



grammar dog.com

grammar, style, and proofreading exercises

The Grammar Dog Guide to Short Stories by Mark Twain

The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Luck

Is He Living Or Is He Dead?

The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg

The Mysterious Stranger

**All exercises use sentences from the stories.
Includes over 250 multiple choice questions.**

About Grammartdog

Grammartdog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Grammartdog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Grammartdog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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SHORT STORIES by Mark Twain

All exercises use sentences from the stories.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | | |
|-------------------|----|---|---------------|
| Exercise 1 | -- | Parts of Speech <i>20 multiple choice questions</i> | 3 |
| Exercise 2 | -- | Proofreading: Spelling, Capitalization, and Punctuation <i>12 multiple choice questions</i> | 5 |
| Exercise 3 | -- | Proofreading: Spelling, Capitalization, and Punctuation <i>12 multiple choice questions</i> | 6 |
| Exercise 4 | -- | Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences <i>20 multiple choice questions</i> | 7 |
| Exercise 5 | -- | Complements <i>20 multiple choice questions on direct objects, predicate nominatives, predicate adjectives, indirect objects, and objects of prepositions</i> | 9 |
| Exercise 6 | -- | Phrases <i>20 multiple choice questions on prepositional, appositive, gerund, infinitive, and participial phrases</i> | ... 11 |
| Exercise 7 | -- | Verbals: Gerunds, Infinitives, and Participles <i>20 multiple choice questions</i> | ... 13 |
| Exercise 8 | -- | Clauses <i>20 multiple choice questions</i> | ... 15 |

SHORT STORIES by Mark Twain – Grammar and Style

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|-----------------------|--|---------------|
| Exercise 9 -- | Style: Figurative Language <i>20 multiple choice questions on metaphor, simile, personification, and onomatopoeia</i> | ... 17 |
| Exercise 10 -- | Style: Poetic Devices <i>20 multiple choice questions on assonance, consonance, alliteration, repetition, and rhyme</i> | ... 19 |
| Exercise 11 -- | Style: Sensory Imagery <i>20 multiple choice questions</i> | ... 21 |
| Exercise 12 -- | Style: Allusions and Symbols <i>20 multiple choice questions pertaining to history, geography, religion, literature, and folklore/superstition</i> | ... 23 |
| Exercise 13 -- | Style: Literary Analysis – Selected Passage 1 <i>6 multiple choice questions</i> | ... 25 |
| Exercise 14 -- | Style: Literary Analysis – Selected Passage 2 <i>6 multiple choice questions</i> | ... 27 |
| Exercise 15 -- | Style: Literary Analysis – Selected Passage 3 <i>6 multiple choice questions</i> | ... 29 |
| Exercise 16 -- | Style: Literary Analysis – Selected Passage 4 <i>6 multiple choice questions</i> | ... 31 |
| Answer Key -- | Answers to Exercises 1-16 | ... 33 |
| Glossary -- | Definitions of Terms Used in Literary Analysis | ... 35 |

SAMPLE EXERCISES - SHORT STORIES by Mark Twain

EXERCISE 5 COMPLEMENTS

Identify the complements in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

d.o. = direct object

i.o. = indirect object

p.n. = predicate nominative

o.p. = object of preposition

p.a. = predicate adjective

THE NOTORIOUS JUMPING FROG OF CALAVERAS COUNTY

- ___ 1. But still he was lucky, uncommon lucky; he most always come out winner.
- ___ 2. He was always ready and laying for a chance.
- ___ 3. Smiley was monstrous proud of his frog, and well he might be, for fellers that traveled and been everywheres all said he laid over any frog that ever they see.

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

Identify the phrases in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

par = participial

ger = gerund

inf = infinitive

appos = appositive

prep = prepositional

THE NOTORIOUS JUMPING FROG OF CALAVERAS COUNTY

- ___ 1. I told him that a friend of mine had commissioned me to make some inquiries about a cherished companion of his boyhood named Leonidas W. Smiley – Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, a young minister of the Gospel . . .
- ___ 2. Smiley he went to the swamp and slopped around in the mud for a long time . . .
- ___ 3. He gave Smiley a look, as much as to say his heart was broke, and it was *his* fault, for putting up a dog that hadn't no hind legs . . .

EXERCISE 9 STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label underlined words:

p = personification

s = simile

m = metaphor

o = onomatopoeia

h = hyperbole

THE NOTORIOUS JUMPING FROG OF CALAVERAS COUNTY

- ___ 1. “. . . his under-jaw'd begin to stick out like the fo'castle of a steamboat, and his teeth would uncover and shine like the furnaces.”
- ___ 2. “He'd give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you'd see that frog whirling in the air like a doughnut . . .”
- ___ 3. “. . . he'd spring straight up and snake a fly off'n the counter there, and flop down on the floor ag'in as solid as a gob of mud . . .”

SAMPLE EXERCISES - SHORT STORIES by Mark Twain

EXERCISE 12 STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS

Identify the allusions and symbols in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

a. history b. geography c. religion d. literature e. folklore/superstition

THE NOTORIOUS JUMPING FROG OF CALAVERAS COUNTY

- ___ 1. I told him that a friend of mine had commissioned me to make some inquiries about . . . a young minister of the Gospel . . .
- ___ 2. “. . . thank the Lord for his inf’nite mercy – and coming on so smart that with the blessing of Prov’dence she’d get well . . .”
- ___ 3. “And a dog might tackle him and bully-rag him, and bite him, and throw him over his shoulder two or three times, and Andrew Jackson – which was the name of the pup . . . would never let on . . .”

EXERCISE 13 STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

“He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal’lated to educated him; and so he never done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn that frog to jump. And you bet you he did learn him, too. He’d give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you’d see that frog whirling in the air like a doughnut – see him turn one summerset, or maybe a couple, if he got a good start, and come down flat-footed and all right like a cat. He got him up so in the matter of ketching flies, and kep’ him in practice so constant, that he’d nail a fly every time as fur as he could see him. Smiley said all a frog wanted was education, and he could do ‘most anything – and I believe him. Why, I’ve seen him set Dan’l Webster down here on this floor – Dan’l Webster was the name of the frog – and sing out, ‘Flies, Dan’l, flies!’ and quicker’n you could wink he’d spring straight up and snake a fly off’n the counter there, and flop down on the floor ag’in as solid as a gob of mud, and fall to scratchin g the side of his head with his hind foot as indifferent as if he hadn’t no idea he’d been doin’ any more’n any frog might do. You never see a frog so modest and straightfor’ard as he was, for all he was so gifted. And when it come to fair and square jumping on a dead level, he could get over more ground at one straddle than any animal of his breed you ever see. Jumping on a dead level was his strong suit, you understand; and when it come to that, Smiley was monstrous proud of his frog, and well he might be, for fellers that had traveled and been everywhere’s all said he laid any frog that ever they see.”
(From *The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*)

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and ay other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- 1 “He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal’lated to educated him; and so he never
- 2 done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn that frog to jump. And you bet you
- 3 he did learn him, too. He’d give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you’d see that frog

SAMPLE EXERCISES - SHORT STORIES by Mark Twain

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13 any frog might do. You never see a frog so modest and straightfor’ard as he was, for all he was so gifted.
14 And when it come to fair and square jumping on a dead level, he could get over more ground at one
15 straddle than any animal of his breed you ever see. Jumping on a dead level was his strong suit, you
16 understand; and when it come to that, Smiley was monstrous proud of his frog, and well he might be,
17 for fellers that had traveled and been everywheres all said he laid any frog that ever they see.”

- ___1. The target of satire in the passage is . . .
a. the narrator b. Smiley c. the frog d. the reader
- ___2. ALL of the following characterize the dialect in the passage EXCEPT . . .
a. incorrect spelling
b. incorrect subject and verb agreement
c. slang
d. sarcasm
- ___3. Lines 4 and 5 both contain examples of . . .
a. metaphor b. simile c. personification d. onomatopoeia