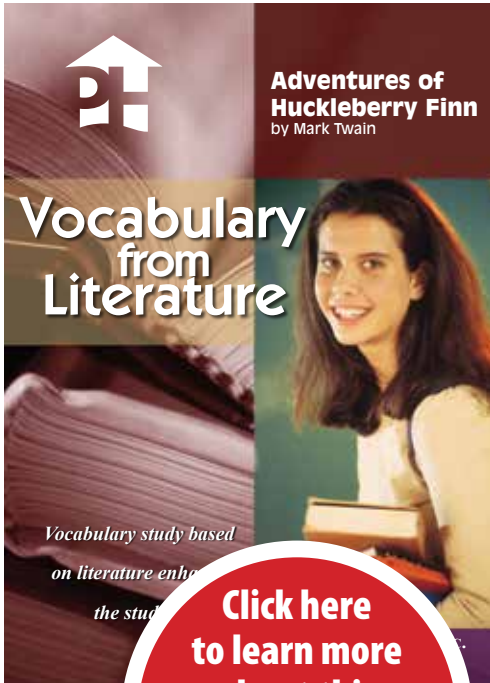




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*Vocabulary From Literature for...*

*Adventures of  
Huckleberry Finn  
by Mark Twain*

*Written by Julie Carroll and Elizabeth Osborne*

*Edited by Paul Moliken*

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*Vocabulary From Literature*

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## *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

### Information for Instructors

The activities in this Unit are designed to help students increase their vocabulary by studying the meanings of words selected from Mark Twain's novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. All definitions provided in these activities are based on the contexts in which the vocabulary words appear, which may not always convey the words' conventional usage.

It is the goal of this Unit to familiarize students with vocabulary words that they will re-encounter in life and in other readings. The words are carefully selected to meet this goal. Many unfamiliar words not covered by the Unit are defined in a Glossary following the Activities section; the Glossary may also contain slang expressions and proper nouns.

Rather than matching *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* chapter-for-chapter, we have divided the book into segments depending on the number of vocabulary words from each chapter. While all of the activities may be completed by students individually, we have had the best results when students worked on them in pairs or small groups. The following activities are provided for each segment.

While the words in this reproducible do represent those necessary for a better understanding of the text, our primary concern is that we select words not only pertinent to the literature, but also useful in other aspects of the students' lives. In addition, activities may vary slightly among the various chapters.

Much of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is in slang and dialect, or uses archaic words. It would not have been possible to include all instances of words students might not be familiar with; the vocabulary that we chose represents both words students might encounter and those necessary to understand the flow of the story.

All page references come from the Dover Thrift edition of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, published 1994.

**Activity I**    Objective:    Using a dictionary to find definitions and interpret them.

**Activity II**    Objective:    Deciphering the meaning of vocabulary words using context clues  
Replacing the vocabulary word with appropriate synonym(s)

**Activity III**    Objective:    Writing synonyms based on context clue

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*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Activity III  
Synonyms  
Chapters I-XI

**Directions:** Replace each highlighted word in the following passages from the text with an appropriate synonym. As a last resort, you may use a dictionary, but be careful that the word you select does not greatly alter the meaning of the passage.

1. The widow she cried over me, and called me a poor lost lamb, and she called me a lot of other names, too, but she never meant no harm by it. She put me in them new clothes again, and I couldn't do nothing but sweat and sweat, and fell all cramped up. Well, then, the old thing **commenced** again. The widow rung a bell for supper, and you had to come to time. When you got to the table you couldn't go right to eating, but you had to wait for the widow to tuck down her head and grumble a little over the **victuals**, though there warn't really anything the matter with them. (Pgs. 1-2)

A. Synonym for **commenced**:

B. Synonym for **victuals**:

2. Her sister, Miss Watson, a **tolerable** slim old maid, with goggles on, had just come to live with her, and took a set at me now, with a spelling-book. She worked me **middling** hard for about an hour, and then the widow made her ease up. I couldn't stood it much longer. Then for an hour it was deadly dull, and I was **fidgety**. (Pg. 2)

A. Synonym for **tolerable**:

B. Synonym for **middling**:

C. Synonym for **fidgety**:

*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

**Activity V**  
**Roots and Prefixes**  
**Chapters I-XI**

A. The judge talks to Huck’s father about *temperance*. Below are some words also based on the *temper* root. Using a dictionary, define each word. Then define the temper root.

<b>WORD</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>	<b>ROOT MEANS</b>
1. intemperate		
2. tempera		
3. temperament		
4. temperature		

B. Huck says that when he realized that the raft was gone, there was no time for *sentimentering*. By *sentimenter*, he means “be sentimental, be emotional.” The Latin *sentire* means “to feel” or “to feel emotion.”

Put each prefix below with the *sent* root to make a new word. Then define the word.

<b>prefix +</b>	<b>root</b>	<b>= new word and definition</b>
A. <i>con</i>	sent: feel	
B. <i>dis</i>		
C. <i>re</i>		
D. <i>as</i> (from <i>ad</i> )		

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*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Activity IV  
Huck's Use of Language  
Chapters XII-XX

**Directions:** The highlighted word or words in each of the following excerpts reflect Huck's creative use of language. For example, Huck refers to "cigars" as "seegars" and uses the word "junketings" in place of "junkets." Based on the context, define each of these words by either writing a definition or providing an appropriate synonym. And, where necessary, determine what the actual word is. You should try to interpret the meaning from context, but you may also use a dictionary.

1. By this time Jim was gone for the raft. I was just **a-biling** with curiosity; and I says to myself, Tom Sawyer wouldn't back out now, and so I won't either; I'm agoing to see what's going on here. (Pg. 51)
  
2. Packard didn't take no notice of that, but hung up his lantern on a nail, and started towards where I was, there in the dark, and motioned Bill to come. I crawfished as fast as I could, about two yards, but the boat slanted so that I couldn't make very good time; so to keep from getting run over and caught I crawled into a stateroom on the upper side. The men come **a-pawing** along in the dark ... (Pg. 51)
  
3. Well, I caught my breath and most fainted. Shut up on a wreck with such a gang as that! But it warn't no time to be **sentimentering**. We'd *got* to find that boat, now – had to have it for ourselves. (Pg. 53)