

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain

Chapter One: 'Look Behind You!'

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Level: Beginner - pre-intermediate
Age: Teenagers / adults
Time needed: Approximately 10 minutes per activity

Activity 1

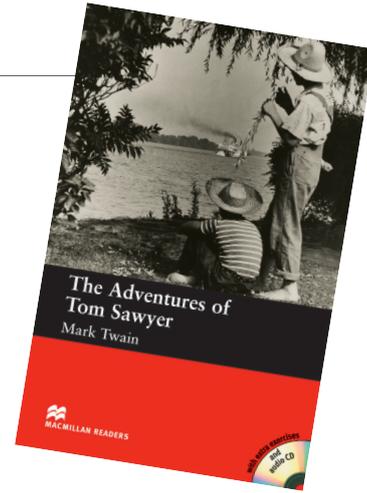
- 1 Ask your students to put their pens down and relax.
- 2 Tell them you are going to play them the first part of a story.
- 3 Play the first part of the chapter up until Aunt Polly says, *I never learn*. Then stop the recording.
- 4 Put the students in pairs and tell them to tell each other about what they heard.
- 5 Monitor and listen, but do not comment unless asked by a student. If this happens, don't judge or ask questions; simply encourage the students by saying 'good' when a student says something accurate.
- 6 Ask some questions about the text.
Who are the people?
How old do you think they are?
How would you describe them?

Note: For the first question there is a correct answer – Aunt Polly and Tom. But for the other two questions it is up to the students (they will hear in the second half how old Tom is – 11, but at this stage it isn't important).

Extension: Physical ordering

Divide the class into teams of six and give each student a scrap of paper with one of the following sentences on it. Play the first part again and have the students arrange themselves in the correct order.

- Aunt Polly called for Tom.*
- Tom came out of the food cupboard.*
- Tom's mouth was red.*
- Tom played a trick on Aunt Polly.*
- Tom ran into the garden.*
- Aunt Polly laughed.*



Activity 2

- 1 For this activity you will use the second half of the recording from *It was 1844* to the end of Chapter 1.
- 2 Play the first sentence: *It was 1844. Tom was eleven years...* Pause the recording on the word *years* and ask students to guess the next word. Tell them to do this NOT by shouting out the word, but by writing it down or whispering it to a partner.
- 3 Give them a few seconds to do this and then start the recording again. Look around to see the reaction of your students, but don't comment.
- 4 Play the next sentence, *He lived in St Petersburg, Missouri. St Petersburg was a...* and pause the recording. Again, ask students to guess the next word.
- 5 Repeat the procedure, stopping at appropriate places (i.e. ones where there is a fairly limited choice of words, although sometimes it's good to make it a little more challenging. For example, I would also pause the recording at *Tom was not clean and...* As students are listening for an adjective the choices are a bit wider although 'clean and tidy' collocate.)

Extension: Role-play

- 1 Put the students into pairs and give each a copy of the dialogue from the first half of the transcript.
- 2 Play the recording again and ask the students to listen to how the sentences are said.
- 3 Ask the pairs to act out the dialogue.
Note: Quite clearly one student will do most of the talking. However, in mixed level classes this can be used as an advantage.

Transcript

'Tom!
There was no reply.
'Tom!
There was no reply.
'Where is he?' said Aunt Polly.
She went to the door of the kitchen and looked into the garden.
'TOM!' she shouted again.
There was no reply from the garden.
Then Aunt Polly heard a noise in the kitchen. She turned round and she saw Tom. He came out of the food cupboard. He ran towards the door. Aunt Polly grabbed his jacket and he stopped.
'Why were you in the food cupboard?' she asked.
Then she saw Tom's mouth. It was bright red.
'I know!' she said. 'You were eating my fruit! Tom, you are a bad boy!
The old lady lifted her hand. She was going to hit Tom.
'Look behind you, Aunt Polly!' said Tom.
Aunt Polly let go of Tom's jacket and turned round quickly. Tom ran away. He ran into the garden and climbed over the fence.
'Tom Sawyer!' said Aunt Polly. Then she laughed. 'He always plays tricks on me,' she said to herself. 'I never learn.'

It was 1844. Tom was eleven years old. He lived in St Petersburg, Missouri. St Petersburg was a town on the Mississippi River, in North America.

Tom's parents were dead. He lived with his father's sister, Aunt Polly. Tom was not clean and tidy. He did not help Aunt Polly with the housework. He often behaved badly. But Aunt Polly loved him very much.

Aunt Polly loved Tom but she worried about him too.

'Tom must behave better,' she said to herself. 'He must obey me. He must be a good boy. He stole my fruit and I will punish him. He must do some work. Tomorrow is Saturday. There's no school on Saturday. Tomorrow, Tom will paint the fence.'

