

THE REASON OF TOM SAWYER'S POPULARITY NOWADAYS

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Literature is one of the most important components of every culture. It reflects national experience gained during centuries and it helps to communicate through decades with the help of literary characters.

My work is devoted to one of the famous Mark Twain's characters, Tom Sawyer. It was written in 1876 by Mark Twain. He is popular for many years; children admire his quick-thinking and vivid imagination. We imagine every scene described in the book.

Tom Sawyer is a wonderfully funny book. I remember laughing until tears ran down my cheeks – the language used is all in context. Tom Sawyer is a book I can reread and find it more and more interesting, it is a book that I recommend to my friends. We shouldn't underestimate the capacity of a child to understand and come away from a good story, no matter how archaic the language, with a true understanding of the story.

The **theme** of my research is «The reason of Tom Sawyer's popularity». The **aim** is to find out the reason of Tom Sawyer's popularity nowadays. The **subject** of my research is the study of «Adventures of Tom Sawyer» episodes. The **object** of my research is «Adventures of Tom Sawyer».

Methods of research used: reading the book, studying the most interesting episodes, finding out the secrets of characters' popularity.

There are similar works describing Tom Sawyer's character, but I tried to compare him with our generation and understand his popularity with modern children.

The main characters in «The adventures of Tom Sawyer»

Mark Twain is considered to be the most successful writer in American literature. Most of his works are highly appreciated by readers, especially; those are for children such as Tom Sawyer, Coronel Sellers, Huck Finn and others.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer takes place in a small 19th century town in the town of St. Petersburg, Missouri. It is literally somewhat like at the edge of the earth where it is not linked to the civilization. Some scenes in the novel take place in the school and its premises, the church and in the whole town itself.

Through these setting scenes Mark Twain takes us to an old typical American community

that we cannot see today. He is like our tour guide to the past time.

The plot and the conflict are surprising and shocking. Because the conflicts Tom experienced is not experienced by ordinary kids, like witnessing a crime. His way of solving the problems is like being a matured person, and is not appropriate for a child to do.

For me, the theme of the story is the oddness of children and adults. Adults want to civilize children by telling them what to do and by these, the children tend to rebel because it hinders their freedom to do what they want. They are like in a war where they both want to win.

This novel is told by a third person narrator, I think it would have made certain scenes more effective if it is written in the first person and the readers can relate as if they are the one who is doing the action.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer should not be read not only by the children but by the adults as well. Although it is a story of a boy who loves challenges and adventures and for the most part provides us with a child's-eye view of the world still it has lessons that every adults will learn.

Let's describe the main characters.

Tom Sawyer. He is shy but mischievous child who gets into trouble without even trying; he envies the freedom and lazy lifestyle of his friend Huckleberry Finn. He skips school to go swimming in a nearby pond. The teacher has no problem believing that he was behind the destruction of the book cover due to his naughty character while all the while it was Becky Thatcher's deeds. He is torn between wanting to be a free spirit like his friend Huckleberry Finn or pursue his true love, Becky Thatcher.

Tom is also a lovable character and that is the reason why Becky Thatcher is so fascinated by him. Heat one point took a beating meant for Becky Thatcher for destroying the cover of a book in school. This also shows his loving nature and his chivalry of being a good man.

Following the play it is evident that Tom Sawyer is a trustworthy and true friend to Becky. His friendship to Huckleberry Finn, the town loner is an indication of his good heartedness. He also has a great imagination.

This is shown when he plays pirates, faking his own death and painting the fence. He is

also, though rarely, a responsible young man. He testified at the trial of Muff Potter after he thought to have murdered Doc Robinson. Tom is also very persuasive as he was able to convince his friends to his chores on more than one occasion.

He also manages to persuade Becky Thatcher to be engaged to him which she almost does. He is also superstitious evident in the fact that they went to the grave side accompanied by Huckleberry to experiment the «cure» for warts.

Huckleberry Finn. He is an honest trusting loner who is free spirited and homeless living a simple life. He is Tom Sawyer's best friend. His free-spirited nature comes to show when he says he will buy pies and sodas when Tom Sawyer asks him what he would if he had a trunk full of money. He is pretty much just like an orphan because his father is the town drunk.

As long as no one finds it offending, he usually sleeps wherever he pleases. He is adventurers and worldly and encourages Tom Sawyer to be like that and that leaves Tom Sawyer spoilt for choice between going with him on adventures or staying with Becky.

Huckleberry Finn also poses some bad traits like drinking, smoking and swearing caused by his lack of going to church or school, no one expects him to do so. He is also superstitious in the fact that they went to the grave side accompanied by Tom Sawyer to experiment the «cure» for warts.

Injun Joe. Injun Joe seems to be the villain in this play. He is a ruthless evil murderer who takes out his anger on anyone who gets on his way. He kills Doc Robinson and as if not enough, he blames the town drunk, Muff Potter for the murder.

He is a chauvinist and a bully as he hates everyone especially women. He expresses that there is no need for killing a woman but rather disfigure her face. He goes for the vulnerable and weak to make himself seem and fell strong and powerful in a psychic way.

He is vengeful shown when he expresses his motivation for revenge on Dr. Robinson and Douglas the widow his actions mostly motivated from unadulterated malevolence from beginning to end he is malicious probably caused by his personal history involving others mistreating and alienating him when at his early childhood days. He is artful and cunning, displayed when he disguises himself as a mute and deaf Spaniard at one point in the play.

Becky Thatcher. She is the daughter of Judge Thatcher. She has yellow hair with braids, fair skinned, shy and is described as very pretty. She is naive when she first sets foot in town and Tom is immediately drawn to her. However she soon matches him, Tom, as strate-

gist in romance and soon the two device means and motives to make each other feel jealous.

She is very trusting shown in the play when they get lost in the cave; she says that she trusts Tom with her life. She believes in Tom's ability to get them to safety. She likes Tom's bad boy image yet she still maintains her kind and sweet nature.

Sid Sawyer. He is Tom's younger brother, described as a sickening good and sweet boy. He is jealous towards his brother on his part and always wants to get Tom in trouble. He is sly and sneaky as he can smile at you, look you straight in the eyes and then stab you in the back. He shows superficial model behavior while inside he is mean spirited. He warm-hearted Tom who behaves badly thus becomes his direct opposite.

Aunt Polly. She has taken up as the guardian of Tom and Sid since the death of their parents. She is very loving as she is torn between punishing the boys when they disobey and just letting go and loving them as her own. She is a kindhearted and simple woman just trying to figure out the balance between love and discipline.

She is always at her abortive attempts to keep Tom under control as she worries for his safety. This makes her a caring person and she only wishes to be loved and appreciated.

Muff Potter. Although he is the town drunk, everyone likes him. His is a case of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. He is generally a lovable character and gets mixed up in Dr. Robinson's death. He is extremely gullible; his trust makes it easy for Injun Joe to convince him that he is the murderer.

Joe Harper. He is Tom's longtime childhood friend, who is compassionate and pitiful as he quickly feels homesick at Jackson Island and has a hard time going along with the adventures Tom and Huck are having. He wants to go back home, and misses his family and is not too proud to say so. He is a mirror character of Tom and eventually his place as Tom's sidekick is taken by Huckleberry Finn.

III. Tom Sawyer's personality. One of the most memorable and the deepest impression in readers' hearts is Tom Sawyer in the novel «The adventures of Tom Sawyer». Tom Sawyer appears in front of us both familiar and fresh. He looks familiar because he seems to be close to us and we can look at ourselves through character Tom.

On the other hand, we find Tom always fresh in every new page of Mark Twain because there is only one character called Tom with his own feeling, thinking and actions.

An active and mischievous boy. The deepest characteristic of Tom Sawyer in readers' hearts is his mischief. He always thinks of

playing tricks to others and making fun in any situation as much as he can.

He does such many different things that no one can know what he will do «he never plays them alike, two days, and how is a body to know what is coming»; his aunt Polly has to say to herself. Whenever Tom makes mistake, either small or big one, he always thinks of getting his way.

For Tom he never sits still or keeps quiet but he always teases anybody he wants in his own ways. When sitting in the church, he always starts to quarrel with others next to him. After that he pulls a boy's hair in the next bench and look at his book as if there is nothing happening.

Tom hates school and church very much. He is forced to go there so it is a good chance for him to play new tricks. Bill is said to be the most difficult to learn by heart and just few in thousand people except the industrious pupils. And those who get the prize Bible will become great and being admired by others.

Tom once more makes all people surprised and shocked when he gets the prize from the superintendent. This event is likely as «a thunder bolt out of a clear sky» because Tom is never expected.

However, people can say nothing because he has got enough «certified checks» to prove himself. By exchanging property which Tom gets in selling whitewashing privileges, secretly buying tickets for the Sunday-school prize Tom immediately becomes a new hero. Through this situation, Tom reveals himself mischievous, intelligent and cunning sometimes.

Being punished by his Aunt Polly, Tom has to work on Saturday while other children are having holidays. It is a quite hard punishment and he regards it as a torture. Life to him now seems nothing but a burden and his work without spirit.

Tom does not want to lose face with other boys so he keeps on the idea of escaping from the work as soon as possible. With such an intelligent and mischievous boy like Tom will never easily surrender.

The more hopeless the situation is, the brighter idea in his mind appears. He then changes the hard task in to a great privilege and considers it as an honor.

«Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?» Moreover, Tom absolutely admits «There is one boy in a thousand, maybe two thousand that can do it the way that is got to be done».

With his intelligent and persuasive words, Tom allows other boys to take over from him for a considerable price. Playing continuously on other boys' aspirations and desires for the whitewashing, Tom quickly becomes a wealthy

boy, just in few hours. Through this situation Tom once more appears to us as a very intelligent and mischievous boy.

An imaginative reading boy. Readers have known about a mischievous and intelligent boy with a lot of different jokes and tricks. At the same time they also know about a boy with adult thinking about behavior. Tom, however, not only takes part in some enterprises called «audacious mischief» by his aunt but also spends much time reading book and giving romantic dreams.

This is the most interesting and outstanding characteristic that Mark Twain builds for his favorite character, Tom Sawyer. Nowadays Tom is also very attractive. Many children like him.

Conclusion

Despite his unruly and obnoxious behavior, Tom Sawyer is one of Mark Twain's most beloved characters. Tom Sawyer is a composite of Twain himself and his countless school friends. There's a little bit of Tom Sawyer in each of us – and a little bit of Huck Finn too. In fact, we're in a constant war with ourselves as to which figure we should model ourselves on.

The fun of reading is the imagination and thought process required to imagine the scene, the characters and trying to be there. I read to escape into history or another place – Tom Sawyer is just such a book, you can almost smell the fence paint...

The character Tom Sawyer is the novel's hero, who appears in almost every scene.

For me he is a genius, because his imagination and way of thinking is far beyond the thought of the average of his friends. He always thinks life as a huge game in which he is one of the players.

His way of thinking and vivid imagination attracts many readers. Modern boys nowadays are like Tom: clever, ready to help, positive and charming. It seems that there he lived some years earlier. Sometimes we are naughty, but easy to go with. We all, like Tom, have a great talent to play tricks, but we don't like to hurt our friends.

Why Tom Sawyer is popular? (1) The book is about friendship, love, generosity. (2) The book is written with humor. (3) The book teaches us to overcome difficulties and be positive.

To sum it up, I'd like to say that Tom Sawyer is my favorite character.

«Most of the adventures recorded in this book really occurred; one or two were experiences of my own, the rest those of boys who were schoolmates of mine. Huck Finn is drawn from life; Tom Sawyer also, but not from an individual – he is a combination of the character-

istics of three boys whom I knew, and therefore belongs to the composite order of architecture.

The odd superstitions touched upon were all prevalent among children and slaves in the West at the period of this story – that is to say, thirty or forty years ago. Although my book is intended mainly for the entertainment of boys and girls, I hope it will not be shunned by men and women on that account, for part of my plan has been to try to pleasantly remind adults of what they once were themselves, and of how they felt and thought and talked, and what queer enterprises they sometimes engaged in» (The Author, Hartford, 1876).

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