

Lesson 5

- Read the following about your first novel of the year, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain.

Summary: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* was written by Mark Twain and published in 1876. It is an adventure story depicting a young boy becoming a young man. It appeals to children who enjoy Tom's timeless adventures, as well as adults who read it and look back to their childhood years with fondness. This was the intent of the author, as he wrote in his preface to the first edition of *Tom Sawyer*. He wanted to appeal to both children and adults. As you read *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, you'll likely come across familiar scenes that you never knew originated with this book. You'll experience the spirit of childhood with all of its ups and downs, dreams and fears, excitement and terror.

Setting: The book is set in a small town north of St. Louis on the banks of the Mississippi River during the 1840s. The author, Mark Twain, grew up in Hannibal, Mississippi, and utilized his own town as the town his characters inhabited in the book (renamed St. Petersburg in his novel). Many of the places in the novel actually exist, such as the Jackson's Island, the cave that Injun Joe inhabited, and the houses of Widow Douglas and Aunt Polly.

Structure: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* is made up of various scenes or episodes that build into the story of Tom's life.

Satire: The author uses satire to criticize and commentate on human nature. After Tom manipulates others into painting a fence he is supposed to paint, Twain commentates that to make someone covet something, all you need to do is make it hard to attain. There are many examples of similar commentaries. Part of the overarching conflict of the novel is that Tom is growing into an adult, but Twain is constantly criticizing adult attitudes and behaviors.

- Read the book's Preface.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer
By Mark Twain
Preface

MOST of the adventures recorded in this book really occurred; one or two were experiences of my own, the rest those of boys who were schoolmates of mine. Huck Finn is drawn from life; Tom Sawyer also, but not from an individual — he is a combination of the characteristics of three boys whom I knew, and therefore belongs to the composite order of architecture.

[THE WHOLE CHAPTER IS INCLUDED IN THE READER. ALL READINGS ARE FULLY INCLUDED.]

Lesson 45

- Read Book 7 of *The Odyssey*.

Book 7

Thus, then, did Ulysses wait and pray; but the girl drove on to the town. When she reached her father's house she drew up at the gateway, and her brothers- comely as the gods- gathered round her, took the mules out of the wagon, and carried the clothes into the house, while she went to her own room, where an old servant, Eurymedusa of Apeira, lit the fire for her. This old woman had been brought by sea from Apeira, and had been chosen as a prize for Alcinous because he was king over the Phaeceans, and the people obeyed him as though he were a god. She had been nurse to Nausicaa, and had now lit the fire for her, and brought her supper for her into her own room.

Presently Ulysses got up to go towards the town; and Minerva shed a thick mist all round him to hide him in case any of the proud Phaeceans who met him should be rude to him, or ask him who he was. Then, as he was just entering the town, she came towards him in the likeness of a little girl carrying a pitcher. She stood right in front of him, and Ulysses said:

“My dear, will you be so kind as to show me the house of King Alcinous? I am an unfortunate foreigner in distress, and do not know one in your town and country.”

Then Minerva said, “Yes, father stranger, I will show you the house you want, for Alcinous lives quite close to my own father. I will go before you and show the way, but say not a word as you go, and do not look at any man, nor ask him questions; for the people here cannot abide strangers, and do not like men who come from some other place. They are a sea-faring folk, and sail the seas by the grace of Neptune in ships that glide along like thought, or as a bird in the air.”

On this she led the way, and Ulysses followed in her steps; but not one of the Phaeceans could see him as he passed through the city in the midst of them; for the great goddess Minerva in her good will towards him had hidden him in a thick cloud of darkness. He admired their harbors, ships, places of assembly, and the lofty walls of the city, which, with the palisade on top of them, were very striking, and when they reached the king's house Minerva said:

“This is the house, father stranger, which you would have me show you. You will find a number of great people sitting at table, but do not be afraid; go straight in, for the bolder a man is the more likely he is to carry his point, even though he is a stranger. First find the queen. Her name is Arete, and she comes of the same family as her husband Alcinous. They both descend originally from Neptune, who was father to Nausithous by Periboea, a woman of great beauty. Periboea was the youngest daughter of Eurymedon, who at one time reigned over the giants, but he ruined his ill-fated people and lost his own life to boot.

[THE WHOLE CHAPTER IS INCLUDED IN THE READER. ALL READINGS ARE FULLY INCLUDED.]