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Pudd'nhead Wilson

BY MARK TWAIN



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Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading

Author's Biographical Timeline

Objective: Understanding the author's life and historical context

Activity

Mark Twain, whose real name was Samuel Clemens, lived from 1835 until 1910, predominantly in America. Much happened to him during his lifetime, as well as in the world during that time. It was a period of great change and progress. When Twain was born, slavery was still legal in many states, mostly in the South. Slavery remained legal until 1863, with Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. Around this time, the Civil War began, which had a deep impact on the culture of the time. Furthermore, great advances were being made in science and industry. Steam heat was developed into a usable form of power. Advances were also made with electricity, leading to electrical power and lighting.

Use the Internet or other sources to research Twain's life, and then create a timeline. List the important events of Twain's life on one side of the timeline. Then, research the major American and world events that occurred between 1835 and 1910. List these events on the other side of the timeline so that the dates correspond appropriately.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter II

Fingerprinting

Objective: Learning the history behind a plot element

Activity

Pudd'nhead Wilson is criticized by the other residents of Dawson's Landing for several of his personality traits and his odd behavior. His collecting of fingerprints, though, garners the most censure from the community. Despite the lack of enthusiasm from his neighbors and friends, Pudd'nhead continues his curiosity and pursuit of fingerprinting.

Although people have been aware of the existence of fingerprints since ancient times, the use of fingerprints as an identification tool and their validity in solving crimes was not accepted until the 20th century.

Working in pairs, research the history of fingerprinting and its use in criminal cases, and write a report on your findings. Then, fingerprint each other using stamp ink and paper, and compare and contrast each other's fingerprints. Identify the similarities and differences between the two sets of fingerprints.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter IV

Writing an Obituary

Objectives: Inferring information about a character
Writing creatively

Activity

In Chapter IV, Percy Driscoll, Tom Driscoll's father and Roxy's and Chambers's owner, passes away. An obituary in the newspaper is the typical method of notifying the public about a death. It provides specific personal information and includes details about funeral arrangements. Most obituaries follow a standard format, but the deceased's family provides much of the content, so obituaries will vary in detail and length.

Using details from the first four chapters and your imagination, write an obituary for Percy Driscoll. Be sure to review the first four chapters for any pertinent information, such as Percy's occupation and time of death. You will also need to add fictional information based on what you can infer about the character from the text. The obituary must be as detailed as possible and include the following information:

- date of birth and where the deceased grew up
- the cause of death
- age at time of death
- the city and state where he died
- noteworthy accomplishments and/or things for which he will be remembered
- family members and friends
- funeral or memorial information

If you are unfamiliar with the format of obituaries, you can review a few online or in newspapers for ideas. The following is an example of a fictionalized obituary for Mark Twain:

Mark Twain

Samuel Clemens, also known as Mark Twain, age 75, died in Redding, Connecticut, on April 21, 1910, from a heart attack. Mr. Clemens was born in 1835, in Florida, Missouri. After working in a variety of positions on the Mississippi River, he moved to California to become a writer. Mr. Clemens is best known for his novels *Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. He is survived by one daughter, Clara.

Funeral services for Mr. Clemens will be private.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter VI

Life Map

Objective: Depicting plot elements visually

Activity

The Capello brothers tell Aunt Patsy and Rowena all about their lives and travels around Europe and the world. The two brothers tell quite an extraordinary tale about their fall from nobility.

Using their description in Chapter VI, draw a map of the Capello brothers' travels and activities. Use the template we have provided. The map does not have to be geographically accurate, but it should show all the places the brothers have been and the things they have done. Feel free to be creative and fill in adventures and activities not explicitly mentioned in the chapter.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter VII

Free-thinkers' Society

Objective: Creating an effective advertisement

Activity

The two most knowledgeable men in Dawson's Landing are Judge Driscoll and Pudd'nhead Wilson. Together, they constitute the Free-thinkers' Society. The society meets to discuss the benefits of thinking for one's self, despite others' views. In Chapter VII, the two men invite the twin brothers to meet with them. Judge Driscoll and Pudd'nhead Wilson are, however, the only members of their society.

Imagine that you have been hired to help the Free-thinkers' Society recruit new members. Create a poster for the society that will attract new members. Be sure to include important information, like where and when the society meets and what it stands for. Feel free to draw your own images, cut pictures from print media, or find computer-generated images. Incorporate plenty of eye-catching images and text to convey your ideas.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter XI

Palm Reading

Objective: Researching and understanding palm reading

Activity

In Chapter XI, Pudd'nhead Wilson, Tom Driscoll, and the Capello twins discuss the practice of fingerprinting and the possibility of telling one's past and future by palm reading. Wilson, who had practiced palm reading years ago, agrees to read Luigi's palm and makes great discoveries about the man's past.

Working with a partner, research palm reading, either on the Internet or through other sources. Make sure to find out what the life lines, heart lines, and head lines are. Then, trace each other's right hand, and identify the different important lines. Next to the hand, list the characteristics these lines reveal. Discuss the results with your partner. Finally, write a short paragraph arguing for whether you think palm reading is a legitimate science, as Pudd'nhead Wilson does.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter XIII**Reward Poster****Objective:** Depicting a plot point visually**Activity**

Constable Blake tells Pudd'nhead Wilson and Tom that the Capello twins have reported that their valuable dagger has been stolen. Tom, of course, is the one who has stolen it, but Wilson and Blake do not know this. The dagger is very important to Angelo and Luigi, so they offer a \$500 reward for its return.

Create a reward poster for the dagger that could be posted around Dawson's Landing. Be sure to include an image of the dagger (either drawn, cut from print media, or made with computer-generated images), a physical description of the dagger, information about the reward, and the contact information for Constable Blake. Do not include the reward for the thief, as that information is not being made public.