

LITERATURE – 5A

Huckleberry Finn is a boy from a poor family. In order to escape his violent father he makes people think he is dead. He then takes a canoe to a deserted river island to begin a new life.

START THINKING ...

1 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions:

- For what reasons might children run away from home?
- How difficult do you think it is to survive alone on a deserted island?
- Which do you think makes a better story – being alone on a desert island, or thinking you are alone on a desert island but discovering someone else is there?

ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN (1884) Mark Twain

I knew I was all right now. Nobody else would come looking for me. I got my **traps** out of the canoe and made me a nice camp in the woods. I made a kind of a tent out of my blankets to put my things under so the rain couldn't get at them. I caught a fish and towards sundown I started my camp fire and

5 had supper. Then I set out a line to catch some fish for breakfast.

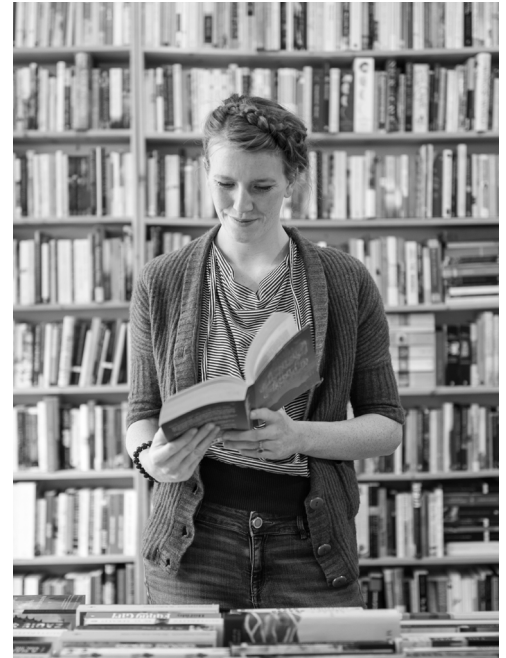
When it was dark I sat by my camp fire feeling pretty well satisfied; but by and by it got sort of lonely, and so I went and sat on the bank and listened to the water, and counted the stars and **rafts** that come down, and then went to bed; there's no better way to spend time when you are lonely; you

10 can't stay so, you soon **get over** it. And so for three days and nights. No difference—just the same thing. But the next day I went exploring around down through the island. I was boss of it; it all belonged to me, so to say, and I wanted to know all about it; but mainly I wanted to pass the time.

I found strawberries, **ripe** and prime; and green summer grapes, and green razberries; and the green blackberries was just beginning to show. They would all come **handy** by and by, I **judged**.

15 Well, I went fooling along in the deep woods till I judged I wasn't far from the foot of the island. I had my gun along, but I hadn't shot anything; it was for protection... About this time I almost stepped on a good-sized snake, and it went **sliding** off through the grass and flowers, and I after it, trying to get a shot at it, and all of a sudden I found the **ashes** of a camp fire that was still smoking. My heart jumped up amongst my lungs. I didn't wait for to look further, I went **sneaking** back on my **tiptoes** as fast as ever I could. Every now and then I stopped a second amongst the thick leaves and listened, but my

20 breath come so hard I couldn't hear nothing else. I walked further, then listened again; and so on, and so on. If I saw a small tree, I thought it was a man...



Glossary

traps	things for catching animals
rafts	a flat structure for travelling across water, often made of wood
get over	recover
ripe	ready to eat
handy	useful
judged	estimate, calculate
sliding	move easily, without interruption, across a surface
ashes	the material left after something burns
sneaking	walking very quietly
tiptoes	walking on your toes so you don't make a noise

2 5A.1 Read the text and listen.

3 Read the text again and answer the questions.

- 1 Initially, what seems to be Huck's main problem?
- 2 Why is it important for him to make a tent?
- 3 How important is it for Huck to find berries on the island?
- 4 How does Huck react when he finds the fire?
- 5 From what we know about Huck, what do you think he will do now?

- 4 **READ BETWEEN THE LINES** From the words below, choose **THREE** you think best describe Huck in the extract. Choose **TWO** words you think do not describe him. Compare your choices with a partner and explain your reasons.

responsible	sad	happy
educated	friendly	proud
capable	intelligent	bored
imaginative	angry	suspicious

- 5 **VOCABULARY** Look at the list of glossary words. In pairs, try and put them into three groups.

- Ways of moving
- Objects
- Mental processes or opinions

Are there any words that do not go in one of these groups?

Complete the following sentences with **ONE** word from the glossary in the correct form.

- Huck uses _____, not his gun, to hunt animals.
 - If fruit isn't _____ it tastes bad.
 - He was walking on _____ so nobody heard him.
 - When he sees the fire Huck _____ he is not alone on the island.
- 6 **ROLE PLAY** Later, Huck talks to a friend about his adventures. Look at the text again and select four ideas for Huck and his friend to talk about. Try to make the friend sound interested by using exclamations and questions.

Example:

FRIEND What did you do first?

HUCK I made a tent!

FRIEND Really! What did you use?

HUCK I used my blankets.

FRIEND Great idea!

Continue the dialogue with four of your own ideas.

- 7 **LISTENING** Before you listen, discuss the following question:

What do you think Huck does next?

5A.2 Listen to the next part of the story. Put the words in the order you hear them.

___ The foot of the island	___ The fire
___ The log	___ The canoe
___ Jim	___ The trees

Work with a partner and draw a map of the island. Mark the locations of a-f.

- 8 **5A.2** True or false? Listen again and decide if statements 1-5 are true or false, according to what you hear.

- Huck couldn't sleep much because he wasn't tired.
- Huck feels good because he has made a decision.
- The bright moon makes it easy to see some of the island.
- Huck sits down on a log because he doesn't know what to do.
- As soon as he sees the man's head he knows it is Miss Watson's Jim.

WRITING Explaining why things are useful

- 9 **WRITING** Look at the following sentences.

- Huck pretends he is dead because he wants to escape from his unhappy life at home.
- In order to escape from his unhappy life at home, Huck pretends he is dead.
- He has traps for catching animals.

Notice how *because*, *in order to* and *for* are used to link two ideas and explain a reason.

Write sentences explaining why Huck uses things or does the following things:

Makes a tent | Has a gun | Goes fishing
 Feels scared | Moves very quietly
 Waits behind a tree | Is happy to see Jim

THINK LITERATURE

Jim is a slave, an African American owned by a woman who wants to sell him. Huck tries to help Jim by taking him to a part of the USA where slavery was not legal. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was one of the earliest anti-racist novels. It criticizes slavery and show slaves as human beings, not property.

Sometimes in these texts the narrator uses incorrect grammar – or 'non-standard' English as a way of making characters more authentic. Their language reflects how people really spoke. Do you think this use of 'real speech' is a good idea?

- 10 Can you find the mistakes in these sentences from the story?

- I counted the stars and rafts that come down.
- Green blackberries was just beginning to show.
- My breath come so hard I couldn't hear nothing else.
- Sleep didn't do me no good.