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# AMERICAN ENGLISH

PRESENTS...  
*READER'S THEATER: THE ADVENTURES  
OF TOM SAWYER*

MARCH 2014

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## READER'S THEATER: *THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER*

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### LEVEL

Intermediate - Advanced

### GOALS

To improve reading skills while developing critical thinking skills

### MATERIALS

- *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* Chapter 2
- *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* Chapter 2 adapted for Reader's Theater
- *What Will Happen?* Graphic Organizer
- Discussion Questions Handout

### PREPARATION

- 1) Download *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* Chapter 2. At least one copy per group is needed, preferably one copy per student.
- 2) Download *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* Chapter 2 Adapted for Reader's Theater, or create your own version. At least one copy is needed per group, preferably one copy per student.
- 3) Download one Graphic Organizer per student.
- 4) Download one Discussion Questions Handout, or create your own discussion questions.

### PROCEDURES

- 1) Divide the class into small groups of 3-4 students and give each student (or group) a copy of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* Chapter 2 and the *What Will Happen?* Graphic Organizer.
- 2) Have the students read the first four paragraphs of Chapter 2 (ending at "At this dark moment, a wonderful idea came to him. It was like a great, bright light.")
- 3) As a class, read the questions on the *What Will Happen?* Graphic Organizer and, in groups, have the students write their answers.
- 4) Have each group present their answers and write them on the board.
- 5) In their groups, have students read the remainder of the chapter and discuss the end of the chapter. See the Discussion Questions handout for sample questions.
- 6) Reorganize the students into groups of 7 and give each student (or group) a copy of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* Chapter 2 Adapted for Readers Theater.
- 7) Assign each student a role.
- 8) Have each group practice reading through the Readers Theater script several times.
- 9) Have each group present their version of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* to the class.
- 10) As a follow-up you can assign students to read additional chapters of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

### ADAPT IT TO YOUR CLASS

- Are the roles too long for your students (Tom and the Narrator, for example)? Split the roles between two (or more) students.
- Adapt the language difficulty for your students by re-writing the script.
- Instead of Reader's Theater, change it to a short play and have your students act out the parts..

**CHARACTERS:**

- Narrator
- Aunt Polly
- Tom Sawyer
- Jim
- Ben Rogers
- Bill Fisher
- Johnny Miller



**Narrator:**

It is Saturday morning and Tom wants to go outside and play.

**Aunt Polly:**

Tom! You must paint the fence before you can play.

**Narrator:**

Tom sighs and starts painting the fence. Jim enters. He is going to get water for Aunt Polly.

**Tom:**

Jim, I will get the water, if you paint the fence.

**Jim:**

No Tom, I have to get the water.

**Tom:**

Are you afraid of Aunt Polly? She won't hurt you. She only talks about it. You should not be afraid of her. Jim, I will give you one of my toys and show you where I hurt my foot if you paint the fence.

**Narrator:**

Jim takes the toy and looks at Tom's foot then runs away. Tom sighs and starts painting again.

**Tom:**

Soon the other boys will come and laugh at me because it is Saturday and I have to paint the fence.

**Narrator:**

Tom looks in his empty pockets.

**Tom:**

I don't even have enough to buy help.

**Narrator:**

Tom stops suddenly.

**Tom:**

I have an idea!

**Narrator:**

Tom starts painting seriously. Ben Rogers enters eating an apple and making noises like a big riverboat.

**Ben:**

Ding-Dong-Dong! Turn her! Slow her! Stop!

**Narrator:**

Ben stops next to Tom. Tom continues painting and does not look at Ben.

**Ben:**

Hello Tom! You are in trouble!

**Narrator:**

Tom continues to paint seriously and looks carefully at his work.

**Ben:**

Hello Tom. You have to work, don't you?

**Tom:**

Oh, Ben! Is that you? I didn't see you.

**Ben:**

I'm going swimming. Don't you wish you could go swimming? But you have to work.

**Tom:**

What do you mean, I have to work?

**Ben:**

Painting a fence is work!

**Tom:**

For some it may be work, but it's fine for Tom Sawyer!

**Ben:**

Do you mean that you enjoy it?

**Tom:**

Enjoy it? Does a boy have the chance to paint a fence every day?

**Narrator:**

Ben stops eating his apple and watches Tom paint.

**Ben:**

Tom, let me paint a little.

**Narrator:**

Tom pauses and thinks.

**Tom:**

No, Ben. Aunt Polly wants this fence to be perfect. If it was the fence behind the house, you could help. But this fence must be done very carefully. There is not one boy in a thousand who can do it well.

**Ben:**

Oh Tom, let me try! Only a little. I'll be careful. Tom, I'll give you a part of my apple.

**Tom:**

No, Ben. I'm afraid...

**Ben:**

I'll give you all of my apple!

**Tom:**

Okay, but you have to be careful!

**Narrator:**

Ben gives Tom the apple and Tom gives the brush to Ben slowly. Ben starts painting the fence. Tom sits down and starts eating the apple. Bill Fisher enters and watches Ben paint the fence.

**Bill:**

Hello Tom and Ben, don't you wish you could play? But you have to work!

**Tom:**

No, Bill. This is more fun.

**Bill:**

Painting a fence is fun?

**Tom:**

Yes, Bill. It isn't every day a boy has the chance to paint a fence.

**Narrator:**

Bill stops and watches Ben paint.

**Bill:**

Tom, let me paint the fence.

**Tom:**

No, Bill. I'm sorry, but this fence must be painted very carefully.

**Bill:**

Please Tom? I will give you my cat with one eye!

**Tom:**

Okay, but you must be very careful!

**Bill:**

I will!

**Narrator:**

Bill gives Tom a cat and Tom gives Bill a paint brush. Bill starts painting the fence with Ben. Johnny Miller enters and sees Bill and Ben painting the fence.

**Johnny:**

I'm going to play. Don't you wish you could play?

**Bill and Ben (together):**

No, Johnny. We're doing something more fun than playing.

**Johnny:**

Painting a fence is fun?

**Bill and Ben (together):**

Yes, it is!

**Tom:**

But not just anyone can paint this fence.

**Johnny:**

I can paint it! Please Tom, let me paint the fence.

**Tom:**

I'm sorry, Johnny. Aunt Polly said it must be done perfectly.

**Johnny:**

I'll give you this piece of broken blue glass!

**Narrator:**

Johnny holds up a piece of broken blue glass. Tom thinks for a moment.

**Tom:**

Okay, but you have to paint very carefully.

**Narrator:**

Johnny gives Tom a piece of broken blue glass and Tom gives Johnny a paint brush. Johnny begins to paint with Bill and Ben. Tom smiles at his new treasures: an apple, a cat with one eye, and a piece of broken blue glass.

**Tom:**

I wish I had more to paint!

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN? GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

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What does Tom want to do?

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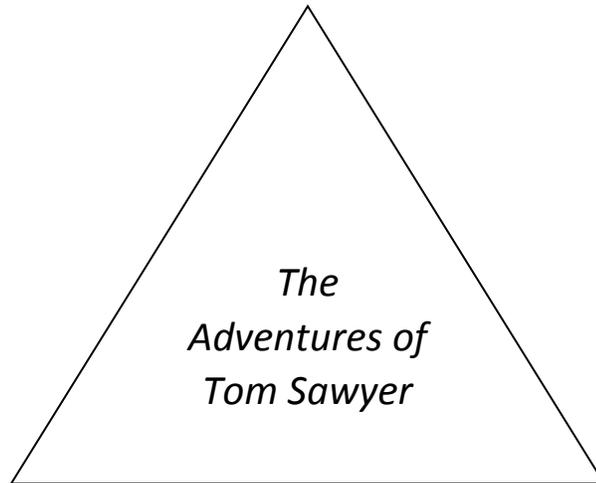
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What does Tom have to do?

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What do you think Tom will do?

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## THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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- Why do you think Tom Sawyer had to paint the fence?
- What was Tom Sawyer's wonderful idea?
- Did Tom Sawyer's idea work well? Why?
- How was Tom Sawyer's idea different from what you thought he would do before you finished the chapter?
- Why do you think the other boys wanted to paint the fence?
- Why did the boys give Tom Sawyer their treasures to paint the fence?
- Did Tom Sawyer finish painting the fence?
- Why did Tom Sawyer stop having the boys paint the fence?
- From this chapter, how would you describe Tom Sawyer? Is he lazy? Mean? Smart? Why do you think that?
- Do you like Tom Sawyer?