Teaching Childrens Literature In An Era Of Standards
The novel opens with Aunt Polly scouring the house in search of her nephew, Tom Sawyer. She finds him in the closet, discovers that his hands are covered with jam, and prepares to give him a whipping. Tom cries out theatrically, "Look behind you!" and when Aunt Polly turns, Tom escapes over the fence. After Tom is gone, Aunt Polly reflects sadly on Tom's naughtiness and how she lets him get away with too much.

Tom comes home at suppertime with an alligator in his mouth. He tells a tall tale about his adventures. During supper, Aunt Polly tells Tom that he will be skipped school that afternoon and must remain at home and clean up his room. Tom's Aunt is still away from home, but Tom's half-brother, almost 16-year-old Mark, is home. Tom has sworn to himself to disguise his age.

Tom goes out of the house into the lure of the streets of St. Petersburg. Tom and the new arrival of a friend, Sid, go to the large houses and eventually choose the verwessaas of the way house.

When he returns home in the evening, Tom finds Aunt Polly waiting for him. She notices his dirty clothes and resolves to make him work the next day, a Saturday, as punishment.

On Saturday morning, Aunt Polly makes Tom out to whitewash the fence. Jim passes by, and Tom asks to get him to do some of the whitewashing in return for a "white alley," a kind of whistle. Jim almost agrees, but Aunt Polly appears and shines him off, leaving Tom alone with his tasks.
The novel opens with Aunt Polly scouring the house in search of her nephew, Tom Sawyer. She finds him in the closet, discovers that his hands are covered with jam, and prepares to give him a whipping. Tom cries out theatrically, “Look behind you!” and when Aunt Polly turns, Tom escapes over the fence. After Tom is gone, Aunt Polly reflects sadly on Tom’s mischievous and how she lets him get away with too much.

Tom comes home at supper time. He has come back from school with many stories about his adventures. During supper, Aunt Polly asks him what he has done about his clothes. As usual, Tom has skipped school that afternoon and went instead to the river. He has cut his hair and shows her that his collar is still down from the neck. Aunt Polly is satisfied. Tom has assured the Aunt that he will make himself presentable. While wondering the streets of St. Petersburg, Tom and his rival, Joe Harper, run across a man who has lost his money and eventually chase the newcomer all the way home.

When he reaches home in the evening, Tom finds Aunt Polly waiting for him. She notices his dirty clothes and resolves to make him work the next day, a Saturday, as punishment.

On Saturday morning, Aunt Polly sends Tom out to whiten the fence. Joe passes by, and Tom tries to get him to do some of the whitewashing in return for a “white alley,” a kind of marble. Joe almost agrees, but Aunt Polly appears and chases him off, leaving Tom alone with his tasks.
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