

WU?[@]therep

THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER

by **Laura Eason**

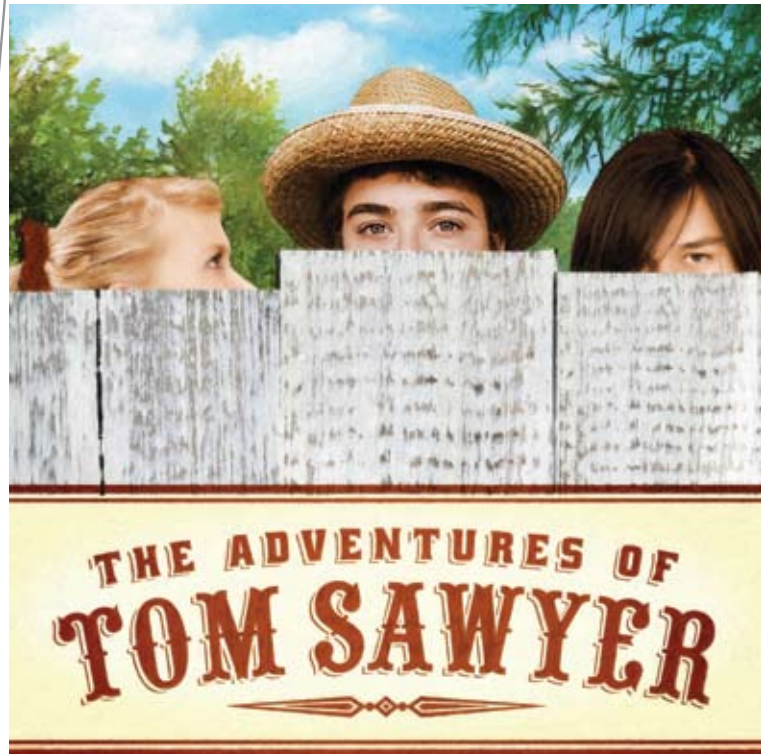
Adapted from the novel

by **Mark Twain**

Directed by **Jeremy B. Cohen**

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**THE REPERTORY THEATRE
OF ST. LOUIS**



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At The Rep, we know that life moves fast—okay, really fast. But we also know that some things are worth slowing down

for. We believe that live theatre is one of those pit stops worth making and are excited that you are going to stop by for a show. To help you get the most bang for your buck, we have put together **WU? @ THE REP**—an IM guide that will give you everything you need to know to get at the top of your theatergoing game—fast. You'll find character descriptions (**A/S/L**), a plot summary (**FYI**), biographical information (**F&F**), historical context (**B4U**), and other bits and pieces (**HTH**). Most importantly, we'll have some ideas about what this all means **IRL**, anyway.

CU@therep!



The Teacher's Lounge

In an effort to make our educational materials accessible to students and easy for educators to incorporate into the classroom, our study guide is written in a student-oriented format. We hope that you will circulate this guide among your students in the weeks preceding your visit to The Rep, encouraging them to browse it before and after class and as time allows, using it as a launch point for both pre- and post-performance discussions. You may also want to visit our website, www.repstl.org, for additional information including educational games, activity suggestions and behind-the-scenes information. Any materials, either from this guide or from our website may be reproduced for use in the classroom. As always, we appreciate

your making live theatre a part of your classroom experience and welcome your feedback and questions.

NEATO!

Show Me Standards: CA 2, 3, 5; FA 2, 4, 5; SS 2, 6
and Illinois Learning Standards: 1, 2, 5, 12, 16, 27.

WELCOME!

The desire to learn, insatiable when awakened, can sometimes lie dormant until touched by the right teacher or the right experience. We at The Rep are grateful to have the opportunity to play a role supporting you as you awaken the desire for learning in your students.

My first memories of literature and of theatre are both centered around Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. One of my elementary teachers read the book aloud to us over a period of weeks. Then in the fifth grade I was in a class production of the whitewashing scene. (I was the kid who traded a dead mouse for the opportunity to paint.) At the time I was caught up in the fun and rebellion of Tom's trickery and pranks, the freedom from rules he gained. Now I see that the situations (and consequences) in which Tom found himself, mostly by his own design, began to form his awareness of his place in the village, in the community. Tom began to look at predicaments with a concern for others rather than just himself. Could we ask for a better learning tool for such an important life lesson?

It would be a good idea to take a minute on the bus to give your students these quick theatre etiquette reminders:

- This show has an intermission; there will be time for bathroom breaks before the show and partway through.
- The actors can hear the audience and appreciate the laughter, gasps and quiet attention to action. However, talking, moving around and eating is very distracting to others and can dampen the energy of what is happening on stage.
- Pictures, phone calls and texting are not allowed at any time during the performance.

Live theatre won't allow your students to take a passive role—they must work with us to create the experience which takes the learning deeper. Our unique ability to fuse words and images onstage allows your students to explore new ideas as well as excites their imaginations. We will do our part so your students will be stirred to understandings and self-awareness while delving into new and familiar worlds. You are doing your part by using The Rep to extend your intellectual and aesthetic curriculum. Thank you!

Marsha Coplton
Director of Education

A/S/L

Like any growing boy worth his salt, TOM SAWYER is a man of adventure (and often mischief!). When it really counts, however, Tom is best known for doing the right thing.

HUCKLEBERRY FINN is legendary in his own right for his adventurous spirit. Wild antics are sure to ensue when he and Tom get together!

Sweet little BECKY TURNER is the apple of Tom's eye, but can she see past his mischievous ways?

Though she's got a handful, sweet but stern AUNT POLLY does the best she can to keep wily Tom in line.

SID SAWYER might be a good boy, but even he is not immune to his brother Tom's tricks.

Though he's a member of the gang, JOE HARPER isn't quite the troublemaker that Tom and Huck can be.

While he might have made a mistake or two, MUFF POTTER seems like a good guy overall.

INJUN JOE is a pretty scary guy, in more ways than one.

H

SHUNNED—persistently avoided, ignored or rejected through lack of consideration or through caution

OBLIGED—legally or morally bound to an action or course of action

VULGAR—lacking sophistication or good taste; unrefined

CHRONOLOGICALLY—arranged or considered starting with the earliest and following in the order of occurrence

COVERT—not openly acknowledged or displayed

ATTAIN—succeed in achieving something that one desires and has worked for

VAGRANT—a person without a settled home or regular work who wanders from place to place and lives by begging

RANK—having a foul or offensive smell; informally used to reference anything that's very unpleasant

IRKSOME—irritating; annoying

GAWK—stare openly and stupidly

IRREFUTABLE—impossible to deny or disprove

TRIFLE—a thing of little value or importance

SWAG—money or goods taken by a thief or burglar

HAPLESS—unfortunate; unlucky

EY

THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER is a play based on the 1876 novel of the same name by Mark Twain. The story is set in 1845 St. Petersburg, Missouri, a fictional town along the Mississippi River based on Twain's real-life home, Hannibal, Missouri.

AS THE PLAY OPENS, Tom is mischievously playing hooky with fellow mischief-maker Huckleberry Finn. Boys will be boys (playing with a dead cat and all), and before they part ways for the day, Tom and Huck decide to meet at the graveyard on Saturday night at midnight to ward off evil spirits (with the dead cat, of course!).

THOUGH HE HAS a euphoric walk home (on the way, he spies the sweet Becky Thatcher...wow, what a woman!), the good vibe quickly fades as Tom arrives home. Aunt Polly is on to Tom's shenanigans, and with the help of his tattletale brother Sid, she sniffs out his misdeeds for the day. Skipping school earns him some whitewashing duties on Saturday!

BACK AT SCHOOL the next day, Tom catches some more lumps from Master Dobins for missing class. It's all worth it, however, when he gets to sit next to Becky Thatcher and strike up a conversation. Though they agree to be engaged (and Tom gives her his

most prized possession, a brass doorknob), their bliss is cut short when Tom mentions his prior engagement to Amy Lawrence (whoops!).

SATURDAY COMES, finding Tom wasting away while whitewashing Aunt Polly's fence out front. As his friends pass by, he catches a notion and tricks all the young boys in town into the "fun" of whitewashing for him.

BEFORE LONG, it's off to the graveyard with Huck. The dynamic duo feigns bravery, but nothing can prepare them for the grisly scene they witness when Doc Robinson, Injun Joe and Muff Potter arrive.

INJUN JOE AND Muff Potter have a standing agreement to help the Doctor dig up bodies illegally (to be used for practice surgery), but Joe goes rogue and decides he wants more money. A scuffle erupts and in the heat of the moment Muff Potter is knocked out cold, Injun Joe stabs and kills Doc Robinson, and when Muff awakes, Joe blames him for the murder. The band of ne'er-do-wells flees the scene leaving the body behind, with Tom and Huck witnessing the whole thing.

4

Nance Williamson, Tim McKiernan and Hayley Treider. Photos by Alan Simons



THE NEXT DAY, the whole town is abuzz with the news—Muff Potter killed Doc Robinson! Tom and Huck have sworn silence for fear of Injun Joe, and in a moment of feeling mistreated, the pair flees (along with buddy Joe Harper) to Jackson’s Island (an island out in the middle of the Mississippi) to get away from it all.

IT DOESN’T TAKE LONG for the boys to get homesick (even the stalwart Tom sneaks home to observe his family mourning his disappearance), but in true trickster fashion they don’t simply return home with their tails tucked between their legs. The boys triumphantly return by marching into church during their own funeral (the town presumed them dead, drowned in the river).

WHEN THE TRIAL of Muff Potter begins, the whole town is shocked when a surprise witness takes the stand—Tom Sawyer. He reveals the true killer that night—Injun Joe, who tears out of the courtroom before he can be apprehended.

THAT’S NOT THE last we see of Injun Joe, however, as one day while the boys are fishing around in the old Haunted House for treasure, Injun Joe and his accomplice slip

in. Luckily, the boys are hidden upstairs, and what they overhear intrigues them—the outlaws have a secret stash hidden in a secret hiding place...maybe they can find treasure after all!

WHILE HUCK SHADOWS Injun Joe, Tom and Becky visit McDougal’s cave with some of their classmates. Tom and Becky quickly lose their way from the pack, getting lost deep in the caverns.

MEANWHILE, HUCK overhears Injun Joe’s plan to exact revenge upon Widow Douglas. Quick on his feet, Huck races out to Widow Douglas’ place ahead of Injun Joe (and his accomplice) to warn her. The Widow’s brother scares off the evildoers, and Huck’s the hero of the day.

DAYS PASS WITH Tom and Becky hopelessly lost. Though they think they hear searchers from time to time (and even see Injun Joe sneaking about), it seems they’ll never escape. Ever chivalric (and lucky!), Tom defies the odds and finds a way out. He even carries Becky when she doesn’t have the strength to walk. What a guy!

IN THE END, Injun Joe is found dead in the cave (McDougal put up a new safety door sheathed with iron, triple-locked!), but what about his secret hidden treasure? Maybe the boys have one last adventure ahead!

*Tim McKiernan and
Michael D. Nichols. Photos by Alan Simons*





MARK TWAIN (the pseudonym or pen name for Samuel Langhorne Clemens) was an accomplished American author, journalist, humorist and social commentator born right here in Missouri in 1835. Hailing from Florida, Missouri, Twain actually grew up in Hannibal, Missouri, a location that served as the inspiration for many of his stories (and the fictional setting of St. Petersburg in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*).

THE 19TH CENTURY, like today, was a time of rapid change in the world. Westward expansion was driving the nation to its Manifest Destiny (the notion that the United States was destined to span from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean), technology was changing the way people did things, and internal turmoil over issues like slavery divided the land. It was a time of innovation, adventure and activity—all things that Twain had a hankering for.

MARK TWAIN WASN'T exactly born a writer, he actually kind of stumbled about until he happened to land on it. After he completed the fifth grade, Twain left school to become a printer's apprentice at a local newspaper. He arranged the type for newspaper stories, which provided him access to news worldwide. A thirst for adventure and desire to see the world steadily grew in the young apprentice.

TWAIN'S FIRST writing experience came at the age of 18 when he began to write for newspapers on the East Coast. While he found some success in the business, his yearning for greater adventure and travel got the best of him. Twain was lured back to Missouri after just a few years to embark upon his second career as a riverboat pilot.

THE CIVIL WAR in 1861 quickly squashed that career, and after a short-lived shot at career number three—service with the Confederate Army (Twain volunteered for two weeks before quitting)—he went west with his brother Orion. Orion was appointed

Secretary of the Nevada Territory, and the Clemens brothers rode in a stagecoach for two weeks out across the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains. There he tried his hand at career number four—silver prospecting (that is, hoping to strike it rich by mining silver).

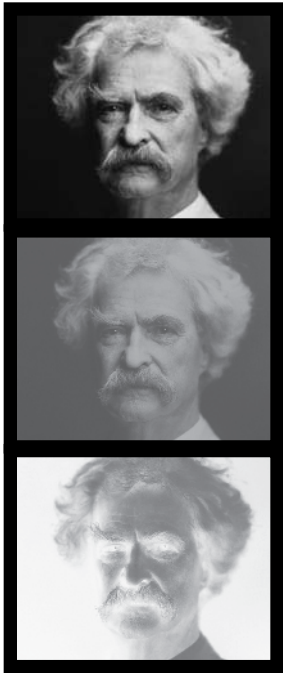
THROUGHOUT HIS many adventures in the West, Twain met a variety of new and interesting characters, though he never found much silver. These adventures and characters would serve as inspiration for his first literary success—a short story called *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*, which was published in papers across the nation.

HIS WITTY, HUMOROUS retelling of travel tales earned him jobs writing for several papers that sent him all around the world. All the while, stories of Missouri burned in the back of his mind.

AFTER GETTING MARRIED and starting a family back in the states (Hartford, Connecticut), Twain composed the works he's often most remembered for—*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *The Prince and the Pauper* (1881) and "the Great American Novel," *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884).

DESPITE SOME ISSUES with his finances, Twain continued to travel the world to lecture. He had no aversion to speaking his mind, and though he might be best known for his fiction, Twain considered himself an insightful social commentator. He spoke out against such things as slavery, racism and other societal evils.

WHILE HE MAY NOT have been born a writer, Mark Twain was certainly born to write. His many stories still enchant and inspire both children and adults. His sense of adventure and his zest for innovation embody the spirit of a young nation struggling through growing pains to become stronger and smarter...a spirit and ambition that lives on even today!



DOING THE RIGHT THING

While Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn were indeed troublemakers, when it mattered most the boys came through and did the right thing. Whether it's taking the fall for Becky Thatcher in school over the soiled book, speaking out on behalf of Muff Potter so he wasn't wrongfully punished or warning Widow Douglas about Injun Joe's plans to harm her, the boys show that courageous, insightful actions can have a great impact on the world. How can you impact the world around you? What opportunities are there on a daily basis for you to be a hero?

ADVENTURE IS ALL AROUND YOU

While Tom and Huck seem to go to great lengths for adventure (visiting the graveyard at night, running away to Jackson's Island, getting lost in a cave), the true source of their adventure always comes right from their own backyards and from within themselves. Their perspective on the world around them is what provides the true color for their world, and their tales grow taller through their own creativity and innate sense of adventure. How do you view the world around you? Are there ways in which a shift in your perception might shed a different light upon your life? How can your own innate sense of adventure and creativity give new meaning to your current circumstances?

READ MORE ABOUT IT

We encourage you to explore the following books, movies and websites for more information.

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, First Edition, CreateSpace, 2010. So you've seen the play, why not check out the classic novel behind it?

Twain, Mark. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, First Edition, CreateSpace, 2010. Can't get enough of Twain? Check out the "Great American Novel" as it was originally written!

Tom and Huck, 97 minutes, Walt Disney Video, 2003.

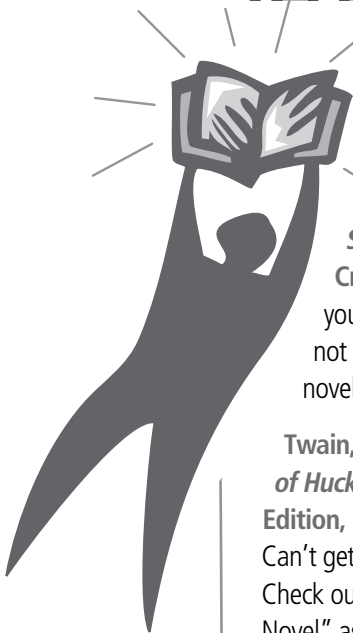
See Jonathan Taylor Thomas and Brad Renfro as they relive the adventures of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn in a film that is fun for all ages.

<http://www.cmgww.com/historic/twain/>

If your thirst for all things Mark Twain is insatiable, why not check out the official website of Mark Twain? There's news, photos, biographical information, quotes and more!

<http://mdc.mo.gov/>

Mark Twain loved Missouri and the great outdoors. If you do too, then check out the Missouri Department of Conservation to learn more about discovering nature!



WAY BACK WHEN

Twenty years ago, most people had never owned a cell phone and few people had home computers. No one played Xbox or Play Station (neither was out yet!), instead they played Nintendo (Super Nintendo, if they were lucky). Televisions in living rooms across the United States were large, oblong boxes often as deep as they were wide (and no one had ever heard of HD, either).

Boy, the world sure does change quickly, doesn't it?

Part of the adventure and excitement in Mark Twain's world came from the fast and furious changes that were taking place around him. Here are a few of the major changes over the course of Twain's lifetime.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The Industrial Revolution was a major turning point in human history during the 18th and 19th centuries by which overhauling changes to agriculture, manufacturing, mining, transportation and technology reshaped the way the world worked.

Textiles (types of cloth or woven fabric), steam power, chemical production, machine tools and iron making were just a few of the innovations that advanced the worlds of manufacturing and consumption. Knowledge of almost every subject was shared through newfound collaboration, study-touring (think exchange student, though within specialized contexts and industries), and publications like encyclopedias (think Wikipedia, only in book form). Bridges, roads and railways (notoriously bad and often technologically underwhelming) saw drastic improvement with new engineering and better vehicles to traverse them, helping to better connect the world and make it a smaller place.

The effects of The Industrial Revolution were numerous and far reaching, including urbanization (growth of urban areas as opposed to other, more rural areas),

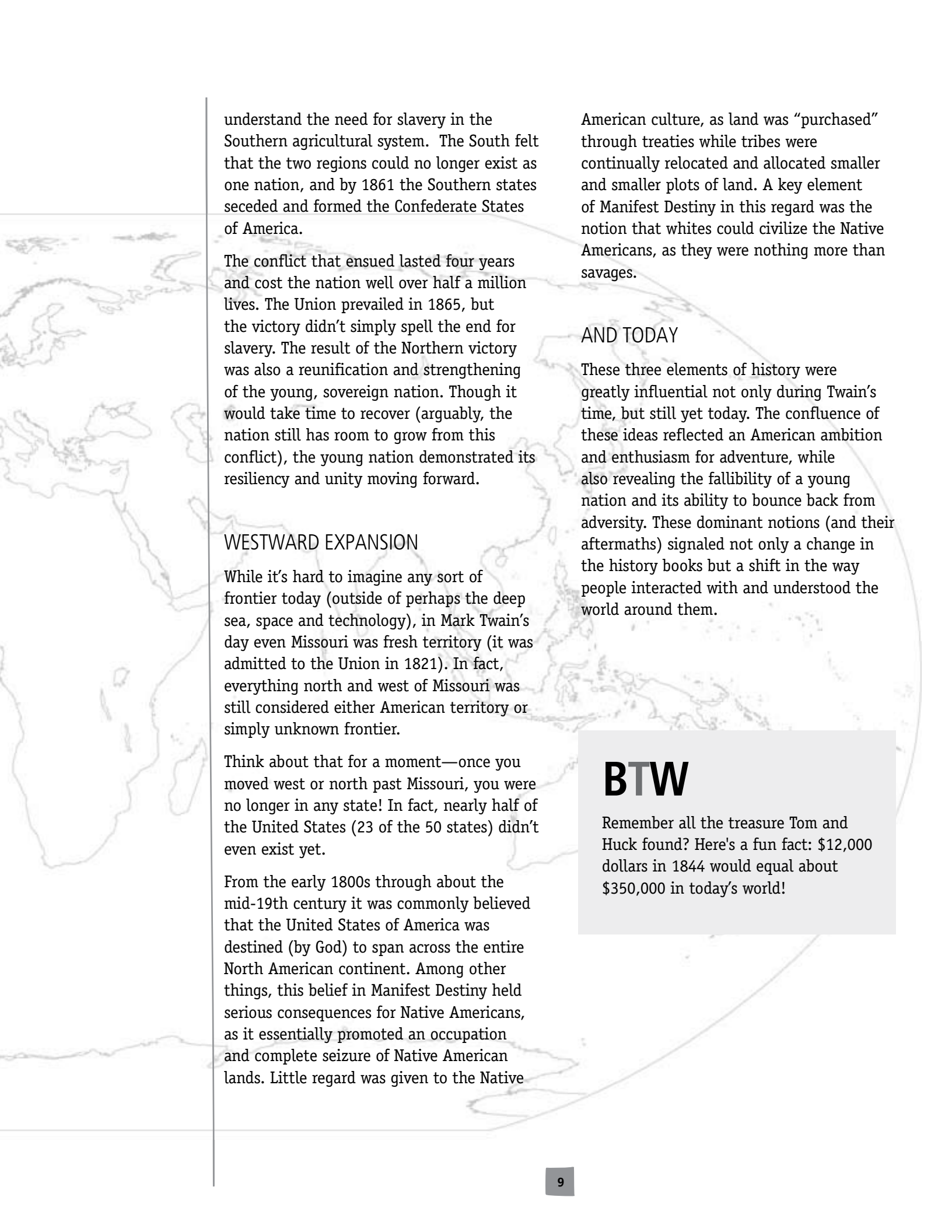
organized labor (a response to factory work and the long overdue need for regulation), increased literacy, population boom, greater standards of living for the general population and much more.

SLAVERY

When Mark Twain was growing up, Missouri was considered a slave state (though it was technically a Union state, it permitted slavery). Twain had direct experience in the matter, as his father owned a slave and his uncle owned several slaves. This evil of society wasn't unique to the United States nor was it new to the world at large, as slavery (in one form or another) had existed for longer than recorded history in many cultures. That didn't make it any less controversial or wrong, however.

An awareness of the evils of slavery was growing in America, and people began to speak out on the matter and even legislate against it. Most states north of the Mason-Dixon Line (an imaginary line dividing Northern and Southern states) made it illegal to possess slaves, and the South responded by slowly seceding from the Union. Southern states felt like the North was overstepping its bounds, and that the North didn't





understand the need for slavery in the Southern agricultural system. The South felt that the two regions could no longer exist as one nation, and by 1861 the Southern states seceded and formed the Confederate States of America.

The conflict that ensued lasted four years and cost the nation well over half a million lives. The Union prevailed in 1865, but the victory didn't simply spell the end for slavery. The result of the Northern victory was also a reunification and strengthening of the young, sovereign nation. Though it would take time to recover (arguably, the nation still has room to grow from this conflict), the young nation demonstrated its resiliency and unity moving forward.

WESTWARD EXPANSION

While it's hard to imagine any sort of frontier today (outside of perhaps the deep sea, space and technology), in Mark Twain's day even Missouri was fresh territory (it was admitted to the Union in 1821). In fact, everything north and west of Missouri was still considered either American territory or simply unknown frontier.

Think about that for a moment—once you moved west or north past Missouri, you were no longer in any state! In fact, nearly half of the United States (23 of the 50 states) didn't even exist yet.

From the early 1800s through about the mid-19th century it was commonly believed that the United States of America was destined (by God) to span across the entire North American continent. Among other things, this belief in Manifest Destiny held serious consequences for Native Americans, as it essentially promoted an occupation and complete seizure of Native American lands. Little regard was given to the Native

American culture, as land was “purchased” through treaties while tribes were continually relocated and allocated smaller and smaller plots of land. A key element of Manifest Destiny in this regard was the notion that whites could civilize the Native Americans, as they were nothing more than savages.

AND TODAY

These three elements of history were greatly influential not only during Twain's time, but still yet today. The confluence of these ideas reflected an American ambition and enthusiasm for adventure, while also revealing the fallibility of a young nation and its ability to bounce back from adversity. These dominant notions (and their aftermaths) signaled not only a change in the history books but a shift in the way people interacted with and understood the world around them.

BTW

Remember all the treasure Tom and Huck found? Here's a fun fact: \$12,000 dollars in 1844 would equal about \$350,000 in today's world!

BU

THE CAVE STATE

WITH NEARLY 7,000 CAVES throughout Missouri, it's no surprise that the Show Me State is also popularly known as the Cave State. Though the number of discovered caves in the state grows each year, we still have a lot to learn about these natural wonders. In fact, cave exploration (alongside deep sea exploration) is considered one of the few true remaining frontiers of planet Earth. How's that for an adventure?

MOST CAVES in Missouri can be found south of the Missouri River, with a high concentration in and around the Ozarks. This is due to the fact that bedrock in the southern part of the state is primarily made up of soluble dolomite and limestone rock, which aids in the formation of caves.

YOU MIGHT BE SURPRISED to learn that caves aren't formed by wrecking balls, lightning strikes or other immediate, intimidating forces of nature. Caves are actually slowly carved out of rock by water. As rainwater trickles down the Earth's surface, it combines with carbon dioxide from decaying plant matter to form carbonic acid. This mild acid eats away at limestone and dolomite, creating openings and often forming springs.

AS A SPRING BEGINS to dry out, the shell of the cave begins to really take form. Water flowing through the opening and down the bedrock has picked up minerals (dissolved limestone and dolomite), which are deposited on cave walls, ceilings and floors. The steady drip of water leaves behind the minerals it picked up on the way in, forming columns, stalactites and stalagmites.

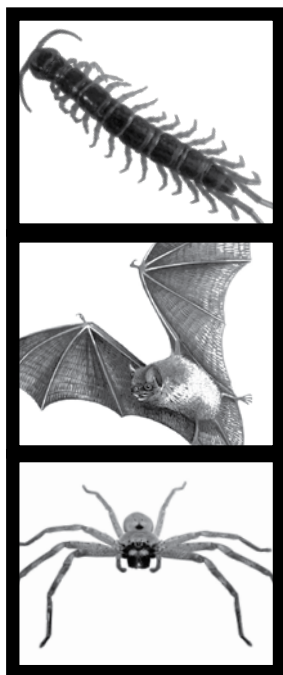
LIFE IN MISSOURI caves can be dark and damp, which leads to some interesting creatures milling about. Blind cavefish, freshwater shrimp, isopods and crayfish

are typical Missouri cave dwellers. Many of these organisms have no pigment and extremely small eyes (if they have eyes at all!). Because often no light reaches these animals deep within a cave, coloration and vision simply have no purpose. They rely on their other senses to survive, which are often more acutely aware of changes in their environment than their more visual counterparts.

ANOTHER POPULAR cave dweller is the bat, the only mammal that can truly fly. These nocturnal animals spend the day perched upon cave walls and ceilings in a state of rest, but at night bats exit the cave to hunt. To observe a bat colony's mass exodus at dusk is truly an impressive sight!

MILLIPEDES, CENTIPEDES, snails, spiders and salamanders are also common to Missouri caves (each with their own special adaptations to living life in the cave). Water moving through the cave is often the basis for life, as many exclusive cave dwellers rely on it for food and oxygen. This makes the world below particularly vulnerable to what's happening up on the surface, as water is filtered through whatever is at the surface before it comes down. Even the slightest change in water composition (particularly that caused by pollution above the surface) can have devastating effects on the ecosystem of a cave. The cavefish population is often a good indicator of water quality, as a sharp drop in population usually indicates increased pollution at the surface.

IF YOU HAVEN'T experienced the beauty and wonder of Missouri's caves, what are you waiting for? There are many caves within driving distance of St. Louis, including Meramec Caverns and Onondaga Cave. Check it out!



SOCIAL ACTIVISM

MARK TWAIN ONCE WROTE, "Supposing is good, but finding out is better." That is to say, Twain was a strong advocate for thoroughly exploring the world and finding answers for himself. And when the answer seemed like it might not be right, Twain was not afraid to stand up for what he believed in. Over the course of his life, he actively spoke out against slavery, racism and greed.

THOUGH HE CONSIDERED HIMSELF a social commentator, Twain might very well be considered an early social activist. Activism consists of an individual or group's efforts to bring about social, political, economic or environmental change. Social activists work in a variety of ways including rallies, marches, strikes and writing letters to newspapers or politicians (just to name a few).

SOCIAL ACTIVISM is typically associated with progressive thought that threatens the status quo, so there is often a fine line between true activism and what could be considered troublemaking. While there are a number of activists today working to instill change, here are a couple of examples for you to consider for yourself. Are these instances of troublemaking or are these actions inspiration for a greater good?

ANONYMOUS

Known for their pictures in Guy Fawkes masks (think *V for Vendetta* mask), the internet hacking group Anonymous is known for controversial, widely publicized protests online. As the name suggests, the group consists of a collection of anonymous computer savvy social activists most concerned with internet freedom and freedom of speech.

The group is most famous for the release of incriminating, confidential documents (like in the case of Bank of America documents released in March 2011 that revealed fraud and corruption related to foreclosures) and for DDoS attacks (attacks to take down websites or other online resources). In the last year Anonymous has taken down several websites in the name of protest, including the websites of the Spanish Police and the Orlando Chamber of Commerce as well as government websites for Tunisia, Anguilla, Brazil, Zimbabwe, Turkey and Australia. They've even hacked NATO's website.

OCCUPY WALL STREET

Occupy Wall Street is a series of ongoing demonstrations rooted in New York City's Wall Street financial district. These protests are centered on what the group perceives as social and economic inequality, corporate greed, corruption and a government tainted by the financial services sector and lobbyists. The movement's actions include non-violent protest, occupation, picketing, demonstrations and internet activism.

The group's slogan, "We are the 99%," refers to the notion that the wealthiest 1% of the United States bears a disproportionately small tax burden, while the other, poorer 99% shoulders a disproportionately heavy tax burden. Protests began September 17, 2011 and have continued to spread in size both in the United States and across the world. Protests associated with the movement have now taken place in over 900 cities worldwide, and the movement shows little sign of slowing down.



- * What other activist groups have you heard of?
- * What is the goal of activist groups? Are they making a difference? Why or why not?

Huck Finn, you're the luckiest boy in St. Petersburg. You get to come and go as you wish, go fishing or swimming when you like and don't have to obey anybody.

- * Tom and most of the children in town seem to view Huck's life as if it was the ideal. With no one to look after him, Huck has the freedom to do anything he pleases. However, that freedom also comes with a down side. What is the down side to living free and alone as Huck does? How does Tom's view on that lifestyle change throughout the play?

TOM: I don't see why I oughtn't to like it. Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?

JOE: Say Tom, let me whitewash a little.

TOM: No, no. I reckon it wouldn't hardly do, Joe. Aunt Polly's awful particular about this fence—right here on the street. It's got to be done very careful. I reckon there ain't one boy in a thousand, maybe two thousand, that can do it the way it's got to be done.

JOE: Oh come, now—lemme just try.

- * One of the most famous and memorable scenes from Twain's novel is this whitewashing scene. Tom demonstrates his cleverness and his great understanding of human nature as he manipulates his buddies into doing his chore. Have you ever been tempted to manipulate someone? What are the repercussions of tricking someone in this way, both for you and for the person you trick?

TOM: What's the talk around, Huck?

HUCK: It's just Muff Potter, Muff Potter, Muff Potter all the time. It keeps me in a sweat, constant, so's I want to hide som'ers.

- * When Tom and Huck first witnessed the crime in the graveyard, they swore an oath to keep it a secret. As time passed, however, it became clear that they would have to speak up, risking their own safety, to save an innocent man. Though he was frightened, Tom finally made the choice to step forward at the trial. What does this say about his character? What would you do in his circumstance? When is it okay to save yourself and when must you stand up for someone else?

Huck and I are striking out for a pirate's life—leaving behind this miserable and ungrateful place.

- * The boys decide to run away to Jackson's Island when they feel they have been mistreated by their families and friends. What do you think of their plan? Were the problems they faced really that bad? Have you ever faced a problem that felt insurmountable but turned out to be rather minor? How can we put these things in perspective?