
The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer: Genres And Themes

There are many genres that we find in "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer", one of the main genres is adventure, as the title of the novel makes it quite clear, Tom runs away from St. Petersburg with his friends, they hunt down Injun Joe, try to find the treasure and find it, bad things happen in the novel, mainly murders, but in the end Tom gets Becky, he lives happy with his friend Huck thanks to the treasure they split between themselves.

Another genre found in the novel is bildungsroman as the novel follows the development of Tom Sawyer from being a bad and naughty boy into a hero admired by the adults of his community. The actions Tom Sawyer does throughout the novel make the adults change the perception they had of him. Some clear examples are when he convinces the other children to paint his aunt's fence, or when he runs away making the people of his town believe he's dead and then he appears at his own funeral. Other actions such as saving Becky and offering half of his money to Huckleberry Finn assure the adults that he has transformed into a man. However Mark Twain throughout the novel suggest that the adults have poor judgement and are untrustworthy as Tom Sawyer easily tricks the adults.

Satire is another genre used by Mark Twain in his novel, he uses satire to expose and criticize people's stupidity. Twain uses satire to make fun of the people of St. Petersburg which is the town where Tom Sawyer lives, some clear examples are when Tom runs away to live as a pirate only because he gets rejected by Becky Thatcher, the girl that he likes. We also find Verbal Irony, this is used when a speaker says something but means the opposite, we find an example of this when the boys pretend to be pirates and steal some ham and bacon but feel guilty doing it. Mark Twain also uses Dramatic Irony which is when the information that the reader knows the characters don't, a clear example is when the boys run away to the island to be pirates and the people of St. Petersburg think they are dead but the reader knows they aren't.

Mark Twain's main themes that he uses in American literature were freedom, individual conscience and nature, in "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" we find many themes throughout the novel. Maturation is a clear theme too as at first Tom is the organizer of the pranks and games and as the novel progresses he leads himself and his friends to danger. Tom also finds himself in situations where he puts his concern for others above his own concern, helping others instead of himself shows maturity and competence. Another scene when he goes to Jackson's Island leaving society makes him return to the village with a more mature outlook on life, at the beginning we notice how Tom admires Huck's maturity but by the end of the novel Tom is much mature than Huck.

In the novel we notice how Twain ridicules and criticizes the adult world, this is another theme that Twain uses we could call it Society's Hypocrisy throughout the novel we see how Twain makes fun of school, church, the law and public opinion, sometimes he mocks individuals too. A clear example is that parental love is balanced by parental authority as many times Aunt Polly tries to punish Tom but in the end she forgives him because of her love for Tom.

Rescue is another theme, this is when you save someone from danger or distress, a clear

example would be when Tom and Becky were rescued from the cave, or when Tom rescued Muff Potter from going to jail.

Justice is another theme, we find justice in Muff Potters trial as when Tom declares that he witnessed the murder of Dr Robinson and he saw Injun Joe do it, the latter jumps out of the window, this proves that Muff was innocent and Injun Joe was the killer.

Boredom is another theme that appears in the first few chapters and this gets Tom into a lot of trouble, a clear example is when he has to whitewash the fence but as he's too bored to do it he tricks the other kids into doing it.

Excessively believing in supernatural beings is classed as superstition, this is found when Tom explains that by burying one marble in the ground all the ones you've lost throughout your lifetime will appear there buried. Another example is when Huck explains how to get rid of a wart, he said you have to go to a graveyard with a dead cat at midnight and the devil will appear and by saying a riddle the wart would disappear.

A lot of violence is displayed in the novel, this is another theme, clear examples are when Tom and a rich boy fight just because Tom is jealous of him, or when Tom and Huck are at the graveyard and witness the murder of Dr Robinson by Injun Joe.

Guilt is another theme as Tom expresses it, he feels guilty for defying his aunt the morning after sneaking out with his friend Huck to the graveyard, she cried and Tom felt really guilty. Another example is at the graveyard when he witnesses the murder of Dr Robinson, he knows Injun Joe murdered him but he doesn't tell the authorities so he feels really guilty.