In fact, this scaffold constituted a portion of a penal machine, which now, for two or three generations past, has been merely historical and traditionary among us, but was held, in the old time, to be as effectual an agent in the promotion of good citizenship, as ever was the guillotine among the terrorists of France. It was, in short, the platform of the pillory; and above it rose the framework of that instrument of discipline, so fashioned as to confine the human head in its tight grasp, and thus hold it up to the public gaze. The very ideal of ignominy was embodied and make manifest in this contrivance of wood and iron. There can be no outrage, me thinks, against our common nature,-whatever be the delinquencies of the individual,-no outrage more flagrant than to forbid the culprit to hide her face for shame; as it was the essence of this punishment to do. In Hester Prynne's instance, however, as not unfrequently in other cases, her sentence bore, that she should stand a certain time upon the platform, but without undergoing that gripe about the neck and confinement of the head, that proneness to which was the most devilish characteristic of this ugly engine. Knowing well her part, she ascended a flight of wooden steps, and was thus displayed to the surrounding multitude, at about the height of a man's shoulders above the street.

Had there been a Papist among the crowd of Puritans, he might have seen in this beautiful woman, so picturesque in her attire and mien, and with the infant at her bosom, and object to remind him of the image of Divine Maternity, which so many illustrious painters have vied with one another to represent; something which should remind him, indeed, but only by contrast, of that sacred image of sinless motherhood, whose infant was to redeem the world. Here, there was the taint of deepest sin in the most sacred quality of human life, working such effect, that the world was only the darker for this woman's beauty, and the more lost for the infant that she had borne.

The scene was not without a mixture of awe, such as must always invest the spectacle of guilt and shame in a fellow-creature, before society shall have grown corrupt enough to smile, instead of shuddering, at it. The witnesses of Hester Prynne's disgrace had not yet passed beyond their simplicity. They were stern enough to look upon her death, had that been the sentence, without a murmur at its severity, but had none of the heartlessness of another social state, which would find only a theme for jest in an exhibition like the present. Even had there been a disposition to turn the matter into ridicule, it must have been repressed and overpowered by the solemn presence of men no less dignified than the Govern, and several of his counsellors, a judge, a general, and the ministers of the town; all of whom sat or stood in a balcony of the meeting-house, looking down upon the platform. When such personages could constitute a part of the spectacle, without risking the majesty or reverence of rank and office, it was safely to be inferred that the infliction of a legal sentence would have
an earnest and effectual meaning. Accordingly, the crowd was sombre and grave. The unhappy culprit sustained herself as best a woman might, under the heavy weight of a thousand unrelenting eyes, all fastened upon her, and concentrated at her bosom. It was almost intolerable to be borne. Of an impulsive and passionate nature, she had fortified herself to encounter the stings and venomous stabs of public contumely, wreaking itself in every variety of insult; but there was a quality so much more terrible in the solemn mood of the popular mind, that she longed rather to behold all those rigid countenances contorted with scornful merriment, and herself the object. Had a roar of laughter burst from the multitude,—each man, each woman, each little shrill-voiced child, contributing their individual parts,—Hester Prynne might have repaid them all with a bitter and disdainful smile. But, under the leaden infliction which it was her doom to endure, she felt, at moments, as if she must needs shriek out with the full power of her lungs, and cast herself from the scaffold down upon the ground, or else go mad at once.

Yet there were intervals when the whole scene, in which she was the most conspicuous object, seemed to vanish from her eyes, or, at least, glimmered indistinctly before them, like a mass of imperfectly shaped and spectral images. Her mind, and especially her memory, was preternaturally active, and kept bringing up other scenes than this roughly hewn street of a little town, on the edge of the Western wilderness; other faces than were lowering upon her from beneath the brims of those steeple-crowned hats. Reminiscences, the most trifling and immaterial, passages of infancy and school-days, sports, childish quarrels, and the little domestic traits of her maiden years, came swarming back upon her, intermingled with recollections of whatever was gravest in her subsequent life; one picture precisely as vivid as another; as if all were of similar importance, or all alike a play. Possibly, it was an instinctive device of her spirit, to relieve itself, by the exhibition of these phantasmagoric forms, from the cruel weight and hardness of the reality.

Be that as it might, the scaffold of the pillory was a point of view that revealed to Hester Prynne the entire track along which she had been treading, since her happy infancy. Standing on that miserable eminence, she saw again her native village, in Old England, and her paternal home; a decayed house of gray stone, with a poverty-stricken aspect, but retaining a half-obliterated shield of arms over the portal, in token of antique gentility. She saw her father's face, with its bald brow, and reverend white beard, that flowed over the old-fashioned Elizabethan ruff; her mother's, too, with the look of heedful and anxious love which it always wore in her remembrance, and which, even since her death, had so often laid the impediment of a gentle remonstrance in her daughter's pathway. She saw her own face, glowing with girlish beauty, and illuminating all the interior of the dusky mirror in which she
had been wont to gaze at it. There she beheld another countenance, of a man well stricken in years, a pale, thin, scholar-like visage, with eyes dim and bleared by the lamp-light that had served them to pore over many ponderous books. Yet those same bleared optics had a strange, penetrating power, when it was their owner's purpose to read the human soul. This figure of the study and the cloister, as Hester Prynne's womanly fancy failed not to recall, was slightly deformed, with the left shoulder a trifle higher than the right. Next rose before her, in memory's picture-gallery, the intricate and narrow thoroughfares, the tall, gray houses, the huge cathedrals, and the public edifices, ancient in date and quaint in architecture, of a Continental city; where a new life had awaited her, still in connection with the misshapen scholar; a new life, but feeding itself on time-worn materials, like a tuft of green moss on a crumbling wall. Lastly, in lieu of these shifting scenes, came back the rude market-place of the Puritan settlement, with all the townspeople assembled and levelling their stern regards at Hester Prynne,—yes, at herself,—who stood on the scaffold of the pillory, an infant on her arm, and letter A, in scarlet, fantastically embroidered with gold thread, upon her bosom!

Could it be true? She clutched the child so fiercely to her breast, that it sent forth a cry; she turned her eyes downward at the scarlet letter, and even touched it with her finger, to assure herself that the infant and shame were real. Yes! these were her realities,—all else had vanished!

**Activities**

**Classroom Assignment:**
Watch the film *The Scarlet Letter.* In groups, compare and contrast the film with the above text, then answer the following questions orally.
1. Identify one theme from *The Scarlet Letter.*
2. Describe the setting of the novel.
3. What is the point of view?
4. Identify the key elements of the plot.
5. What different kinds of conflicts does Hester undergo?
6. Identify the external and internal conflicts of the novel.

**Homework Assignment:**
Finish reading the novel. Write a three page summary of *The Scarlet Letter.*
Unit 4: Post Civil War Literature (1852 - 1922)

Introduction

The United States began the twentieth century with a population of less than 76,000,000, almost two thirds of it living on farms and in rural villages. The dominant symbol of mobility and industrialism that would soon transform American life had just begun to appear: in all the land there were only miles of paved country roads.

By 1984, the population had more than tripled. The vast majority of Americans now lived in large urban centers. They owned an enormous quantity of automobiles that congested the miles of roads and streets: more land in the United States was paved. The nation's wealth and its technological achievements on earth and in space had astonished the world.

In 1900, the American arts were poised on the brink of a turbulent modernity. In little more than two decades, American painters, architects, composers, and writers would adopt a variety of avant-garde doctrine so revolutionary as to exhaust the traditional vocabulary of the arts and require the creation of new descriptive terms: futurism, expressionism, post impressionism, dadaism, imagism, and surrealism.

In the years preceding World War I, nineteenth century realism and naturalism remained vital forces in American Literature. Early in the century, Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot published works that would change the nature of American poetry. But the impact of modernist writers on the general reading public was only slight. The gentle tradition and popular romanticism still dominated the nation's literary tastes.

The growth of mass-circulation periodicals created a rich marketplace for popular writers. By the 1920's, general-audience magazines that had circulation in the millions were paying as much as six thousand dollars for a short story and sixty thousands dollars for a serial. During the depression years of the 1930's, the profitable mass market for literature temporarily declined, but after World War II, it expanded enormously with the growth of the population, the increase of wealth and education, the expansion of mass-distribution, book clubs, and the technological advances in printing that made possible the publishing of vast numbers of inexpensive paperbacks.

Although the form and direction of modern American literature had clearly begun to emerge in the first decades of the century, the First World War (1914-1918) stands as the great dividing line between the nineteenth century and contemporary America. World War I had its origins in the political turmoil of the early 1900's and in the vain rivalries of European imperial powers that had once seemed to be the glory of the age.
Writers of the first postwar era self-consciously declared that they were a “Lost Generation,” devoid of faith and alienated from a civilization that was “bothered,” as Ezra Pound described it, “An old bitch gone in the teeth.” Yet in the decade of the 1920’s, American literature achieved a new diversity and reached its greatest heights. The publication in 1922 of T.S. Eliot’s “The Waste Land,” the most significant American poem of the twentieth century, helped to establish a modern tradition of literature rich with learning and symbolism.

In 1929, the stock market crashed, and the Great Depression of the 1930’s began, cataclysmic events that shattered public complacency and transformed American society. American artists of all kinds began to produce works of political and social criticism. John Steinbeck described the sweat-drenched lives of factory workers and migrant farmers in journalistic reports, in short stories, and in such memorable novels as *Of Mice and Men* (1937).

After World War I, a new generation of American authors appeared, writing in the skeptical, ironic tradition of the earlier realists and naturalists. The writers of the 1950’s used a prose style modeled on the works of Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald, narrative techniques derived from William Faulkner, and psychological insights from Sigmund Freud. But in the 1960’s and 1970’s America’s prose writers turned increasingly to experimental techniques, to absurd humor, and to mocking examination of the irrational and the disordered.

Since World War II, more poetry has been published and read in America than in any earlier period of its history. As new poets emerged and as new audiences were created, critical values changed. Such poetic monuments of the past as T.S. Eliot and Robert Frost went temporarily out of fashion.

From the 1960’s to the 1980’s, American writers confronted a world of ferocious change and accelerating technology. Within the pluralistic society American poets, playwrights, novelists, and essayists, influenced by the contraries and the varieties they perceive, continue to explore their own lives and their own perceptions of the land and its people, confronting the great questions of American civilization and forming their experiences into timeless myth, just as their colonial American fore-bearers did three centuries before.

**Activities**

**Classroom Assignment:**

Answer the questions below orally.

1. Define the following terms: futurism, expressionism, post-impressionism, dadaism, and surrealism.
2. Which were the two remaining vital forces in American Literature in the years preceding World War I?
3. Where did World War I have its origins?
4. What was the situation in the United States like after World War I?
5. What kind of literary works did Americans begin writing in 1929? Why?
6. Who were the famous authors of this time period?

**Homework Assignment:**
Write a one page composition explaining how new technology influenced the works of writers.

**Biography**

Mark Twain
1835 - 1910

Mark Twain (born Samuel Longhorne Clemens) looked back with longing to what he recalled as the innocence, simplicity, and rectitude of pre-Gold Rush America. Yet no other writer partook so hungrily of the wealth, status, fame, and other rewards that the Gilded Age offered. A divided sensibility who alternately craved attention and solitude, he lived on the scale of a prince of industry or banking in New York, Hartford, and the great cities of Europe while his imagination remained tied to the drowsing villages of the Mississippi River valley.

Caught up in the westward tide of expansion, Samuel Clemens' parents, poor but blood-proud Virginia gentry, settled along what was then the southwestern frontier, first in the crossroads Hamlet of Florida, Missouri, where he was born in 1835, and four years later in Hannibal on the Mississippi River. There, Sam developed a passion for the river and a desire to become the pilot on a riverboat. His father, a justice of the peace, failed in the law, shopkeeping, land speculation, and ventures in slave trading. He was a popular man in Hannibal, but remained poor, and when he died, Samuel was apprenticed to a printer. The boy left school at twelve to earn his living, though he continued to read extensively. He worked in a printing office and wrote occasional newspaper items, burlesques, and humorous sketches. "One isn't a printer ten years," he was to recall, "without setting up acres of good and bad literature, and learning - unconsciously at first, consciously later - to discriminate between the two, within his mental limitations; and meanwhile he is consciously acquiring what is called a 'style.' " But he also realized the boyhood ambition he was to write about in *Old Times on the Mississippi*: In 1859, after two years of "cubbing," he earned a pilot's license and stood in princely grandeur in the wheelhouse of a river steamboat.

The coming of the Civil War put an end to this occupation and to commercial traffic on the river. Young Clemens spent a few grim weeks in the field as a Confederate irregular before going West to try his hand at prospecting in the Nevada Territory and California.
working as a reporter on the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise*, he settled finally on his vocation: "seriously scribbling to excite the *laughter* of God's creatures." He was to learn that the punishing thing about laughter was a supreme moral weapon. All his life he felt compelled to defend his profession, to segregate the noun *humorist* from the adjective *mere* and the synonym *clown*. Reciprocally, Americans of his time tended to cherish him as entertainer alone and, as soon as the smiles faded from their faces, trivialize his genius and irony, his moral passion and assaults on conventional wisdom.

In 1870, Clemens married Olivia Langdon, a wealthy and rather aristocratic girl and heiress to a coal fortune, and settled in the East, first in Buffalo and then permanently in Hartford, Connecticut. They rented, and soon built, a house at Nook Farm, a tightly knit, high-minded enclave of writers and intellectuals that included Harriet Beecher Stowe. When he moved to Hartford, Samuel gave up journalism to make fiction writing his career. His writing was popular and sold well, although he sometimes found lecture tours necessary to supplement his income.

At fifty, it seemed that Mark Twain was blessed with everything: overflowing creative energies; domestic happiness; world fame and social eminence; friendships with other writers; wealth; and an eye-catching brick-and-brownstone mansion - part steamboat, part medieval stronghold, part cuckoo clock - that was one of Hartford's curiosities. The house at 351 Farmington Avenue, now maintained as a memorial to its owner, served as a reminder of how far he had traveled from a clapboard dwelling "the size of a birdhouse" in Hannibal. He invested heavily in speculative business ventures which did not profit and Twain was forced to declare bankruptcy. To pay off his debts he traveled to Australia, New Zealand, India and South Africa on a year long lecture tour. He was the most famous American author in the world. People in India knew only three things about the United States, he noted - "George Washington, Mark Twain, and the Chicago Fair." He had settled in England to write a book about his journey around the world, when he learned by cable from Hartford that his favorite daughter had died of meningitis. "It is one of the mysteries of our nature," Mark Twain was to reflect, "that a man, all unprepared, can receive a thunder-stroke like that and live."

Restored to financial health, Mark Twain moved back to the United States in 1900. He had lived abroad for approximately eleven years. The ovation that welcomed him continued until his death in 1910. In 1902 he revisited Missouri, "a great and beautiful country," for the last time and imagined Tom and Huck (two young main characters from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*) coming home to Hannibal old and withered. Five years later, he journeyed to England to receive the degree of Doctor of Letters from Oxford University.
For his honor to himself and to the profession of humor, he said he would have been willing to "Journey to Mars." He died in 1910 at Stormfield, his Italian like villa perched on a hilltop in Reading, Connecticut. He had built this last home with the proceeds from his serialized autobiography.

The typical motif in Clemens' writing was the narration of a story by a young or naive person or a story in which the main character was an Easterner unaccustomed to frontier life. In Clemens' stories the over-refined Easterner was usually outwitted by Westerners. When he wrote from a youth's perspective, the youth was usually wise beyond his years, but retained and idealism which Clemens contrasted with the hypocrisy and cruelty of the adult world. Some of his works include Roughing It, The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Prince and the Pauper, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, and A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court.

Activities

Classroom Assignment:
Answer the following questions and discuss the answers in pairs.
1. How did Mark Twain's life influence what he wrote?
2. What kinds of professions did Mark Twain have?
3. What was the typical motif in Clemens' writing?
4. Why did Twain feel compelled to defend his profession?

Homework Assignment:
Investigate to find out what historical events took place during Mark Twain's lifetime. Use this material to prepare for an oral report.

Literary Work
from The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

"Tom!"
No answer.
"Tom!"
No answer.
"What's gone with that boy, I wonder? You Tom!"
The lady pulled her spectacles down and looked over them, about the room; then she put them up and looked out under them. She seldom or never looked through them for so small a thing as a boy, for they were her state pair, the pride of her heart, and were built for
'style', not service; she could have seen through a pair of stove lids as well. She looked perplexed a moment and said, 'Well, I lay if I get hold of you, I'll -'

She did not finish, for by this time she was bending down and punching under the bed with the broom - and so she needed to breathe to punctuate the punchers with. She resurrected nothing but the cat.

'I never did see the beat of that boy!'

She went to the open door and stood in it, and looked out among the tomato vines and 'jimpson' weeds that constituted the garden. No Tom. So she lifted her voice, at an angle calculated for distance, and shouted.

'Y-o-u-u Tom!'

There was a slight noise behind her and she turned just in time to seize a small boy by the slack of his roundabout and arrest his flight. 'There! I might 'a thought of that closet. What you been doing in there?'

'Nothing.'

'Nothing! Look at your hands, and look at your mouth. What is that truck?'

'I don't know, aunt.'

'Well, I know. It's jam, that's what it is. Forty times I've said if you didn't let that jam alone I'd skin you. Hand me that switch.';

The switch hovered in the air. The peril was desperate.

'My! Look behind you, aunt!' The old lady whirled around and snatched her skirts out of danger, and the lad fled, on the instant, scrambled up the high board fence, and disappeared over it. His aunt Polly stood surprised a moment, and then broke into a gentle laugh.

'Hang the boy! Can't I never learn anything? Ain't he played me tricks enough like that for me to be looking out for him by this time? But old fools is the biggest fools there is. Can't learn any old dog new tricks, as the saying is. But my goodness, he never plays them alike two days, and how is a body to know what's coming? He 'pears to know just how long he can torment me before I get my dander up, and he knows if he can make out to put me off for a minute, or make me laugh, it's all down again, and I can't hit him a lick. I ain't doing my duty by that boy, and that's the Lord's truth, goodness knows. Spare the rod and spile the child, as the good book says. I'm a-laying up sin and suffering for us both, I know. He's full of the old scratch, but laws-a-me! He's my own dead sister's boy, poor thing, and I ain't got the heart to lash him, somehow. Every time I let him off, my conscience does hurt me so; and every time I hit him my old heart most breaks. Well-a-well, man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble, as the Scripture says, and I reckon it's so. He'll play hookey
this evening, and I'll just be obliged to make him work to-morrow, to punish him. It's mighty hard to make him work Saturdays, when all the boys is having holiday, but he hates work more than he hate anything else, and I've got to do some of my duty by him, or I'll be the ruination of the child.'

Tom did play hookey, and he had a very good time. He got back home barely in season to help Jim, the small coloured boy, saw next day's wood, and split the kindlings before supper - at least he was there in time to tell his adventures to Jim, while Jim did three-fourths of the work. Tom's younger brother (or rather half-brother), Sid, was already through with his part of the work (picking up chips), for he was a quiet boy, and had no adventurous, troublesome ways. While Tom was eating his supper and stealing sugar as opportunity offered, Aunt Polly asked him questions that were full of guile, and very deep - for she wanted to trap him into damaging revealments. Like many other simple-hearted souls, it was her pet vanity to believe she was endowed with a talent for dark and mysterious diplomacy, and she loved to contemplate her most transparent devices as marvels of low cunning. Said she, 'Tom, it was middling warm in school, warn't it?'

'Yes, 'm.'

'Powerful warm, warn't it?'

'Yes, 'm.'

'Didn't you want to go in a-swimming, Tom?'

A bit of scare shot through Tom - a touch of uncomfortable suspicion. He searched Aunt Polly's face, but it told him nothing. So he said:

'No, 'm - well, not very much.'

The old lady reached out her hand and felt Tom's shirt, and said:

'But you ain't too warm now, though.'

And it flattered her to reflect that she had discovered that the shirt was dry without anybody knowing that was what she had in her mind. But in spite of her Tome knew where the wind lay now. So he forestalled what might be the next move.

'Some of us pumped on our heads - mine's damp yet. See?'

Aunt Polly was vexed to think she had overlooked that bit of circumstantial evidence and missed a trick. Then she had a new inspiration:

'Tom, you didn't have to undo your shirt collar where I sewed it to pump on your head, did you? Unbutton your jacket!'

19 South-western for 'afternoon'
The trouble vanished out of Tom's face. He opened his jacket. He shirt collar was securely sewed. 'Bother! Well, go 'long with you. I made sure you'd played hookey and been a-swimming. But I forgive ye, Tom, I reckon you're a kind of singed cat, as the saying is - better'n you look. This time.'

She was half sorry her sagacity had miscarried, and half glad that Tom had stumbled into obedient conduct for once.

But Sidney said:

'Well, now, if I didn't think you sewed his collar with whit thread, but it's black.'

'Why, I did sew it with white! Tom!'

But Tom did not wait for the rest. As he went out of the door, he said,

'Siddy, I'll lick you for that.'

In a safe place Tom examined two large needles which were thrust into the lapels of his jacket - and had thread bound about them - one needle carried white thread and the other black. He said:

'She'd never noticed if it hadn't been for Sid. Confound it, sometimes she sews it with white and sometimes she sews it with black. I wish to gee-miny she'd stick to one or t'other - I can't keep the run of 'em. But I bet you I'll lam Sid for that. If I don't, blame my cats.'

He was not the model boy of the village. He knew the model boy very well, though, and loathed him.

Within two minutes, or even less, he had forgotten all his troubles. Not because his troubles were one whit less heavy and bitter to him than a man's are to a man, but because a new a powerful interest bore them down and drove them out of his mind for the time; just as men's misfortunes are forgotten in the excitement of new enterprises. This new interest was a valued novelty in whistling, which he had just acquired from a negro, and he was suffering to practise it undisturbed. It consisted in a peculiar bird-like turn, a sort of liquid warble, produced by touching the tongue to the roof of the mouth at short intervals in the midst of the music. The reader probably remembers how to do it if he has ever been a boy.

Diligence and attention soon gave him the knack of it, and he strode down the street with his mouth full of harmony and his soul full of gratitude. He felt much as an astronomer feels who has discovered a new planet. No doubt as far as strong, deep, unalloyed pleasure is concerned, the advantage was with the boy, not the astronomer.

The summer evenings were long. It was not dark yet. Presently Tom checked his whistle. A stranger was before him; a boy a shade larger than himself. A new-comer of any age or either sex was an impressive curiosity in the poor little village of St. Petersburg. This boy was well dressed, too - well dressed on a weekday. This was simply astounding. His cap
was a dainty thing, his close-buttoned cloth roundabout was new and natty, and so were his pantaloons. He had shoes on, and yet it was only Finney. He even wore a neck-tie, a bit of bright ribbon. He had a stilted air about him that ate into Tom’s vitals. The more Tom stared at the splendid marvel, the higher he turned up his nose at his finery, and the shabbier and shabbier his own outfit seemed to him to grow. Neither boy spoke. If one moved the other moved - but only sidewise, in a circle. They kept face to face and eye to eye all the time.

Finally, Tom said:

‘I can lick you! ’

‘I’d like to see you try it.’

‘Well, I can do it.’

‘No, you can’t either.’

‘Yes, I can.’

‘No, you can’t.’

‘I can.’

‘You can’t.’

‘Can.’

‘Can’t.’

An uncomfortable pause. Then Tom said:

‘What’s your name?’

‘Tisn’t any of your business, maybe.’

‘Well, I know I’ll make it my business.’

‘Well, why don’t you?’

‘If you say much I will.’

‘Much - much - much! There, now.’

‘Oh, you think you’re mighty smart, don’t you? I could lick you with one hand tied behind me, if I wanted to.’

‘Well, why don’t you do it? You say you can do it.’

‘Well, I will if you fool with me.’

‘Oh yes, I’ve seen whole families in the same fix.’

‘Smart! You think you’re some now, don’t you?’

‘Oh, what a hat!’

‘You can lump that hat if you don’t like it. I dare you to knock it off; and anybody that’ll take a dare will suck eggs.’

‘You’re a liar!’

‘You’re another.’
'You're a fighting liar, and dasn't take it up.'

'Aw - take a walk!'

'Say - if you give me much more of your sass I'll take and bounce a rock off'n your head.'

'Oh, of course you will.'

'Well, I will.'

'Well, why don't you do it, then? What do you keep saying you will, for? Why don't you do it? It's because you're afraid.'

'I ain't afraid.'

'You are.'

'I ain't.'

'You are.'

Another pause, and more eyeing and sidling around each other. Presently they were shoulder to shoulder. Tom said:

'Get away from here!'  

'I won't.'

'I won't either.'

So they stood, each with a foot placed at an angle as a brace, and both shoving with might and main, and glowering at each other with hate. But neither could get an advantage. After struggling till both were hot and flushed, each relaxed his strain with watchful caution, and Tom said:

'You're a coward and a put. I'll tell my big brother on you, and he can lam you with his little finger, and I'll make him do it, too.'

'What do I care for your big brother? I've got a brother that's bigger than he is; and, what's more, he can throw him over that fence, too.' (Both brothers were imaginary.)

'That's a lie.'

'Your saying it don't make it so.'

Tom drew a line in the dust with his big toe, and said:

'I dare you to step over that, and I'll lick you till you can't stand up. Anybody that'll take a dare will steal a sheep.'

The new boy stepped over promptly, and said:

'Now you said you'd do it - why don't you do it?'

'By jingoes, for two cents I will do it.'

The new boy took two broad coppers out of his pocket, and held them out with derision.
Tom struck them to the ground.

In an instant both boys were rolling and tumbling in the dirt, gripped together like cats; and for the space of a minute they tugged and tore at each other's noses, and covered themselves with dust and glory. Presently the confusion took form, and through the fog of the battle Tom appeared, seated astride the new boy, and pounding him with fists.

'Holler 'nuff!' said he.

The boy only struggles to free himself. He was crying, mainly from rage.

'Holler 'nuff!' and the pounding went on.

At last the stranger got out a smothered 'nuff!' and Tom let him up, and said, 'Now that'll learn you. Better look out who you're fooling with next time.'

The new boy went off brushing the dust form his clothes, sobbing, snuffling, and occasionally looking back and shaking his head, and threatening what he would do to Tom the 'next time he caught him out'. To which Tom responded with jeers, and started off in high feather; and as soon as his back was turned the new boy snatched up a stone, threw it, and hit him between the shoulders, and then turned tail and ran like an antelope. Tom chased the traitor home, and thus found out where he lived. He then held a position at the gate for some time, daring the enemy to come outside; but the enemy only made faces at him through the window, and declined. At last the enemy's mother appeared, and called Tom a bad, vicious, vulgar child, and ordered him away. So he went away, but he said he 'lowed' to 'lag' for that boy.

He got home pretty late that night, and when he climbed cautiously in at the window he uncovered an ambuscade in the person of his aunt; and when she saw the state his clothes were in, her resolution to turn his Saturday holiday into captivity at hard 1 about became adamantine in its firmness.

Activities

Classroom Assignment:
Answer the questions below as a class.

1. What is the point of view?
2. Describe the setting.
3. Identify one theme in the story.
4. Write the plot of the story.
5. Describe the main character in the story.
6. Explain what Tom meant when he said, 'I dare you to step over that, and I'll lick you till you can't stand up. Anybody that'll take a dare will steal a sheep.'
7. Look for the following words in the story: ain't, warn't, t'other, better'n, nuff, dasn't, off'n. From the context of the story, explain what they mean, and how they are used.

8. How does the writer's language convey and influence the meaning of the story?

9. What do you think about the story? Did you enjoy reading it? Why or why not?

**Homework Assignment:**

Put the following events in chronological order using numbers 1 to 6.

1. Tom got home late that night.
2. Tom's aunt checked his collar.
3. Tom ran away from his aunt.
4. Tom got into a fight.
5. Tom chased the traitor home.
6. Tom played hookey.

Finish reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Be prepared to discuss it during the next lesson.