**Relevant Terms for**

***Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

***BILDUNGSROMAN*** (Germ. “formation novel”), or COMING-OF-AGE STORY: A narrative in which an adolescent protagonist comes to adulthood by a process of experience and disillusionment. This character loses his or her innocence, discovers that previous preconceptions are false, or has the security of childhood torn away, but usually matures and strengthens by this process.

**MOOD** (from Anglo-Saxon, *mod*: “heart” or “spirit”): In literature, a feeling, emotional state, or disposition of mind—especially the predominating atmosphere or tone of a literary work. Most pieces of literature have a prevailing mood, but shifts in this prevailing mood may function as a counterpoint, provide comic relief, or echo the changing events in the plot. The term “mood” is often used synonymously with atmosphere and ambiance. Students and critics who wish to discuss mood in their essays should be able to point to specific diction, description, setting, and characterization to illustrate what sets the mood. [Contrast “tone”]

**NOVEL:** In its broadest sense, a novel is any extended fictional prose narrative focusing on a few primary characters but often involving scores of secondary characters. The fact that it is in prose helps distinguish it from other lengthy works like epics. We might arbitrarily set the length at 50,000 words or more as a dividing point with the novella and the short story. The English novel is primarily thought of as a product of the eighteenth-century, though many earlier narratives in classical Greek and Japanese easily fulfill the normal requirements of the genre—though most Western scholars treat these works as separate from the novel genre because historically they do not play a direct part or direct influence in the evolution of the popular English novel genre today.

**PICARESQUE NOVEL** (from Spanish *picaro*, a rogue or thief; also called the picaresque narrative): A humorous novel in which the plot consists of a young knave’s misadventures and escapades narrated in comic or satiric scenes. This roguish protagonist—called a *picaro*—makes his (or sometimes her) way through cunning and trickery rather than through virtue or industry. The *picaro* frequently travels from place to place engaging in a variety of jobs for several masters and getting into mischief. The picaresque novel is usually episodic in nature and realistic in its presentation of the seamier aspects of society. The genre has heavily influenced episodic humorous novels as diverse as Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* and Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

**TONE:** The writer’s or speaker’s attitude toward the subject, the audience, or herself or himself; the emotional coloring, or emotional meaning, of a work. [Contrast “mood”]

[Definitions from *Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense,* 9th ed., by Laurence Perrine and <http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/lit_terms.html>]