

**1.1 What's the book about?**

Look at the picture and discuss these questions. What do you think?



- 1 When and where does this story happen?
- 2 What can you tell about the people in the picture?
- 3 What kind of story will this be?

**1.2 What happens first?**

Read the title of Chapter 1 and the words in *italics* below it. Then look at the picture on page 4. What do you think it shows? Check (✓) the one correct statement.

- 1  It shows Huckleberry Finn's gang.
- 2  The boys are dangerous.
- 3  They steal from people.
- 4  They meet in the house of one of the boys.
- 5  Their families know where they are.
- 6  Boys soon leave the gang.

# The Tom Sawyer Gang

*“You can go home now,” Tom told us. “We’ll meet next week.  
Then we can rob somebody and kill some people.”*

**Y**ou don’t know me if you haven’t read *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Mr. Mark Twain wrote that book, and most of it was true. Some things weren’t exactly true, but everybody lies sometimes. Maybe not Tom’s Aunt Polly or the **Widow** Douglas, though. They were in that other book.

The book ended like this. Tom and I found some money in a **cave** and it made us rich. We got \$6,000 each—in gold! That’s a lot of money. So we gave it to Judge Thatcher to keep it safe.

The Widow Douglas made me her son. “I’ll teach you to be polite,” she said.

But I didn’t want to be polite. I didn’t like living in a house all the time. She even dressed me in nice clothes, but I really didn’t like them. So one night I put on my old clothes and ran away.

But Tom Sawyer found me. He said, “I’m going to start a gang of robbers. If you go live with the Widow again, you can join the gang.”

So I went back.

When I got home, the Widow cried with happiness. She kissed me and said, “My poor lost baby has come home.” I didn’t like that, but she meant it in a nice way.

Then it all started again. I had to sleep in a bed and I had to wear new clothes. I even had to be polite at dinner.

One night, I went to my room, feeling really lonely. Then I heard something. It sounded like a cat: “Me-yow, me-yow.” I went to the window and looked down. It was Tom, waiting for me.

I climbed out the window to meet him. We went toward the trees in the Widow’s backyard. We had to be very quiet. But when we passed the kitchen, I fell. The Widow’s old **slave** Jim heard the noise and said: “Who’s that?”

He listened carefully, but we didn’t say anything. Then he came out into the backyard. He stood very near us. But we were very quiet, so he never saw us.

Then my foot began to itch, but I couldn’t move—I didn’t want him to hear me. The **itch** moved to my ear. Next, it moved to my back, right between

**widow** /ˈwɪdʊw/ (n) a woman whose husband has died

**cave** /keɪv/ (n) a large natural hole in the side of a hill or under the ground

**slave** /sleɪv/ (n) someone who is owned by another person. A *slave* must work for that person without pay.

**itch** /ɪtʃ/ (v/n) to have an uncomfortable feeling on your skin so you can’t stop touching it

my shoulders. This happens a lot. When I have to be quiet, I start to itch in a thousand places.

Soon Jim said, "Hey, where are you? Who's there? I know I heard something. I'm going to sit right here until you come out."

And he sat down between me and Tom, but still he didn't see us. He sat against a tree and waited.

My nose began to itch. Then I started to itch on the inside! I itched in eleven different places now. But then Jim fell asleep, and all my itches stopped.

Tom came to me very quietly. "Let's tie Jim to the tree, just for fun," he said. "That's too dangerous," I said.

So then Tom went to Jim really carefully. He didn't want Jim to wake up. He took Jim's hat and hung it in the tree above his head. Then Tom and I ran as fast as we could into the woods.



The next day, Jim told everybody the story. “**Ghosts** put me to sleep,” he said. “They picked me up and took me all over the state of Missouri. And then they brought me back, and hung my hat in the tree.”

Later, when he told the story again, “all over the state of Missouri” changed to “all over the USA.” The next time, it was “all over the world.” Jim loved to tell stories, and people loved to hear them, too. Black people walked for miles to hear his story of the ghosts.

When we left Jim, he was still asleep. We ran all the way to town and found some other boys. Then we all followed Tom to his secret hiding place. There was a small hole in a hill and we climbed through, into a big cave. Tom told everybody about his gang of robbers. “We’ll call it Tom Sawyer’s Gang,” he said, “and this will be our hiding place.”



**ghost** /goust/ (n) a dead person who has returned to this world



We all had to sign our names in blood. We also promised not to tell anybody about the gang.

Tom said, "If anybody tells, the gang will kill his family."

"Then Huck can't join because he doesn't have a family," somebody said.

"You can kill the Widow. She's almost my family," I suggested.

Everybody thought that was a good idea. So I joined the gang.

Then somebody asked, "What do robbers do?"

Tom said, "They steal things, of course. And they **ransom** people."

"Ransom? What does that mean?"

"I don't know," said Tom. "But robbers do it—I read it in a book. So we've got to do it. We have to bring prisoners to the cave and ransom them. Then we kill the men. But we keep the women until they fall in love with us."

I said, "Soon we'll have a cave full of women. There won't be any room for us robbers."

But we all agreed to be robbers.

"You can go home now," Tom told us. "We'll meet next week. Then we can rob somebody and kill some people."

So we all went home.

I climbed in my bedroom window just before the sun came up. My new clothes were all dirty but I was very tired. I couldn't worry about that.

## Pap Comes to Town

*I thought, "If Pap's here, I'm in trouble. He probably wants my gold."  
So I ran to the Judge's house.*

The next morning, the Widow Douglas was very angry at me because of my dirty clothes. So I decided to be good.

I went out with the Tom Sawyer Gang for about a month, but we never robbed anybody and we never killed anybody. We only played. After a time I stopped going to the meetings. The other boys stopped going, too.



Three or four months went past and it was winter time. The Widow sent me to school every day. I could spell and read and write a little. They wanted to teach me numbers, but I didn't like them and I didn't learn very much.

At first I hated school, but after that it was OK. When I got really bored with it, I didn't go. The teacher hit me the next day, but I didn't mind. Soon I even liked living with the Widow. Sometimes I still slept in the woods, but most of the time I liked sleeping in a bed.

I didn't know where Pap was. Pap's my dad. He came to town sometimes. I always hid in the woods when he came to town. One day, I heard that he was dead. But you could never be sure about Pap.

One morning, I was going to school. When I saw some footprints in the snow in front of the house, I looked closely at them. There was a small cross on the left foot. That was Pap's shoe! The cross was there because it kept away bad luck.

I thought, "If Pap's here, I'm in trouble. He probably wants my gold."

So I ran to the Judge's house.

"Do you still have my \$6,000 of gold?" I asked.

"I do," he answered. "Do you want it?"

"No, sir!" I said. "I don't want it! I want *you* to have it. I want to give it to you!"

The Judge looked surprised. I said, "Don't ask me any questions about it. You just keep the gold."

He thought about this for a minute. He didn't know Pap was in town. But he was a smart man and he understood. "I'll buy your gold from you," he said. "I'll give you one dollar for it."

I agreed, and I signed a piece of paper. He gave me my dollar and I left.

That night, I went to bed early. When I opened my bedroom door, there was Pap! He was sitting on my bed.

Pap was almost fifty years old. He had long, dirty black hair. His face was white—like a ghost. But he wasn't dead. He looked at me and said, "You think you're a big man now, boy. And people say you can read and write, too." I didn't say anything. Then he said, "I can't read or write. Your mother couldn't read or write. So why do you need it?"

"I have to go to school," I told him. "The Widow sends me."

But he was angry and didn't want to listen to me. He asked me about my gold.

"I don't have any gold," I said. "I sold it to the Judge for a dollar."

Then he got really angry. "I'll talk to the Judge in the morning," he said. He took my dollar and left.



Things were OK after that. I didn't see Pap again until the spring. Then he took me away from the Widow. He took me three miles up the river in a boat.

On the other side of the river, he had a **cabin**. He kept me there and I couldn't leave. Before bed, he always locked the door and put the key under his head.

“I don't want you to run away in the night,” he said.

Sometimes he went away, but he always locked the door. He had a gun, too, and he kept it near him. So there was nothing that I could do.

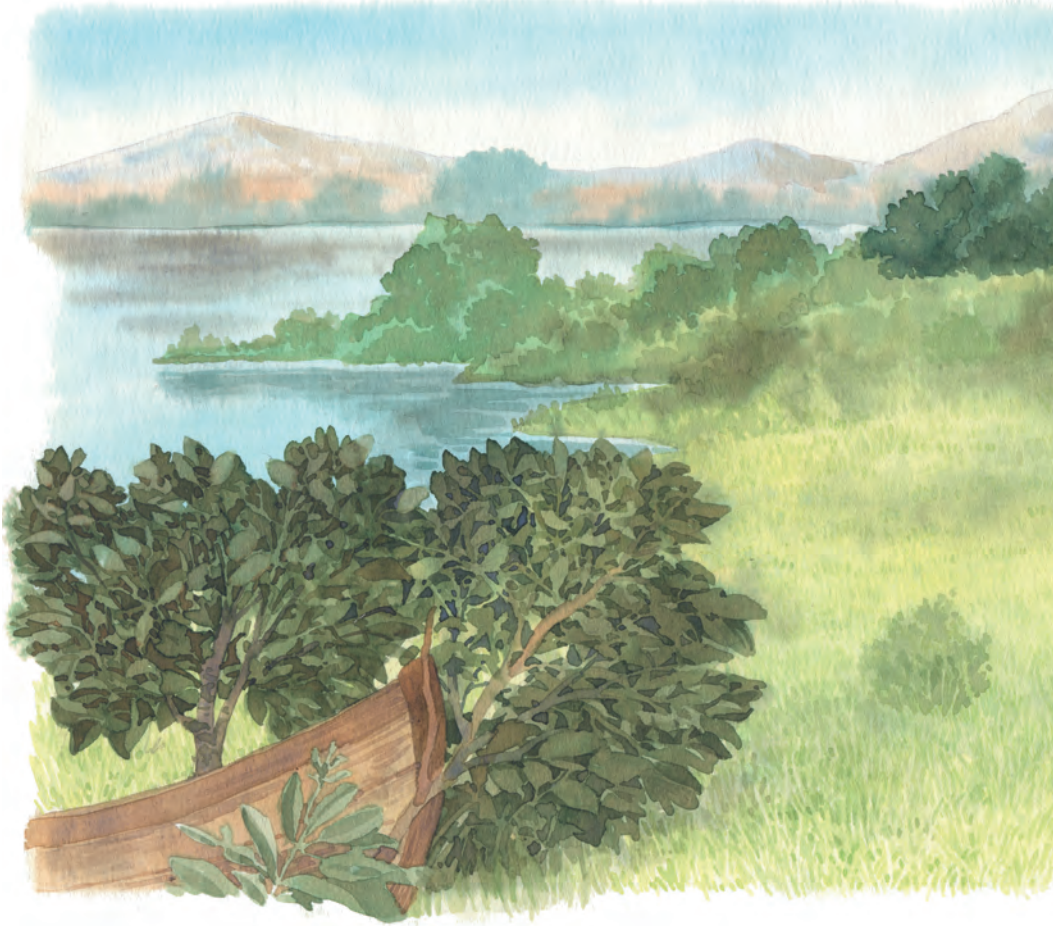
I lived in the cabin with Pap for two months and I started to like it there. I didn't have to go to school, so I went **hunting** and fishing and swimming.

But sometimes Pap got angry and hit me. I didn't like that. Then he started hitting me all the time. Sometimes he went away and locked me in the cabin for two or three days. Then I got really lonely. So I decided that I had to escape.



**cabin** /'kæbɪn/ (n) a small house made of wood, usually in the forest or mountains

**hunt** /hʌnt/ (v) to follow and kill animals for food or sport



I tried everything, but I couldn't get out of the cabin. I couldn't get through the small window and I couldn't break the door. I looked everywhere for a way out.

Then one day, when Pap was in town, I found an old knife in the roof. Pap didn't know it was there. So I went under the bed and I started to cut a hole in the wall. It took a long time. I was almost finished when I heard a gun shot in the woods. It was Pap's gun! He was coming home. I stopped, hid my knife and waited.

Pap sent me to the river to catch some fish for dinner. I could see that the water was getting higher. This always happened in the spring and it was always fun. Things fell in the river. You could keep anything that you found. Sometimes I found big pieces of wood and I sold them to a man in town.



That day I was lucky. I looked up the river and saw a **canoe**. I jumped in the river and swam over to it. There was nobody in it, so I got in. I **paddled** back to the riverside and hid it in the trees.

The next day, Pap went to town again, so I finished cutting the hole in the wall. Now I could escape! I didn't want him to follow me. So I broke down the door of the cabin from outside. Then I went into the woods and found a wild pig. I caught it and killed it with my knife. I took the pig back to the cabin and put its blood on the ground. There was blood everywhere. I put the pig in a big bag with some rocks. Then I pulled the bag to the river. There was blood from the cabin to the river. When I threw the bag into the river, it went all the way down to the bottom.

"Everybody will think I was killed by robbers," I thought happily. "And they threw me in the river."

Then I put some food in my canoe and paddled away.

**canoe** /kə'nu/ (n) a light, narrow boat which is pointed at both ends

**paddle** /'pædl/ (v) a short stick with a wide, flat end for moving a boat through water

**2.1 Were you right?**

Look back at your answers to Activity 1.2 on page iv. Then read these sentences. Are they true (T) or not true (NT)?

- 1 The gang meets in a cave. ....
- 2 They steal gold. ....
- 3 The gang is secret. ....
- 4 They kill people. ....
- 5 Tom Sawyer makes the gang's rules. ....
- 6 Huck doesn't stay with the gang for long. ....

**2.2 What more did you learn?**

1 Answer these questions. Why:

- a does Huck have \$6,000 in gold?  
.....
- b does Huck live with the Widow Douglas?  
.....
- c does Jim think that ghosts carried him away?  
.....
- d does the Judge agree to buy Huck's gold for \$1?  
.....
- e does Pap lock Huck in his cabin in the woods?  
.....
- f does Huck kill a wild pig?  
.....

2 How is Huck's life different with Pap than with the Widow? Make notes.

| Life with the Widow   | Life with Pap |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| <p>goes to school</p> |               |

### 2.3 Language in use

Look at the sentences on the right. Then find the correct endings to the sentences below.

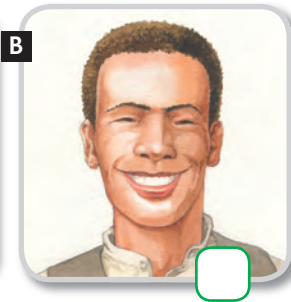
I climbed out the window **to meet** him.  
Black people walked for miles **to hear** his story.

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1 Tom and Huck gave their gold to the Judge ... | to escape from Pap.  |
| 2 Tom put the hat on a tree ...                 | to please the Widow. |
| 3 The boys signed their names in blood ...      | to trick Jim.        |
| 4 Huck went to school ...                       | to trick Pap.        |
| 5 Huck cut a hole in the cabin wall ...         | to join Tom's gang.  |
| 6 Huck put pig's blood everywhere ...           | to keep it safe.     |

### 2.4 What happens next?

Read the words in *italics> on page 12. Then check (✓) the right answers. What do you think?*

- 1 Who is speaking?



- 2 Who is the speaker talking to?

