Mississippi River

Project Objectives

The student will be able to...

... identify the ten surrounding states.

... explain the uses of the Mississippi River today and yesterday.

... participate in an oral discussion on the Mississippi River.

... answer questions given from the text.

Materials

Student text

Map of the Mississippi River area

Puzzles

Card Catalogue of Reference Material

Enrichment Idea List

Bulletin Board Ideas

Suggested Procedures

Preparation:

1. Choose a film or filmstrip from the reference packet to show the first day. Be sure to preview.

2. Obtain and display several books listed in the reference catalogue.

3. Display the map and bulletin board(s). See designs.

Teaching:

4. Show introductory film/filmstrip.

5. Play the verbal game with students. Ask them to create questions to "Stump the Teacher." Have a student write these questions on the board.
6. Answer only a few, even if you could really answer them all. Place a check by the answered ones. Save and refer to them later.

7. Review and discuss the meanings of the words found in the students' glossary of the text. This will prepare for silent reading.

8. Instruct students to read the booklet on their own.

9. Go over the "Questions for Discussion" together.

10. Have students complete the various puzzles and worksheets.

11. Go over the puzzles and worksheets together and discuss.

12. Have students find the answers to the unanswered questions on the board. (Distribution may vary according to the class size and the number of questions). Discuss them together.

13. Administer the short ten-question test.

14. Add enrichment ideas to the lesson as you feel would interest the students at the time of the lesson.
Senior Thesis References


Map received from the Mississippi River Commission Corps of Engineers.
Enrichment Ideas

1. Read an episode from Tom Sawyer or Huckleberry Finn. After the reading, have the students dress as a character of the story. Discuss the attitudes, actions, and reactions of these characters.

2. Trail Blazers
   Think how each of the "Trail Blazers" listed below influenced history and, therefore, the way we live today. Use your imagination. Describe how these "Trail Blazers" have changed lifestyles of the future:
   - Daniel Boone
   - Mark Twain
   - Peré Marquette
   - Lewis and Clark
   - Louis Joliet

3. Compare the clothing fashions of today and yesterday worn around the Mississippi River. Have the students do their own research.

4. Investigate the crafts necessary for survival on the Mississippi River. Do some of these in the classroom.

5. Build a model of a raft, a barge, a canoe, a flatboat, etc.

6. Social Studies Baseball
   Divide the group into two equal teams. Don't worry about having exactly 9 players on each team. Team captain chooses for first chance at bat and assigns batting order.
The four corners of the room serve as three bases and home plate. The team at bat sits or stands lined up near the batter's box. The other team sits on the other side or in the middle.

The first child in the batting order stands at home plate and is fired a question by the leader. With a correct answer the player goes to first base. The play continues in this fashion. When three teammates have made "hits," the first player scores. With a wrong answer the player is out. Three outs retire a side for that inning.

The number of innings will depend on the time allotted.

7. **Historical Letters**
   Have each student assume a name, real or imaginary, appropriate to the Mississippi. Pretending to be this person, each student writes a letter home telling about traveling down the Mississippi. Later these letters could be hung in the classroom or published in the school newspaper.

8. **Be a News Reporter**
   Have students divide into pairs. One student is to be the reporter, and the other is the celebrity. Without saying who he is, the celebrity answers questions of the reporter to give clues to his identity. The reporter guesses who it is. Later the students switch places.
   The students will write a news article on the celebrity.
Down The Mississippi
Down The Mississippi

Authors
Which River Side

Object: To be the first person to go from start to finish by spelling a state name and stating which side of the river the state is on.

Materials: 1 die
"?" cards
playing pieces
gameboard

Rules: Player one rolls the die. The player to his right draws a card. Player one must spell the word correctly and state which side of the river it is on: east side, west side or if the river goes through the state. When the correct answer is given, the player moves forward the number of spaces indicated on the dice. With an incorrect answer, the player moves back the number of spaces indicated on the dice. If a space is already occupied move ahead one space. Play continues in this fashion to the player on the right.

The winner is the first person to reach Finish!
Guess Me!

Directions: Answer the questions. Fill in the corresponding blanks to answer the riddle.

Riddle: What type of transportation is the Mississippi River best known for?

1a 1b 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

1. What two states along the Mississippi have 3 sets of double letters?
   a) M I S S I P P I
   b) T C N N E E E

2. What state carries the Kentucky Derby?
   K E N T U C K Y

3. In what state does the Mississippi River end?
   L O U I S I A N A

4. In what state does the Mississippi River start?
   M I D N E W Y C K

5. B

6. What state touching the Mississippi has four letters in its name?
   I D W I L L
7. What state has the name of another state in it?
   A    K    A    N    S    T    S

8. T
Guess Me!

Directions: Answer the questions. Fill in the corresponding blanks to answer the riddle.

Riddle: What type of transportation is the Mississippi River best known for?

1. What two states along the Mississippi have 3 sets of double letters?
   a) \[ M \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \]
   b) \[ \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \]

2. What state carries the Kentucky Derby?
   \[ K \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \]

3. In what state does the Mississippi River end?
   \[ L \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \]

4. In what state does the Mississippi River start?
   \[ \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \]

5. B

6. What state touching the Mississippi has four letters in its name?
   \[ I \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \square \]
7. What state has the name of another state in it?
   A

8. T
FIND THE STATE

Directions: Find the following words in the puzzle below. They may be forward, backward, and diagonal. The words are: Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

AZ MISSISSIPPI TX
BY I C X D L W E V F U O G E
X O N N P Y L U S X N P W A G
W E N L O U I S I A N A A I G
K I E S A S N A K R A V W I M
E O S U B D O G Q J M R R T D
N T O C N O I V R E S U K E N
@ S T U O T S T O N O K E V L
U I A N A N E E S S E N N E T
C D R E A F S R S A N C E S D
K B R G R K N I G N U H M L B
Y O Y A O R M D N B A B O H R
FIND THE STATE

Directions: Find the following words in the puzzle below. They may be forward, backward, and diagonal. The words are: Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

```
AZ M I S S I S S I P P I T X
B Y I C X D L W E V F U O G E
X O W N P Y L U S X N P W A G
W E N L O U I S I A N A A I G
K I E S A S N A K R A V W I M
E O S U B D O G Q J M R R T D
N T O C N O I V R E S U K E N
P S T U O T S T O N O K E V L
U I A N A N E E S E S E N N E T
C D R E A F P S R S A N C E S D
K B R G R K N I G N U H M L B
Y O Y A O R M D N B A B O H R
```
Famous Author

Question: What is Mark Twain's real name?

To break the code: Back up one letter to solve the riddle.

Example: BVUIPR = AUTHOR

Answer:

TBNVDM
DMFNNFOT
Famous Author

Question: What is Mark Twain's real name?

To break the code: Back up one letter to solve the riddle.

Example: BVUIPR = AUTHOR

Answer: SAMUEL CLEMENS
"Miss." Match

Directions: Complete the crossword puzzle by matching the vocabulary words with its definition. (Hint: Look in the glossary of your text.)

**Across**

1. Rivers and streams which feed a larger river.
2. A long, flat-bottomed boat.
3. Similar to a state.
4. A flat boat built of logs and lumber
5. Boats which tow barges and other boats.
6. Flood area along a river.
7. A large boat driven by a steam engine.
8. First trip.
9. The buying and selling of goods.
10. A unit of distance equal to 3 miles.

**Down**

"Miss." Match

Directions: Complete the crossword puzzle by matching the vocabulary words with its definition. (Hint: Look in the glossary of your text.)

Across
1. Rivers and streams which feed a larger river.  
3. Similar to a state.  
7. A large boat driven by a steam engine.  
9. Flood area along a river.  
10. The buying and selling of goods.

Down
2. A long, flat-bottomed boat.  
4. A flat boat built of logs and lumber.  
5. Boats which tow barges and other boats.  
6. First trip.  
8. A unit of distance equal to 3 miles.

River Code

Question: What was the first steamboat to travel the Mississippi River?

LCUMPJCYLQ

To break the code: Shift the letters by 3.

Example: PGTCP AMBC SECRET CODE

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

PQRSTUVWXYZ
River Code

Question: What was the first steamboat to travel the Mississippi River?

NEW ORLEANS
LCUMPJCYLQ

To break the code: Shift the letters by 3.

Example: PGTCP AMBC SECRET CODE

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O
Y Z A B C D E F G H I J K L M

P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
N C P Q R S T U V W X
Mississippi Unit Test

Directions: Answer each question thoroughly. Answer on a separate piece of paper.

1. The Mississippi River is fed by smaller rivers and streams called _________.
   a) provinces  b) tributaries  c) settlements

2. The _______ was the first steamboat to travel the Mississippi River.
   a) Zebulon M. Pike  b) Enterprise  c) New Orleans

3. Which one of the following came after the steamboat?
   a) canoe  b) towboat  c) raft

4. How many leagues on each side of the river was the flood area which Vega reported?
   a) 10  b) 20  c) 30

5. Where does the Mississippi River start?
   a) Lake Tippicanoe, IN  b) Lake Marion, SC  c) Lake Itasca, MN

6. How is the Mississippi River used today?

7. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of flooding along the Mississippi River.
8. What kind of commerce is moved along the Mississippi River?

9. Name and describe at least three kinds of boats used on the Mississippi River.

10. How did steamboat travel time change?
Mississippi Unit Test

Directions: Answer each question thoroughly. Answer on a separate piece of paper.

1. The Mississippi River is fed by smaller rivers and streams called ___________.
   a) provinces  b) tributaries  c) settlements

2. The _______ was the first steamboat to travel the Mississippi River.
   a) Zebulon M. Pike  b) Enterprise  c) New Orleans

3. Which one of the following came after the steamboat?
   a) canoe  b) towboat  c) raft

4. How many leagues on each side of the river was the flood area which Vega reported?
   a) 10  b) 20  c) 30

5. Where does the Mississippi River start?
   a) Lake Tippecanoe, IN  b) Lake Marion, SC  c) Lake Itasca, MN

6. How is the Mississippi River used today? Answers may vary but should include commerce, recreation, and adventure.

7. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of flooding along the Mississippi River. Answers may vary but should include: destroys things in its path, leaves fertile soil.
8. What kind of commerce is moved along the Mississippi River? Answers may vary, but should include: salt, chemicals, grains, coal, petroleum products, sand and gravel, and building materials.

9. Name and describe at least three kinds of boats used on the Mississippi River. Answers may vary, but may be any of the following: barges, canoe, flatboat, keelboat, raft, steamboat, and/or towboat.

10. How did steamboat travel time change? Steamboat travel time was reduced from 4 months to 20 days to 6 days.
A Boy on the Mississippi: 1835-1910
When someone speaks of "Florida," we are almost sure to think of one of the large American states, but there are six villages in the United States with that name. One of these is Florida, Missouri, which contained 208 persons at the time of the census of 1940. It never was and probably never will be a large center of population, but it has one great reason for pride--it is the birthplace of Samuel Clemens, later known as "Mark Twain." This fact makes the little village one to be remembered.

The father of the Clemens family was a lawyer, whose work brought him only a small income. The mother was a kindly woman who had a special fondness for animals--at one time she had nineteen cats in her home! Little Sam spent the first four years of his life in the village where he was born. Then the family moved to Hannibal, another village fifty miles away. There were five other Clemens children, two of them girls.
2.

In later years of his life, Samuel Clemens did not remember much about the village where he was born, but he remembered a great deal about Hannibal. Much of what happened there was to go into the books he was destined to write. Sam became the leader of a group of boys who spent much time swimming in the Mississippi, which flowed past Hannibal. Sometime they built rafts and floated for miles down the river. Among the boys was one named Tom Blankenship. The time was to come when Tom’s adventures would be told in a book called "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." Some of the things in that volume are not actually true, but many of them are based on experiences which the boys really had.

That is true, also, of the famous book, "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer." There was no boy in the group name Tom Sawyer, but there was one who may be called the "original" of Tom Sawyer. That boy was no other than Sam Clemens, himself. Another character in "Tom Sawyer," drawn from a real person, was Sid.
In actual life Sid was the author's brother, Henry Clemens. In writing about this character in his autobiography, Mark Twain said: "It was his duty to report me, when I needed reporting and neglected to do it myself, and he was very faithful in discharging that duty... but Henry was a much finer and better boy than ever Sid was."

The boys made journeys to some of the islands which dot the Mississippi. One island in that part of the river is now called "Tom Sawyer's Island." Another favorite place to visit was a cave near Hannibal. In it were long, dark, winding passages, and lofty chambers with stalactites hanging from the ceiling. It was easy to get lost in the cave because of its many turns. This cave plays an important part in the book about "Tom Sawyer." Although the character called "Indian Joe" in that volume did not really die in the cave, at one time he was lost while
wandering around inside. Today the cavern is known as the "Tom Sawyer Cave."

When he was eleven years old, Sam Clemens suffered a heavy blow in the death of his father. This event caused the boy much sorrow. He kept thinking of the times when he had not obeyed his father. He was sorry for some of the things he had done which had brought trouble to the man who was now dead. Mrs. Clemens saw how the boy was losing himself in grief, long after the funeral, and said to him one day: "You can do nothing to change the past. The right thing now is to promise to be a better boy in the future."

Sam promised, and he kept his promise. No longer did he spend most of his free time getting into mischief with the gang of boys. Leaving school because his mother found it hard to support the family, he obtained work in a print shop when he was only twelve. He worked as a printer's apprentice on a newspaper known as the Hannibal Courier, receiving payment in food and clothes,
but no money. This was the usual arrangement for an apprentice at that time. The clothes were old garments which had belonged to the editor. Sam was only about half as tall as the editor and later wrote that the shirts gave him "the sense of living in a circus tent" and added, "I had to turn up my pants to my ears to make them short enough."

Two years later Sam helped one of his older brothers publish a weekly newspaper at Hannibal. One day, as he was on his way home from work, he saw in the street a leaf from a book. It had been part of a volume about Joan of Arc. The youth read the words on the page, and they interested him greatly. He had never before heard about the Maid of Orleans, and decided to learn as much about her as he could. Later in life he wrote a long book about this heroine.

That little event has been used to explain another change in the life of Samuel Clemens.
6.
He found other books about Joan of Arc and read them carefully. He also started reading histories. In that way he did much to make up for the education he had missed by leaving school.

While he was in his teens, he set out on a journey which took him to New York, Philadelphia and Washington. He earned his living in those cities by working in print shops.

Returning to the Middle West, the youth studied to become a pilot on boats passing along the Mississippi. The pilot was responsible for keeping the old side-wheelers off the many sand bars, and out of the shallows. Telling about his efforts to perform this hard job, he wrote: "If I had known what I was about to require of my faculties, I should not have had the courage to begin. I supposed that all a pilot had to do was to keep his boat in the river, and I did not consider that that could be much of a trick since it was so wide." As a matter of
also started reading about Joan of Arc and read
fact he had to learn every bend in over twelve
about how the bowed much to make up hundred miles of river! It was hard to keep the
had missed by leaving boats from running aground. To prevent that,
this teens, he set out on a tests of the depth of the river were made at
 São Paulo to New York, Philadelphia frequent intervals. When the cry, "Mark twain!"
learned his living in those rang out, the pilot knew that the testing rope
print shops. showed two marks of depth, or twelve feet. The
Middle West, the youth memory of that call led Sam to adopt the pen
pilot on boats passing along name "Mark Twain" which was to become known
shallow. Telling about to millions of people. To this day, he is
in this hard job, he wrote: spoken of as Mark Twain more than as Samuel
I was about to require Clemens.
should not have had the Sam's experience on the river gave him
supposed that all a pilot the material for one of his best books, "Life
his boat in the river, and on the Mississippi." It presents a colorful
at that could be much of picture of American life along the great
so wide." As a matter of river about the middle of the past century.

Pioneers and outlaws, young and old, white
and black, fill the pages of the book with action.

At the age of twenty-six he made a
journey to the Rocky Mountain region, and
looked for silver in Nevada. In Virginia City, Nevada, he edited a newspaper, and signed some of his writings "Mark Twain."

Mark Twain's success as an author began when he was thirty-five with the appearance of a book called "The Innocents Abroad." Its pages are packed with humor about his adventures during a trip he made through Europe. Although he later served as one of the editors of the Buffalo Express, it was his books, not his editorial work, which made him famous.

"The Prince and the Pauper," a story of two boys who change places at birth, has proved popular with young readers. Another volume, "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court," tells about a man who was struck on the head by an iron bar and woke up far back in time—in the days of King Arthur. The Yankee had a hard time understanding the life of that far-away period. Mark Twain showed in his story that the glamor of the days of chivalry did not prevent many persons from suffering misery and injustice.
evada. In Virginia City, newspaper, and signed some Twain."
ness as an author began e with the appearance of ocents Abroad." Its humor about his adventures through Europe. Although of the editors of the his books, not his ed- de him famous. he Pauper," a story of aces at birth, has proved ders. Another volume, in King Arthur's Court," was struck on the head by far back in time--in the The Yankee had a hard life of that far-away owed in his story that of chivalry did not pre- suffering misery and

The list of Mark Twain's works is a long one, but certainly among the best of them are those which tell of the region in which he was born. "Tom Sawyer," "Huckleberry Finn," and "Life on the Mississippi" make entertaining reading, and also add to our knowledge of life along the Mississippi River a century ago.

Mark Twain died in 1910, at the age of seventy-four. He ranks as one of the great authors and humorists of American history.

Sam Clemens Becomes Mark Twain.
Sam Clemens Becomes Mark Twain
Oldtimers began to say that Sam Clemens was one of the best pilots on the whole Mississippi. Mr. Bixby was proud of him. The river meant a lot to Sam. He expected to spend the rest of his life on it. But when he was twenty-six years old, trouble started in the United States between the North and the South that put an end to regular shipping on the river.

Many people in the southern states kept slaves. Many people in the North thought this was wrong. At last, the southern states decided to break away from the Union and set up a government of their own. The people in the North were determined that the Union should not be broken up. And so the Civil War had begun.

Sam was very troubled when he went home to see his mother. Missouri had not left the Union with other southern states. But Will Bowen and John Briggs and a lot of Sam's other friends were enlisting in the Confederate Army to fight against the Union.
"I can't do that, Ma," Sam told Mrs. Clemens. "I think Abraham Lincoln is absolutely right. Slavery is wicked and all people ought to be free. But I can't go fighting my best friends. I wouldn't be any good as a soldier if I was always scared I'd kill Will or John or somebody like that."

"I don't believe in slavery either," Orion said.

Orion's newspaper hadn't lasted long after Sam left it. Now he had another job.

"Pa's rich cousin in St. Louis has fixed it up for me to be Territorial Secretary of Nevada," he went on.

"Why, that's fine!" Sam exclaimed. "That's sort of an Acting Governor, isn't it? If you work hard, by the time Nevada becomes a state you might be elected Governor."

"It's a real honor," Orion said, "but I don't have enough money to get there. The fare costs all of a hundred and fifty dollars."

"That's easy," Sam told him. "I've got three hundred dollars. We'll both go west and
a," Sam told Mrs.
Lincoln is
wicked and
ree. But I can't go.
I wouldn't be any
as always scared I'd
body like that."
slavery either,
hadn't lasted long
he had another job.
St. Louis has fixed
itial Secretary of
Sam exclaimed.
Governor, isn't
the time Nevada
be elected

Orion said, "but
to get there. The
ed and fifty dollars."
old him. "I've got
'll both go west and

I'll make my fortune mining. They say there's
an awful lot of silver out in that Comstock
Lode."

The two brothers set out by Overland
Stage for Carson City, the capital of Nevada.
It was a dusty trip behind sixteen galloping
horses. The stage never stopped except to
change horses or to give the passengers time
to eat. They traveled west over billowing
plains and across the Rocky Mountains that were
still snow-capped in July. In nineteen days
they covered seventeen hundred miles.

Sam found Carson City a real wild-west
boom town. The buildings were ramshackle.
Streets were thick with dust. But horses
galloped through them wearing pure silver
harnesses and scattering the dirt from solid
silver shoes. Pack trains and cowboys jostled
Indians, miners, and Chinese fruit peddlers
from California. Bankers and gamblers bumped
yelling newsboys and organ-grinders.
"You've got your work cut out for you if you're going to try to govern a place as wild as this," Sam told Orion.

"I can see that." Orion was gloomy already. "I only hope you make good at mining. Take care of yourself, Sam."

Sam bought a blanket and some grub to carry rolled up in it. He had hoped to get a burro, but his money ran out. So he set out on foot for the silver diggings.

After hearing men talk in Carson City, Sam had thought there was silver any place you wanted to dig for it. He soon found this was far from true. The best claims in the rich Comstock Lode had been staked out long ago. Other miners who had not found silver were just waiting to sell or rent their claims to greenhorn prospectors like Sam.

Sam was not lucky at mining. He formed a partnership with an old blacksmith and two young lawyers. Through a long, hard winter,
work cut out for you if
gover a place as wild
on.
Orion was gloomy al-
lu make good at mining.
Sam."
et and some grub to
He had hoped to get
ran out. So he set out
diggings.
talk in Carson City,
as silver any place you
He soon found this was
it claims in the rich
staked out long ago.
it found silver were just
their claims to green-
am.
at mining. He formed a
blacksmith and two
a long, hard winter,
the four of them toiled with pick and shovel,
finding barely enough silver to keep them
working at it.

Now and then they moved on to new claims,
hoping for better luck. They traveled through
sandstorm and snow. An Indian war had just
ended, and they passed new graves and the
charred ruins of shacks. Once a pack of wolves
chased them. Luckily, just when they ran out
of bullets, the wolves got discouraged and
loped off in another direction.

They all hated the alkali grit that got
into their clothes and blankets, and into salt
pork and sourdough flapjacks. Their backs
were sore. Their hands were blistered. But
somehow Sam managed to laugh. He could always
make his comrades laugh, too, with his "long
talk."

And no matter how bad things were, Sam
wrote funny letters. And Orion showed them
to the publisher of a newspaper called the
Territorial Enterprise.
"Now that's the kind of writing I want in my newspaper," the publisher said. "I'd like your brother to work for me."

Then he wrote to Sam, offering him a job. Sam got the letter when he was near Aurora, one hundred and thirty miles away, and very sick and tired of mining. It didn't take him long to decide to be a newspaperman.

On a hot August afternoon, the editor of the Enterprise looked up when a travel-stained figure came into the office. There was no guessing the age of the man who loosened a blanket roll and dropped into a chair. He wore a rusty slouch hat on tangled reddish hair. He had no coat. His trousers hung down over his boot tops. A tawny beard, gray with alkali dust, fell halfway to his collar. In his belt he carried a navy revolver.

"Can I do something for you?" the editor asked.

The man gave him a faraway look. "My starboard leg seems to be unshipped," he drawled.
kind of writing I want in
lisher said. "I'd like
or me."
Sam, offering him a job.
he was near Aurora,
miles away, and very
ng. It didn't take him
newspaperman.
fternoon, the editor of
p when a travel-stained
ice. There was no
man who loosened a
nt into a chair. He
on tangled reddish
His trousers hung
A tawny beard, gray
halfway to his collar.
navy revolver.
ng for you?" the editor
faraway look. "My
e unshipped," he drawled.

"It would take about a hundred yards of line
to do anything for me. I've walked clear from
Aurora and I think I'm falling to pieces."

Then he added, even more slowly, "My name
is Clemens. "I've come to write for the paper."

The editor smiled.

"When do you want to start work?" he asked.

"Show me a desk and I'll begin now," Sam
said. He did not know that with these words
he was starting his greatest career.

Several months later, Sam Clemens sat
in front of his scarred desk. He was chewing
the handle of his pen. "Now that I'm a real
reporter," he told himself, "I think I'll
give myself a new name. This time I want a
name I'll stick to."

He stared out at the road where the
alkali dust was still thick between patches
of dirty February snow. Right now he was
pretty homesick for clean green country and a
big wide river.
8.

"Mark Twain!" he said out loud, remembering his steamboat days on the Mississippi. "By golly, Mark Twain is going to be my name from here on out."
she said out loud, remembering
in the Mississippi. "By
going to be my name from

Howard, Joan. The Story of Mark Twain.
New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1953.
Pg. 133-140
Sam Clemens Tries on Some New Names
Miss Mary Ann Newcomb's long, bony hand reached for the bell on her high desk.

"Recess, children!" she called.

That was something the teacher never had to say twice in spite of the racket in the room. There were twenty-two pupils of all ages in the tiny log schoolhouse. They made a lot of noise when they repeated their lessons aloud.

Sam Clemens was the first one on his feet in the rush for the door. Recess usually came only just in time to keep the nine-year-old redhead from doing something desperate. Sam thought it was a crying shame to waste the best hours of the day babbling rubbish like Miss Mary Ann's parrot. Especially a golden day like this one.

He glanced at his little brother. As usual, Henry was the only boy who had not stirred from his seat. Henry had only started school this term, but he already loved reading more than anything else. Even the First Reader held him fascinated.

Henry was handsome and smart, and he had winning ways. Sam was as fond of him as everybody else was. But he simply could not understand his brother. "The trouble is, Henry is just naturally a good boy," Sam guessed. "He can't help himself."

Nobody ever said that about Sam Clemens.
Once outside the schoolroom, Sam forgot Henry. The yard was full of sure signs of springtime, shouting at him to escape while he could. Blossoms hanging heavy on the locust tress smelled sweet in the sun. Mud was drying off into dust, and Sam rubbed his bare feet hard along the ground. Except for the cut on his left big toe, he found they were toughening nicely.

Shooting marbles or playing three-cornered cat was not enough to celebrate such a day. Dodging between the girls' skipping ropes, Sam started a fast tag game.

"You're it!" he shouted, touching his best friend, Will Bown. "Let's go fishing," he added in a lower voice. Then he raced away round the schoolhouse.

By the time Miss Mary Ann rang her bell to herd the children back into the schoolroom, four of her pupils had melted out of the yard. Sam was in the lead, of course, with Will Bown right behind him.

Most days John Briggs would have come next. But John was home with the measles, so Arch Fuqua took his place. Arch was a gangling boy who never said much, but he could crack his big toe with a snap that could be heard for thirty yards. Jimmy McDaniel was the last. The others
hoolroom, Sam forgot

of sure signs of
im to escape while he

heavy on the locust

he sun. Mud was dry-

am rubbed his bare

nd. Except for the

he found they were

playing three-cornered

lebrate such a day.

's skipping ropes,

me.

duted, touching his

"Let's go fishing," he.

Then he raced

e.

y Ann rang her bell

nto the schoolroom,

ted out of the yard.

urse, with Will

s would have come next.

measles, so Arch Fuqua

a gangling boy who

ould crack his big toe

heard for thirty

s the last. The others

let him come along because his father kept

the candy store. Jimmy's pockets were usually

stocked with licorice strings and horehound

drops.

The boys reached the safe side of a clump

of elderberry bushes.

"Hey, are you all playing hookey?" a

voice asked from the bushes. "Can I go fishing

with you?"

"Sure you can, Tom," Sam said. "I'd

have asked you if I'd known where you were."

They never did know when they were going

to run into Tom Blankenship—or where. He

was supposed to live in a ramshackle cabin

over Stringtown way. But his mother was dead

and he didn't like his father, so he often

stayed away for a spell. He ate whatever he

could find or steal. Huckleberries, mostly,

when they were in season. If it rained, he

slept in a hogshead down at the tanyard.

Sam thought Tom was just about the

luckiest boy in the world. Tom didn't have

to go to school. He didn't even have to wash.

Of course, respectable folks were always

telling their children to keep away from

"that dirty boy." He was a disgrace to the

town, they said. Sam Clemens thought that was

unfair, when Tom was almost the only boy among

them who had been born in Hannibal.
Hannibal, Missouri was still too young for most of them to have been born there. Five years ago, it had been little more than a wood yard surround by a few cabins. Now it was a tidy white village where a thousand people lived and farmers came to market. The steamboat even stopped there regularly.

The five boys were as quiet as Indians in the night till they reached the spot where their fishhooks and hazel rods were stowed. They had picked this hideout for its central location in the middle of town.

It was a fine thicket of elderberry and hazel bushes. The bushes grew right where Bear Creek made a sharp elbow at the crossing of Main Street and Market. A heavy curtain of wild grapevine trailed over them. Here the boys were hidden from grown-up eyes, yet down at the levee. In case anything exciting happened, like a runaway or a fire, they could get to the scene in two minutes.

Now they baited their hooks and settled down to serious fishing. A quarter of an hour later, Will Bowen poked Sam.

"Wake up, Sam!" he said. "You've got a bite!"

The rod jerked in Sam Clemens's hand, and every freckle seemed to jump on his nose. He had not really been asleep, but he was a great boy for dreaming by day as well as by night.
A sudden whirl stirred the lazy water of Bear Creek. Sam's hook came up, with his bait worm gone.

"Aw, schucks," he muttered, "he got away--a whopper, too!"

"What was it--bullhead or catfish?" asked Tom.

"T'wasn't any of your plain old fishes," Sam said in a soft drawl. The other boys called this drawl "Sam's long talk." It took him a little while to get words out, but mostly they were funny enough to be worth waiting for.

"What I had hooked there," he said now, "was a great big comet with a goldy yellow tail. A Halley's Comet."

"You're the biggest liar in Hannibal," Will declared.

Usually those would have been fighting words, for Sam's temper matched his fiery hair. From his friend Will Bowen, though, he took them with a grin.

"What I want to know is, what's a Halley's Comet?" Tom Blankenship asked.

"Well, a Halley's Comet is something like a shooting star," Sam explained. "Only a lot bigger. Its gold tail stretches clean across the sky."

"I'd mighty like to see that," Tom said.
"My mother told me it streaked over real low the year I was born," Sam bragged. "Folks said it was a sign."

"Sign of what?" Tom's eyes were round with wonder.

His Negro friends on the levee and poor whites in shanty boats had told him a lot about signs and spells. Deathwatch beetles and howling dogs were always signs of bad luck. But a gold-tailed comet ought to bring good luck.

"Ma didn't say," Sam admitted. "Likely it's a sign I'm going to live till Halley's Comet comes back again. That ought to give me a nice long life. A hundred years maybe."

"You just think you're some," Jimmy McDaniel jeered. He was worrying about playing hookey, and blaming Sam. "We'll get switched tomorrow," he predicted gloomily.

"Hush your big mouth," Sam told him. "You just ought to be glad our old schoolmarm don't board over at your house like she does at mine. She'll tell my folks right out at the supper table..."

"Then you'll catch it, won't you?" Will asked.

Sam nodded. He knew exactly how it would be. Pa would look at him. Somehow, a look from Pa was worse than a whipping any day to Sam. He decided right then and there that he'd better just skip supper that night.
it streaked over real.

"Folks
on the levee and poor
had told him a lot about
watch beetles and howl
ons of bad luck. But a
to bring good luck.
Sam admitted. "Likely
live till Halley's Comet
ought to give me a nice
ears maybe."
're some," Jimmy Mc
worrying about playing
'We'll get switched
gloomily.
h," Sam told him. "You
old schoolmarm don't
like she does at mine.
at out at the supper
it, won't you?" Will
ew exactly how it would
. Somehow, a look from
any day to Sam.
d there that he'd
that night.

"How about a swim?" he asked.
"A drown, you mean." Jimmy thought his
own words were so funny that he almost laughed
a loose tooth right out of his head.
"The laugh's on you," Sam said cheerfully.
"I can swim now as good as you can. It came
easy after Tom gave me this certain-sure charm
against cramp."

Tom blushed with pleasure when Sam showed
off the ring of rattlesnake rattles wound
around his ankle.

Swimming had not come naturally to Sam.
He wasn't careful enough to stay in the shallows
till he learned. So he had been hauled out of
depth water again and again, practically dead.
"How many times was you drowned?" asked
Arch Fuqua.

"Nine, by my count," Sam drawled. "That
makes me cousin to the cat with nine lives."
"I s'pose you think that's special----
being cousin to a cat," Jimmy teased.
"Are you trying to pick a fight?" Sam
demanded. "I like cats."

Jimmy didn't really want trouble. He
pulled a dusty licorice whip out of his pocket
to share with the boys.

For a while the silence was only broken
by chewing noises. Sam began to day-dream
about the wonderful things he would do when he became a man. He was forever changing his mind, trying to decide whether to be sheriff or pirate or Indian scout when he grew up. But his favorite dream was the one he was dreaming now.

"Sawyer... Chalmers... Montgomery..." he mumbled through a wad of licorice.

"Huh? Is that a charm?" Tom asked hopefully.

"Nope," Sam said. "I'm trying on a new name for when I get to be captain of the Big Missouri."

"You can't go changing your name," Jimmy argued.


"Golly, I'd like to get me a short name," Tom Blankenship said. "So's I could learn to write it in case anybody left me their money and I had to sign a paper to get it."

"Let's see..." Sam said thoughtfully. "How about Finn? It's easy---look?" Sam scratched the word "Finn" in the mud with his big toe.

Tom gazed at it respectfully. "I reckon I could learn that. Then what'll I do with Blankenship?"

"Blankenship," Sam repeated slowly. "Hey, that would make a fine name for a steamboat captain!"
"You can have it any time you want. "Tom said. "I'll give it to you free for nothing, because you're my friend."

Sam was pleased. Arch Fuqua gave his big toe an extra-loud crack. Then, all of a sudden, a distant yell brought the boys scrambling to their feet.

"STEEAMM-BOAT a-coming!"

Every day the Negro drayman, John Hannicks, was first to spot a smudge of smoke way up past the point. His shout always brought the whole sleepy town on the run. The five boys lit out for the levee. They got there ahead of everybody else.

The Big Missouri gave a fine show as she came down the river. Her twin smokestacks streamed black clouds. Bells rang. Gagecock screamed. Her paddle boxes were newly gilded. Furnace doors were flung open, and the fires which had been freshly stocked with pitch pine reddened the whole mile-wide Mississippi River.

Tom and Will, Arch and Jimmy, all feasted their eyes on the boat. So did Sam Clemens. But in his mind he was not Sam Clemens any longer. He was the gallant Captain Blankenship up on the Big Missouri's hurricane deck. He was shouting orders, and hearing leadsman call the soundings.
10.

"Mark twain!" yelled the leadsman.
That meant the water was two fathoms, or
twelve feet deep. The Big Missouri needed
nine feet of river under her, so at "mark
twain" she was in safe water.

When the steamboat churned on downstream,
Will and Arch and Jimmy went home to their
suppers. Tom Blankenship toted a traveler's
carpetbag to Old Man Coleman's tavern. But
Sam Clemens went on standing on the levee till
the night settled down all round him.

"Mark Twain!" he said aloud to himself.
"I think that would make a fine name for
somebody."

Howard, Joan. The Story of Mark Twain.
New York: Grosset and Dunlap,
1953. Pg. 3-15.
The Mississippi

by Dawn Novreske
Morganza Floodway.
The Mississippi River has played a large part in the development and settlement of both the North American continent and the United States. It molds the shape of men's lives. Men mold the shape of it, also.

The Mississippi River is the coming together of many small rivers called tributaries. Tributaries are rivers and streams which feed a large river like the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River has tributaries from 31 different states and two provinces of Canada. These tributaries range from the Ohio River and
r has played a large
and settlement of both
ment and the United
ape of men's lives.
also.

is the coming to-
ers called tributaries.
nd streams which feed
issippi River.
s tributaries from
wo provinces of Canada.
from the Ohio River and

Missouri River to smaller rivers like the
Big Sunflower River.

The Mississippi River splits the United
States into two parts. On the east side the
soil is moist, and rich. The west side
provides us with an arid, prairie climate.

The Mississippi River touches approximately
ten different states. Starting at the beginning
of the river Lake Itasca, Minnesota, it flows
southeastward towards the Minnesota and
Wisconsin borders. From there it flows along
the borders of Iowa, Missouri and Arkansas

on the west and the
Illinois, Kentucky,
Tennessee and Miss-
issippi borders on
the east. Finally,
it flows along the
eastern border and
into the toe portion
of Louisiana, towards
the Gulf of Mexico.
3.

With as much water as pours into the river, flooding is most likely to occur. The area in which this flooding occurs is known as an alluvial plane or valley. It is one of the richest sources of soil. This is caused by flooding. As the water goes back into the riverbed, it leaves very rich soil. The problem with flooding is that it destroys everything in its path. Today, engineers work to solve the problem of this flooding. The U.S. government has established commissions and agencies to control the river and protect the people living in the flood area.
pours into the river, to occur. The area is known as an.

It is one of the

This is caused by

goes back into the rich soil. The

The Mississippi River and its tributaries form a large portion of our transportation system today, just as in the past. A large amount of supplies and people moved along this river.

In 1705, the first cargo was floated down the Mississippi River from the states of Indiana and Ohio. It contained 15,000 bears and deer hides. They ended up in France by way of the Atlantic Ocean.

Eventually the settlers of this new land found the Indian canoe lacking. They built flatboats and rafts. These were built and loaded upstream, floated downstream, unloaded, taken apart, and sold for lumber. The keelboat was the first
two-way boat on the Mississippi. It was floated down the river and towed up the river by men on the shore.

River travel became easier in the early nineteenth century when the steamboat was invented. The first steamboat to travel the Mississippi was the New Orleans. It made its maiden trip in 1812, arriving in New Orleans on January 12, 1812. The steamboat could haul supplies and be comfortable for the passengers. The crew no longer had to drag the boat back up the river. It could go up the river as easily as it went down. The most notable thing about the steamboat was the time it took for travel. Before steamboats, it took up to four months to go from Louisville to New Orleans, in 1820 in 20 days, in 1836 in 6 days.
The riverboats played their biggest role in commerce during this time. By late nineteenth century, the railroads had almost taken over. Today, commerce is carried on by diesel-driven boats, which are much more powerful. Today, many of the boats used on the river are used for recreation and preservation of the past.

How did we come upon this great river? Some believe the first white man to see this river was Christopher Columbus. The first men to see and actually record it were Hernando DeSoto and Garciliaso de la Vega in 1541. Vega described the river as a flood of great
great severity and of prolonged length of time. The flooded areas were described as extending 20 leagues on each side of the river.

Joliet and Marquette were the first to travel from the beginning, one-hundred and twenty years after DeSoto. They got as far as Arkansas City, Arkansas. Next came LaSalle, who traveled the whole length of the Mississippi.

Today, people travel the full length of the Mississippi for adventure, fun and a challenge. In the past, the top most reasons were for survival, making a living and settling the United States.
The commerce of the river, though sparse in comparison to the past, was important during World War II. It carried gasoline, oil, sulphur and other supplies needed for the war effort, and 3,943 destroyer escorts, fleet submarines, landing crafts, freighters, tankers, and ocean-going tugs were brought from inland shipyards, where they were built.

Recently, river commerce has increased greatly. There are many reasons for this. Towboat (a boat which tows barges and other boats) and barge (a flat platform boat) building had improved. Much of what is carried on the barges includes grains, coal, petroleum products, sand and gravel, salt, chemicals, and building materials.
Questions for Discussion:

1. How has the Mississippi River changed in the past?

2. How has its transportation changed?

3. Who was Hernando DeSoto?
4. What is a tributary?

5. What was the New Orleans?

6. Name and describe the different kinds of boats that travel the Mississippi River?

7. How is the Mississippi used today?

8. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of flooding along the Mississippi.

9. Name the states along the Mississippi River.

10. How did the steamboat travel time change?
Glossary:

Alluvial plane or valley-Flood areas along a river.

Barges- A long, flat-bottomed boat.

Canoe - A light, slender boat with pointed ends, propelled by paddles.

Commerce - The buying and selling of goods.

Continent - A large land mass.

Diesel-driven - Moved by an engine using diesel gasoline.

Flatboat - Flat-bottomed boat used for carrying freight.

Keelboat - Flat sailboat-type barge.

Leagues - A unit of distance equal to 3 miles.

Maiden Trip - First trip.

Provinces - Similar to a state.

Raft - A flat boat built of logs and lumber.

Steamboat - A large boat driven by a steam engine.

Towboat - A boat which tows barges and other boats.

Tributaries - Rivers and streams which feed a larger river.
ley-Flood areas along a
topped boat.
der boat with pointed ends,
and selling of goods.
and mass.
by an engine using diesel
ked boat used for carrying
at-type barge.
stance equal to 3 miles.
ip.
a state.
It of logs and lumber.
at driven by a steam engine.
tows barges and other boats;
streams which feed a

Bibliography

Water Resources Development in Louisiana 1981
Vicksburg, MS: The U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers, Lower Mississippi Valley
Division. No copyright date available.

Water Resources Development in Mississippi 1981
Vicksburg, MS: The U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers, Lower Mississippi Valley
Division. No copyright date available.

Map received from the Mississippi River
Commission Corps of Engineers.