



Huckleberry Finn Social Conformity and Irony

Mark Twain draws portraits of ordinary people who conform to the values of respectable society and then uses irony to undercut those same values. *Irony* is an unexpected twist or contradiction in a story or situation. Irony oftentimes creates humor, but the humor may seem bittersweet. Complete this chart to explore Twain's attitudes toward social conformity and how they are expressed through irony in the novel.

Situation	Ideas, Beliefs, and Values That the Character Expresses	Irony
Miss Watson threatens Huck with hell if he doesn't behave. Chapter 1	Christianity	Miss Watson owns slaves.
Pap Finn goes to court to get control of Huck's money. Chapter 5	Parental rights	Pap is a violent drunkard and completely unfit as a parent.
The Grangerford females create art and poetry. Chapter 17		
Slaves owned by the Grangerfords hide Jim and help him escape. Chapter 18		
Huck prevents the con artists from pulling off a con. Chapters 27–29		
Jim is captured and escapes again but comes back to save Tom's life. Chapters 41–42		
Tom tells Jim that Miss Watson died and freed him in her will. Last chapter		

RL.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.5 Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

RL.11-12.6 Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

W. 11-12.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.