



Gold Seal Lesson

Author(s): William Moreau			Lesson Title: Huck Finn – Thought Responses			
Grade Span			ICLE Application Model			
K-4	5-8	9-12 XX	A	B	C XX	D

Instructional Focus:

Speaking

Students speak for a variety of purposes and audiences with sophistication and complexity appropriate to the grade level.

Writing

Students write for a variety of purposes and audiences with sophistication and complexity appropriate to the grade level.

Listening

Students listen for a variety of purposes appropriate to the grade level.

Reading

Students read a variety of grade level materials, applying strategies appropriate to various situations.

Performance Task

Previous to this lesson, students have finished reading Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Below are "Thought Responses" that students could respond to in a variety of ways. "Thought Response" activities ask students to dig back into the literature and challenge student understanding of major ideas/ themes/ backgrounds/ and applications to real life.

Activity options using these "Thought Responses":

- Students could work in small groups or individually (or a combination of both at times).
- Students could be assigned all the "Thought Response" activities/ questions below, or they could do selected ones. Choice could be teacher and/or student based.
- Students should brainstorm (prewrite) answers to questions/ activities through taking notes, listing references to the literature, and organizing all avenues of possible answers/ responses.
- Once prewriting is done, students could use their responses as a basis for discussion. One group or individual could be assigned as the presenter of a particular question's answer to the class. Or all students could be responsible for sharing something in response to each question. This could be organized via volunteers or through some sort of number or name drawing lottery.
- Students could also be asked to go beyond prewriting for all or selected questions (again, through student or teacher choice). They could be asked to write a rough draft and then eventually a final product that could be shared with other class members via a "reading circle" where students read responses aloud or pass them for silent peer reading.
- This whole process could take one class session or several class sessions depending upon the demands of the assignment.

Here are some suggested “Thought Responses” for Mark Twain’s The Adventure of Huckleberry Finn:

- 1) Mark Twain might say to us, “In this book, I wanted to show the insensitivity of one person to another isn’t right and shouldn’t be tolerated.” Where did Twain show us people mistreating others? Find five specific and different examples.
- 2) Twain might also say, “Christians should not be hypocrites. They should do a good job of ‘walking the talk.’” Find three specific and different places where Christianity is given a bad name by hypocritical people. What could a person of any faith learn from this?
- 3) “An individual needs to see with clear vision and not be influenced negatively by those around her. She must make decisions based on what she knows is correct—from deep within her heart,” would be something Twain might tell us. With that in mind, chronicle Huck’s struggle with turning in Jim. How is Huck’s ultimate decision in harmony with this quote?
- 4) Twain might also say, “Be willing to take hold of adventure. Live your life to the fullest, so that when you die, even the undertaker will be sorry.” Find three specific and different examples of events in the story to prove this is part of Twain’s goal in writing this book.
- 5) “I wrote satire—a blend of humor and a critical attitude aimed at improving people (as individuals) and their institutions (churches, businesses, governments),” Twain might further share with us. Prove Mr. Twain did just that.
- 6) Rent one of the movie versions of this book. Watch it and write an essay comparing it to the book. You could do some reviewing (sharing what was good and what was bad about it), but your main task is to compare/ contrast the book and the movie.
- 7) Select a main character and follow his/her development throughout the book. This is a formal character sketch. Include strengths and weaknesses and what role the character plays. Also, why is this character important to the story as a whole?
- 10) Are there any heroes in this novel? Assume there are and list those you would consider heroes and tell why each could be considered so.
- 11) What does this novel (and Twain) tell you about the following topics? Relate your answer to real life in 2001 and to the overall book The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn:
 - about self-fulfilling ambitions and self –centeredness
 - about knowing the difference between right and wrong
 - about human nature
 - about following society’s laws and rules
 - about prejudice
- 12) What was your favorite part/ scene in this novel? Explain what happens and use lots of detail to tell why you liked it.
- 13) Write a letter from one character to another. You should explain events from the novel as they would be interpreted by this character. Make sure you speak with the character’s “voice.”
- 14) What qualities of which character strike you as good characteristics to develop within yourself? Why? How does the character demonstrate these qualities? (You should explain three different qualities.)
- 15) Did you like this novel? Write a letter to the author, Mr. Twain, and explain your answer by telling specifically why or why not.

ICLE Essential Skills

Prepare and deliver individual speeches by gathering information, rehearsing, making eye contact, speaking loudly enough, delivering information in a well-organized fashion, and appealing to the needs of the target audience. (ela 10)

Use writing as a way of expressing personal creativity.(ela 31)

Listen, comprehend and summarize essential information from a variety of sources such as speeches, plays, commercials on radio and television, and political debates.(ela 25)

Scoring Guide:

This depends upon what students are asked to do. It could conceivably range from “credit” for participating in the prewriting and sharing sessions to making this project (prewriting, writing, peer editing, proofreading, self editing, sharing) a major percentage of a marking period’s value. For example, 50 points could be awarded for the prewriting/ note taking aspect; 100 points for the final written product of selected questions; 50 points for sharing findings if done with a speaking component. The teacher would have to create criteria for evaluation that would be shared with the students when the original assignment is introduced.

Keywords

English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science
Reading	Algebra	Earth Science
Writing Creative writing	Geometry	Life Science
Communications Listening Speaking Visuals	Statistics	Chemistry
Literature	Calculus	Physics
Other The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Essay questions Literature projects Thought responses	Trigonometry	Other
	Other	