

**Prompt #1:**

At the end of the novel, Huck says, “But I reckon I got to light out for the Territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she’s going to adopt me and sivilize me and I can’t stand it. I been there before.” **Why, at the end of the book, does Huck once again reject “civilization”?** In your essay discuss:

- What “civilization” means to Huck
- Specific instances of hypocrisy, cruelty, and social satire in the novel (This will take several paragraphs)
- Contrast the raft life of Huck and Jim with the shore world
- What Twain thinks of society in particular and mankind in general

**Prompt #2:**

**Discuss the development of Jim as a character.**

- How is he portrayed in the opening chapters of the novel?
- How does his character evolve as the novel continues. What do we learn about him?
- How is he ultimately a foil or contrast to Pap?
- Discuss the depiction of Jim in the closing chapters of the novel. Can you reconcile him as both the victim of Tom Sawyer’s ridiculous “ambuscade” and the noble soul who risks his long-sought freedom to save Tom’s life?
- Decide and discuss whether Twain’s ending negates or strengthens Jim’s character development.

**Prompt #3:**

Ernest Hemingway once said that all American literature came from one book: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. According to Hemingway, it’s “the best book we’ve got.” However, other scholars and students of literature dare to disagree with this assessment. Examine the novel *Huck Finn* as a masterpiece of American literature. Does it deserve a place in the canon of Great Books? (Do not automatically assume that your teacher agrees with Mr. Hemingway.) **Support or refute Ernest Hemingway’s claim. Take a stand for or against the inclusion of this novel as required high school reading.** Develop your reasons for or against the novel’s stature as an icon of American literature. Provide specific and intelligent reasons, and support those reasons with specific examples from the novel, as well as relevant quotes. You will also need to examine American society (and its students) today, as contrasted with society in the past. Thus, you will need support from both the novel and “real life” when constructing your arguments and marshalling your support.

**Prompt #4:**

**Trace Huck's changing relationship with Jim throughout the course of the novel.** *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* gives us a glimpse of one summer in the life of the thirteen-year-old boy. During that time, Huck develops an extraordinary friendship with Jim, a runaway slave. Although Huck never comes to a final awareness that his society is wrong to enslave another human being, he ultimately chooses loyalty to a friend over the legal and moral code of his land. Discuss Huck's "journey" in this changing relationship with Jim. Be sure to address:

- The way Jim is depicted in the earliest chapters and how both Huck and Tom treat him.
- Huck's decision to turn Jim in, then his decision to trick the slave-hunters as they approach the raft.
- Huck's apology after the fog incident.
- Huck's surprise over Jim's misery regarding his daughter. How is Jim a foil, or contrast to, Pap?
- Huck's argument with Jim over King Solomon and the French.
- Huck's decision to tear up the letter to Miss Watson.
- Huck's tolerance of Tom's escape plan.
- Huck's rationalization after Jim sacrifices his freedom for Tom.