MAR GREGORIOS COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCE

Block No.8, College Road, Mogappair West, Chennai – 37

Affiliated to the University of Madras
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An ISO 9001:2015 Certified Institution

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

SUBJECT NAME: AMERICAN LITERATURE-I

SEMESTER: IV

PREPARED BY: PROF. INDHUMATHY

Objectives: To introduce the students to the evolution of American literature through the studyof pioneering texts.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course, students will be able to

● Trace the origin and history of American Literature
● Understand and explain the cultural, political, and stylistic protocols that governed early American literature, the impact of Puritanism and significance of Transcendentalism using prescribed texts
● Assess thematic aspects of literary texts as a part of cultural and historical movements in America

Course Components

UNIT 1: Poetry

1.1 “Prologue”
Anne Bradstreet
1.2 “Brahma”
R. W. Emerson
1.3“The Broken Oar”
Henry W Longfellow
1.4 “Because I could not stop for Death
Emily Dickinson
1.5 "Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night"
Walt Whitman
1.6 “Sparrow”
Paul Laurence Dunbar
1.7 “The Raggedy Man”
James Whitcomb Riley
1.8 “The Anti-Suffragists”

UNIT 2: Prose
2.1 “Where I Lived, and What I Lived For”
H.D. Thoreau
2.2 “The Philosophy of Composition” Edgar Allan Poe
2.3 “The American Scholar”
R. W. Emerson
[Excerpt:Paragraphbeginning„In this view of him as Man Thinking…‟ to the lines ending… „popular judgments and mode of action.‟–Education of the American writer by nature, books and action]
2.4 “The Slaves' New Year's Day” Harriet

UNIT 3: Drama
3.1 Trifles
Susan Keating Glaspell

UNIT 4: Short Story
4.1 “The Murders at the Rue Morgue”
Edgar Allen Poe
4.2 “Jim Baker‟s Blue Jay‟s Yarn”
Mark Twain

4.3 “The Luck of Roaring Camp”
Bret Harte
4.4 “Regret”
Kate Chopin

UNIT 5: Fiction
5.1 Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
Mark Twain

Prescribed Texts:

- The Norton Anthology of American Literature, Vol. C, Baym,Nina et al. Fifth Avenue, New York-17, U.S.A., 2012.
- Norton Anthology of American Literature, Vol. D, Fifth Avenue, New York-17, U.S.A.
- Norton Anthology of American Literature, Vol. E, Fifth Avenue, New York-17, U.S.A.
- Short Story Masterpieces, Five American Masters, Jaico Pub.House, Mumbai- 23, 2003.
- 1.5 https://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/poems/raggedy-man
- 1.8 https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/52090/the-anti-suffragists

2.3http://digitalemerson.wsulibs.wsu.edu/exhibits/show/text/the-american-scholar

- 4.4 https://americanliterature.com/author/kate-chopin/short-story/regret
- 5.1 http://www.gutenberg.org/files/642/642-h/642-h.htm

Further Reading: (can be considered for Term Paper and Passage Analysis)
1. “Song of Myself” & “I hear America Singing” by Walt Whitman
2. “Of Deserts” by Herman Melville
3. “Virtue” by Phillis Wheatley
4. “On Women‟s Right to Vote” by Susan B. Anthony
5. “Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl” by Harriet Jacobs
6. “The Fall of the House of Usher” by Edgar Allan Poe
7. “Young Goodman Brown” by Nathaniel Hawthorne
8. “Brown Wolf” by Jack London
9. “Chikamauga” by Ambrose Bierce
10. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain
11. The Bridge of San Luis Rey by Thornton Wilder

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

Unit I: Poetry

1. **“Prologue” by Anne Bradstreet**

Prologue

BY ANNE BRADSTREET

To sing of Wars, of Captains, and of Kings,

Of Cities founded, Common-wealths begun,

For my mean Pen are too superior things;

Or how they all, or each their dates have run,

Let Poets and Historians set these forth.

My obscure lines shall not so dim their worth.

But when my wond'ring eyes and envious heart

Great Bartas' sugar'd lines do but read o'er,

Fool, I do grudge the Muses did not part

'Twixt him and me that over-fluent store.

A Bartas can do what a Bartas will

But simple I according to my skill.

From School-boy's tongue no Rhet'ric we expect,

Nor yet a sweet Consort from broken strings,

Nor perfect beauty where's a main defect.

My foolish, broken, blemished Muse so sings,

And this to mend, alas, no Art is able,

'Cause Nature made it so irreparable.

Nor can I, like that fluent sweet-tongued Greek

Who lisp'd at first, in future times speak plain.

By Art he gladly found what he did seek,

A full requital of his striving pain.

Art can do much, but this maxim's most sure:

A weak or wounded brain admits no cure.

I am obnoxious to each carping tongue

Who says my hand a needle better fits.

A Poet's Pen all scorn I should thus wrong,

For such despite they cast on female wits.

If what I do prove well, it won't advance,

They'll say it'sstol'n, or else it was by chance.

But sure the antique Greeks were far more mild,

Else of our Sex, why feigned they those nine

And poesy made Calliope's own child?

So 'mongst the rest they placed the Arts divine,

But this weak knot they will full soon untie.

The Greeks did nought but play the fools and lie.

Let Greeks be Greeks, and Women what they are.

Men have precedency and still excel;

It is but vain unjustly to wage war.

Men can do best, and Women know it well.

Preeminence in all and each is yours;

Yet grant some small acknowledgement of ours.

And oh ye high flown quills that soar the skies,

And ever with your prey still catch your praise,

If e'er you deign these lowly lines your eyes,

Give thyme or Parsley wreath, I ask no Bays.

This mean and unrefined ore of mine

Will make your glist'ring gold but more to shine.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

The poet does not think she will write about wars, captains, kings, or cities of commonwealths. She believes that these topics are too "superior" for her pen, and should be written by historians. Her lines, meanwhile, would be too "obscure."

However, when she lets her eyes wander over Bartas' work, she wishes the Muses had not given him so much more talent. She feels that her work is simple compared to the work of that great man. She claims that readers do not expect fancy words from schoolboys or sweet music from broken instruments, and blames her Muse for giving her "broken, blemished" words.

She does not think she is capable of ever harnessing Bartas' talent, and feels that a "weak or wounded brain admits no cure." She is angry, however, with people who tell her that her hand is better with a needle in it, and advise her to scorn the "poet's pen." Even if she does write something worthy, she knows that critics will say she copied it with or that her success is just due to luck.

The poet thinks that the Greeks must have been more "mild" toward feminine achievement because of all the powerful female characters in mythology. However, she criticizes Greek men, saying the "play the fools and lie." She just asks for Greeks to be Greeks and for women to be women. She accepts that men "have precenency, and still excell," and feels that there is no point for women to wage war on that reality. She hopes, though, that women will get some small acknowledgment. She does not want "bays" but will be content with a "thyme or parsley wreath." She knows that her ore is "unrefined," but knows that she can still make "glistening gold" shine.

2. “Brahma” by R.W. Emerson

He begins by stating that any "slayer" who really believes that he is killing, and equally any "slain" person who truly believes he is dead, does not understand the "subtle ways" of Brahma, who stays, turns, and returns continually.

Brahma goes on to explain his universality in terms of opposites. To him, "shadow and sunlight" are the same thing, and gods thought "vanished" by others are visible to him.

Those who do not pause to consider Brahma have thought poorly and made bad decisions. Brahma explains that he is everything—he is doubt, and he is the one who doubts; he is the hymn sung by the Brahmins. It is Brahma who is encapsulated by every human experience, and Brahma who is praised by those who are seeking spirits.

The "strong gods," Brahma says, yearn to live where Brahma lives—which is to say, everywhere. At the end of the poem, Brahma urges the reader, a person who loves "the good," to seek out Brahma and pursue him, rather than "heaven." We can recognize the sentiment here from other transcendentalist poetry of Emerson's—he is urging the reader to seek satisfaction and, indeed, self-reliance on earth, in this life, rather than living for some far-off spiritual future.

3. “The Broken Oar” by Henry W Longfellow

Once upon Iceland's solitary strand

A poet wandered with his book and pen,

Seeking some final word, some sweet Amen,

Wherewith to close the volume in his hand.

The billows rolled and plunged upon the sand,

The circling sea-gulls swept beyond his ken,

And from the parting cloud-rack now and then

Flashed the red sunset over sea and land.

Then by the billows at his feet was tossed

A broken oar; and carved thereon he read,

'Oft was I weary, when I toiled at thee';

And like a man, who findeth what was lost,

He wrote the words, then lifted up his head,

And flung his useless pen into the sea.

4. "Because I could not stop the Death" by Emily Dickinson

In the first lines of the poem, the speaker uses the famous line "Because I could not stop for Death,/ He kindly stopped for me". This phrase hints at the personification that is going to be utilized throughout the stanzas to describe the experience of entering the afterlife. Death stopped for the speaker and helped her into the carriage that held "just ourselves/ And Immortality".

They drove along the lane and the speaker takes note of what she sees around her. She was in the process of putting away the life she knew and allowing this next stage of existence to take over. They pass a school, fields, and the setting sun (a very obvious symbol of death). The poem concludes with the speaker saying that it has been centuries since all this occurred and she first realized the horse's heads were pointed toward "eternity".

5. "Vigil Strange I kept on the Field One Night" by Walt Whitman

Vigil strange I kept on the field one night;

When you my son and my comrade dropt at my side that day,

One look I but gave which your dear eyes return'd with a look I shall never forget,

One touch of your hand to mine O boy, reach'd up as you lay on the ground,

Then onward I sped in the battle, the even-contested battle,

Till late in the night reliev'd to the place at last again I made my way,

Found you in death so cold dear comrade, found your body son of responding kisses, (never again on earth responding,)

Bared your face in the starlight, curious the scene, cool blew the moderate night-wind,

Long there and then in vigil I stood, dimly around me the battle-field spreading,

Vigil wondrous and vigil sweet there in the fragrant silent night,

But not a tear fell, not even a long-drawn sigh, long, long I gazed,

Then on the earth partially reclining sat by your side leaning my chin in my hands,

Passing sweet hours, immortal and mystic hours with you dearest comrade—not a tear, not a word,

Vigil of silence, love and death, vigil for you my son and my soldier,

As onward silently stars aloft, eastward new ones upward stole,

Vigil final for you brave boy, (I could not save you, swift was your death,

I faithfully loved you and cared for you living, I think we shall surely meet again,)

Till at latest lingering of the night, indeed just as the dawn appear'd,

My comrade I wrapt in his blanket, envelop'd well his form,

Folded the blanket well, tucking it carefully over head and carefully under feet,

And there and then and bathed by the rising sun, my son in his grave, in his rude-dug grave I deposited,

Ending my vigil strange with that, vigil of night and battle-field dim,

Vigil for boy of responding kisses, (never again on earth responding,)

Vigil for comrade swiftly slain, vigil I never forget, how as day brighten'd,

I rose from the chill ground and folded my soldier well in his blanket,

And buried him where he fell.

"Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night" (1865) was first published in Walt Whitman's Drum-Taps (1865). The poems in the Drum-Taps volume, along with those in Sequel to Drum-Taps (1865–1866), were eventually incorporated into Leaves of Grass, where most of them, including "Vigil Strange," ended up in the "Drum-Taps" cluster.

The poem relates a Civil War incident that the poet may either have witnessed or experienced when he visited the front; however, critics do not agree as to the source of the incident that served as the impetus for the poem. Emory Holloway believes that Whitman is the first person narrator in the poem. Holloway suggests that Whitman may have lived the incident in the poem when he went to Culpepper, Virginia, in the company of General Lyman Hapgood. Holloway alleges that during the visit to the front Whitman "kept vigil all night with the body of a fallen comrade" (219). On the other hand, M. Wynn Thomas ascribes the narration to a persona invented by Whitman. He reads the poem literally and states that both the father and the son are soldiers. When the son is killed the father advances in battle and then, at the end of the day, returns to the scene of the son's death and buries him "where he fell." Whitman may have meant for the soldier to be a composite American. Whatever his intent, the poem's power lies in its dramatic narrative.

The poem is a dramatic monologue in which the narrator feels all the emotional impact of his comrade's death, yet he seems to transcend to a spiritual level. He carries out his "vigil" in the starlight, feeling the "cool . . . moderate night-wind." The repetition of the word "vigil" from the title throughout the poem becomes the "central 'meaning'" (Miller, Critical 159). The narrator must surely feel anguish as he returns to his fallen companion, yet no anguish is overtly expressed. Only the lonely "vigil of night and battlefield dim" fills the thoughts of the narrator. The speaker, the dead comrade, and the universe are linked by the experience. As the soldier waits under the stars for the dawn, he is aware of his comrade's death and that he is powerless to save a person whom he cared for and loved. "I think," the narrator states, "we shall surely meet again." That line in the poem marks a change in the narrator's voice. Until then he speaks directly to the dead "son-soldier," but after that line to the end of the poem, the narrator speaks not to the dead comrade, but in a detached voice refers to the comrade in third person as he goes about burying the body. Miller regards this poem as "one of the really great poems in the language".

6. "Sparrow" by Paul Lawrence Dunbar

A little bird, with plumage brown,

Beside my window flutters down,

A moment chirps its little strain,

Ten taps upon my window–pane,

And chirps again, and hops along,

To call my notice to its song;

But I work on, nor heed its lay,

Till, in neglect, it flies away.

So birds of peace and hope and love

Come fluttering earthward from above,

To settle on life's window–sills,

And ease our load of earthly ills;

But we, in traffic's rush and din

Too deep engaged to let them in,

With deadened heart and sense plod on,

Nor know our loss till they are gone.

This visit be the little bird probably

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doesn't last long at all, and it reminds me of how fleeting moments like this can be. Suppose we could think for example of moments when the sun comes out from behind a cloud, or a rainbow appears in the sky, however faintly. But there is something also about our attention being called to another living thing: like when someone else's child tries to smile or say hello to you in the supermarket, or to tell you a little piece of 'nonsense'. The bird's 'little strain' and its 'taps' might not mean anything that we can quite understand or decode in human terms, but it is an offering, an attempt to reach us in our own solitary situations. We like the idea in the next verse of 'life's window-sills'. wonder if we are aware of our own, and of how closely things might come to rest just on the other side of where we are. It is a homely image, and we might be inclined to think of the window-sill as a rather insignificant prop in the context of a house. But this poem encourages us to think of the life-giving potential of noticing that we have them. 2020 may have trained us to look at what others have left in their own windows, with rainbows of all kinds being shared in communities across the country. And yet there is a hint here of the repeated offerings that we may find around us, that actually do not require any effort from us at all. So birds of peace and hope and love Come fluttering earthward from above, To settle on life's window-sills, And ease our load of earthly ills; But we, in traffic's rush and din Too deep engaged to let them in, with deadened heart.

<u>Unit II: Prose</u>

1."Where I Lived and What I lived for" by H.D Thoreau

Thoreau recalls the several places where he nearly settled before selecting Walden Pond, all of them estates on a rather large scale. He quotes the Roman philosopher Cato's warning that it is best to consider buying a farm very carefully before signing the papers. He had been interested in the nearby Hollowell farm, despite the many improvements that needed to be made there, but, before a deed could be drawn, the owner's wife unexpectedly decided she wanted to keep the farm. Consequently, Thoreau gave up his claim on the property. Even though he had been prepared to farm a large tract, Thoreau realizes that this outcome may have been for the best. Forced to simplify his life, he concludes that it is best "as long as possible" to "live free and uncommitted." Thoreau takes to the woods, dreaming of an existence free of obligations and full of leisure. He proudly announces that he resides far from the post office and all the constraining social relationships the mail system represents. Ironically, this renunciation of legal deeds provides him with true ownership, paraphrasing a poet to the effect that "I am monarch of all I survey."

Thoreau's delight in his new building project at Walden is more than merely the pride of a first-time homeowner; it is a grandly philosophic achievement in his mind, a symbol of his conquest of being. When Thoreau first moves into his dwelling on Independence Day, it gives him a proud sense of being a god on Olympus, even though the house still lacks a chimney and plastering. He claims that a paradise fit for gods is available everywhere, if one can perceive it: "Olympus is but the outside of the earth every

where." Taking an optimistic view, he declares that his poorly insulated walls give his interior the benefit of fresh air on summer nights. He justifies its lack of carved ornament by declaring that it is better to carve "the very atmosphere" one thinks and feels in, in an artistry of the soul. It is for him an almost immaterial, heavenly house, "as far off as many a region viewed nightly by astronomers." He prefers to reside here, sitting on his own humble wooden chair, than in some distant corner of the universe, "behind the constellation of Cassiopeia's Chair." He is free from time as well as from matter, announcing grandiosely that time is a river in which he goes fishing. He does not view himself as the slave of time; rather he makes it seem as though he is choosing to participate in the flow of time whenever and however he chooses, like a god living in eternity. He concludes on a sermonizing note, urging all of us to sludge through our existence until we hit rock bottom and can gauge truth on what he terms our "Realometer," our means of measuring the reality of things.

2. "*The Philosophy of Composition"* by Edgar Allan Poe

The Philosophy of Composition is an essay written by one of the most well known, and arguably one of the best American authors of short stories and poems of all time, Edgar Allan Poe. It was first published in 1846 by George Rex Graham, a friend and former employee of Poe's. Graham had turned down Poe's now famous poem, "The Raven," saying he did not like it very much, but later published the essay in *Graham's American Monthly Magazine of Literature and Art.* In the essay, Poe discusses what he believes to be the rules which need to be followed to create good literature.

The **irony** of the situation, however, is that Poe did not exactly follow his own rules for all of his writing. Many of his works diverge from the path that he lays out in the essay, and people noticed. T.S. Eliot was noted to have said, "It is difficult for us to read that essay without reflecting that if Poe plotted out his poem with such calculation, he might have taken a little more pains over it: the result hardly does credit to the method."Indeed, speculators have even suggested that Poe's essay rules are so strict and rigid, the entire work might actually have been intended as a satirical hoax. There do seem to be several significant French literary figures from the time period who at least believed that "The Raven" itself was duly formed using the manners discussed. Maurice Ravel and Charles Baudelaire both deeply revered both Poe's essay and his fictional works, while the rest of the world took far longer to give Poe much literary recognition.

Poe's overall argument is as follows: length, unity of effect, and a logical method are the universal rules to a well written piece of literature. All of these elements are written in reference to Poe's process in writing *The Raven*. This is a significantly deliberate contrast to the spontaneous creation explanation, which was advocated for by Samuel Coleridge after he wrote his own magnum opus, Kubla Khan. He also maintains that the death of a beautiful woman is unquestionably the most poetic topic in the world, and that the most suitable lips for this topic are those of a heartbroken lover. This is likely the reason that so many of Poe's poems and short stories cover, at length, this exact trope. This is most likely because of the sheer number of women that Poe had lost tragically throughout his life, including his mother, foster mother, and wife, Virginia.

The first argument that Edgar Allan Poe puts forth concerns length. Poe states that all literary works should be short. He claims that there is a distinct limit to all works of literary art, defined by the single

sitting. That is, if a piece of writing cannot be easily read and consumed in one sitting—as is obviously the case with most short stories and poems—it is not worth reading. This rule was particularly highlighted in reference to the short story being far superior to the novel. Of course, Poe did eventually write a novel, despite his distaste for them: *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket.*

Poe delves into his opinion of the method behind creation. He claims the idea of artistic intuition is nonsense and that all writing is methodical and analytical. No author will admit this, says Poe, because it would mean letting the public look behind the scenes to witness everything that had been so cautiously chosen or discarded.

The final conviction that Poe advocates for is that a piece should only be written after the author decides how it will end, and how to properly infuse the story with the desired emotional response the author wishes to create. He calls this the unity effect. The writer is then instructed to decide every other detail, including, but not limited to, the tone, theme, setting, characters, conflict, and plot points.

The use of his poem to illustrate the essay is interesting. Poe traces the logical following of each rule using "The Raven." He says a good poem should appeal to both the public and the critics, and that he has considered every aspect of the poem. No part of the poem was an accident.Every element was critically controlled by the poet:the contrast of white bust versus black raven; the raven personifying "Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance"; the bust of Palla, the scholar, in relation to the academic narrator; even the term "Nevermore" is based on the unity of effect by resembling in both sound and vowels, the name of the lost woman: Lenore.

3. "The American Scholar" by Ralph Waldo Emerson

"The American Scholar" is a lecture by Ralph Waldo Emerson, transposed into an essay. The occasion for the lecture was an address that Emerson gave to the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge, on August 31, 1837.

The subject of the lecture is the role of the American intellectual, as distinct from the European intellectual. Emerson calls for an intellectualism that is engaged, optimistic, and forward-thinking. He believes that American scholars have been overly dependent on their European forebears, and that they need to forge a role of their own. He warns against the "sluggard intellects" (Paragraph 1) that are a result of overspecialization, and notes that "[m]an is thus metamorphosed into a thing" (Paragraph 5), rather than a full man.

Emerson views the role of the American intellectual in regard to nature, books, and action; these three different influences form three separate numbered sections of the lecture. In the first section, Emerson examines the intellectual's relation to nature. He discusses the process by which scholars learn how to classify the natural world and to see the laws and systems behind the apparent disorderliness of nature: "To the young mind, everything is individual, stands by itself. By and by, it finds how to join two things and sees in them one nature; then three, then three thousand" (Paragraph 8). Emerson warns against this process of tying separate things together to which they become overly detached and disembodied: a mere "accumulation and classifying of facts" (Paragraph 8). He urges instead that the intellectual

learns how to see the natural world as a reflection of his own soul, and its laws as being equivalent to those of the human mind: “Nature then becomes to him the measure of his attainments […] And, in fine, the ancient precept, ‘Know thyself,’ and the modern precept, ‘Study nature,’ become at last one maxim” (Paragraph 9).

In the second section of his lecture, Emerson discusses what he sees as the American intellectual’s ideal relation to books and warns against an overly reverential and backwards-looking approach to literature. He reminds us that earlier lauded writers such as Cicero, Locke, and Bacon “were only young men in libraries when they wrote those books” (Paragraph 13). While acknowledging the inherent sacredness of old books, he sees “a grave mischief” (Paragraph 13) in whole colleges and fields of study being devoted to the study of these books. He believes that such institutions can breed a timid and cautious brand of intellectual, and instead calls for a less fearful approach to both writing and reading. He reminds us that every book must speak of its time, and that every book is human and flawed. He believes that the intellectual who leads a full and vigorous life—that is, a life apart from books—will bring more to his reading and his writing: “One must be an inventor to read well […] When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion” (Paragraph 19).

This leads Emerson to the third section of his speech, involving the importance of action in the life of the American intellectual. Stating that “life is our dictionary” (Paragraph 25), he invokes the necessity of empirical observation and being engaged in the immediate physical world. He speaks of the ways in which living and thinking inform each other as being equivalent to the laws of nature:

That great principle of Undulation in nature, that shows itself in the inspiring and expiring of the breath; in desire and satiety; in the ebb and flow of the sea; in day and night; in heat and cold […] is known to us under the name of Polarity […] The mind now thinks, now acts, and each fit reproduces the other (Paragraphs 26-7).

Emerson then turns his attention to what he sees as the duties of the American scholar. These duties are democratic and individualistic in nature. He emphasizes the importance of “self-trust” for an intellectual, and the necessity of ignoring what is fashionable: “defer never to the popular cry” (Paragraph 31). He also urges the intellectual not to shrink from the world or to think of himself as a “protected class” (Paragraph 32), but rather to see the world as a thing that he can remake. He rejects the “great man” (Paragraph 33) theory—the idea that only certain designated leaders can remake society—and states that the individual writer should see his role as active and essential as that of a statesman, if not more so: “The private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy, more formidable to its enemy, more sweet and serene in its influence to its friend, than any kingdom in history” (Paragraph 35).

In the final part of the essay, Emerson turns his attention to his immediate time. He sees cause for hope in what others have decried: the increased emphasis in society on the individual, and the increased attention paid to “the near, the low, the common” (Paragraph 40). He states that “[t]his time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it” (Paragraph 38) and declares that “[t]he world is nothing, the man is all” (Paragraph 43). This last statement underscores his belief that the world is not a finished, separate thing, but is in continual flux and a reflection of man’s consciousness.

Unit III: Drama

1."Trifles" by Susan Keating Glaspell

The play opens on the scene of an abandoned farmhouse. The house is in disarray, with various activities interrupted, such as dishes left unwashed and bread prepared but not yet baked. Five people arrive at the house to investigate the scene of a crime, including the county attorney, George Henderson, the local sheriff, **Henry Peters**, and the neighbor, **Lewis Hale**, who discovered a murdered man, **John Wright**, strangled with a rope in his bed. The men are accompanied by two of their wives, **Mrs. Peters** and **Mrs. Hale**. Mr. Hale describes for the country attorney the experience of finding John Wright's dead body the previous day. He stopped by his neighbors' house to ask if they'd want to install a party line telephone. He encountered **Minnie Wright** sitting in her rocking chair, and she calmly announced that her husband was dead. Mr. Hale went upstairs to find the body, and left everything in place for the inspection of the attorney and the sheriff. Minnie claimed that she didn't wake up when her husband was strangled in their bed.

Mrs. Wright (Minnie) has been arrested for the crime and is being held until her trial. The men do not look closely around the kitchen for evidence of a motive, but discover Minnie's frozen and broken canning jars of fruits. Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale know that Minnie was worried her canning jars would explode in the cold weather, and the sheriff jokes that a woman would worry about such things while held for murder. The men criticize Minnie's poor housekeeping, as evidenced by the mess in the kitchen and **a dirty towel**.

The men go upstairs to inspect the bedroom and Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale collect items from the kitchen that Minnie requested be brought to her at the jail, including clothes and an apron. The women comment on the strangeness of strangling a man to death when the men had pointed out that there was a gun in the house. The women admire **a quilt** that Minnie was working on, and are wondering if she was going to finish it by "quilting" or "knotting" when the men reenter and, overhearing the women talking, joke about the women's trivial concerns at a time like this. Once again left alone by the men, the women notice that some of the stitching of the quilt is very poor, as if Minnie were nervous or upset.

The women then find a birdcage without any bird in it. Mrs. Hale expresses strong regrets having not come to visit Minnie more often, acknowledging that John Wright was a hard man and that it must have been very difficult for Minnie to be alone at her house. She recalls Minnie before she married and how cheerfully she sang in the choir. The women then uncover a beautiful red box, and in it, the dead bird that was missing from the birdcage, its neck broken.

When the men return, Mrs. Hale hides the box with the body of the bird. Once the men leave again, Mrs. Peters remembers a boy who killed her childhood pet kitten, and her certainty that she would have hurt him in return if she could have. And yet, Mrs. Peters says, "the law has got to punish crime." Mrs.

Hale berates herself for what she sees as her own crime of not visiting her neighbor Minnie, crying out, “who’s going to punish that crime?”

The men return, and the sheriff asks if the county attorney wants to take a look at the items Mrs. Peters is bringing to Minnie at the jail. He says that Mrs. Peters doesn’t need supervising and assumes the things she’s taking aren’t harmful. The women hide the box with the body of the bird. The county attorney jokes that at least they discovered the fate of Minnie’s quilt project, and Mrs. Hale reminds him that she was planning to finish the quilt by knotting it.

<u>Unit IV: Short Story</u>

1.”The Murders in the Rue Morgue” by Edgar Allen Poe

An unnamed narrator begins this tale of murder and criminal detection with a discussion of the analytic mind. He describes the analyst as driven paradoxically by both intuition and the moral inclination to disentangle what confuses his peers. He adds that the analyst takes delight in mathematical study and in the game of checkers, which allows the calculating individual to practice the art of detection—not only of the moves integral to the game, but also the demeanor of his opponent. The narrator argues, however, that analysis is not merely ingenuity. He states that while the ingenious man may, at times, be analytic, the calculating man is, without fail, always imaginative.

The narrator then describes the circumstances in which he met a man named C. AugusteDupin. Both men were searching for the same book at an obscure library in the Rue Montmartre, in Paris, and began to converse. Soon, they became friends and decided to share the expenses of a residence together. The narrator then relays an anecdote illustrating Dupin’s brilliant powers of analysis: one night, while walking together, Dupin describes an actor whom the narrator is pondering. Amazed, the narrator asks Dupin to explain his method, and we witness Dupin’s capacity to work backward and observe the importance of seemingly insignificant details in order to reach ingenious conclusions.

Soon thereafter, the narrator and Dupin read newspaper headlines about a horrible murder in the Rue Morgue. One night at three a.m., eight or ten neighbors of Madame L’Espanaye and her daughter, Mademoiselle Camille, wake to shrieks from their fourth-floor apartment. The neighbors hear two voices, then silence. The neighbors and two policemen finally break into the locked apartment to find utter disorder and multiple pieces of evidence of a crime, including a blood-smeared razor, locks of gray human hair, bags of money, and an opened safe. They find no traces of the older woman. However, the noticeable traces of soot in the room lead them to the chimney, where they find the corpse of Mademoiselle Camille. They reason that the murderer must have choked Camille to death and then thrust her body up into the chimney. Expanding the search, the neighbors and police discover the body of Madame L’Espanaye in a courtyard in the rear of the building. They find her badly beaten, with her throat severely cut. When the police move the body, in fact, her head falls off. The 4,000 francs that Madame L’Espanaye had just withdrawn from the bank are still in the apartment, ruling out robbery as a motive for the grisly crime.

The newspaper then recounts the depositions of witnesses concerning the voices they heard. They all agree that they heard two voices: one, a deep Frenchman’s voice; and the other, a higher voice of

uncertain ethnic origin, though speculated to be Spanish. The gender of the second speaker is uncertain. The same newspaper reports the findings of the medical examiner, who confirms that Camille died from choking and that Madame L'Espanaye was beaten to death with immense violence, most likely by a club. The evening edition of the paper reports a new development. The police have arrested Adolphe Le Bon, a bank clerk who once did Dupin a favor.

With the arrest of Le Bon, Dupin becomes interested in pursuing the investigation and obtains permission to search the crime scene. Dupin is eager to survey the setting because the newspaper reports portray the apartment as impossible to escape from the inside, which makes the case so mysterious. Dupin suggests that the police have been so distracted by the atrocity of the murder and the apparent lack of motive that, while they have been attentive to what has occurred, they have failed to consider that the present crime could be something that has never occurred before. Producing two pistols, Dupin reveals that he awaits the arrival of a person who will prove his solution to the crime.

Dupin also names those elements of the crime scene that he believes the police have mishandled. For example, the shrill voice remains unidentifiable in its gender and its nationality, but it also cannot be identified as emitting words at all, just sounds. He also explains that the police have overlooked the windows in the apartment, which operate by springs and can be opened from the inside. Though the police believe the windows to be nailed shut, Dupin discovers a broken nail in one window, which only seemed to be intact. Dupin surmises that someone could have opened the window, exited the apartment, and closed the window from the outside without raising suspicion.

Dupin also addresses the mode of entry through the windows. The police imagine that no suspect could climb up the walls to the point of entry. Dupin hypothesizes that a person or thing of great agility could leap from the lightning rod outside the window to the shutters of the window. Dupin surmises that no ordinary human could inflict the beating that Madame L'Espanaye suffered. The murderer would have to possess superhuman strength and inhuman ferocity. To satisfy the confusion of the narrator, Dupinpoints out that the hair removed from Madame L'Espanaye's fingers was not human hair. After drawing a picture of the size and shape of the hand that killed the two women, Dupin reveals his solution. The hand matches the paw of an Ourang-Outang.

Dupin has advertised the safe capture of the animal, news that he believes will draw out its owner. Dupinadds that the owner must be a sailor, since, at the base of the lightning rod, he found a ribbon knotted in a way unique to naval training.

When the sailor arrives, Dupin draws his pistol and demands all the information he knows about the murders. He assures the sailor that he believes him to be innocent. The sailor describes how the animal, grasping a razor, escaped from its closet one night and disappeared from his apartment. The sailor followed the Ourang-Outang and watched him climb the lightning rod and leap into the window. Because he does not possess the animal's agility, the sailor could only watch the animal as it slashed Madame L'Espanaye and choked Camille. Before escaping the apartment, the animal threw Madame L'Espanaye's body to the courtyard below. The sailor thus confirms the identity of the mysterious voices—the deep voice was his own, and the shrill shrieks were that of the Ourang-Outang.

When informed of Dupin’s solution, the police release Le Bon. The prefect is unable to conceal his chagrin at being outwitted by Dupin. He is happy to have the crime solved, but he is sarcastic, rather than grateful, about Dupin’s assistance. Dupin comments, in conclusion, that the prefect is a man of ingenuity, not analysis.

2.“ Jim Baker's Blue Jay’s Yarn” by Mark Twain

“Jim Baker’s Bluejay Yarn” was first published as chapter 3 of Mark Twain’s travel narrative *A Tramp Abroad* (1880). In that version, the actual narrative is preceded by an introduction, which appears at the end of chapter 2, in which the narrator of *A Tramp Abroad* introduces Jim Baker as “a middle-aged, simple-hearted miner who had lived in a lonely corner of California among the woods and mountains a good many years, and had studied the ways of his only neighbors, the beasts and the birds, until he believed he could accurately translate any remark they made.” Also in the introductory section, Jim Baker elaborates on his high opinion of jays, offering the opinion that they are “just as much a human as you be,” and concluding that “a jay will lie, a jay will steal, a jay will deceive, a jay will betray; and four times out of five, a jay will go back on his solemnest promise.” The narrator affirms that he knows this to be true because Jim Baker told him so himself, thus establishing his own naïveté and gullibility. This beginning establishes a “frame” for the story.

Some editors print the introductory material as part of “Jim Baker’s Bluejay Yarn,” although others include only the material from chapter 3 of *A Tramp Abroad* that is discussed below. Because the story materially benefits from establishing Jim Baker’s character and his views on jays, it is best to read a complete version.

Jim Baker’s “yarn” cannot be captured in a simple summary of events, because, as Twain pointed out in an essay entitled “How to Tell a Story,” a “humorous story depends for its effect on the manner of the telling,” rather than on its contents. Thus, the events of the story are unimpressive unless presented with the droll style of the master storyteller. Even when read aloud, the yarn falls flat unless it is artfully presented. Being such a master raconteur, Jim Baker must be “heard” as he elaborates this tale of an excessively ambitious bluejay whose reach far exceeded his grasp.

Baker begins in a matter-of-fact way by establishing his authority as an expert on bluejay behavior by setting the story at a time in the past “when I first begun to understand jay language correctly.” Being the last remaining soul in the region, Baker no doubt gained his knowledge of jays by doing just what he describes in the story: watching bluejays from his front porch. In fact, he seems to have nothing else in particular to occupy his time, so on this Sunday morning, Baker says, “I was sitting out here in front of my cabin, with my cat, taking the sun, and looking at the blue hills, and listening to the leaves rustling so lonely in the trees, and thinking of the home away yonder in the states, that I hadn’t heard from in thirteen years, when a bluejay lit on that house, with an acorn in his mouth, and says, ’Hello, I reckon I’ve struck something.’” In this way, Twain not only establishes the “authenticity” of the story but also subtly characterizes the narrator and his way of life.

As Baker watches, the jay becomes intrigued by a knothole he has discovered in the roof of the abandoned cabin on which he is perched. After an elaborate examination to satisfy himself that it is

indeed a hole that he has discovered, the jay drops an acorn into the opening and awaits the sound of it hitting bottom. When he hears nothing after a proper interval, he seems first curious, then surprised, and finally indignant. Baker is able to infer this because, as he told the reader at the outset, he understands jay language. In this context, the elaborate description given of the jay's behavior is Baker's way of describing the bird's language. "He cocked his head to one side, shut one eye and put the other one to the hole, like a 'possum looking down a jug; then he glanced up with his bright eyes, gave a wink or two with his wings—which signifies gratification, you understand—and says, 'It looks like a hole, it's located like a hole—blamed if I don't believe it is a hole.'" For the remainder of the yarn, Baker alternates between elaborate descriptions of bluejay behavior and interpretations of the meaning of the activity.

The first acorn having been lost in the recesses of the hole, the jay quickly fetches another, only to drop it in with the same results as the first. He tries to drop acorns, then quickly peep in the hole to see where they fall, but this technique, too, is unsuccessful. After a marvelous bout of cursing, he finally concludes that this is a hole of a kind that is new in his experience, but his frustration only strengthens his resolve. "Well," he says, "you're a long hole, and a deep hole, and a mighty singular hole altogether—but I've started to fill you, and I'm d——d if I don't fill you, if it takes a hundred years!"

The jay works himself into a frenzy dropping acorns into the hole, but again with no noticeable results. This time his cursing attracts another jay, and the two hold a noisy conference on the ridgepole. The second jay, unable to make any more sense of the mysterious hole than the first, "called in more jays; then more and more, till pretty soon this whole region 'peared to have a blue flush about it." All the jays offer their opinions, leading to a cacophony of disputation. This continues until one old jay eventually finds his way through the open door of the house and finds all the acorns scattered over the floor.

The other jays' curiosity and interest now turns to derision, and they join in laughing at their silly companion. Baker finishes his story by telling the reader that "they roosted around here on the housetop and the trees for an hour, and guffawed over that thing like human beings," then concludes in defense of these silly creatures, "it ain'tno use to tell me a bluejay hasn't got a sense of humor, because I know better. And memory, too. They brought jays here from all over the United States to look down that hole, every summer for three years." Other birds came also, and all saw the humor except an owl from Nova Scotia who had come west to visit "the Yo Semite" and stopped by on his way home. "He said he couldn't see anything funny in it. But then he was a good deal disappointed about Yo Semite, too."

3." The Luck of Roaring Camp" by Bret Harte

It's 1850, and something big is happening in the gold mining settlement of Roaring Camp, deep in the wilderness of the American West. Everyone is buzzing about a woman named **Cherokee Sal**—the town prostitute, who happens to be the only woman at Roaring Camp. Sal is going into labor, and this is monumental at the camp. Death is normal here, as is people being banished from the settlement. But birth—the introduction of someone new into the community—is unheard of.

One of the camp's men, **Stumpy**, is appointed to help deliver the baby. He's fathered two families before, so the other men of Roaring Camp (a collection of 100 criminals, fugitives, gamblers, or

otherwise "reckless" men) decide that this makes Stumpy most qualified to help Sal. The landscape of Roaring Camp is as tough and rugged as the men who live there. The camp is nestled in a triangular valley, flanked on all sides by a river or hills; the only way in and out is a steep trail up the summit of one of the hills.

Sal's health quickly declines after she delivers her **baby**, and she soon dies. The men aren't too upset about her death, but they *are* concerned about what they're supposed to do with a newborn baby. In the short term, their only option is to have the camp's female mule nurse the baby.

The men line up to see the baby. One by one, they enter into the cabin in which the baby was born and leave a gift for him. By the time all of the men have had their turn, the baby has amassed a pile of gold nuggets, boot spurs, jewels, and coins. One of the gruffest and most hypermasculine of the men, **Kentuck**, has a particularly tender moment when it's his time to see the baby: the baby reaches out and clings to Kentuck's finger, which delights (and consequently embarrasses) Kentuck. He talks about this moment all night with anyone who will listen.

The next day, the men hold a formal meeting to figure out what to do with the baby. All but one of the men believe that they should adopt him; only **Tipton** thinks they should send the baby to Red Dog (the next town over, which is 40 miles away), where he could be properly nursed by a woman. This idea is promptly squashed, as is the idea of sending for a woman from another settlement to stay at Roaring Camp to tend to the baby—the men don't want women here. This, the narrator interjects, may seem harsh, but it's actually "the first spasm of propriety" at the camp. Eventually, they decide to raise the baby themselves, with Stumpy and the female mule acting as his primary caregivers.

As time goes on, the baby thrives, perhaps because of all the fresh air. Around this time, the men begin to find more and more gold, so they deem the baby their good luck charm and name him Tommy Luck—or "the Luck"—in honor of this. Wanting to make the settlement a better environment for the Luck, the men begin cleaning up the cabins and even themselves—bathing before they hold the baby, for instance, and cutting expletives out of their language. They even begin bringing the Luck wildflowers and other treasures they find, as the Luck has opened their eyes to the beauty surrounding them.

After the Luck has been with the men for several months, they discuss the idea of building a hotel in the camp and inviting a couple "decent families" to live at Roaring Camp and give the Luck some company. The men are still highly skeptical of women, but they want the best for the Luck and think he'd benefit from "female companionship," so most of them agree to this plan.

Before the plan can be put into action, a powerful winter flood sweeps through the settlement in the night. Chaos ensues, as Stumpy's entire cabin is swept away into the river and massive trees are uprooted. Roaring Camp is reduced to debris, and Stumpy is killed. Kentuck is found barely clinging to life, with the Luck's dead body in his arms. He's contented that he's following the Luck into death, though, and quickly dies, floating into the dark river and drifting to an "unknown sea."

4."Regret" byKate Chopin

MamzelleAurelie, who has good structure with ruddy cheeks. She was now 50 years old and had never been in love. One day, when she received a proposal, She declined. But now, She turned 50 and she never regret anything about. Thus, She grew up and had no experience in life with a pinch of love.

Until One day, Odile decided to get his children from Mamzelle because she will go to her sick mother and take care of her mother. Though, she not even once tried to care the children of Odile, to feed a child nor to care or, lets say she had no experience.

Days have past, Mamzelle realized that she had now the enjoyment and happiness but then, the loneliness ate her happiness. Odile went to her and took her children and she became lonely and not even noticing that her dog, Ponto licked her hand while crying.

Unit V: Fiction

1." Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" by Mark Twain

What Happened Before:

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer ends with **Huckleberry Finn** and **Tom Sawyer** finding a large amount of money that a band of robbers had hidden. They each get $6,000 – a huge sum for the boys – which **Judge Thatcher** invests for them at the bank. The **Widow Douglas** and her extremely conservative and religious sister **Miss Watson** adopt Huckleberry, but he struggles with their attempts to "sivilize" him and runs away. Tom persuades him to return. He does, but Huck isn't happy.

Life at the Widow's House:

While Huckleberry likes some of the luxuries his new life offers, he misses the freedom of being able to do and wear what he wants. The new clothes make him feel "cramped up," he struggles with the strict time schedule at the Widow Douglas's house, and he doesn't see the point of saying his prayers or reading the Bible. One night, just as Huckleberry is feeling low, Tom appears in the garden and together they steal away. Tom has great plans to start a band of robbers with Huck and a few other boys.
Tom makes each of the boys swear an oath of allegiance, which he has cobbled together from a number of pirate and robber stories he has read. They all sign the oath with their blood and decide that their "line of business" will be robbery and murder.

A Body in the River:

One day, some locals fish a body from the river that runs past the town. Even though it's badly bloated, they think it might be **Huck's father**, an alcoholic prone to violence, who never bothered with his son except to beat him viciously. Huck is relieved to hear the news, even though he isn't fully convinced that the body is indeed that of his father. Meanwhile, the gang continues to meet, but they never move beyond "pretend" robberies fueled by Tom's imagination. Soon, the band dissolves.

"Right is right, and wrong is wrong, and a body ain't got no business doing wrong when he ain't ignorant and knows better." (Huck Finn)

Winter comes, and Huck goes to school fairly regularly, learning to spell, write and do math. One morning, he comes across footprints in the snow outside the Widow Douglas's house. When he looks closer, he realizes that they're his father's footprints. Huck runs straight to Judge Thatcher and asks him to take all the savings from him. He's afraid that his father has only come back for the money but doesn't tell Judge Thatcher of his suspicion. The judge, guessing the reason, makes a deal with Huck in which he pays him $1 for his property. Huck signs and returns home. When he gets to his room that evening, his father is there waiting for him.

The Kidnapping:

Huck's father wants Huck's money, but Judge Thatcher refuses to hand it over. The judge and the Widow Douglas attempt to get custody for Huck, but a **new judge** in town, who knows nothing about Huck's father, decides that it wouldn't be good to separate father and son. The new judge takes in Huck's father and tries to reform him but soon has to admit defeat. Huck's father starts a lawsuit in order to get to Huck's money. He also tries to stop the boy from going to school. When the widow tells him to stay away, he waits for Huck and kidnaps him. He takes him across the river to Illinois to an old wooden cabin. They live on what they can fish and hunt, and Huck enjoys the freedom of not having to wash, dress properly, eat from a plate, and so on. However, his father soon starts hitting him again. He also locks Huck into the cabin whenever he goes away – sometimes for several days.

The Escape:

Huck can't take it anymore, and he hatches a plan to escape. He finds a rusty saw and starts sawing a hole in the cabin wall while his father is gone. When the man returns, he's in a foul mood because the lawsuit for Huck's money is dragging on. Also, the judge and the widow have started another attempt to be made Huck's guardians. The thought of going back to "civilization" doesn't appeal to Huck, and he plans to run away that night once his father drinks himself into oblivion. However, Huck himself falls asleep with the gun across his lap and only wakes up late the next morning. To explain why he has the gun, he tells his father that he heard someone walking around the cabin. His father sends him off to fish, and Huck finds a canoe drifting down the river. He pulls it ashore and hides it. In the afternoon, his father heads back into town, and Huck sets to work. He takes all the provisions and tools from the cabin and loads them into the canoe, then shoots a wild pig and splatters its blood around the cabin, staging his own murder. He leaves an axe with blood and a bit of his hair stuck to it and sets off toward Jackson Island in his canoe.

On Jackson Island:

Huck enjoys the solitude and freedom on the island, but three days after arriving, he comes across a still-smoking campfire. Scared, he packs all his possessions and decides to sleep in the canoe. Toward morning, he finally gathers enough courage to find out who is on the island with him. To his surprise and relief, it's **Jim,** Miss Watson's slave. Jim tells him that Miss Watson decided to sell him to a slave trader, so he has run away. Huck promises not to betray him. The two set up camp in a cave, where they sit out a storm that lasts over a week and floods parts of the island. Once the storm passes, they go exploring in Huck's canoe. They come across a two-story wooden house floating past, and they climb into it. They

find the **body of a man** who was shot in the back. Jim has a look at his face but tells Huck to stay away, saying that it's "too ghastly." Jim covers the body with some old rags. They take what they can from the boat and head back to the island.

Flight South:

Huck is curious: He wants to find out what people are saying about him and his "death," so he dresses up as a girl and heads into town. From a **woman** who only recently moved into town, he learns that initially, people suspected his father of his murder, but now they believe it was Jim, since he disappeared at the same time. There is a reward of $300 for Jim's capture. The woman tells Huck that her **husband** has decided to go and search Jackson Island the next day, because he has seen smoke on the island. Huck rushes back to the island, and he and Jim pack their belongings on a raft they found and set off. As they drift down the Mississippi River, they come across a stranded steamboat. They climb on board and run into **three criminals**, two of which have ganged up on the third and are about to shoot him. When Jim and Huck try to escape before the three men notice them, they find that their raft has come lose and drifted off. They steal the criminals' boat and soon catch up with their own raft.

A Narrow Escape:

Jim and Huck's aim is to get to Cairo, where the Mississippi River meets the Ohio River. Their plan is to sell their raft and take a steamboat up the Ohio River to the states where slavery has been abolished. One night, they get caught in thick fog and become separated, finding each other again only with great difficulty. As they continue to drift down the river, Jim talks about what he will do as a free man: work, save some money, and buy his **wife and children**. Huck starts to feel guilty; he is helping a slave escape. He decides he needs to tell someone, and so he takes the canoe and paddles off under the pretense of wanting to find out whether they have reached Cairo. As he sets off, Jim calls after him that Huck is the best friend that he has ever had. Huck is confused; he now feels as if he is betraying Jim. He isn't far off the raft before **two men** in a boat stop him. They're after **five runaway slaves** and start questioning Huck. He prevents them from searching the raft by telling them that his father is there and that he has smallpox. Afraid to catch the contagious disease, the men give Huck some money and advice on how to get to the nearest landing place; the men then move on. Jim, who overheard the conversation, feels his trust in Huck is justified: his friend lied for him and saved him.

A Deadly Feud:

Jim and Huck realize that, because of the fog, they have drifted past Cairo. They can't go back upriver because they've lost their canoe. To top it all off, a steamboat rams their raft and splits it in two. Huck manages to get to shore, but there is no sign of Jim. Huck is taken in by a local family, **the Grangerfords**. From their son **Buck**, Huck learns that the family has a long-standing feud with another local family, **the Shepherdsons**, which has led to several deaths on both sides. No one really knows what started the feud, but fighting between the families continues. One day, after Huck and the family return from church, **Miss Sophie**, one of the Grangerford daughters, asks Huck if he would go back to the church to pick up her Bible. He does so, but suspects something is up. When he picks up the Bible, he

finds a note inside it that says “half-past two.” He is puzzled by what it could mean but gives the book and note to Miss Sophie without saying anything.

“Human beings can be awful cruel to one another.” (Huck Finn)

The **slave** who has been “assigned” to Huck comes to him with a strange request: He asks if he could show Huck a place where there are water moccasins (venomous snakes). Huck gathers that something is up and follows the slave. In the middle of a swamp, well-hidden by bushes and tree, he comes across the sleeping Jim. Huck wakes him up, and Jim reports what happened after the steamboat rammed them. He tried to follow Huck but had been too slow to catch up. Afraid that someone would capture him and force him back into slavery, Jim decided to hide. He met some other slaves who lived nearby and decided to send a message to Huck. The next morning, Miss Sophie is gone. She has eloped and married **Harney Shepherdson**. The Grangerfords swear revenge and go after the Shepherdsons. Buck is killed in the ensuing shooting. Huck and Jim escape.

Two Hustlers:

Jim and Huck continue their journey down the river. They pick up **two men** who are on the run. The older man claims to be the Duke of Bridgewater and asks to be addressed as “Your Grace,” “My Lord” or “Your Lordship.” Not wanting to be outdone, the younger one says that he is a descendant of Louis XVI and therefore should be called “Your Majesty.” Huck realizes quickly that the two are nothing but frauds and hustlers who travel around trying to scam people. However, as free white men, they are in a better position than Jim and Huck, so Huck pretends to go along with their game. He tells them that Jim is his slave and that they are on their way to his uncle, who lives down south. Soon, the Duke and the King take control of the raft. They keep stopping along the way, coming up with ever new and outrageous schemes to swindle people out of their money. For example, in Parkville, the King goes to a church meeting and pretends to be a reformed pirate who now wants to take the gospel to other pirates. He ends up with $80 in donations to help him on his mission. At their next stop, the pair stage a ridiculous theater show and manage to get away with several hundred dollars in their pockets.

A Great Coup:

A few days later, Huck and the King meet **a young man** who tells them about some recent events in the nearby village: A man called **Peter Wilks** has just died, leaving **three orphaned nieces**, a small fortune and property behind. The man had suffered from a long illness and had been hoping that his two remaining brothers **William** and **Harvey** would come over from England before his death. The King and the Duke see their chance to get their hands on the inheritance. They go into the village with Huck and pretend to be Wilks’s brothers. They’re welcomed with open arms, and soon the money ends up in their possession. Huck feels sorry for the three girls, so he decides to steal the money and give it back to them. However, his well-intentioned plan goes wrong. After he steals the money from the Duke and the King’s room, he almost gets caught and is forced to hide it in the deceased’s coffin, which is nailed shut and buried the next day. Huck convinces the Duke and the King that the slaves they sold the previous day stole the money. When Huck finds **Mary Jane**, the oldest of the girls, crying in her room, he decides to tell her everything. She agrees to stay at a friend’s for a day to give Huck and Jim the chance to

escape before she exposes the two fraudsters. However, shortly after she leaves the next morning, **Wilks's real brothers** turn up. In an attempt to prove that the King and the Duke are lying, the real Harvey Wilks asks the King if he knows what his brother had tattooed on his chest. The King quickly invents something, and it is his word against that of Harvey Wilks. The people of the village decide to dig up Peter's body to determine who is right. When they open the coffin, they find the money. In the ensuing confusion, Huck manages to escape. He runs to the raft, where he and Jim set off, celebrating that they have finally gotten rid of the King and the Duke. But then they see a boat coming after them carrying the two fraudsters. Resigned, Jim and Huck take them back on board.

An Elaborate Plan:

The four continue the journey south. They stop at a few villages, but all the King and the Duke's schemes prove unsuccessful. Having lost all their money and not earning any either, they start making new plans. When they come to the next stop at Pikeville, the King sets off into the village. He asks the Duke and Huck to come after him if he isn't back by lunchtime. When he doesn't return, they follow him and finally find him, completely drunk in a tavern. The Duke and the King get into a fight, and Huck sees his chance to escape the two. He runs back to the raft, only to find that Jim has disappeared. The King has sold him to a local family, the **Phelps**. Huck goes in search of Jim. The Duke tells Huck where Jim is after Huck promises not to cross them as they go about their latest scheme.

"Jim said bees wouldn't sting idiots; but I didn't believe that, because I had tried them lots of times myself, and they wouldn't sting me." (Huck Finn)

Huck goes to the Phelps's house. To his surprise, Mrs. Phelps, or "**Aunt Sally**," welcomes him with open arms. She believes he is her nephew **Tom Sawyer**, whose arrival they have been expecting for days. Huck plays along. The next day, he heads into town to intercept Tom and let him in on his plan to free Jim. Tom agrees to play along and help Huck. They introduce Tom to Aunt Sally and her husband, **Uncle Silas**, as Tom's brother Sid.

Tom insists that they need an elaborate plan to free Jim. So rather than just stealing the key and running away, the rescue plan gets more and more complicated. Inspired by all the adventure stories he has read, Tom decides that they need use a knife to dig a tunnel under the wall of the shed, make a rope-ladder from sheets that they steal from Aunt Sally and climb down a lightning pole at night instead of taking the stairs. He also thinks that Jim's life as a prisoner is too easy, so he insists on bringing rats, snakes and spiders into the cabin. He also asks Jim to write a journal in his own blood on a shirt and to scratch "mournful inscriptions" into the walls of the cabin. It takes them three weeks to implement Tom's elaborate and completely ridiculous plan.

Happy Ending:

Tom is still not satisfied with their escape plan. To make things even harder, he decides to send anonymous notes to Aunt Sally and Uncle Silas, warning them that something is afoot. He even goes so far as to tell them the night and time when they are going to free Jim. A group of men armed with guns turn up to help Aunt Sally and Uncle Silas. Jim, Huck and Tom have to run for their lives as they try to get away. They make it onto their raft, but Tom is shot in the leg. Huck returns to the village to fetch

a **doctor** and then hides in a lumber pile to wait and see what will happen. He falls asleep and wakes up late the next morning. As he emerges from his hiding place, he runs straight into Uncle Silas. When questioned where they have been, Huck tells Uncle Silas that he and Tom had decided to go after Jim, and that Tom had now gone to the post office to find out if there was any news. Together with Uncle Silas and Aunt Sally, Huck waits anxiously for Tom to appear. After two days, the doctor arrives with Tom, who is being carried on a mattress. He also has Jim with him, who is immediately put into chains. The doctor puts in a good word for Jim, who came out of hiding when he saw that the doctor needed help with Tom's wound, thereby effectually giving up his freedom.

"You can't pray a lie; I found that out." (Huck Finn)

Tom recovers quickly. When he learns that Jim has been put back into chains, he is outraged and reveals what he had known for months: namely that Miss Watson died two months ago and decreed in her will that Jim should be set free. Immediately, Jim is released, given food and made a fuss over. Tom's Aunt Polly appears and puts an end to the charade that Tom and Huck have been playing on the Phelps. Huck learns from Jim that the dead man they found in the house on the river had been Huck's father. Before Aunt Sally can attempt to adopt Huck and "sivilize" him, he heads off to the West.