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**Simon & Schuster Classroom Activities
for the Enriched Classic edition of
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain
1-4165-0022-7 • \$4.95 / \$6.95 Can.**

Activities created by Katie Gideon

Each of the three activities includes:

- NCTE standards covered
- An estimate of the time needed
- A complete list of materials needed
- Step-by-step instructions
- Questions to help you evaluate the results

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Lesson Plan #1

“The Best-Hearted Boy That Ever Was”
(A Lesson in Connotation and Frame of Reference)

Before students embark on a close reading of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, they must identify their personal frames of reference. After all, our individual perspectives greatly affect how we interact with texts. This lesson provides a forum for students to identify their frames of reference and share their discoveries with classmates. It also introduces students to the concept of connotation, and provides a kinesthetic activity for building group understanding of key terms. As such, this lesson may be especially helpful for students whose first language is not English.

This activity will take one fifty-minute class period and includes potential homework.

NCTE Standards Covered:

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.
10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

What To Do:

1. In order to prepare for the lesson, you’ll need to create four index cards. Each card contains a different pair of words (one on each side of the card). Create cards for the following pairs of words:
 - a. Childhood/Adulthood
 - b. Frontier/Civilization
 - c. Masculine/Feminine
 - d. Freedom/Repression

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2. As each individual student enters the room, hand him/her a copy of Handout #1. Read the directions out loud, and then instruct students to spend several minutes completing the handout as thoroughly and honestly as possible.
3. After students finish, they will select the one piece of information that they feel has had the greatest impact on their frame of reference. This should be something they are comfortable sharing, as each student will give a brief statement to the class. You should probably model this to encourage brevity.
4. Once everyone has had a chance to share, reiterate that our frames of reference impact the ways in which we interact with text. For example, a grown man and a twelve-year-old boy would read *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* from very different perspectives. Ask students how their frames of reference might affect their reading. What kinds of themes, plots, and characters might interest them? What might they find off-putting?
5. Write the word “connotation” on the board. (“Connotation” is the implicit rather than explicit meaning of a word and consists of the suggestions, associations, and emotional overtones attached to a word.) Illustrate the definition by asking students the difference between a house and a home.
6. Connect connotation to frame of reference. Just as each student’s experience will color their understanding of text, each culture’s belief systems will color its members’ understanding of words.
7. Tell students that their job in class today is to identify their culture’s understanding of some important words. They will be divided into groups, and each group will create two separate skits to illustrate each of the words on their index card. Then, each group will explain the relationship between their two words, stating which might be more valuable (for both the 19th century and the 21st century).
8. Divide the class into groups, hand each group an index card, and help them as they rehearse. Once groups are ready, have them each present. After the groups have presented, have students return to seats and take out their books. Students should look at the cover art, skim the chapter titles, and use their understanding of connotation to answer the following questions:
 - a. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* was written during a time when “the American West made the transition from frontier life to civilization,” and many pioneering types worried about “becoming too ‘soft’ and feminine.” (pg.291) Given this concern, what are your predictions concerning Twain’s portrayal of wild areas versus his portrayal of civilized places? Will the cultural concern with “becoming too ‘soft’” also impact depictions of masculinity and femininity? Explain your prediction.
 - b. What kinds of settings and/or activities do you think help Tom Sawyer to feel free? What kinds of events/institutions might make Tom Sawyer feel repressed? What might this say about the tension between childhood and adulthood?

(If there’s not enough time in class, students can take the questions home to answer.)

What You Need:

A copy of the Enriched Classic edition of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1416500227) for each student

Copies of Handout #1

Index cards

How Did It Go?

Frame of Reference: Were students able to understand how experience impacts perception? Did students in the class gain greater appreciation for the diversity of individual viewpoints expressed?

Connotation: Did students understand the definition of “connotation”? Were they able to create some sort of skit that conveyed the connotation of their words? Could they explain the relationship inherent in their word pair? Did the whole class agree on cultural norms (i.e., could they distinguish between masculine and feminine behavior? Could they distinguish which gendered traits might be more valued in a 19th century boy? In a 21st century boy?) Do the students have sufficient understanding of the four word pairs to provide a foundation for later thematic analysis?

Lesson Plan #2

“The Glorious Whitewasher”
(A Lesson in Diction and Tone)

In order to become mature readers, it is imperative that students practice close reading skills. To that end, this lesson gives students guided rehearsal in analyzing how Twain uses stylistic elements to create tone, achieve an effect, and/or convey a message. By the end of the lesson, students should be able to identify the three levels of diction. They should be able to explain the relationship between diction and tone. Finally, they should also understand the concept of tone, and be able to manipulate it in their own writing.

This activity assumes that students have finished the first chapter. It will take two fifty-minute class periods and includes homework.

NCTE Standards Covered:

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

What To Do:

1. Before class begins, divide your board into three sections. Label each section: “Formal/High Diction,” “Neutral/Middle Diction,” and “Informal/Low Diction.” Write one or two sentences below each label to give an example of the different levels. It will probably be more meaningful for students if you excerpt works from your syllabus, but here are some examples from other Enriched Classics titles:

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Formal/High Diction: “Too often she betrayed this, by the undue vent she gave to a spiteful antipathy she had conceived against little Adèle: pushing her away with some contumelious epithet if she happened to approach her, sometimes ordering her from the room, and always treating her with coldness and acrimony.”

- *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë (pg.237) (ISBN: 1416500243)

Neutral/Middle Diction: “Yes, that’s what drives me mad: the silly people don’t know their own silly business. However, it’s over and done with; and now I can go to bed at last without dreading tomorrow.”

- *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw (pg.96) (ISBN: 1416504005)

Informal/Low Diction: “I used to, when I fust begun, have considerable trouble fussin’ with ‘em, and trying to make ‘em hold out,--doctorin’ on ‘em up when they’s sick, and givin’ on ‘em clothes and blankets, and what not, tryin’ to keep ‘em all sort o’ decent and comfortable.”

- *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe (pg.415) (ISBN: 0743487664)

2. You should also have an overhead slide prepared with the definitions for “diction” and “tone.” The definitions should be projected as students enter the class. Pass out Handout #2. Instruct them to copy down the definitions.

Diction: word choice, used by an author to share meaning and mood with the reader

Tone: the speaker and/or author’s attitude towards the subject. Conveyed through diction.

3. Discuss diction with your students. How do authors consciously manipulate language? How might the students, as writers, use language while applying for a job? While text-messaging a friend? If you asked them to write a story for class, what words might they choose to write a horror story? How would the words change if it were a romance? (Bonus points if anyone mentions “connotation” in the discussion.)
4. Once students have agreed that consciously selected words and phrases have the power to create meaning and mood, tell them *why* they’re studying diction and tone. Good readers don’t just read for plot—they read for the underlying meaning. Yes, they should have an appreciation for the boyish hijinks of Tom Sawyer. But they should also consider that his book is about more than painting fences. What is Twain’s attitude towards childhood, and how does that compare to his attitude towards adulthood? What’s his attitude on freedom? On restraint? Only through analyzing the diction can we uncover the larger meaning of the text. Experienced readers instinctively do this; we will have to practice more mechanically.
5. Explain that most scholars divide diction into three general categories, and direct students’ attention to the excerpts on the board. What are some of the differences students notice among the three categories? They should look for generalizations that could help them categorize future works (i.e., “Formal diction contains many polysyllabic words”). Have students take notes on Handout #2 concerning the key words they brainstorm for each category.
6. Transition to the next term. Tone is the speaker or author’s attitude toward the subject, and most students are somewhat familiar with this term. After all, who hasn’t been

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chastised with the words: “I don’t like your tone”? To access students’ prior knowledge, ask volunteer partners to read the following dialogue using different tones of voice.

A: Sorry I’m late.

B: Don’t worry about it. Really.

7. Explain to students that, for homework, they will read Chapter II, “The Glorious Whitewasher.” After they read the chapter, they should fill in the blanks of the last question on the page, to create a tone statement. (See below.) Obviously, this means that they should pay attention to diction as they read!

Twain treats childhood with a/an (strong adjective to describe tone) tone, as evidenced by his used of words and phrases such as (direct quotation from meaningful text) , (direct quotation from meaningful text) , and (direct quotation from meaningful text) to describe (summary of meaningful moment in text from which student took quotations) .

8. Some of your students may have noticed the five words under “independent work” that you’ve yet to discuss. Before they begin reading, they need to define these words—it will deepen their tone identification abilities, as well as their literary vocabulary. Make dictionaries, etc., available to the students. Instruct them to begin their homework once they finish looking up definitions.
9. The next day in class, discuss students’ understanding of the chapter. Also discuss their understanding of diction: did they see instances of colloquialism, connotation, dialect, and/or slang? Did they have to use a dictionary, or the chapter notes (pg. 275-276) to help them understand denotation?
10. As another rehearsal for close-reading, have students complete Handout #3. After students have finished the handout, discuss any nuances of tone and/or diction that you wish to reinforce. (For instance, it’s important to note that an author’s attitude towards a subject may differ greatly from the protagonist’s. Can students make the distinction?)

What You Need:

A copy of the Enriched Classic edition of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1416500227) for each student

Copies of Handout #2

Copies of Handout #3

Dictionaries, access to Internet, and/or style guides (such as *The Chicago Manual of Style*)

How Did It Go?

Could students identify the diction(s) used by Twain? Could they use the homework terms to describe how they identified the level of diction spoken by the two “characters” detailed on the handout? Can students explain the difference between the three basic levels of diction? Could

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they distinguish between the character's and the narrator's attitudes towards the whitewashing event? Could they identify an overall tone of the chapter? Could they manipulate tone in their own writing?

Lesson Plan #3

“A Wasteful and Opulent Gush of ‘Fine Language’”
(A Lesson in Literary Analysis)

The following assignment revisits—and then builds upon—concepts taught in prior lessons. Once again, this lesson gives students guided rehearsal in analyzing how Twain uses stylistic elements to create tone, achieve an effect, and/or convey a message. This time, however, students are asked to identify tone shifts in a larger passage. They must also relate their analysis of diction and tone to a larger theme.

This activity takes one fifty-minute class period to introduce and includes two nights of homework. The activity also provides an introduction to later assessment activities, which will guide the students’ remaining reading and dictate the structure of their final essay.

NCTE Standards Covered:

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

What To Do:

1. As homework the night before, assign Chapter XXI, “Eloquence—and the Master’s Gilded Dome.” At the start of class, students should be able to (a) summarize what happened in the plot and (b) share initial impressions of the diction/tone shifts in the chapter.

2. Remind students of the connotation exercise that they did at the beginning of the unit. Review the connotations of and relationship between the word pairs. Then, read the “Boyhood and Freedom versus Adulthood and Civilization” entry in the Interpretive Notes section (pgs.290-291). Explain that students will be writing an analytical essay as part of their final assessment for the unit. The expectation is that students will analyze diction and tone in order to (a) identify one of Twain’s themes and (b) explain how he conveys theme.

3. Pass out copies of Handout #4. Read the essay prompt (in bold) to students. Lead students through a brief prompt analysis. What is this prompt asking students to do? Who are some of the

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characters the students might discuss in their papers? What are some key events they may want to analyze? How might they make choices amongst the original four word pairs in order to create a focused scope for their paper?

Word pairs:

- a. Childhood/Adulthood
- b. Frontier/Civilization
- c. Masculine/Feminine
- d. Freedom/Repression

4. Inform students that you're going to get them started on gathering evidence for this paper, even though they haven't finished the book yet (that way, they won't have to spend too much time going back to look). Before you help them rehearse the necessary skills, however, they need to review some terms—and use their prior knowledge to puzzle out the meaning for any new terms. Write the following terms on the board, and lead students through a *brief* review discussion of their meanings:

- a. Connotation
- b. Formal/high diction
- c. Neutral/middle diction
- d. Informal/low diction
- e. Abstract diction
- f. Concrete diction
- g. Allusion
- h. Theme

5. Have students open their books to the description of Tom's recitation, and read it out loud to the class (pg. 168). Briefly discuss the diction of this passage: how does Twain's word choice set a tone? What larger message (theme) does this tone seem to illustrate? Keep in mind that your ultimate goal is to analyze the interactions between Tom Sawyer and several of St. Petersburg's more well-behaved citizens. How does Tom fail to meet expectations in this chapter? Who are the more "well-behaved" citizens at the recitation?

6. Explain that we will be comparing Tom's performance to the "original compositions" by the young ladies" (pg.168). The comparison becomes more meaningful if students are familiar with the "Give me liberty or give me death" speech, so have them turn over their handouts.

7. Lead students through the analysis of the two passages, and help them construct a thematic statement regarding Twain's treatment of masculinity and femininity. They should record the thematic statements in the appropriate column on the other side of the handout. (Note: if students don't know how to abbreviate longer quotes using ellipses in citations, take a moment to teach them this skill.)

8. For homework, students should go back in the text and analyze four more passages that somehow address the essay prompt.

9. As students finish their reading, you may wish to give them another copy of the chart to fill out with evidence from the remaining chapters.

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10. After students finish the book, they will write their essay. As they write, encourage them to use the concepts taught over the course of the unit in their commentary. Students must analyze what's being said, but they also must analyze *how* it's being said, and to what purpose.

What You Need:

A copy of the Enriched Classic edition of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1416500227) for each student

Copies of Handout #4 (double-sided)

How Did It Go?

Could students identify the diction(s) used by Twain? Could they explain how the diction created tone? Could they identify and analyze the tone shift between Tom's recitation and the schoolgirl speakers? Could they relate the quotes to a larger theme that somehow speaks to the essay prompt? Could they repeat the task independently, with self-selected quotes? When they wrote their essays, could they make connections between their collected passages? Could they use the terms taught in prior lessons to formulate and support a coherent argument? Could they synthesize what they learned into an organized essay? Did their essays fully address the prompt?

Individual Frames of Reference

Your frame of reference consists of the culture you've inherited and the choices that you make. Every individual has a unique frame of reference which impacts his/her reading of a text. Consequently, it is important to identify the factors in your life which have helped to create your frame of reference. Fill out the following chart with relevant information.

<p>Family/Home: <i>How would you describe your family? Your home? Your neighborhood and/or community?</i></p>	<p>Adults/Mentors: <i>Who are the meaningful adults in your life, and what is their relationship to you? Who are your mentors, and what is your relationship?</i></p>
<p>Friends/Heroes: <i>Who are your friends? Your heroes? Why are you drawn to these people?</i></p>	<p>School Experience: <i>How many schools have you attended? What has been your experience interacting with teachers? What's your favorite subject? Least favorite? Elaborate.</i></p>
<p>Hobbies/Talents/Extracurricular Activities: <i>How do you choose to spend your free time? What activities are important to you?</i></p>	<p>Books/Movies: <i>What are your favorite books and movies? What do you like about them?</i></p>
<p>Generational Experiences: <i>What important cultural events have shaped your generation? (examples: 9/11, advances in computer technology)</i></p>	<p>Life-Changing Experiences: <i>What relationships, events, and/or epiphanies are milestones in your life?</i></p>

Handout #2

Diction and Style Terms

Class Notes:

Diction _____

Formal/High: _____

Neutral/Middle: _____

Informal/Low: _____

Tone _____

Independent Work: Define each word in the space provided. Make sure the definitions are in your own words, and that you understand what they actually mean. (Yes, we have talked about some of these terms already—some of this should be review!) Then, fill in the blanks below.

Colloquialism _____

Connotation _____

Denotation _____

Dialect _____

Slang _____

Twain treats childhood with a/an _____ tone, as evidenced by his used of words and phrases such as _____, _____, and _____ to describe _____.

Handout #3

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer: Diction and Tone

TOM: “*She!* She never licks anybody—whacks ‘em over the head with her thimble—and who cares for that, I’d like to know. She talks awful, but talk don’t hurt—anyways it don’t if she don’t cry. Jim, I’ll give you a marvel. I’ll give you a white alley!”¹ (pg. 16)

Which type of diction is this character using? In the passage above, highlight key words/phrases that indicate diction. Then, circle the choice below that best describes this character’s diction.

Formal/High Diction

Neutral/Middle Diction

Informal/Low Diction

Rewrite passage in correct standard English: _____

How does your rewrite alter Twain’s original meaning/effect? _____

How does the author’s use of diction in this dialogue support the tone of the chapter? _____

* * * * *

NARRATOR: “Tom said to himself that it was not such a hollow world after all. He had discovered a great law of human action, without knowing it—namely, that in order to make a man or a boy covet a thing, it is only necessary to make the thing difficult to attain. If he had been a great and wise philosopher, like the writer of this book, he would now have comprehended that Work consists of whatever a body is *obliged* to do and that Play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do.” (pg. 21)

Abstract diction refers to language that denotes ideas, emotions, conditions, or concepts that are intangible. Underline any abstract diction you see in the passage above. Then, highlight key words/phrases that indicate the narrator’s diction. Finally, circle the choice below that best describes the narrator’s diction.

Formal/High Diction

Neutral/Middle Diction

Informal/Low Diction

How does the narrator’s diction compare to Tom Sawyer’s diction? _____

How does this shift in diction affect the tone of the chapter? Do Tom and the narrator share a single attitude, or are they different? Explain. _____

¹ Tom is offering Jim a streaked white agate marble.

Analyze the interactions between Tom Sawyer and several of St. Petersburg’s more well-behaved citizens. What larger truth is the author trying to convey, and how does he construct his message?

Evidence from Text	Tone and Diction Analysis	Thematic Implication
<p>“The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone... give me liberty or give me death!” (Henry)</p>	<p><i>(See other side of paper)</i></p>	
<p>“She moved like one of those bright beings...bade me contemplate the two beings presented” (Twain 172).</p>	<p><i>(See other side of paper)</i></p>	

“A Wasteful and Opulent Gush of ‘Fine Language’” Compare and Contrast

Tom’s Recitation:

“The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable--and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come.”

“It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace--but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!”

– *Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death*, Patrick Henry; March 23, 1775

Underline any concrete diction you see in the passage above. Then, highlight key words/phrases that indicate the speaker’s diction. Finally, indicate which of the three types of diction best describe this passage: _____

What does Tom’s recitation of Patrick Henry’s diction imply about masculinity? How does it compare to the female’s speech, and what is Twain’s attitude towards the difference? _____

Sample Schoolgirl Speech:

“She moved like one of those bright beings pictured in the sunny walks of fancy’s Eden by the romantic and young, a queen of beauty unadorned save by her own transcendent loveliness. So soft was her step, it failed to make even a sound, and but for the magical thrill imparted by her genial touch, as other unobtrusive beauties, she would have glided away unperceived—unsought. A strange sadness rested upon her features, like icy tears upon the robe of December, as she pointed to the contending elements without, and bade me contemplate the two beings presented.”

– *A Vision* (pg.172)

Underline any abstract diction you see in the passage above. Then, highlight key words/phrases that indicate the female speaker’s diction. Finally, indicate which of the three types of diction best describe this passage: _____

What does the female speaker’s use of diction imply about femininity? How does it compare to Tom’s recitation, and what is Twain’s attitude towards the difference? _____