

TITLE OF LESSON

American Literature Unit 1 Lesson 31 – To Ban or Not To Ban?
Should Huckleberry Finn Stay on School Reading Lists?

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – Eng 11-12: R1.0-3, 2.0, 3.0-5, W1.0-5, W/O1.0-2, L/S1.0, 1.6-9, 2.0, 2.3

MATERIALS

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Ch. 41-42 – Reading (not provided by ESubjects)
Huck Finn Banning Debate – Reading
Persuasive Writing Review – Student Page
Blank Circle Diagram – Student Page

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To use [Reciprocal Teaching](#) strategies to pose questions, summarize, clarify, and make predictions about the novel, paying special attention to the complexity of Huck’s and Jim’s characters
- To read two different opinions on the issue of banning *Huckleberry Finn*
- To formulate an opinion about the complexity of characters and the value of the content in *Huckleberry Finn*
- To review the process for persuasive writing

FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Stamp/initial all complete homework assignments ([Annotated notes](#) and [word diaries](#)). Return Corrected Binders.
- 2) [Daily Log](#) – Tell students to copy the [Daily Log](#) below.
- 3) [Sustained Silent Reading](#) – Read for fifteen minutes. At the end of the reading, ask students to say why they think their novel has been put on the **Independent Reading List**. Do they agree that it’s worthwhile enough to be recommended to all students in their grade?

Date	Journal	Lecture Discussion	Activity	Readings	Homework
	13 – Write an alternative ending to the novel (1 page)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reciprocal Teaching presentations 2. Review of Huck Finn Controversies 3. Persuasive Writing Introduction. 	<p><i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>, Ch. 41-42</p> <p><i>Huck Finn Banning Debate</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Chapters 41 and 42 of <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> 2. Journal 13 3. Outline To Ban or Not to Ban (Essay 2)? 4. Study Vocabulary. 5. Continue reading novels.

ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. Ground Rules for Discussions – Remind students of the ground rules for discussions involving potentially offensive language.

2. **Reciprocal Teaching** Group Discussions – Tell students to bring out their **Reciprocal Teaching** handouts from the homework. They will need to fulfill their previously assigned *Group Roles* (see below). Using their handouts, they must conduct a small group discussion. The purpose of the discussion will be to present information from the reading and decide how to present it to the class. Assign each group a cluster of chapters to review and present on (one group may be in charge of Chapters 31-33-, another in charge of 34-36, and so on). First, the summarizers will present their information for the assigned chapters, and the other group members must decide whether they agree or disagree with the summary given. If they disagree, they should suggest what needs to be added or removed from the summary. Next, the clarifiers present and the group members state whether they agree or disagree. Then the questioner should present the questions to the group members, who will agree or disagree that the questions are good questions for generating discussion. Finally, the predictors will inform the group members of their predictions and seek their input. Allow them ten minutes for this discussion.
3. **Reciprocal Teaching** Class Presentations – Call on each group, in order of chapters, to present the information from their small group discussions. Each presentation should include the information from every group member. Make sure that the questioners facilitate discussion from the rest of the class, and that each group asks for class participation where appropriate. Allow ten to fifteen minutes for the presentations and discussions.
4. To Ban or Not to Ban? – Distribute the reading *Huck Finn Banning Debate* and ask each group to decide how they will read the article (out loud – one person reads to the group while others follow along, each person reads a paragraph until the whole article has been read, each person reads one sentence until the whole article is read, or they read silently). While they are reading, students should **highlight** the main points. If you have a class set of highlighters, pass them out now. Otherwise have students get out their own highlighters or pens to underline instead. Tell students that this is an article with two viewpoints about banning *Huckleberry Finn* from school reading lists. Both viewpoints were written by high school students. While they are reading, they should also jot notes about other reasons people have wanted the novel banned in the past (tell them to think back to when they were first reading about the novel). Tell them to read the article, and to look up when they are finished (it should only take a few minutes).
5. Controversies – Ask students to remind you of some of the other reasons people have wanted Huck Finn banned. They should be able to remember the Concord Library controversy, when the officials felt that the book was too coarse and a bad example for young boys. They may also remember that people disapproved of the book being written in vernacular (i.e. nonstandard English). They may or may not relate the concepts they learned about abolitionists to people’s motives for wanting the novel banned. An important point to bring up is that some people feel the novel is racist, not just because of the author’s use of the “N” word, but because they feel that the character of Jim is a racist stereotype. The subjects of complexity of character and appropriateness of language are ones the students should feel comfortable expounding on by now – they have spent several lessons discussing language change and politics, Twain’s own beliefs, and methods of characterization. Tell them that they are going to contribute their own voice to the Huck Finn controversy, by writing an essay on whether or not they believe the book should be banned from school reading lists. They may choose any of the above reasons to use in their paper, or use other ideas. They must be able to support their ideas with evidence, however. They can use all of the evidence they have gathered so far this unit: articles about controversies surrounding the novel; handouts with historical information; other readings and texts; class notes from films, lectures and discussions. Tell them that this piece will not go through the drafting process, since they will be using it as a basis for a satirical piece they will write on the same topic. They will only be writing a first draft. They will outline it tonight and write it for homework the next night.
6. **Persuasive Writing** Review – The students should all be familiar with the elements of persuasive writing, since they learned them during sophomore year. Ask them to remind you which elements belong in a persuasive writing piece. After several people have offered answers, hand out the student page **Persuasive Writing Review**. Tell them to use this page tonight, as they outline an essay about whether or not *Huckleberry Finn* should be banned. They should use a **Circle Diagram** outline format (If your students are not familiar with this format, please pass out the **Blank Circle Diagram** found in the *Student Pages* section of this unit. Use the **Persuasive Writing Review** sheet—also a Student Page—to explain to students how to fill it in. You will need to apply the instructions to the appropriate places on the Blank Circle Diagram.)

7. Review Homework –Read Chapters 41-42 of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. **Annotate** the reading and write **Journal 13** – an alternative ending to the novel. This journal only needs to be a page, and it can re-imagine the ending from any point of view the students desire. Outline your persuasive essay on To Ban or Not to Ban?
 8. Remind students to meet in the computer lab tomorrow.
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HOMEWORK

- 1) Read Chapters 41-42 of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. **Annotate** the reading.
 - 2) Essay 2 – Outline persuasive essay, To Ban or Not to Ban?
 - 3) Study vocabulary.
 - 4) Continue reading novels.
 - 5) **Journal 13** – Write an alternative ending to the novel.
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GROUP ROLES

Clarifier – Your job is to dig up any information that will make the reading easier to understand. This might mean researching information related to the story like: history, culture, geography, information about the author, or words that are unfamiliar. You will present these ideas (for your assigned chapters) to your small group, refine them, and present them to the class. Ask if anyone else in the class has information that will help others understand the text. Make sure to offer information on whether Huck and Jim are flat or round characters.

Predictor– Your role is to gather information, make connections, and predict what will happen next or what the author might discuss next in the text. Predictions are based on information, not just guesses. Heading, subheadings, and questions found in the text will help with predictions. Be sure you can answer the Why. You will present these predictions (for your assigned chapters) to your small group, refine them, and present them to the class. Make sure to make predictions about whether Huck and Jim are flat or round characters.

Summarizer – Your job is to write a brief summary of the reading. You will need to write a statement that will give the key points, the main highlights, the gist, the essence of the reading assignment. There may be several big ideas or events that will be important to remember and discuss. Write them down. You will present your summary (for your assigned chapters) to your small group, refine it, and present it to the class. Make sure to ask the other students to identify any key points that you have not mentioned. Make sure to point out ways you know whether Huck and Jim are flat or round characters.

Questioner – Your job is to develop a list of questions about the reading assignment that the group will discuss. Usually the best questions come from your own thoughts, feelings, concerns, and reactions to what you read. Your task is to help people talk over the big ideas in the reading and share their reactions. You will present these questions (for our assigned chapters) to your small group, refine them, and then present it to the class for discussion. You will lead the class discussion and make sure that all participants contribute. Make sure to ask questions about whether Huck and Jim are flat or round characters.

DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

Unit 1

Project 1: A True Story
Evaluation Essay 1
Incident Poem