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## The adventures of tom sawyer chapter 1-3 summary

Tom's pursuit of his "Adored Unknown" (we find out later that the girl's name is Becky Thatcher) also helps to pinpoint his level of maturity. The fact that he is interested in a girl shows him to be mature compared to his friends, but his "showing off" for Becky, along with his melodramatic desire to die under her window after Aunt Polly falsely blames him for breaking the sugar bowl, spring from the sensitivity and sensibility of a young boy. Furthermore, the fluidity of Tom's imagination—he moves with ease from one game or occupation to the next—testifies to his youthful manner of experiencing the world. This Study Guide consists of approximately 82 pages of chapter summaries, quotes, character analysis, themes, and more - everything you need to sharpen your knowledge of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. This section contains 613 words (approx. 2 pages at 400 words per page) The old woman is looking high and low and is calling out for the boy, Tom. Aunt Polly looks under the bed, in the garden, and finally in a closet from which he emerges and she is quick enough to grab him. By looking at his face, she can tell he has been in the jam and scolds him and just when she thinks she has him for good, he tells her to look behind her and when she does, he escapes. Tom's aunt knows full well that he will play hooky for the rest of the day but he is out of her grasp. Polly scolds herself for not being wise to his tricks by now. Tom is her dead sister's son and she has taken him to raise and is trying to do good by him, but he is... (read more from the Chapters 1 and 2 Summary) This section contains 613 words (approx. 2 pages at 400 words per page) Copyrights The Adventures of Tom Sawyer from Gale. ©2005-2006 Thomson Gale, a part of the Thomson Corporation. All rights reserved. As the book begins, an old woman is calling for Tom Sawyer. This woman is Tom's Aunt Polly. He is in trouble, and she's going to give Tom a whipping. Before she can, however, he yells, "My! Look behind you, Aunt!" Chapter 1, pg. 2 and dashes away. Aunt Polly, being a kind woman, laughs at Tom's escape. Assuming he will play hooky from school that afternoon, she decides it's best just to put him to work all day Saturday as punishment. When Tom returns, he helps Jim, "the small colored boy," saw wood and split kindling before dinner. Tom spends most of this time letting Jim work and telling him of his day's adventures. Sid, Tom's half brother, is already done with his chores; unlike Tom, he is very well-behaved. At dinner, Aunt Polly asks Tom about his day. Tom has spent the afternoon swimming, but he is prepared for Aunt Polly. He tells her that he got his hair wet under a pump, and then shows her that his shirt-collar is still sewn shut. Sid speaks up and points out that Aunt Polly used white thread to sew Tom's shirt, but now the thread is black. Tom sewed his collar together again after swimming! Tom dashes out the door before Aunt Polly can scold him, threatening Sid as he goes. Topic Tracking: Growing Up 1 "He was not the Model Boy of the village. He knew the model boy very well though--and loathed him." Chapter 1, pg. 4 Once Tom is away, he forgets his problems and wanders, whistling as he goes, until he sees a boy he's never seen before. The boy is dressed very nicely, unlike most boys who live in St. Petersburg. This boy has new clothes and a fancy hat and shoes, and Tom resents his clean, "citified" look. The two boys argue, shove, and threaten each other, and then fight. Tom makes the boy give up, but as the boy walks away he throws a rock at Tom. Tom chases the boy home and stays there until the boy's mother chases him off. When Tom gets home, Aunt Polly looks at his clothes and decides that Tom will do a full day of chores the next day. Chapter 1 Aunt Polly is searching the house for Tom, her dead sister's son, who lives with her. She finds him hiding in a closet, his mouth covered in jam. She is about to cane Tom when he cries, "Look behind you, Aunt!" As her attention is distracted, he escapes over the garden fence. Aunt Polly reflects on Tom's mischievous nature. She feels guilty for not disciplining him better, but on the other hand, when she does give him a beating, her heart almost breaks. She plans to make him work the following day to punish him. It will be a Saturday, and the other boys will be enjoying a day off. Tom returns to help Jim, the black slave boy, saw the firewood. Tom's younger half-brother, Sid, is also helping. During supper, Aunt Polly questions Tom to try to find out if he has skipped school that afternoon to go swimming, as she suspects. He says that he pumped water on his head, which explains why it is damp. She inspects his collar and sees that it is still sewn up, confirming his claim that he has not gone swimming, as he would have had to unpick the sewing in order to remove his shirt. Aunt Polly seems convinced. But Sid points out that Aunt Polly used white thread, and now the thread on Tom's collar is black. Tom escapes from the house again, angry with Sid for betraying him. He knows he is not "the model boy of the village," but he knows the boy who is, and loathes him. As Tom is wandering along the street, he meets an overdressed boy. Tom provokes the boy and the two insult each other until a fight breaks out. Tom gets the better of the boy, who runs off home. Tom follows him and loiters outside the boy's house until he is driven off by the boy's mother. Tom arrives home late and creeps in through the window. He is caught by Aunt Polly, who is more determined than before to make him work the next day. Chapter 2 It is Saturday, and Tom is whitewashing the fence as his punishment. He sees Jim setting off to fetch water from the pump. Because there will be other children at the pump, Tom thinks he would prefer to fetch water than to whitewash. He tries to persuade Jim to swap jobs with him, offering him the bribe of a marble. Jim is tempted, but Aunt Polly appears and chases Jim off to the pump. Tom returns to whitewashing, but is soon distracted by the thought of the other boys enjoying their freedom. He examines his store of treasures (toys, marbles and other objects) but decides he does not have enough to bribe another boy to do the whitewashing for him. A boy, Ben Rogers, passes by. Tom pretends to Ben that he likes whitewashing the fence. Ben is taken in by Tom's ruse and asks to be allowed to take over. Tom pretends reluctance as Aunt Polly is so "particular" about the fence. Ben bribes Tom with an apple to let him whitewash, and Tom agrees, taking care not to show his delight. Throughout the day, several boys arrive and give Tom their treasures in order to be allowed to have a turn at whitewashing the fence. Tom ends the day with a hoard of treasures, a perfectly whitewashed fence, and having enjoyed plenty of company. He reflects that "in order to make a man or boy covet a thing, it is only necessary to make the thing difficult to obtain." Chapter 3 Aunt Polly is astonished to find that the fence is finished, and lets Tom go out. On his way out, he throws clods of earth at Sid in revenge for his telling Aunt Polly about the shirt collar. He goes to the town square, where there are two groups of boys who fight mock battles: one led by Tom, the other by his friend Joe Harper. Tom's army wins that day's battle. On his way home, Tom passes the Thatchers' house, and sees a beautiful girl in the garden. It is Becky Thatcher. He is instantly smitten by her, forgetting his previous beloved, Amy Lawrence. He begins to show off to gain Becky's attention. As she disappears into her house, she throws him a flower, which he picks up and keeps, taking care not to let anyone see him. Tom walks home. Sid breaks the sugar bowl while stealing sugar. Aunt Polly assumes that Tom broke it and punishes him. Sunk in self-pity, Tom imagines himself dying and Aunt Polly begging him to forgive her. He wonders how she would feel if he died without saying the words she longed to hear. He walks to Becky Thatcher's house, takes out the flower she threw to him, lies down under her window and fantasizes about dying there. His reverie is cut short when a maid opens the window and throws waste water over him. Drenched, Tom returns home and goes to bed without saying his prayers, an omission of which Sid takes note. Analysis of Chapters 1-3 These chapters set up the relationship between Aunt Polly and Tom. Tom is the wayward boy, and Aunt Polly the disciplinarian - though it is a role that does not come easily to her. Aunt Polly knows that she should punish Tom when he misbehaves, but her warm heart often gets the better of her and she lets him off, only to feel guilty for spoiling him. She feels a mixture of exasperation at Tom's mischievousness and love and compassion for him, especially as he is the orphaned son of her dead sister. Tom emerges from these chapters as something of a leader, partly because he is more psychologically astute than his peers. He manages to palm off the hated job of whitewashing the fence onto other boys - and get paid in treasures into the bargain - by making it seem like a privilege that is "difficult to obtain." While from the point of view of the adult world, Tom is a rule-breaker, he and the other children have their own system of values, morals and rules. This value system is often at odds with the adult system. For example, while adults approve of children who are well behaved and conform to adult rules, such children are not necessarily popular among their peers, and certainly not with Tom. Tom is "not the model boy of the village" and "loathes" the boy who is. He also fights a new boy for being unacceptably well dressed. Tom's younger half-brother Sid is "a quiet boy, and had no adventurours, troublesome ways," but he comes over as an untrustworthy sneak who betrays Tom's misdemeanors to Aunt Polly. Tom is not fond of Sid, and pelts him with clods for his betrayal. Tom and Sid are contrasting characters, in that Tom is badly behaved but essentially good-hearted, whereas Sid's good behavior conceals malice in his heart. A theme that highlights the contrast between the adult and children's world is that of freedom. Good behavior (as defined by adults) entails a loss of freedom. It means whitewashing the fence on Saturday, not being able to eat jam when you feel like it, having to stay in school when the weather is too hot for anything except going swimming, and dressing in ridiculous and restrictive clothes like the new boy's. The adult and children's worlds are not always at odds, however. One way in which the children's system mirrors the adult system is economics. The children's system is based on "treasures" such as marbles and odd bits of trash, which stand in place of money and which they use to barter with each other. In a sense, this prepares them to enter the adult world. Also, the games played by Tom and his friends, and the superstitions they observe, are completely hedged in by rules every bit as strict as those imposed by adults. The moral status of the adults in Tom Sawyer is ambiguous, to say the least. We do not gain the impression that the adults always guide the children in wisdom, judgment and maturity. In this respect, Tom Sawyer stands in revolutionary contrast with much traditional nineteenth century literature, which was written to keep children in line and obey their 'elders and betters.' In the relationship between Aunt Polly and Tom, for example, Aunt Polly struggles to retain her authority and is often unsure whether she is doing the right thing. Frequently, it is Tom who is in control, as Aunt Polly says in Chapter 1: "He 'pears to know just how long he can torment me before I get my dander up." Later in the novel, we learn that many adult rules are governed not by what is right, but by hypocrisy, vanity and other human foibles.





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