Is Huck Finn Too Mature? Essay, Research Paper

Is Huck Finn too Mature?

Huck Finn knows more than a fourteen year old boy could possibly know. He

has the maturity level of one in their twenties at least. Huck’s knowledge and

decisions in certain situations in the book exceed the intelligence in general

fourteen year old boys. When Samuel Clemens wrote this book, he was well into

his mature adult years. Huckleberry Finn represents the adventurous, free

spirited life that we all would like to have led in our childhood years.

Clemens wrote this book with the frame of mind of a fourteen year old. Huck

Finn is Twain’s dreams and childhood ambitions come to life.

On Huck’s adventure he encounters alot of different views of society. He

experiences the restrictions of the company in which he surrounds himself. This

knowledge that Huck get’s first hand ultimately ends with Huck’s mature decision

to oppose the views of society and risks going to hell for his friendship with

Jim. This is a very mature and noble decision for a boy of Huck’s age to make.

It is also noticeable that Huck is unlike other boys of his age with the

introduction of Tom Sawyer. Tom is always thinking of amazing plans and

activities. In contrast, Huck’s ideas are sensible and well thought out. This

fact shows that Twain made his own character superior in a way to the others,

giving him a practical edge on situations. Huck is definitely superior to other

boys of his age, but it may not be just his intelligence. Also, Huck has a

tendency to confide in the way things are rather than looking for a deeper

meaning. This aspect of Huck’s character allows him to express his own system

of values which seem to give him an edge on other fourteen year old boys.

Whatever the reason, Huckleberry is definitely advanced in life.

In this book, it is noticeable that Twain has given the narrator all of the

major and necessary attributes needed by an adventurous boy. Huck has no

religion to keep him from doing what he feels is necessary. He has family that

cares about him or his well-being. He has seen many views of society and has

decided that he does not want anything to do with it. He prefers the freedom of

the wilderness to the restrictions of society. Huck has his own set of morals

and values to govern his life. He also has perhaps the most needed quality of

all. Huck has the ability to adjust to any situation, and to adjust to almost

any surroundings.

The situation with Jim and the rattlesnake is surprising to the reader.

It is one of the three specific situations in the book where Huck makes a

decision without thinking it through. Huck forgets that a rattlesnakes mate

always curls around its dead partner. This turns out to have bad result when

Jim is bitten by the snake which was not at all Huck’s intent. Twain may have

put that case in the book to show that Huck is not always right and is capable

of making bad decisions. At this point, it is likely that Twain realized how

good Huck was turning out to be, and therefore had him make a mistake. Not just

a mistake, but a mistake that went against one of his main morals, which was to

be kind to others. The second trick played on Jim will be the last immature and

childish thing that Huck does before the end of the book. Huck lies to Jim and

tells him that they were never separated on the river. Jim finally realizes

that Huck is lying to him, and then becomes extremely upset. It is at this

point that Huck understands his need for Jim’s friendship and, sees Jim’s

dedication to him. Huck’s next action shows that he does not care about

societies views and does an act that would never be accepted by his society. “It

was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a

nigger: but I done it, and I warn’t ever sorry for it afterward, neither. I

didn’t do him no more mean tricks, and I wouldn’t done that one if I’d’ `a’

knowed it would make him feel that way.”

During Huck’s time spent with the Grangerford and Shepherdson families he

sees an view of society that he has never faced. Huck does not understand why

people are fighting to the point of death when they fail to remember the

original reason for the feud. Huck’s common sense allow him to judge the

situation, seeing through the shallow ideas that keep the feud going. Huck is

eventually shocked at the notion that boys his age are trying to kill each other.

Huck’s true advancements to other boys of his age come out in his dealings with

Buck Grangerford. Huck forgets his name and must be smooth enough to devise a

way where Buck would spell it for him. This episode displays Huck’s

understanding of people and his ability to put it to use. This is probably a

feature that Twain would have liked to have had in his childhood years. Huck

Finn has more knowledge and maturity than any boy of his age at that time. His

individuality and failure to agree to society often make it seem to the reader

that he is well beyond his years. Twain wrote this book with never having

accomplished his childhood dreams and wishes. It is likely that Twain realized

how advanced Huck was turning out to be, and therefore had him make a few acts

which were performed without the use of common sense. Huckleberry Finn is the

image of an adventurous boy with nothing to hold him back from doing what he

wants. He is what Samuel Clemens hoped to be as a child, and regretted not

having had these experiences to carry through adulthood.