

Name _____
English 11

Date _____
Period _____

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Head and Heart – Chapter 31



Objectives: (a) To understand what factors influence Huck Fin in making decisions (b) To realize the innate goodness of Huck as opposed to the pretense of goodness in society.

For all the light-hearted play and nonsense, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a serious book with a serious message. Huck is confronted with important decisions that have grave consequences. His greatest dilemma is presented in chapter 31, "You Can't Pray a Lie." Huck does not know what to do about Jim's situation. The reader sympathizes with Huck when he says, "I thought till I wore my head sore."

Although people possess a certain innate sense of good and evil, morality (knowing right from wrong) is also learned from parents, teachers, friends, and society and then applied to specific life situations.

Wrestlin' with Right 'n' Wrong

Part A. Directions: For each category in the left-hand column, recall an example from Huck's life, and write it in the right hand column. In the box next to each number in the right hand column, put a plus sign (+) if you think it was a good learning experience for Huck; if it was a bad experience or if it did not exist, mark a minus sign (-). Briefly explain your choices.

Children Learn Right From Wrong Through:	Examples from Huck's Life
1. Their parents as models to imitate	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Promises or rewards for good actions	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Threats or punishments for bad actions	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Acceptance by others	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Rejection by others	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Experiences such as guilt and success	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Teachers in school	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Religious instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Society's Laws	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Social Custom	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Personal experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part B. THINK ABOUT IT:

- How do Huck's two decisions differ from each other?
- Which is the morally right decision? Why?
- Does Huck know it is right?
- Does Huck use his heart or his head or both to make the final decision?
- What makes Huck a moral person?
- What makes *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* a moral book even though it describes such immorality as murder, stealing, and slavery, and it includes some vulgar language?