

# moralhf Huckleberry Finn's Struggles with Conscience

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## Huckleberry Finn's Struggles with Conscience

Since Mark Twain published *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in 1885, critics have considered it an excellent example of a story tracing the journey of a young man from childhood to adulthood. Through the years, readers have enjoyed seeing Huck grow from a young, carefree boy into a responsible young man with a decent sense of right and wrong. The "adventures" appeal to readers who had to make some of the same tough decisions Huck did in struggles with conscience.

When readers first meet Huck, he is living with the Widow Douglas

and trying his best to conform to her rules. For example, when he wanted to smoke, "She said it was a mean practice and wasn't clean, and I must not try to do it any more" (4). Huck's [immaturity](#) shows in his reaction to her rule. He felt that she was "finding a power of fault in me for doing a thing that had some good in it" (4). Huck is struggling with his conscience early in the novel. He knows that the widow is right, but his reaction is still childish.

Another character who tries to help Huck is the widow's sister, Miss [Watson](#), who lives with them and was trying to teach Huck [spelling](#).

From Huck's standpoint, "Miss Watson she kept on pecking at me, and it got tiresome lonesome" (5). Huck's immaturity is obvious as he expresses his dislike of how Miss Watson wanted him to sit up straight and stop fidgeting. Huck's immaturity is clear in the beginning of the book.

All of Huck's discipline leaves his life as the book progresses, and Huck's father shows up to take him to live in a cabin in the woods.

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...ore everybody. I couldn't

understand it no way at all. It was outrageous . . . " (224-25). This is one of Huck's more mature statements in the novel. He knows how smart Tom Sawyer is and does not understand why Tom would not put his talent to good use.

Readers begin to see a different Huckleberry Finn towards the end

of the book. Instead of an immature, self-centered boy who broke many rules, Huck had changed into a person who began to care about others and turned out to be an individual who was a good human being in general. It is this change from a boy into a man through a series of struggles with conscience that makes *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* a favorite of people of all ages.

#### Work Cited

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1999

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