

EXAMINE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUCK AND JIM
THROUGHOUT THE NOVEL, WHAT WERE THE MAJOR
DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RELATIONSHIP AND HOW DOES THE
WRITER CONVEY THESE.

In this piece of coursework I am going to look at the relationship between Huck and Jim throughout the novel. I am going to indicate where the relationship progresses and I am going to specify how the writer conveys these developments.

The setting of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is America during the 19 Century. The story is set in the southern states of America where slavery for black people was common. At this time it was not common for whites to associate with blacks. Most of the blacks were slaves and were treated like second-class citizens.

Most of the characters in this story are white people and do not like black people. Huckleberry Finn is a young, white boy aged thirteen. He is an adventurous boy and his father is a drunk. He does not like his father much. Jim is a black slave. He is around thirty years old and he has a family in slavery also. His dream is to travel to Cairo where he will be free. There, he will work to buy his family out of slavery.

Widow Douglas looks after Huck. He does not like her much and he has tried to run away from her. Widow Douglas owns Jim and Huck always plays tricks on Jim. Jim is gullible and always falls for these tricks. Huck and Jim do not really like each other at the start of the novel but it is when they meet at Jackson Island they look out for one another.

Jackson Island is the first place that they meet up at after they get separated. Jim is glad to see Huck because Jim thought that Huck had been murdered. Huck is also glad to see Jim,

'I was ever so glad to see Jim.'

This shows that Huck starts to care a little for Jim now. He also shows trust because he is not afraid of Jim telling people where Huck was,

'... I warn't afraid of him telling people where I was.'

They were both running away. Jim told Huck that he was running away which shows that Jim also trusts Huck,

'Well, I b'lieve you, Huck. I-I run off.'

This develops their relationship a lot. Jim trusts Huck more than Huck trusts Jim. While they are on Jacksons Island their relationship develops further. When they enter a house that floats down river during the flood, Jim finds Huck's dead pa in the house. Jim does not tell Huck who the dead person was. This shows that Jim cares for Huck,

'Come in,

Huck, but doan' look at his face - it's too gashly.'

Huck again tries to play a trick on Jim, which goes badly wrong. Huck finds a dead snakeskin. Jim told him not to touch it because it is bad luck but Huck lifts it up and puts it into Jim's sleeping bag. The snakes 'mate' bit Jim. Jim drinks whiskey to stop himself from feeling the pain. Huck hides the snakeskin so Jim doesn't know that it was his fault that he got bitten.

'... for I

warn't going to let Jim find out it was all my fault, no if I could help it.'

This shows that Huck still does not treat Jim like a true friend even though Jim treats Huck like a friend.

They travel downriver together for a couple of days. One foggy night it was too foggy to travel so they decided to tie up the skiff. When Huck jumped off the skiff he tied the rope to a twig. But the twig broke before Jim could get off. Jim drifted off downriver. Huck followed him in the canoe but he could not catch up with him. They were separated for a long time. Huck found Jim again but he was sleeping. He woke Jim up and decided to play a trick and to pretend to Jim that it was all a dream. Jim fell for it and he began to interpret the dream.

'Gone away? Why, what in the nation do you mean?'

Huck then told Jim that it was not a dream and Jim would not believe him. But he proved it because of the debris on the boat. Jim did not like this very much,

'... en wid de callin' for you, en went to

sleep, my heart wuz mos' broke bekase you wuz los'...'

Huck was then forced to apologise to Jim. This shows a major development in their relationship.

'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 afterwards, neither.'

Huck says that he wasn't sorry for apologising to Jim. This was the first time that Huck had ever apologised to a black person and he was brought up that he should not apologise to a nigger but he cares for Jim's feelings and apologised to him because he was sorry for what he had done.

They both realised that they were going to need each other if they were going to escape from Miss Watson. At this moment Huck started to value Jim's friendship and help. He knew that Jim could help him on his journey along the river. Jim would also need Huck's help along the river.

When Jim was sold to Tom's Aunt Polly, Tom and Huck devise a plan that could get Jim free again. They were going to steal Jim from Tom's Aunt Polly. They pretended to be robbers and they wrote a letter scaring off the townspeople and they went out and stole Jim that night. But there were fifteen farmers waiting for them. When Jim, Huck and Tom started running away they were spotted and shot at by the farmers. Tom was hit in the leg. This was a very dangerous thing for Huck to do to free Jim. This shows that Huck likes Jim and he is Jim's friend. This shows that Huck thinks about Jim and that he needs him to continue with his journey along the river. This was a dangerous plan to carry out as the local farmers were shooting them at.

At the start of the story Huck was playing lots of tricks on Jim. He did not count him as a friend and he didn't really like him. He did not think much of Jim; he was just a slave and nothing more. During the story their relationship builds, right from the time that they meet on Jacksons Island. At this

time Jim trusted Huck more than Huck trusted Jim. Jim trusted Huck because he had no one else and Huck was a rich and wealthy boy. Huck continued to play tricks on Jim throughout the story including the time that he put the snakeskin under Jims blanket and Jim got badly bitten.

The worst trick that Huck played on Jim was pretending that Huck getting lost was a dream. Jim showed that he cared for Huck in the things that he said to him. When Jim found out that it was not a dream he was very upset. Huck was then forced to apologise to Jim for the wrong that he had done. This was a major stepping-stone, in the relationship between Jim and Huck, for equality between them. Until this point Jim respected Huck more than Huck respected Jim. At the end of the story Jim was freed from slavery. This is when Huck and Jim became equals because Jim was not a slave anymore.

During their adventure they both realised that they needed each other. Jim realised before Huck did. At the end of the story they became good friends and treated each other with respect and cared for one another.