

In a work of recognized literary merit, address how the author uses a variety of literary elements to satirize society. Be sure to address the importance and purpose of the satire rather than just summarizing the plot.

Thesis:

Mark Twain uses diction and syntax to create humor about the social inequalities of the time period only to show how unimportant such pretense really is.

Intro #1:

The United States has dealt with many issues of social inequality throughout its sorted past. Although American's are not alone in dealing with racial and social differences, these particular issues have scarred our nation for centuries: the Civil War, The Great Depression, and the struggle for civil rights. Yet even with all of the years of our accumulated history, we have still not learned to deal with these problems appropriately. We hide them. We pretend that they do not exist or that they affect our daily decisions. Mark Twain points out these social problems in his novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, but he does more than just point them out. Twain uses his diction and syntax to develop a dark sense of humor about such social inequalities to show how truly unimportant such a pretense of equality really is.

Intro #2:

I used to think that we had surely moved past many of the social prejudices that have so marred our past. Live by the golden rule. Be kind to one another. It is what we teach children in Sunday school and kindergarten. Why wouldn't we live that way? It was a cold hard reality when in my first year of school several people eschewed my company simply because of where I lived. I was an apartment, latch-key kid—one who had the privilege of going to an upper level school on the rich side of town. The new friends I had made quickly fell away. Live by the golden rule? Not really. We are far from being past the problems of our past. We only hide them behind pretense and superficial rules for children. In Mark Twain's novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* he uses diction and syntax to create a dark humor that strips away the pretense of social progress.

Now you try:

A recurring theme in literature is the classic war between a passion and responsibility. For instance, a personal cause, a love, a desire for revenge, a determination to redress a wrong, or some other emotion or drive may conflict with moral duty. Choose a literary work in which a character confronts the demands of a private passion that conflicts with his or her responsibilities. In a well-written essay show clearly the nature of the conflict, its effects upon the character, and its significance to the work. Do not merely summarize the plot.

Step one: identify themes that address the question. Turn it into a theme statement.

Step two: use the theme statement as the focus of a thesis statement.

Step three: write an engaging intro paragraph.