

# Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum

Lesson or Unit Plan for Tom Sawyer

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City, State: Bowling Green, Missouri

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Hannibal, Missouri

## "Tom Sawyer in Song"

### UNIT PLAN for Tom Sawyer in Song

<b>UNIT PLAN for Tom Sawyer in Song</b>	
<b>Concept or Topic:</b> Tom Sawyer in Song	<b>Suggested Grade Level(s)/Course:</b> Fifth Grade Music
<b>Subject:</b> Elementary Music	<b>Suggested Time Frame:</b> Three class periods, 40-45 minutes each (Three weeks of class) followed by 12 weeks of practice on the songs, dialogue and movement for the musical "Tom Sawyer"
<b>Objective(s):</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Fifth Grade music students will identify three facts from Mark Twain's life on an exit slip.</li><li>2. Fifth Grade music students will list character traits from the four main characters in the book excerpts from "Tom Sawyer" that they read in reading class.</li><li>3. Fifth Grade music students will compare the personality traits they have identified with the personality traits of current celebrities and "recast" the play using modern people.</li><li>4. Fifth Grade music students will learn and perform the musical play "Tom Sawyer" arranged by David Friedell along with selections from "Reader's Digest presents: a Musical Adaptation of Mark Twain's <u>Tom Sawyer</u>."</li></ol>	
<b>Missouri State Fine Arts Standards (GLEs):</b> <b>FA1: Develop and apply singing skills to perform and communicate through the arts.</b> <b>A. Independent Singing- Use breath control and accurate Diction while singing.</b> <b>B. Expressive Singing- Use dynamics and phrasing to communicate an</b>	

interpretation of a given style.

**C. Repertoire-** Perform a varied repertoire of songs including patriotic, folk, seasonal and spirituals.

**FA1, 3.5:** Develop and apply skills to communicate ideas through theatrical performances.

**B. Acting-** use vocal skills (clarity, variety and volume) through reading aloud and interpreting characters.

**FA5: Interdisciplinary Connections-** Develop and apply knowledge and skills to understand the relationships between music, the other arts and disciplines outside the arts.

**A. Connections between music and non-arts disciplines-** Describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines are interrelated with music.

**Assessments (at least two):**

**1. Mark Twain information exit slip.** Students will be given an exit slip (attached below) to write five pieces of information that were presented in the Mark Twain story.

**2. Students will list personality traits and characteristics of each of the four main characters on the character sheet (attached below). They will then use these traits to “recast” each of the characters using current celebrities. They will also have to defend their choices on the character sheet.**

**3. During the musical and movement portion of this unit, assessments will be teacher observation of participation, pitch matching, rhythm matching and diction.**

**Vocabulary (Tiers 2 & 3):**

Interpretation, repertoire, dynamics, clarity, variety, volume, Character Traits

Song Specific Vocabulary:

“Gratification” (gratification), Saunter, Whitewash, Superintendent, Pint Pot, Uncouth, Irreverent, Tarnation, Swine, Dunce Cap, Exasperatin’, Ambition, Shoulder’s to the Wheel, Nose to the Grindstone, Spite, Vitals (Vittles), Winders, Fritters, Dumplins, Churn, Lallygaggin’

**Subject Area Integration:**

**English Language Arts- Reading and Writing**

**History**

**Music**

**Background Information Required for Unit/Lesson:**

- Students will not need a background in the history of Twain or Tom Sawyer- this unit will be used to give them the understanding they need of both the author and the book so that their performance is done with an understanding of the background of both.

**\*\*Please Note:** The 5th grade reading specialist at my school is going to do a read aloud with her class using these excerpts prior to the beginning of this unit. If that is not an option for you, the unit will probably take an extra class period for a read aloud of the excerpts used in the play.\*\*

- Students will need a basic knowledge of reading lyrics, rhythms and pitches before beginning the performance part of this unit.

**Materials:**

- Information on Mark Twain's background and life Powerpoint Presentation
- Excerpts from "Tom Sawyer" by Mark Twain:
  - The Fence Painting Scene
  - The Verse Learning Scene
  - The Sunday School Scene
  - The Spilled Ink Scene
  - The School Examination Scene
  - The Riverboat Ride and Picnic Scene
  - The Cave Scene
- The play "Tom Sawyer" arranged by David Friedell (for the performance)
- The Vocal Selections book "Reader's Digest Presents: Tom Sawyer" with music and lyrics by Richard and Robert Sherman
- The music and lyrics to "River Song", "Tom Sawyer", "Gratification", "If'n I Was God", "Steamboat Song" and "Hannibal Mo(Zouree)".(I used the Finale PrintMusic Program to make a powerpoint presentation for the students to be able follow along with on the Smartboard while we were learning the songs.)
- Recordings of the Vocal Selections by Richard and Robert Sherman: "River Song", "Tom Sawyer", "Gratification", "If'n I Was God", and "Hannibal Mo(Zouree)" (I used the Finale PrintMusic program to make my own mp3 recordings of the accompaniment that I had entered into the PrintMusic program so that I could do the movements with the children during the program.)
- Recording of the Vocal Selection from the David Friedell arrangement of "Steamboat Song" (I also used Finale PrintMusic for this.)

**Technology:**

- Computer and Smartboard and/or projector for Powerpoint presentation and Lyrics/music presentation
- <https://shsmo.org/historicmissourians/name/c/clemens/#intro> (powerpoint presentation from State Historical Society of Missouri)
- Twain Quotes: <http://www.twainquotes.com/quotesatoz.html> (This is a great site for getting true Mark Twain quotes- they have all been authenticated.)
- Create a Song: <http://www.song-lyrics-generator.org.uk/> (idea for extra credit)
- Finale "PrintMusic" program (if desired)

**Related Twain Quotes/Passages:**

- Ah, that shows you the power of music, that magician of magician, who lifts his wand and says his mysterious word.  
- From Mark Twain's *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*
- We often feel sad in the presence of music without words; and often more than that in the presence of music without music.  
-From Mark Twain's *More Maxims of Mark*
- All of us contain Music & Truth, but most of us can't get it out.  
- autograph for Stefan Czapka

**Lesson Sequence:****Day 1: (40 minutes)****Hook/Intro:**

- **Direct students' attention to the Mark Twain Powerpoint on the Smartboard (see Technology section)**
- **Explain that our "Tom Sawyer" musical will be starting soon.**
- **Ask students to discuss why we would study an author in music class.**
- **Share the above quotes and ask them what Mark Twain means by each statement.**

**Teaching of the Concept(s):**

1. I utilize a "story telling" style of sharing composer information with my students. They have learned what is expected during my composer stories such as: sitting quietly, listening, and saving questions until the end. I will use a similar style of sharing Mark Twain's information and after the discussion above will start with an explanation of why we are studying Mark Twain when he is not a composer. I will start this by sharing the above quotes.

2. After the Samuel Clemens story, I will go through the Powerpoint showing pictures and scenes from his life.

3. Before they leave at the end of class, students will fill out an exit slip with three facts about Mark Twain that they learned in today's lesson. (see handout)

**Suggested Questions:**

1. Why do you think we are going to study an author in music class?
2. What value does learning about an author have when you are preparing a musical based on their work?

**Review/Closure:** Have students fill out and turn in an exit slip listing three interesting facts they learned about Mark Twain.

## **Day 2: (40 minutes)**

### **Hook/Intro:**

- **Ask students what facts about Mark Twain they can recall from the lesson the week before.**
- **Have a few students share their favorite scenes from Tom Sawyer that they did as a read aloud in reading class.**

### **Teaching of the Concept(s):**

1. Explain what character traits are and ask them to give some examples of character traits of a different fictional character that they might have learned about before, such as the Pigeon, Goldilocks, etc.
2. Remind students about the four main characters in “Tom Sawyer”- Tom, Becky, Aunt Polly and Huck Finn.
3. Pass out the “Main Characters” paper (see handout) and have them write down some personality traits that they noticed in each character from their reading.
4. Collect and discuss the traits as a class.

### **Suggested Questions:**

1. Why is it important for us to identify the character traits of the character in a musical?
2. What are some ways you could portray character traits on the stage? (examples include facial expression, timbre of voice, movements)

**Review/Closure:** Tell students that next week they will be “Recasting” Tom Sawyer. But don’t tell them what that means. (This should get them ready to have fun the next week!)

## **Day 3: (40 minutes)**

### **Hook/Intro:**

- **Review as a class what character traits are, and how you show them while acting out a part.**
- **Review some of the character traits we identified in the four main characters last week.**

### **Teaching of the Concept(s):**

1. Pass out the “Recast” handout and put them in groups of four to choose celebrities that would share some of the same character traits with the main characters from Tom Sawyer. Have them write a defense for why that celebrity would fit the character from the book.

### **Suggested Questions:**

1. Why did your group choose the celebrities they chose for the different characters in the Recasting activity?

2. How does recasting help you know how to portray a character on a stage?

**Review/Closure:** Have each group share the “Recasts” that they chose and share the reason why they chose that person for that character. Each person in the group will present one character.

**Homework (for the unit):**

There will not be homework for this unit- all work will be done in class.

**Strategies for Exceptional Students (for the unit):**

- Offer extra credit to students to write their own “Tom Sawyer” song on <http://www.song-lyrics-generator.org.uk/>.
- Suggest that students could “Recast” other characters from the excerpts.

**Suggested Follow-Up Activities (for the unit):**

- The first week after the unit will be auditions for the speaking parts in the musical. I usually do auditions during class. I am considering having the auditions two nights after school so what we can spend a little more time on the performance practice, but I will have to check with my principal to see if that would be a problem.
- If I am able to do after school auditions, we will begin the 12 week preparation for the musical. (If not, I will have to shorten our prep time to 11 weeks.) I usually teach the song-specific vocabulary when we come to the song that includes that word. I also teach them about the different musical terms such as clarity, volume, dynamics, etc. I usually can teach two songs a week, which takes 3-4 weeks. After that, I teach choreography to the songs for about 4-5 weeks. The last 2-3 weeks are spent reviewing and revising their songs and movement.
- The students who have speaking parts work with me after school one day a week to learn their words and blocking.



**Mark Twain Information Exit Slip-  
Name 3 facts about Mark Twain**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Mark Twain Information Exit Slip-  
Name 3 facts about Mark Twain**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## “Tom Sawyer” Recasting Group Activity

Each group will “recast” the four main characters from Tom Sawyer using celebrities such as movie stars, musicians, YouTube stars or authors. Each group member should be prepared to share with the class one of their group’s recast choices and tell the reason that person was selected. (Examples of reasons: their voice, facial expressions, body movements, personality, etc.)

**Tom Sawyer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Huck Finn:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Becky Thatcher:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Aunt Polly:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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## Mark Twain Musical Quotes

Ah, that shows you the power of music, that magician of magician,  
who lifts his wand and says his mysterious word.

- From Mark Twain's *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*

We often feel sad in the presence of music without words;  
and often more than that in the presence of music without music.

-From Mark Twain's *More Maxims of Mark*

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