

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

MARK TWAIN'S FAMOUS
TALE OF **MISCHIEF**
AND **MURDER**

ADAPTATION BY JENNIFER DIGNAN
ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM GARRETT

CHARACTERS

- ***NARRATORS 1, 2, 3 (N1, N2, N3)**
- ***TOM SAWYER**, a 12-year-old boy
- ***AUNT POLLY**, Tom's aunt, with whom Tom lives
- ***JOE HARPER (JOE H.)**, a close friend of Tom's
- BILLY FISCHER**, a local boy
- ***HUCKLEBERRY FINN**, a close friend of Tom's
- DR. ROBINSON**
- ***INJUN JOE (JOE)**, a scoundrel
- ***MUFF POTTER**, a fisherman
- MARY**, Tom's teenage cousin
- MRS. HARPER**, Joe's mom
- PREACHER**
- LAWYER**
- BECKY THATCHER**, a close friend of Tom's
- VILLAGER**
- MR. THATCHER**, Becky's dad

Circle the character you will play.

**Starred characters are major roles.*



SCENE 1

St. Petersburg, Missouri, in the 1840s

N1: On a glorious Saturday morning in June, Tom Sawyer and Aunt Polly stand in front of a picket fence.

TOM: Come on, now. I'll get teased something terrible.

AUNT POLLY: Well, maybe next time you'll think twice before playing hooky from school!

TOM: But—

POLLY: And don't you try any of your tricks, neither!

N2: As Aunt Polly leaves, Tom stares at the bucket of



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over the course of the play?

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whitewash at his feet. Sighing, he begins to paint.

TOM (to himself): There's got to be a way out of this . . .

N3: A few minutes later, Joe Harper walks by.

JOE H.: Guess you druther work than go swimming, hey?

TOM: What are you calling work?

JOE H.: Why, ain't that work?

TOM: Well, maybe it is, maybe it ain't. All I know is, it suits me fine. It's not like a boy gets to whitewash a fence every day.

JOE H.: Huh. Say, Tom, let me whitewash a little.

TOM: I don't think so. I **reckon** there ain't one boy in a thousand who could do it right.

JOE H.: Oh, come on. Lemme try.

TOM: Well . . .

JOE H.: I'll give you my apple.

TOM: OK. Just be careful.



N1: Tom stretches out in the shade, munching Joe’s apple. A while later, Billy Fischer comes by.

BILLY: Why is Joe whitewashing your fence, Tom?

TOM: I got to feelin’ sorry for him, so I gave him a chance.

BILLY: Can I have a chance too?

TOM: I don’t know. My Aunt Polly is awful particular about this fence.

BILLY: I’ll give you my kite.

TOM: Well, all right then.

N2: By the time Billy is tired, Johnny Miller—who gives Tom a dead rat on a string—is eager to paint.

N3: And so on and so forth.

N1: Finally, the bucket is empty. Tom is rolling in wealth. His new treasures include 12 marbles, a brass doorknob, a tin soldier, and a one-eyed kitten.

N2: Huckleberry Finn strolls up.

TOM: Hello, Huck! What’s that you got there?

HUCK: Dead cat.

TOM: What is dead cats good for?

HUCK: To cure warts, of course. You take your cat to the graveyard when

somebody wicked has just been buried. At midnight, devils will come, and you say, “Devil follow corpse, cat follow devil, warts follow cat, I’m done with ye!” Want to try it—or are you afeard?

TOM: Afeard! ’Taint likely. I’ll see you tonight.

SCENE 2

N3: Near midnight, Tom and Huck crouch under some trees near a fresh grave. Save for the hooting of a distant owl, it is quiet.

TOM: Did you hear that?

HUCK: I did!

TOM: It’s the devils!

N1: The boys watch, terrified, as three figures approach through the gloom.

TOM: Oh, Huck, what will we do?

HUCK: Shh! Listen. . . . That’s old Muff Potter’s voice.

TOM: You’re right. And that’s Injun Joe’s voice!

N2: The three figures reach the grave. The third figure speaks.

DR. ROBINSON: Here it is. Now hurry!

N3: Joe and Muff begin digging up the grave. They pull out the corpse and tie a blanket around it with rope.

JOE: Another five, Doc, and we’ll carry the thing out.

DR. ROBINSON: What? I’ve already paid you!

JOE: We increased our fee.

N1: Joe looms threateningly over the doctor. The doctor shoves Joe.

N2: Muff drops the knife he had been using to cut the rope and lunges at the doctor, who grabs the tombstone and knocks Muff out. Joe snatches Muff’s knife and plunges it into Dr. Robinson’s chest.

N3: Tom and Huck run away as fast as they can.

N1: When Muff wakes up a few minutes later, he is holding the bloody knife in his hand.

This is an offensive word for “American Indian.” It reflects the racism toward Native Americans that was widespread in Tom’s time.





MUFF: I'm all in a **muddle**. What happened?

JOE: You got the doctor with yer knife just as he hit you!

MUFF: Oh no! I . . . I didn't know what I was doing. You won't tell, will you Joe?

JOE: No, I won't. Now let's get outta here, quick.

N2: Joe and Muff flee. Meanwhile, a mile away, Tom and Huck finally stop running.

HUCK: We can't ever tell anyone about this. Joe would find a way to kill us for sure.

TOM: Let's swear to keep mum.

SCENE 3

N3: By noon the next day, the village knows about the murder. There is no doubt in anyone's mind that Muff Potter is guilty; his knife was found at the murder scene, after all.

N1: Muff goes to jail to await trial. If he's found guilty, he will surely be hanged.

N2: As the weeks go by, Tom is **racked** with guilt. So he runs away with Huck and Joe Harper to be pirates.

N3: They take a raft to a small island in the middle of the river and set up camp. On their second day there, Joe notices something unusual.

JOE H.: Look at those boats on the river.

HUCK: What are they up to?

TOM: They're searching for somebody who's drowned.

HUCK: I'd give heaps to know who it is.

JOE H.: Me too.

TOM: Boys, I think it's us!

JOE H.: You're right. They must have found our raft that

drifted off, and now they think we're dead.

TOM: Oh, this is glorious!

N1: But that night, Tom starts to feel bad. He writes a message and slips it into his pocket.

N2: He sneaks off for home while Joe and Huck sleep.

N3: Peering into his open living room window, Tom sees Aunt Polly, his cousin Mary, and Mrs. Harper.

POLLY: He warn't bad, just mischievous. He was the best-hearted boy that ever was.

MARY: It's true—he was a good boy, underneath. Oh Tom, poor Tom!

MRS. HARPER: It was just so with my Joe! Always up to something, but just as kind as he could be.

POLLY: How will I ever bear the funeral on Sunday?

N1: Moved, Tom wipes a tear from his eye . . . and heads back to the island.

SCENE 4

N2: The preacher speaks at the boys' funeral.

PREACHER: Truly, I say, there were never three boys more sweet or generous!

N3: Everyone is sobbing when the door of the church creaks open. All heads turn to the miraculous sight of the three "dead" boys walking up the aisle.

POLLY and **MARY:** Tom!

MRS. HARPER: Joe!

N1: Tom's and Joe's families surround them, wild with joy. Huck, whose mother is dead and whose father is seldom around, stands by himself.

TOM: Aunt Polly, it ain't fair. Someone's got to be glad to see Huck.

POLLY: I'm glad to see him, poor thing!

N2: Aunt Polly throws her arms around Huck.

N3: Her **exuberant** mood continues to the next morning. But then . . .

POLLY: It's a pity you made me suffer so, Tom.

TOM: Well, I . . . I just didn't think.

POLLY: Oh, child, you never think—of anything besides your own selfishness.

TOM: Well, I did come to bring you a note. But when you got to talking about the funeral, I got the idea of coming to the church, and I couldn't bear to spoil it.



POLLY: If that's true—that you meant well, at least—it would cover up a power of sins.

N1: When Tom goes out, Aunt Polly finds the note in Tom's jacket.

POLLY (reading): “Don't worry, Aunt Polly. Me and Joe and Huck ain't drowned.”

N2: Aunt Polly sighs, holding the note to her heart.

SCENE 5

N3: Muff Potter's murder trial is approaching when Tom draws Huck aside for a serious talk.

TOM: Have you ever told anybody about . . . that night?

HUCK: Not a solitary word. You know we wouldn't be alive two days if we told.

TOM: All right. Say, do you ever feel sorry for old Muff?

HUCK: Most always. He's always been kind to me.

TOM: To me too. I hate the mean way everybody talks about him.

N1: The day of the trial arrives. Injun Joe testifies that he saw Muff stab the doctor.

LAWYER: Your Honor, we call Tom Sawyer to the stand.

N2: Puzzlement settles on every face in the courtroom as Tom walks forward.

LAWYER: Thomas Sawyer, where were you on June 17, about the hour of midnight?

TOM (quietly): In the graveyard.

LAWYER: A bit louder, please.

TOM: In the graveyard!

N3: Tom describes everything he saw. As he gets to the end, Joe jumps out the courthouse window and runs off.

N1: Tom is celebrated as a hero. But Joe infests his dreams. Tom is certain Joe will make him pay.

SCENE 6

N2: A few weeks later, Tom goes to a cave with his classmates. He walks with Becky Thatcher.

TOM: Let's see where this passage goes.

BECKY: All right, but let's make smoke marks on the wall with our candles so we can find our way back.

N3: They mark the wall and begin to wander,



passing through one corridor after another.

N1: They come to a large cavern where hundreds of bats hang from the ceiling.

N2: The bats begin flying down in **droves**. Tom grabs Becky's hand and they run.

BECKY: Ahhh! A bat just flew into my candle!

TOM: Come on, they're chasing us!

N3: Finally, the bats disappear. It is very quiet.

BECKY: It's been ever so long since I heard any of the others. We better start back. Can you find the way?

TOM: I reckon so.

BECKY: All right, but I hope we don't get lost.

N1: But Tom and Becky *are* lost. Very, very, very lost.

SCENE 7

N2: Days pass. Tom and Becky have long ago burned down their last candle.

BECKY: Tom, I am so hungry and tired.

TOM: You stay at the spring. I'll look for a way out. I'll trail this kite string so I can find my way back.

BECKY: Promise you'll come back . . . and . . .



The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and its sequel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* are considered two of the greatest American novels of all time.



when the time comes that you'll stay and hold my hand?

TOM: Don't talk like that, Becky. We'll find our way out.

N3: In truth, Tom isn't so sure.

N1: In the first corridor he tries, he comes to a drop-off. He stops. In the darkness below, a human hand appears, holding a candle.

N2: Tom squints. Then he sees—it's Injun Joe!

N3: Paralyzed with fear, Tom watches Joe scurry back into the darkness.

TOM (to himself): I'm going back to the spring. I cannot risk running into that murderer again!

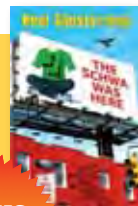
SCENE 8

N1: All of St. Petersburg is in mourning for Tom and Becky. Then, in the middle of the night, the church bells begin to **peal**.

VILLAGER: They're found! They're found!

WRITING CONTEST

In a "coming-of-age story," the main character matures, or makes progress on the journey from childhood to adulthood. Do you think *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* is a coming-of-age story? Write a paragraph answering this question, using text evidence to support your claim. Send it to **TOM SAWYER CONTEST**. Five winners will each get Neal Shusterman's *The Schwa Was Here*.



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N2: Tom and Becky are whisked to Becky's house, where Tom weakly but enthusiastically tells his story.

TOM: . . . and then I decided I had to try again. I followed another corridor, right to the end of my kite string. I was about to turn back when I saw a tiny speck of light in the distance. I crawled forward and poked my head through a small hole, and what did I see but the Mississippi River! I went back for Becky, and I don't mind saying that we both cried for gladness when we got out. Before long, some men come by in a **skiff** and picked us up.

N3: Two weeks after his brush with death, Tom visits Becky and her family.

MR. THATCHER: I guess you won't be going back to that cave anytime soon, hey Tom?

TOM: Oh, I don't know.

MR. THATCHER: Trust me, you won't. Nobody will ever get lost in that cave again.

TOM: Why?

MR. THATCHER: Because I had the entrance sealed tight.

BECKY: Tom, you've gone as white as a sheet!

TOM: Joe is in that cave!

SCENE 9

N1: Mr. Thatcher and Tom lead a group of villagers to the cave. They unseal the entrance.

N2: Right inside lies Joe, dead.

TOM: I can't say I'm not relieved, but I do feel bad for him. It is a terrible thing to be trapped in a cave.

N3: After Joe is buried, Tom takes Huck aside.

TOM: Huck, I think Joe was hiding treasure in that cave.

HUCK: That's a shame. They sealed that cave back up.

TOM: I know how we can get in: through the hole I used to escape.

HUCK: Hurry up, then. Let's go!

N1: And the boys are off on another adventure. ●