

October 17 2014 Literature Circle 7th grade #2

Rebecca_poulson@hotmail.com 747-3448

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Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain. This week, read chapters 17-30, and write a paragraph, based on the discussion or your own ideas. Mark parts (by noting page numbers in your notebook) that stand out.

Discussion: first share your research into the background of the book:

Mark Twain's biography and dates

Jim Crow laws

The Civil War (overview, dates)

history of banning of the book

log rafts and steamboats – economy of the Mississippi River in 1840

slavery in the American south before the Civil War

bring in a map of the Mississippi River from around this time – it can be a print out or in a book or hand drawn – from Hannibal, Missouri to the Louisiana border

the picaresque novel – what it is, some examples

what kind of clothes did people wear in that place and time (Mississippi River around 1840) – if you can, bring in a book or a print out, or just describe

public education in this place and time

Next, share the parts that stuck out to you (that you marked), and where you think the book is going.

Tom's fantasies of life-and-death adventures relative to Huck's real ones

Huck's ignorance, innocence, and intelligence

being free on the river

systems of belief – Christianity, superstition, Tom's fantasy life, Huck's

author's attitude toward the various characters

Huck's knowledge, abilities and intelligence

Excitement and danger – how does the author make things thrilling

How do you think it would feel to read this book if your ancestors had been slaves?

How Huck is treated in the book compare to Jim's treatment (as a character). Huck grows and changes – could Jim?

Notice how the author is using characters, landscape and incident to create a whole

how important are relationships in this part of the book?

The way characters are fleshed out, the way they interact, the way relationships change (or not).

Huck's innocent morality, compared to the morals of others in the book

the book is a picaresque novel, where the action is a series of adventures as the hero moves through space and time. One thing we might write about, after we finish reading the book, is how a particular adventure fits into the book.

For the middle third of the book, all of the above and:

Are some parts just for humor, and not part of the overall thrust of the book?

Death – tally up the people Huck sees die, and the deaths that occur he doesn't witness

Lies

Foolishness

Evil and cruelty

Conscience/morality – how Huck is developing, or is he.

Goodness

The places, societies, worlds? of each adventure

How does this section compare to the first

Women