**The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**

**Culminating Explanatory Essay**

**DUE MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23rd**

**Objective: CCSS 10.W.2 – Write explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas through careful selection, organization, and analysis of a text.**

**Objective: CCSS 10.W.2.b,c,e – Identify relevant facts, effectively link major sections of a written text together, and establish a formal style of writing.**

**Objective: CCSS 10.R.6 – Analyze a text where understanding that story requires distinguishing between what is really said and what is meant (satire, irony, and sarcasm).**

*Choose an essay topic that sounds interesting to you. Use your journals to help support your work and remember, you are being asked to use in text citations, so as you take notes, write down page numbers.*

**Paper requirements:**

* At least 650 words
* Addresses one of the below prompts
* Uses at least 3 direct citations from the novel
* Typed and printed
* **See rubric on the back for assessment scale**

**This is a formal essay which means:**

* No first or second person pronouns (I or you)
* No contracted words
* No colloquial phrasing or slang unless it is a direct quote from the novel
* No “think, feel, seems, kind of like, sort of, makes it feel like,” words or phrasing
* No retelling of the plot

POTENTIAL PROMPTS:

1. Mark Twain said of Huck Finn: *“it is a novel where a sound heart and a deformed conscience come into collision and conscience suffers defeat.  The conscience – that unerring monitor—can be trained to any wild thing you want it to approve.”* In light of these comments, **trace Huck’s moral development** throughout the novel.    
   Your essay could examine Huck’s lies, Huck’s decisions regarding Jim, Huck’s refusal to be “sivilized,” Huck’s relationship with Jim, or the differences between individual and society.
2. What is **Mark Twain’s message about morality and religion**?  How does Twain use both the geography and characters in the novel to support that message?
3. Even though Mark Twain says it doesn’t, morality plays a big role in Twain’s novel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. **Where do ideas of morality come from?**  Does Twain value some sources of morality more than others?
4. The Mississippi River is a symbol of freedom as well as for the growing up of Huck.  How do you see the river symbolizing one of these things?  How does the river contrast with the society that surrounds it?

SUGGEST STEPS: *You know, just some good ideas.*

1. Choose your topic or come up with your own.
2. As you read Huck Finn, keep notes in a section of your journal that relate to your idea. Make sure to write down page numbers and even paragraphs.
3. Write your thesis statement.
4. Ask questions and then answer them. These can become the topic sentences of your body paragraphs.
5. Find evidence/quotes/citations that you can use to support your thesis and include in your paragraphs.
6. Write your paper! In class time will be given, but you’ll probably have to read, plan, and write outside of class.

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| **Rubric** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| **Content**  **(the analysis part)** | Clearly addresses the prompt and has a thesis, strong supporting details, and a concise conclusion explaining the meaning and method of your thesis and analysis. | Has a clear thesis and specific supporting details from text. Also, contains a well written conclusion. | Contains a thesis, but is inconsistent in focus. Gives support and conclusion. Doesn’t address part 2 of the assignment. | Does not address the prompt. Thesis lacks strength or clarity. Missing support or conclusion. |
| **Style**  **(your words… but formal)** | Written in formal language. Citations fit with students writing and directly support ideas. Word choice intentional and conveys intended message. Concise arguments. | Mostly written in formal language. Language is appropriate to topic.  Direct quotes support thesis and ideas. | Some use of formal language. Able to get the idea across, but could use a lot of polishing. | Plagiarized. Shame on you. And actually, if you plagiarize you’ll fail this paper. In college if you plagiarize, you fail the course, which depending on where you go can cost you ~$500 - $3000. |
| **Organization (clean up your room!)** | Has a strong introduction with substantial support of claims and citations. Finishes with conclusion. Excellent use of transitions between ideas and paragraphs. | Has a clear intro and conclusion. Shows some logical progression. Uses transitions. | Intro and conclusion is present. Shows some consistency and order in writing. Minimal use of transitions. | Paper is all over the place. Hard to follow logic and/or doesn’t back up claims with support. Unable to identify introduction and conclusion. |
| **Citations and conventions**  **(give credit where credit is due)** | Superior editing. Few errors in grammar, spelling, and citation. In MLA format. PROOFREAD. | Careful editing with a few more mistakes in convention. PROOFREAD. | Many spelling and grammatical mistakes. Clearly not proofread. | Com’on the word processer has a spell check doesn’t it? Let’s give it another try |

**Paper Checklist**

* Is my essay formatted in MLA?
* Is the title of my essay informative and interesting?
* What is my thesis? Do I state it soon enough and keep it in view?
* Is the organization reasonable? Does each point lead into the next without irrelevancies and without anticlimaxes?
* Is each paragraph unified by a topic sentence or topic idea? Are there adequate transitions from one paragraph to the next?
* Is the opening paragraph interesting and, by its end, focused on the topic? Is the final paragraph conclusive without being repetitive?
* If there is a summary of the text, is it as brief as possible, given its purpose?
* Are the quotations adequately introduced, and are they accurate? Do they provide evidence and let the reader hear the author’s voice, or do they merely add words to the essay?
* Are the spelling and punctuation correct? Are other mechanical matters (such as margins, spacing, and citations) in correct form? Have I proofread carefully?