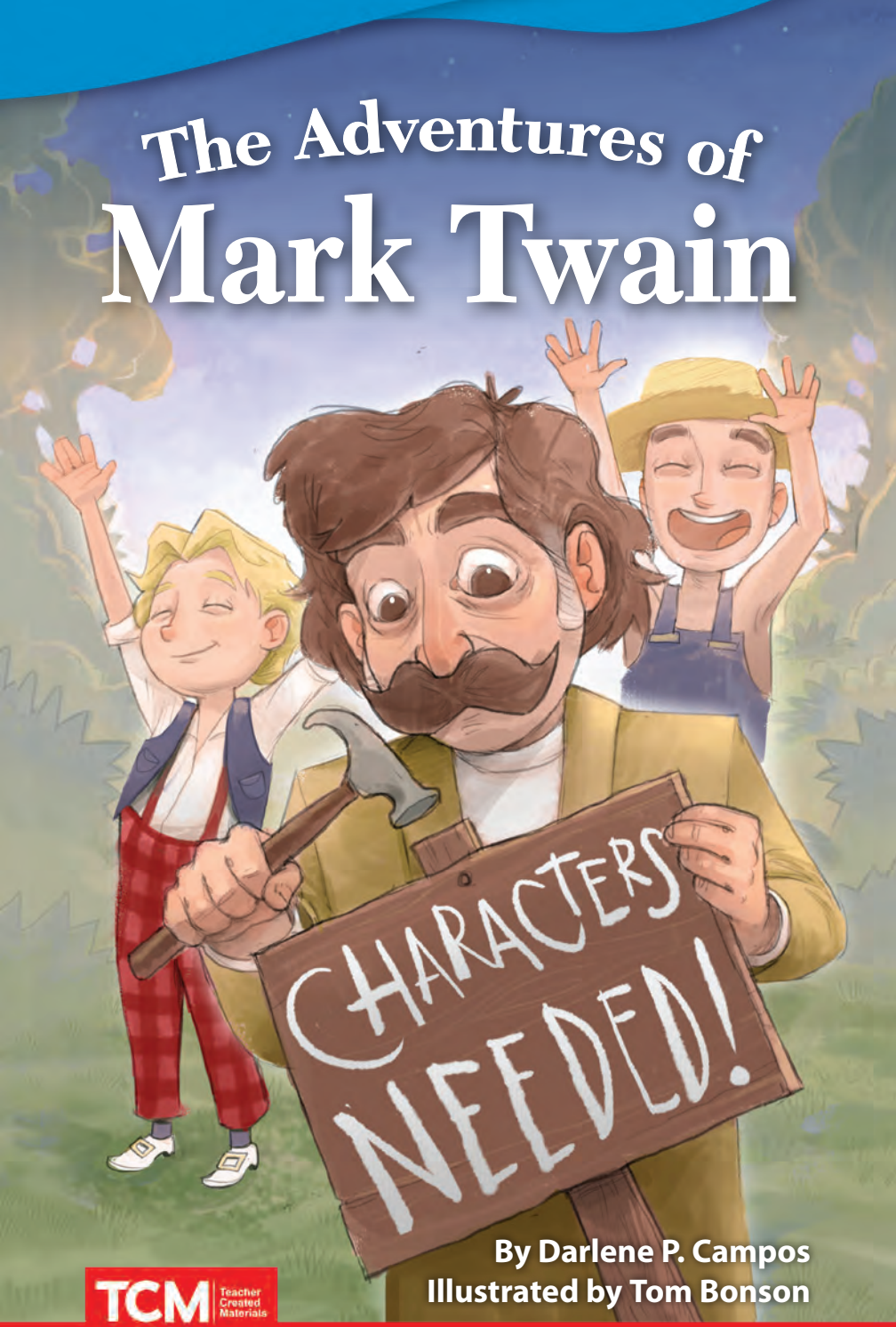
The Adventures of Mark Twain



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TCM Teacher Created Materials

Table of Contents

Chapter One: My Name Is Actually Samuel 5

Chapter Two: Tom and Huck 9

Chapter Three: Writing the Adventures 15

Chapter Four: A Short Vacation 19

Chapter Five: Story's Finished 25

Chapter Six: Back to Work 29

About Us 32

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CHAPTER ONE



My Name Is Actually Samuel

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Hello there! I'm Mark Twain, but that is not my real name. My real name is a spoonful of syllables—it is Samuel Langhorne Clemens. Some writers, like me, use a pen name when they write. Since my real name is longer than a

yardstick glued to another yardstick, I made myself a pen name. I got my pen name from riverboat lingo. *Mark twain* means "the water is at least 12 feet deep, and a riverboat can float steadily and safely."

But that's enough about me and my name. I told you I am a writer. I love creating stories for people to read. A couple of years ago, my friend Charles Dudley Warner and I wrote a book together called *The Gilded Age*. However, that book was for adults. Now, I want to write something different, like a story about adventures—a story for people your age.

Unfortunately, my imaginative mind has been plagued with a serious case of writer's block. Writer's block is when a writer just can't think of what to write next. And trust me, it's torture. I wish characters could just stroll into my house and tell me about themselves. Having characters around me would

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make this writing process a lot easier.

Do you know what else is frustrating? There is no book about how to find a good idea for a new story. You can't go to a store and buy a good idea either. The wonderful thing about ideas is they are free, but, boy, sometimes finding one is as hard as squeezing an elephant



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into a mouse hole.

One morning, I woke up early. I sat on the porch to observe the world around me. Sometimes, I can get inspiration for an entire story by just looking at a bird, or clouds, or people on the street. But as I sat on my porch, with gusts of wind rustling the edges of my papers, I didn't write one word. The birds in the trees weren't interesting, the clouds looked the same as they always did, and there weren't any people outside.

I suddenly had an idea—not for a story but for how to find an idea. I got a piece of a wood and a sharp stick, and I carved the words "Characters Needed: Please visit Mark Twain's house." I put the sign about a mile up the road from my house. I hoped some characters would see it soon.

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CHAPTER TWO



Tom and Huck

You'll never believe what happened three days after I left that sign on the road. I was just sitting down to eat my breakfast when I heard thunderous pounding at my door. I dashed to the door and peeked through the peephole. I saw two boys who looked to be about 12 years old. I swung the door open,

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excited to see whether these would be the characters to inspire my new story. One of the boys was shoeless, dressed in tattered overalls and a straw hat. The other boy wore expensive checkered pants, a white button-down shirt, a navy vest, and shoes that shined like a light bulb.

"Good morning, Mr. Mark Twain," the one in the raggedy clothes said. "My name is Huckleberry Finn."

"I'm Tom Sawyer," the boy in the extravagant clothes said. "We were having one of our adventures when we saw your sign down the road, sir. But if you'll excuse us, we're hungry!"

They rushed past me toward the table. They gulped my coffee and gobbled my pancakes.

"My breakfast!" I cried out.

"We're your characters, Mr. Mark Twain. You don't even have to pay us. You just have to feed us!" Huck said, with a mouth full of *my* hot pancakes and syrup dribbling down his chin.

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