

- Continue the discussion of *Tom Sawyer* by asking the following questions.

Discussion Questions

Literary Response and Interpretation Questions

- What adjectives would you use to describe the character of Tom Sawyer, based upon the excerpt you just read? What evidence from the story supports your description?
- What was Tom's "great, magnificent inspiration"? How did he "put the thing in a new light"?
- Tom found the world "not so hollow" after all. What does he mean by that statement?
- How does Aunt Polly perceive Tom? In what ways is this different from how he perceives himself? Are either of their perceptions more accurate? Why or why not?
- What title might you give to this excerpt from the book? Give reasons for your selection.

Reasoning Questions

- What was Tom's problem? What was his first solution? What was his second solution?
- How were the consequences of Tom's eventual solution different from the consequences he would have faced if Jim had agreed to trade places with him? Which solution was a better one for Tom?
- Tom's solution to his problem was based on certain assumptions or guesses he made about the other boys. What did Tom assume about the other boys? What is meant by the words, "He had discovered a great law of human action, without knowing it—namely, that in order to make a man or a boy covet a thing, it is only necessary to make the thing difficult to attain"?
- Would you have been persuaded by Tom's argument? Why or why not?
- What can distinguish persuasive techniques from being dishonest to get one's way?

Change Questions

- What techniques did Tom use to change people's minds?
- Would you classify the changes that took place in the story as positive or negative for the people involved? Why? In what ways was the whitewashing arrangement thought to be positive by everyone?
- How does the classification of something as either work or as play change the way you feel about it?

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