

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

*Mark Twain*

*Before reading*

**1 Guess**

How much do you know about Mark Twain? Answer these questions. If you don't know the answer, guess.

- 1 Where in the USA did Mark Twain NOT live at some point in his life?
  - a New Orleans
  - b Pennsylvania
  - c California
  - d Buffalo
- 2 Which of these is NOT a book by Mark Twain?
  - a *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*
  - b *Quaker City*
  - c *Tramp Abroad*
  - d *Pudd'nhead Wilson*

Now scan the text and find the correct answers.

*While reading*

**2 Comprehension**

Read the text. Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)? Correct any that are false.

- 1 Several of Mark's siblings died young. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Mark received a university education. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Mark spent a good deal of time travelling. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Mark spent a lot of time in England. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Mark's marriage was unhappy. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Mark's books only became popular after his death. \_\_\_\_\_

**3 Comprehension**

Complete these sentences with words from the text.

- 1 Before changing his name, Mark's name was \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 Mark grew up in a town called \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 Mark was \_\_\_\_\_ years old when he started to travel.
- 4 Mark educated himself by \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 Mark wrote the book \_\_\_\_\_ while working on a steamboat.
- 6 Mark's first trip overseas was to \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 Mark married \_\_\_\_\_ in 1870.
- 8 In 1883, Mark started his own \_\_\_\_\_.
- 9 The historical science-fiction novel \_\_\_\_\_ was unpopular.
- 10 Mark spent the last years of his life living in \_\_\_\_\_.

**4 Comprehension and writing**

Write sentences about Mark Twain's life using the following words.

- 1 The Confederate Army  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Pennsylvania  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Quaker City  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Susy  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Oxford University  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Halley's Comet  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5 Comprehension and writing**

Answer these questions in sentences.

- 1 Why did Mark travel so much?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 What was Mark's writing style like?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Why do you think Mark was an 'Amazing Writer'?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Mark Twain

*After reading*

### 6 Language

Find words in the text with the following meanings.

- 1 a large farm, particularly for producing cotton, sugar or tea (page 46) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 when one person is owned by another (page 46) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 using humour to criticize someone or something (page 48) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 money earned by an author through sales of his/her books (page 49) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 the state of having no money to pay debts (page 51) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 someone who is an enemy of his/her own country (page 51) \_\_\_\_\_

### 7 Follow-up activity

Select six more new words from the text which are NOT underlined. Write definitions for the six words. You can use [www.collinsdictionary.com/cobuild](http://www.collinsdictionary.com/cobuild) to help you.

**TIP**

Make sure that you choose the right 'sense' of the word for your definition. Many words have various different definitions – choose the one that is correct for this text.

### 8 Research

Choose one of the following topics. Do an online search and make notes about it. You can also use the 'Further Research' document to help you search. Write a paragraph about your findings.

- The *Pennsylvania* steamboat explosion
- Mark Twain's house 'Hartford'
- The American Civil War

## ANSWER KEY (STUDENT ACTIVITIES)

*Mark Twain*

### 1 Guess

- 1 b
- 2 b

### While reading

### 2 Comprehension

- 1 T
- 2 F – He educated himself by reading in libraries
- 3 T
- 4 F – He didn't visit England.
- 5 F – Mark's marriage was very happy.
- 6 F – His books were very popular in his lifetime.

### 3 Comprehension

- 1 Samuel Langhorne Clemens
- 2 Hannibal
- 3 18
- 4 reading library books
- 5 *Life on the Mississippi*
- 6 Hawaii
- 7 Olivia Langdon
- 8 publishing company
- 9 *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*
- 10 New York

### 4 Comprehension and writing

*Answers will vary.* Suggested answers:

- 1 Mark spent two weeks as a volunteer with the Confederate Army.
- 2 Mark's brother Henry died in an explosion on board the *Pennsylvania* steamboat.
- 3 Mark crossed the Atlantic on a ship called *Quaker City*.
- 4 Mark's daughter Susy died in 1896 of meningitis.
- 5 Mark received an Honorary Doctor of Letters degree from Oxford University in 1907.
- 6 Mark was born when Halley's Comet appeared in the sky, and he died when it returned.

### 5 Comprehension and writing

*Answers will vary.*

- 1 Answers may refer to the need to earn money, his desire to learn and have interesting experiences, his need to get over grief
- 2 Answers may refer to satire, humour, popularity and his interesting travel writing. Controversial political writings and his unpopular science-fiction / historical book may be mentioned.
- 3 Answers may refer to his popularity, humour and satire, his excessive travels that enabled him to capture in writing a great deal of the world, his many experiences which inspired him

### 6 Language

- 1 plantation
- 2 slavery
- 3 satirical
- 4 royalties
- 5 bankruptcy
- 6 traitor

### 7 Follow-up activity

*Answers will vary.*

### 8 Research

*Answers will vary.*