

Transformation of Huck and Jim in the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a novel written by Mark Twain, who was born in 1835 in the town of Florida, Missouri. The novel is set in the town of St. Petersburg, Missouri, along the banks of the Mississippi River. Huckleberry, the narrator of the novel, is the thirteen-year-old son of a poor, drunken father (Twain & Reichardt, 2009). The characters in the novel include Huckleberry Finn, Tom Sawyer, Widow Douglas, Miss Watson, Jim, Pap, the Duke and the Dauphin, Judge Thatcher, the Grangerfords, the Wilks family, Silas and Sally Phelps, and Aunt Polly. The main characters who play significant roles in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* are Huck and Jim.

Huck Finn

Huck is the protagonist and narrator of the novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Huck is seen as a thirteen-year-old boy in the novel who is forced to live a miserable life on his own. His father is poor and drunk in the town of St. Petersburg, Missouri. Despite being an uneducated young boy, Huck is intelligent, thoughtful, and creative, and he always tries to draw conclusions on important matters concerning his life. Huck is also influenced by his peers, especially his close friend Tom.

Despite Huck being dirty and homeless, Widow Douglas tries to help and protect him from his drunken father, but he declines the offer and sticks to his independent way of life. Finally, Widow Douglas manages to give Huck some education and spiritual lessons that he had missed,

unlike other children. Still, Huck is less indoctrinated with social values than other young boys of his age, such as Tom Sawyer.

Huck is instinctively distrustful, and his travel experience makes him question many things that society has taught him. At some point, Huck and Jim tell the Black slave hunters that sometimes speaking is the right way to go.

Everything seems new to Huck, and every encounter becomes an occasion for a new lesson because of his background. It makes Huck set his own rules, though he is not a kind of independent moral genius. Toward the end of the novel, Huck becomes more open and says that all those willing to follow Tom Sawyer's leadership can do so.

Despite this failure, Huck remains appealing and sympathetic. The novel teaches society many moral lessons, especially young people. Just like Huck, who is very young at the age of thirteen, one can still make a difference in society. Huck represents what any individual is capable of becoming: a thinking, feeling human being rather than a mere burden in the system of society.

Jim

Jim is also one of the main characters in the novel. He appears to be a man of rare intelligence and compassion. Jim is perceived to be superstitious to the point of idiocy. A careful reading of Jim and Huck on Jackson Island reveals that his superstitions show his deep understanding of the natural world, and he portrays an alternative form of truth in society.

Jim also has healthy functions in the novel. This is portrayed when the author tells us that he misses his family terribly. When he reaches the river, he becomes a surrogate father. He takes care of the little boy Huck, cooks for him, and shelters him too.

Like Huck, Jim is realistic about his condition and must find a way of achieving freedom without facing the wrath of those who can change it. Jim is also seldom able to make bold decisions. Some readers criticize him as being passive, though it remains true that his mercy toward the young boy has to be remembered.

Jim is depicted as a loyal and noble man (Twain, 2004). He remains a good friend of Huck, especially when he cares for him. Lastly, the novel describes Jim as the only adult in the story who is positively concerned about Huck and remains a role model to him.

References

1. Twain, M., & Reichardt, M. R. (2009). *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: With an Introduction and Contemporary Criticism*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press.
2. Twain, M. (2004). *CliffsComplete Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.