

## MARK TWAIN

**Coordinator: Tom Grant**

This study group follows the transformation of Samuel Clemens, an obscure Missouri "border ruffian" into "Mark Twain," the wealthy, critically acclaimed, globe-trotting author - and, by all accounts, the most famous American of his time. Clemens' timely discovery of his pseudonymous "other self" proved to be both a blessing and a curse, and created the central conflict in most of his writings - that between Sam Clemens' yearning for respectability and security and Mark Twain's irrepressible, often subversive, desire to perform before an adoring public. We examine this central conflict chronologically in representative humorous sketches, tall tales, public lectures, adventure stories and fantasies, including two essential novels, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.

### **Readings and other Required Materials:**

Justin Kaplan, Ed., *The Signet Classic Book of Mark Twain's Short Stories*, Signet, ISBN 987-0-451-53016-5

Thomas Cooley, Ed., *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Third Edition, Norton Critical Edition, Norton, ISBN 0-393-966-40-2

Allison Ensor, Ed., *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, Norton Critical Edition, Norton ISBN 0-393-95137-5

**Tom Grant** has published and lectured widely about Mark Twain during his career as a college teacher in Clemens' adopted home state of Connecticut.

### **\* \* \* \* \* Syllabus \* \* \* \* \***

1. Sam Clemens Discovers His Gold Mine: The Vein of Humor  
Selections from *The Signet Book of Stories*
2. "The Sagebrush Bohemian" Among the WASP "Elect" *Innocents Abroad* (1869), Selections (in the course pack)
3. "The Wild Humorist of the Pacific Slope" *Roughing It* (1872), Selections (in the course pack)
4. Nook Farm, Hartford: Marrying Up, Settling Down, Cashing In Selections

from *The Signet Book of Stories*

5. Recapturing Memories: Return to the River of Boyhood Memory  
Selections from *Life on the Mississippi* (1883) in the course pack
6. 7. 8. Bondage and Escape: What Price Freedom? *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885)
9. 10. The Clash Between Medieval Order and Modern Speculation  
*A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*
11. The "Damned Human Race" The Making of a Misanthrope  
Selections from *The Signet Book* and the course pack
12. Loneliness at Twilight  
Selections from *The Signet Book* and the course pack