understanding (with word banks)
- Identifying tall tale elements.
- The ending & irony analysis.
- FANBOYS grammar practice

# Questions? ?

## Next Week: Short Stories Continued

- Do you understand Frame Narrative?
- Are you clear on the comma rule?
- Have you chosen your homework?