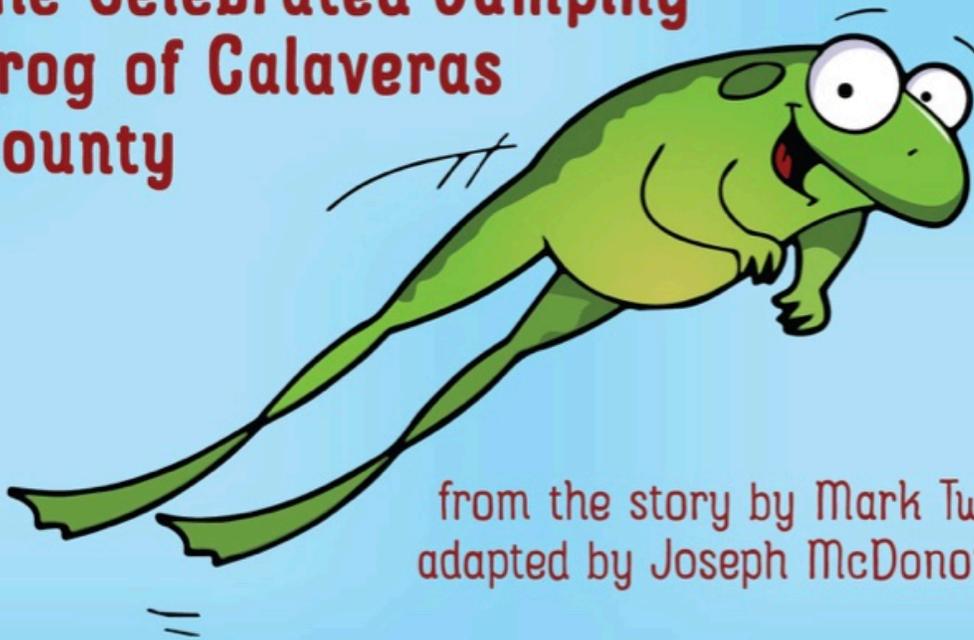


NEW STAGE *Theatre*

Arts in Education Touring Production

The Celebrated Jumping
Frog of Calaveras
County



from the story by Mark Twain
adapted by Joseph McDonough

STUDY GUIDE

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About the Arthur

It was in the West that Samuel Clemens became Mark Twain, and although the landscape and characters of frontier life play only a small part in his writings, one can always detect a tang of the region where he found his literary voice and identity in his distinctively colloquial style.

Clemens was born in Florida, Missouri, in 1835, and grew up in nearby Hannibal, on the Mississippi River. His father died in 1847, leaving the family with little financial support, and Clemens became a printer's apprentice, eventually working for his brother, Orion, who had set himself up in Hannibal as a newspaper publisher. After a year spent setting type for newspapers on the east coast, Clemens returned in 1854 to rejoin Orion, who by this time had moved on to start a paper in Keokuk, Iowa.

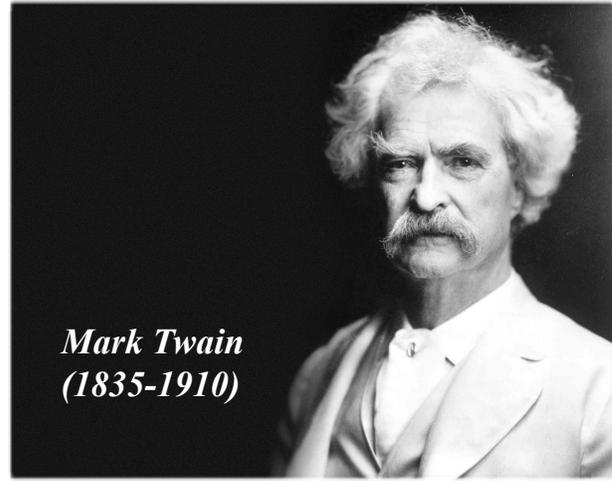
Through all his years in the printshop, Clemens tried his hand at composing humorous pieces, using the heavy-handed techniques of local colorists who were popular at the time. By 1856, he was accomplished enough to receive a commission from the Keokuk *Saturday Post* for a series of comical letters reporting on his planned travels to South America. But on his way down the Mississippi, Clemens temporarily abandoned his literary ambitions to take up a trade he had dreamed about as a boy. He apprenticed himself to become a riverboat pilot, and after 18 months of training, spent the next three years navigating the Mississippi's ever-changing waters.

When the Civil War closed traffic on the river in the spring of 1861, Clemens spent a few inglorious weeks as a volunteer in the Confederate army, then deserted to join Orion again, whose abolitionist views had won him appointment as territorial secretary in Nevada. By mid-August, the brothers were in Carson City, where Clemens tried his luck with timber, then mining, then finally found a measure of success in 1862 as a feature writer for the [Virginia City Territorial Enterprise](#). It was as this paper's reporter at the Nevada constitutional convention that Clemens began to sign his work "Mark Twain."

The experience of filing daily reports on the picturesque doings in a Nevada mining town helped Clemens sharpen and broaden his abilities as a writer. After two years, he carried those talents to [San Francisco](#), where he wrote for a variety of newspapers and periodicals, among them *The Californian*, edited by Bret Harte. Though they were to quarrel later, at this time Clemens and Harte shared a common ambition, and the more experienced Harte proved a valuable guide as Clemens tried to work the comic artifice out of his humor and develop a more natural, conversational style. With "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," published in 1865 by *The Saturday Press* of New York, and reprinted by newspapers across the country, this style made its first appearance, a style readers would soon come to recognize as the voice of Mark Twain.

Clemens left San Francisco in 1866, reporting first on his travels to Hawaii for the *Sacramento Union*, then heading back east with an open assignment for humorous travel writing from the San Francisco *Alta California*. After a brief return to Missouri, he took up the literary life in New York, where he polished his lucrative talent as an entertaining lecturer, then set sail in 1867 on a grand tour of Europe and the Mideast. The reports of this journey which he sent back to San Francisco and New York later became his first best-seller, *Innocents Abroad* (1869).

On his return to the United States, Clemens married Olivia Langdon of Elmira, New York, in 1870 -- after a courtship hundreds of love letters long. The couple settled briefly in Buffalo, New York, then permanently in Hartford, Connecticut, where Clemens finally turned from journalism to produce the books and novels that are the basis of his fame. One of the first in this string was *Roughing It* (1872), an autobiographical account of his years in the West told in the humorous style of his travel writing, which pits a self-confident observer against a setting which he both comically misinterprets and ironically understands only too well. This element of self-conscious irony, rooted here in memory, would become the hallmark of Clemens' best work, especially evident in the novels set in his boyhood world beside the Mississippi River, *Tom Sawyer* (1876) and his masterpiece, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). Like his father and brother before him, Clemens was unlucky in business and much of his writing and lecturing was spurred by the need to pay off debts stemming from bad investments. Toward the end of his life, Clemens passed through a period of deep depression, which began in 1896 when he received word on a lecture tour in England that his favorite daughter, Susy, had died of meningitis. His wife's death in 1904, and the loss of a second daughter in 1909, deepened his gloom. Clemens had once humorously predicted that, since his birth had coincided with the appearance of Halley's comet, his own death would come when the comet next returned. This prophecy was fulfilled when he died at his home in Redding, Connecticut, in 1910.



Mark Twain
(1835-1910)

What's an Adaptation?

Our play, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* is an adaptation of Mark Twain's short story. It was adapted by Joseph McDonough. It takes a lot of work to adapt a short story you read on a page into a play you can watch on stage and even participate in! Let's take a look at some of the steps we took to create our adaptation of the story.

First, the playwright reads the story and turns the words into dialogue for the characters to say.

Then, the director meets with the designers to create the world of the play. This includes the elements you see onstage like the set, costumes, and props.

After that, the director holds rehearsals with the cast. Throughout the rehearsal process, the playwright may make changes to the script to solve any problems that might arise.

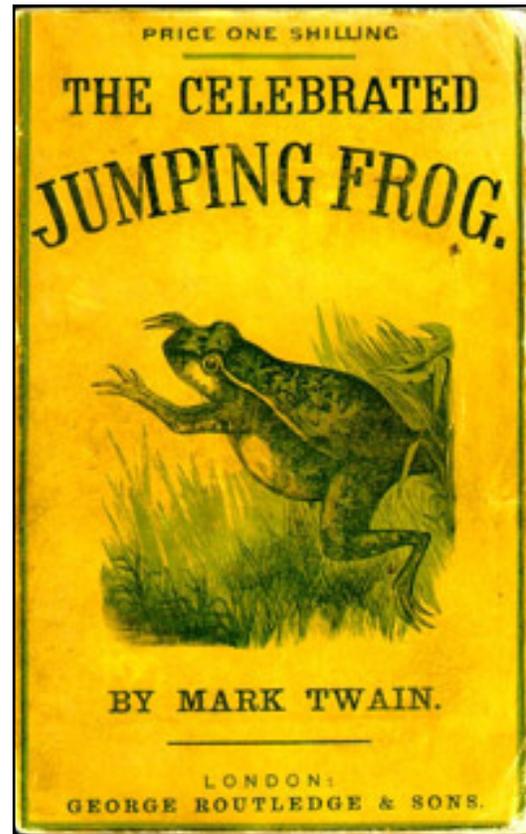
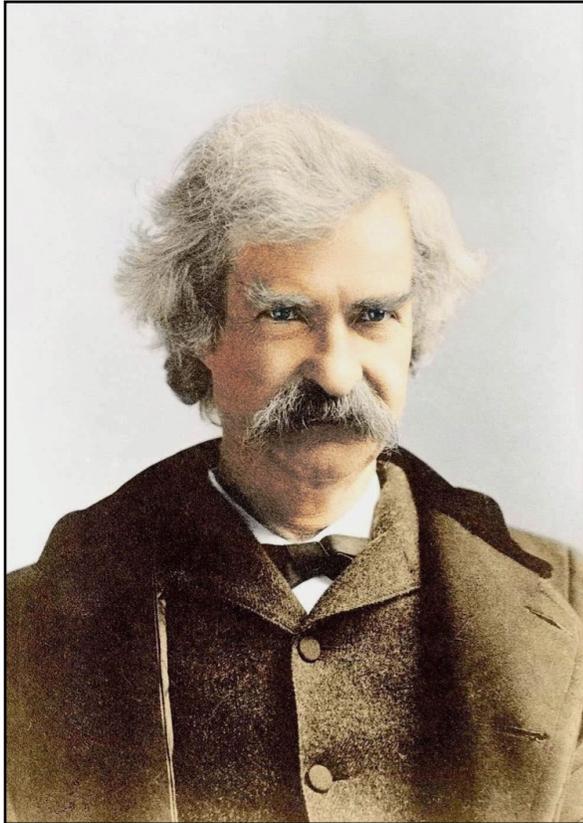
Next, the costume designer measures each actor for their costumes. The props designer finds or makes the props, and the scenic designer begins work on the backdrops and other scenic elements. The actors and directors continue to rehearse.

As elements become ready, actors begin to incorporate costumes and props into their rehearsals. They memorize their lines and movement.

Finally, it's showtime!

If you could adapt a book or story into a play, what would it be?

About The Story



Mark Twain, perhaps the most renowned American humorist. When Mark Twain's "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" first appeared in 1865, it was hailed by James Russell Lowell, the Boston-based leader of the literary elite, as "the finest piece of humorous literature yet produced in America." This was high praise for a tall-tale from a little known San Francisco newspaper humorist, but Lowell aimed precisely at the most distinguishing feature of Twain's first nationally acclaimed work of fiction: its transforming relationship to the long tradition of American humor. In this brief masterpiece, Twain combines the vibrant, loquacious storytelling tradition rooted in folk tale, fable, and gossip with the more calculated literary tradition of satire, irony, and wit. This lesson plan frames "The Jumping Frog" in this context, introducing students to both aspects of American humor in order to deepen appreciation of Twain's achievement.

The Original Short Story!

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

(Mark Twain intentionally included misspelled words for humor)

In compliance with the request of a friend of mine, who wrote me from the East, I called on good-natured, garrulous old Simon Wheeler, and inquired after my friend's friend, Leonidas W. Smiley, as requested to do, and I hereunto append the result. I have a lurking suspicion that Leonidas W. Smiley is a myth; that my friend never knew such a personage; and that he only conjectured that, if I asked old Wheeler about him, it would remind him of his infamous Jim Smiley, and he would go to work and bore me nearly to death with some infernal reminiscence of him as long and tedious as it should be useless to me. If that was the design, it certainly succeeded.

I found Simon Wheeler dozing comfortably by the bar-room stove of the old, dilapidated tavern in the ancient mining camp of Angel's, and I noticed that he was fat and bald-headed, and had an expression of winning gentleness and simplicity upon his tranquil countenance. He roused up and gave me good-day. I told him 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, who he had heard was at one time a resident of Angel's Camp. I added that, if Mr. Wheeler could tell me any thing about this Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, I would feel under many obligations to him.

Simon Wheeler backed me into a corner and blockaded me there with his chair, and then sat me down and reeled off the monotonous narrative which follows this paragraph. He never smiled, he never frowned, he never changed his voice from the gentle-flowing key to which he tuned the initial sentence, he never betrayed the slightest suspicion of enthusiasm; but all through the interminable narrative there ran a vein of impressive earnestness and sincerity, which showed me plainly that, so far from his imagining that there was any thing ridiculous or funny about his story, he regarded it as a really important matter, and admired its two heroes as men of transcendent genius in finesse. To me, the spectacle of a man drifting serenely along through such a queer yarn without ever smiling, was exquisitely absurd. As I said before, I asked him to tell me what he knew of Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, and he replied as follows. I let him go on in his own way, and never interrupted him once:

There was a feller here once by the name of Jim Smiley, in the winter of '49 or may be it was the spring of '50 I don't recollect exactly, somehow, though what makes me think it was one or the other is because I remember the big flume wasn't finished when he first came to the camp; but any way, he was the curiosest man about always betting on any thing that turned up you ever see, if he could get any body to bet on the other side; and if he couldn't, he'd change sides. Any way that suited the other man would suit him any way just so's he got a bet, he was satisfied. But still he was lucky, uncommon lucky; he most always come out winner. He was always ready and laying for a chance; there couldn't be no solittry thing mentioned but that feller'd offer to bet on it, and -take any side you please, as I was just telling you. If there was a horse-race, you'd find him flush, or you'd find him busted at the end of it; if there was a dog-fight, he'd bet on it; if there was a cat-fight, he'd bet on it; if there was a chicken-fight, he'd bet on it; why, if there was two birds setting on a fence, he would bet you which one would fly first; or if there was a camp-meeting, he would be there reg'lar, to bet on Parson Walker, which he judged to be the best exhorter about here, and so he was, too, and a good man. If he even seen a straddle-bug start to go anywheres, he would bet you how long it would take him to get wherever he was going to, and if you took him up, he would foller that straddle-bug to Mexico but what he would find out where he was bound for and how long he was on the road. Lots of the boys here has seen that Smiley, and can tell you about him. Why, it never made no difference to him he would bet on any thing the dangdest feller. Parson Walker's wife laid very sick once, for a good while, and it seemed as if they warn's going to save her; but one morning he come in, and Smiley asked how she was, and he said she was considerable better than the Lord for his infnity mercy and coming on so smart that, with the blessing of Providence, she'd get well yet; and Smiley, before he thought, says, "Well, I'll risk two- and-a-half that she don't, any way."

Thish-yer Smiley had a mare the boys called her the fifteen- minute nag, but that was only in fun, you know, because, of course, she was faster than that and he used to win money on that horse, for all she was so slow and always had the asthma, or the distemper, or the consumption, or something of that kind. They used to give her two or three hundred yards start, and then pass her under way; but always at the fag-end of the race she'd get excited and desperate- like, and come cavorting and straddling up, and scattering her legs around limber, sometimes in the air, and sometimes out to one side amongst the fences, and kicking up m-o-r-e dust, and raising m-o-r-e racket with her coughing and sneezing and blowing her nose and always fetch up at the stand just about a neck ahead, as near as you could cipher it down.

And he had a little small bull pup, that to look at him you'd think he wan's worth a cent, but to set around and look ornery, and lay for a chance to steal something. But as soon as money was up on him, he was a different dog; his underjaw'd begin to stick out like the fo'castle of a steamboat, and his teeth would uncover, and shine savage like the furnaces. 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 Andrew Jackson would never let on but what he was satisfied, and hadn't expected nothing else and the bets being doubled and doubled on the other side all the time, till the money was all up; and then all of a sudden he would grab that other dog jest by the j'int of his hind leg and freeze on it not chew, you understand, but only jest grip and hang on till they thronged up the sponge, if it was a year. Smiley always come out winner on that pup, till he harnessed a dog once that didn't have no hind legs, because they'd been sawed off by a circular saw, and when the thing had gone along far enough, and the money was all up, and he come to make a snatch for his pet bolt, he saw in a minute how he'd been imposed on, and how the other dog had him in the door, so to speak, and he 'peered sur- prised, and then he looked sorter discouraged-like, and didn't try no more to win the fight, and so he got shucked out bad. He give 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 for him to take bolt of, which was his main dependence in a fight, and then he limped off a piece and laid down and died. It was a good pup, was that Andrew Jackson, and would have made a name for hisself if he'd lived, for the stuff was in him, and he had genius I know it, because he hadn't had no opportunities to speak of, and it don't stand to reason that a dog could make such a fight as he could under them circumstances, if he hadn't no talent. It always makes me feel sorry when I think of that last fight of his'n, and the way it turned out.

Well, thish-yer Smiley had rat-tarriers, and chicken cocks, and tom- cats, and all of them kind of things, till you couldn't rest, and you couldn't fetch nothing for him to bet on but he'd match you. He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal'klated to edercate 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 may be 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 catching flies, and kept him in practice so constant, that he'd nail a fly every time as far as he could see him. Smiley said all a frog wanted was education, and he could do most any thing 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 again as solid as a gob of mud, and fall to scratching 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 straightforward 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 would ante up money on him as long as he had a red. Smiley was monstrous proud of his frog, and well he might be, for fellers that had traveled and been everywhere, all said he laid over any frog that ever they see.

Well, Smiley kept the beast in a little lattice box, and he used to fetch him down town sometimes and lay for a bet. One day a feller a stranger in the camp, he was come across him with his box, and says:

"What might it be that you've got in the box?"

And Smiley says, sorter indifferent like, "It might be a parrot, or it might be a canary, may be, but it an't it's only just a frog."

And the feller took it, and looked at it careful, and turned it round this way and that, and says, "H'm so 'tis. Well, what's he good for?"

"Well," Smiley says, easy and careless, "He's good enough for one thing, I should judge he can outjump any frog in Calaveras county."

The feller took the box again, and took another long, particular look, and give it back to Smiley, and says, very deliberate, "Well, I don't see no p'int about that frog that's any better'n any other frog."

"May be you don't," Smiley says. "May be you understand frogs, and may be you don't understand 'em; may be you've had experience, and may be you an't only a amature, as it were. Anyways, I've got my opinion, and I'll risk forty dollars that he can outjump any frog in Calaveras county."

And the feller studied a minute, and then says, kinder sad like, "Well, I'm only a stranger here, and I an't got no frog; but if I had a frog, I'd bet you."

And then Smiley says, "That's all right that's all right if you'll hold my box a minute, I'll go and get you a frog." And so the feller took the box, and put up his forty dollars along with Smiley's, and set down to wait.

So he set there a good while thinking and thinking to hisself, and then he got the frog out and prized his mouth open and took a tea- spoon and filled him full of quail shot filled him pretty near up to his chin and set him on the floor. Smiley he went to the swamp and slopped around in the mud for a long time, and finally he ketchd a frog, and fetched him in, and give him to this feller, and says:

"Now, if you're ready, set him alongside of Dan'l, with his fore- paws just even with Dan'l, and I'll give the word." Then he says, "One two three jump!" and him and the feller touched up the frogs from behind, and the new frog hopped off, but Dan'l give a heave, and hysted up his shoulders so like a Frenchman, but it wan's no use he couldn't budge; he was planted as solid as an anvil, and he couldn't no more stir than if he was anchored out. Smiley was a good deal surprised, and he was disgusted too, but he didn't have no idea what the matter was, of course.

The feller took the money and started away; and when he was going out at the door, he sorter jerked his thumb over his shoulders this way at Dan'l, and says again, very deliberate, "Well, I don't see no p'int about that frog that's any better'n any other frog."

Smiley he stood scratching his head and looking down at Dan'l a long time, and at last he says, "I do wonder what in the nation that frog throw'd off for I wonder if there an't something the matter with him he 'pears to look mighty baggy, somehow." And he ketchd Dan'l by the nap of the neck, and lifted him up and says, "Why, blame my cats, if he don't weigh five pound!" and turned him upside down, and he belched out a double handful of shot. And then he see how it was, and he was the maddest man he set the frog down and took out after that feller, but he never ketchd him. And-

[Here Simon Wheeler heard his name called from the front yard, and got up to see what was wanted.] And turning to me as he moved away, he said: "Just set where you are, stranger, and rest easy I an't going to be gone a second."

But, by your leave, I did not think that a continuation of the history of the enterprising vagabond Jim Smiley would be likely to afford me much information concerning the Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, and so I started away.

At the door I met the sociable Wheeler returning, and he button- holed me and recommenced:

"Well, thish-yer Smiley had a yeller one-eyed cow that didn't have no tail, only jest a short stump like a bannanner, and "

"Oh! hang Smiley and his afflicted cow!" I muttered, good-naturedly, and bidding the old gentleman good-day, I departed.

After the performance, compare and contrast the original story to the adoption of the play! What are some of the differences?



What can we all learn from this classic tall tale about by Mark Twain?

The Cast



BRIANNA HILL is excited to start her professional career with New Stage Theatre. She is proud Florida native and graduated from Florida Southern College with a BFA in theatre performance and B.S. in business administration with a focus in theatre management. Some of her favorite credits from college include Olive in **Odd Couple (Female Version)**, Queen Titania in **A Midsummer Night's Dream**, and Florence in **Poof**. Recently, Hill finished a house management internship with Playhouse on the Square in Memphis and received the opportunity to be in FEMMemphis's inaugural performance as Betty 5 in **Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Betties**.

KYLE PARKER DANIELS is excited to be joining New Stage for the 2017-2018 season as an acting associate. Daniels attended Xavier University in Cincinnati for acting. Some of his favorite roles include Adam in the world premiere **Begotten**, Haemon in **Antigone**, Xander Wallen in **#Selfie the Play**, Chet in **Cannibal Galaxy: A Love Story**, and Huck Finn in **The Complete Tom 2: Huckleberry**. Daniels would like to thank his family for their support.



JESSICA DEBOLT is a recent graduate of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, where she studied directing, management, and performance. In the summer DeBolt stage managed for Hershey Park in Pennsylvania. Her acting credits include Kate in **Dancing at Lughnasa**, and the title role in **Medea**. She also recently directed **The Importance of Being Earnest** in her home city of Champaign, Ill. DeBolt is excited to be part of the acting associates company and looks forward to learning from and contributing to New Stage Theatre.

XERRON MINGO is a recent graduate of Florida A&M University. He has worked professionally since graduation at a plethora of regional theaters. He has appeared in **The Wiz (The Lion)** and **The Hot Mikado (Pooh-Bah)** at the GLOW Lyric Theatre in Greenville, S.C.; **Black Nativity (Narrator)** and JazzLinks Tour at Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe; **The Great Society** at Asolo Rep; **Hairspray (Gilbert)** at American Stage; **A Chorus Line (Richie)** at Quincy Music Theatre; and in **Ragtime (Harlem Ensemble, Booker T. Washington Understudy)** at Florida State University. His educational theatre credits includes **Blues For An Alabama Sky (Guy)** and **Five Guys Named Moe (Eat Moe)**. This is his first time in Mississippi and is so excited to be working as an Acting Apprentice with New Stage Theatre!



The Company

SHARON MILES (Education Director/Show Director) received her theatre training from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, MS. As a actor, writer, director, and all around supporter of the arts, she is extremely excited to join the New Stage team as Education Director. Sharon has been working as a contracted guest artist in the education department since 2011. Most recently, she served as the Music Director for the First Stages Camp production of **Lion King Kids!** Some favorite theatrical roles at New Stage include: Stage Manager in **Our Town**, Gwen in **A Time to Kill**, Fannie Lou Hamer in **All the Way**, Miss Nelson in the children's musical **Miss Nelson is Missing**, Cassandra in **Vanya, Sonia, Masha and Spike** and Alex the Lion, in **Madagascar the Musical!**

KRISTIN JOHNSON (Costume Designer) This is Kristin's third year at New Stage Theatre, but her first season as the official Costume Assistant and her second year designing the touring productions. Last year she had a blast designing **Oh, Freedom** and **The Selfish Giant**. She graduated from Delta State University where she studied Fashion Merchandising. At Delta State, she designed costumes for the Delta Players including the productions of **The Last Days of Judas Iscariot**, **The Liar**, **These Shining Lives**, and **The Bald Soprano**. Some of her favorite shows from the last few years are **Shrek: The Musical**, **A Time to Kill**, **Oh, Mr. Faulkner**, **Do You Write?**, and **Madagascar**. She also designed costumes for New Stage Theatre's Unframed Series productions of **Constellations** and **This is our Youth**. While not at New Stage, Kristin works as a server and bartender at Amerigo in Ridgeland. She lives in Jackson with her fiancé, Troy, and their two rambunctious dogs, Anubis and Leroy.

MICHAEL TOBIN (Set Designer/Production Assistant) graduated from Belhaven University with a B.A. in English and minors in Creative Writing and Theatre. This is his first season at New Stage Theatre. Some of his previous credits include lighting design and assistant technical direction for **The 39 Steps**, lighting design and technical direction for **Sketching the Soul**, dramaturg for **Mayfair Ma Chere**, master electrician for **The White Snake** and **Big Fish the Musical**, and stage management for **Little Shop of Horrors**.

CHRIS ROEBUCK (Resident Teaching Artist/Sound Designer) graduated from Mississippi College with a B.A. in history. He taught for two years at Madison Central High School, where among other responsibilities he assisted with the Drama Club. Roebuck was an acting intern at New Stage Theatre, working with four other apprentices to take three touring shows across the state. Among his numerous professional acting credits, Roebuck has appeared in **Shrek**, **Hairspray**, **The Foreigner**, **Annie**, **The 39 Steps**, **A Soldier's Play**, **A Year with Frog and Toad**, **The Ponder Heart**, **A Christmas Carol**, **Idols of the King**, **Forever Plaid**, and **A Raisin in the Sun**. In addition to the education touring shows, his directing credits include **Goodnight, Moon**, **The Cat in the Hat**, **The Lion**, **The Witch**, and **The Wardrobe**, **The Weir**, **Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse**, **A Christmas Carol** and **Dead Man's Cell Phone** .

BETTY WONG (Box Office Assistant/Education Assistant) begins her twelfth season at New Stage. She enjoys traveling to schools throughout the state with the Professional Apprentice Company to provide live theatre experiences for students of all ages. When not on the road, you can find Betty in the Box Office. She has also served for many years as a volunteer in other areas of the theatre. Her professional work experiences in education and her passion for live theatre has contributed to the growth and expansion of New Stage's Educational Department. She has served as a consultant to school districts throughout the state of Mississippi. Wong has a B.S. in Educational Psychology from Mississippi State University, and a M.Ed. from Delta State University.

Audience Etiquette

For many of your students, **The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County** may be their first theatre experience! It may be helpful to discuss with them the expected behavior of an audience. While our play does feature moments of audience participation, we want to be sure your students are aware of audience etiquette.

New Stage asks that prior to the performance, students are made aware of the following:

- Stay with your group at all times and pay attention to your teachers and chaperones.
- Be sure to go to the bathroom before the performance begins.
- Make yourself comfortable while keeping movement to a minimum.
- Please do not stand up, walk around or put your feet on the seat in front of you. - Absolutely no gum chewing, eating or drinking in the theatre.

Noise

Live theatre means live actors who can hear not only what is happening on the stage, but in the audience as well. While laughter and applause at appropriate time are appreciated by the actors, excessive noise and talking is not. Even whispering voices can be distracting to the actors and others in the audience.

- Do not talk during the performance.
- Cell phones are prohibited in the theatre. If you have one turn it off and put it away and do not bring it out during the performance.

Applause!

Applause is used to acknowledge the performers and to voice appreciation or approval. Traditionally, applause comes before intermission and at the performance's conclusion. Dimming the lights on the stage and bringing up the house lights usually signals these intervals. A curtain call in which the cast returns to the stage for bows usually follows a performance.

Check out our costume designer, Kristin Johnson's renderings of her designs for The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County!



Before the Play Activities!



If you have limited time you may want to check out these videos to familiarize your group with the material:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXivgpLSQeo>

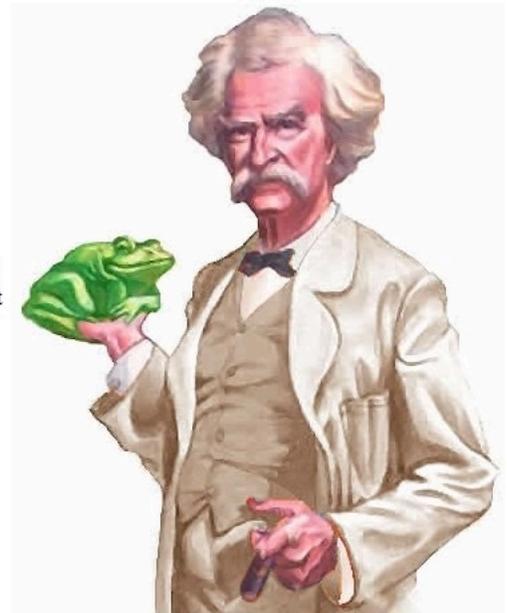
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1UzWv09dDuU>

Reading Activity 1

As you read the original story, consider these questions. After reading, answer the questions on your own paper.

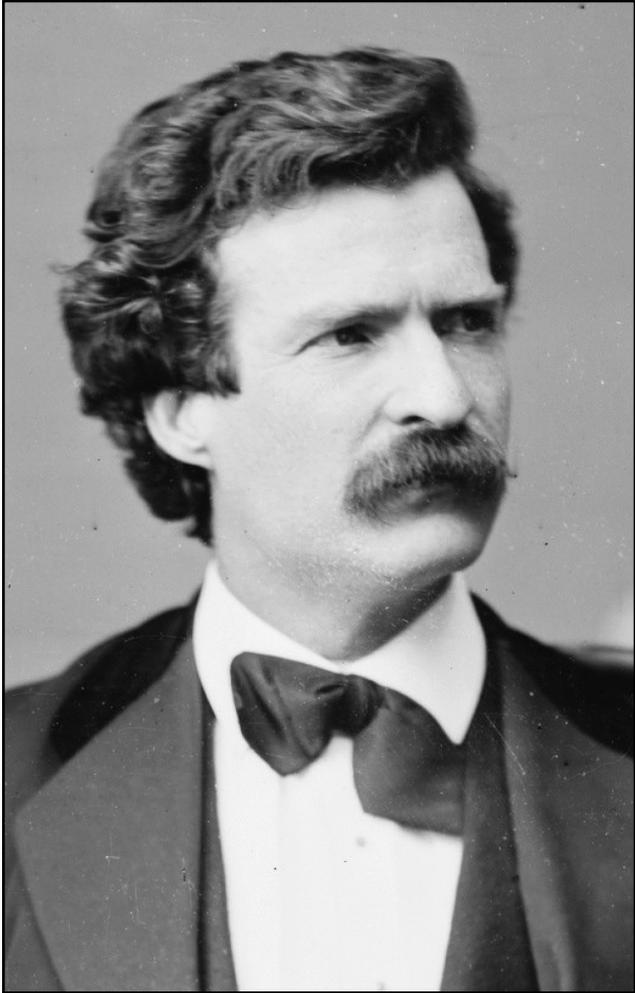
1. What is the purpose of the letter at the beginning of the story?
2. Who is the telling the story?
3. Who is Jim Smiley and what kind of person is he?
4. The horse's nickname is _____.
5. What kind of dog is in the story? His name is _____?
6. How does Andrew Jackson teach a lesson?
7. The frog's name is _____?
8. Mark Twain gives us a story within a story. Why?
9. What is the importance of the dialect that Twain uses?
10. Where would Smiley live today?

It certainly had a wide celebrity...but I was aware that it was only the frog that was celebrated. It wasn't I.
- Mark Twain's *Autobiography*



Twain's Vocabulary Unlocked

Instructions: On a separate sheet of paper, define each word. Then, write the sentence from the story and create an original sentence with a modern-day use of the word.



1. Garrulous
2. Conjectured
3. Infernal
4. Dilapidated
5. Countenance
6. Roused
7. Monotonous
8. Interminable
9. Transcendent
10. Tranquil
11. Exhorter
12. Cavorting

Reading Activity 2

Stage a reading of "The Celebrated Jumping Frog"

Have students read "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." Students can either read the story in class, since it is relatively short, or instructors might consider assigning the reading the night before.

Begin discussing the story by focusing initially on the structure.

1. Ask a small group of students to perform it as a skit.
2. Have students assign parts and consider the roles that need to be filled.

They will find that Twain has devised a story-within-a-story framing structure (also known as a frame or 'envelope' narrative) by making his narrator the reluctant audience for his storyteller, Simon Wheeler, and by distinguishing his storyteller from his protagonist, Jim Smiley.

3. Students might stage the performance in separate areas of the classroom to represent the different framed interactions from the story.

After students have performed the story, discuss how its structure contributes to the comic effect. Ask students to consider the following questions, either as a large group or in several small groups:

- How does this structure influence our perception of Jim Smiley?
- To what extent does he seem just a character in a story?
- To what extent does he seem realistic, a picturesque inhabitant of the Old West?
- To what extent does he seem a fantasy creation of the storyteller, Simon Wheeler?
- How do these perspectives combine in our response to Smiley as a comic protagonist?

Go on to discuss the storyteller's contribution to the story's comic effect.

- How does Simon Wheeler's voice influence our perception of Smiley?
- To what extent does Wheeler's picturesque speaking style help bring Smiley's story to life?
- To what extent does his distinctive style bring Wheeler himself to life as a comic character?

Reading Activity 3

Name: _____

Character Traits and The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Below is a passage from Mark Twain's short story "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" published in 1865. In the story the narrator has been asked by a friend to talk to Simon Wheeler about the location of a man named Leonidas Smiley. The narrator visits Wheeler in a gold mining camp in California.

Passage from "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County"

I found Simon Wheeler dozing comfortably by the bar-room stove of the old, dilapidated tavern in the ancient mining camp of Angel's, and I noticed that he was fat and bald-headed, and had an expression of winning gentleness and simplicity upon his tranquil countenance. He roused up and gave me good-day. I told him 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, who he had heard was at one time a resident of Angel's Camp. I added that, if Mr. Wheeler could tell me any thing about this Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, I would feel under many obligations to him. Simon Wheeler backed me into a corner and blockaded me there with his chair, and then sat me down and reeled off the monotonous narrative which follows this paragraph. He never smiled, he never frowned, he never changed his voice from the gentle-flowing key to which he tuned the initial sentence, he never betrayed the slightest suspicion of enthusiasm; but all through the interminable narrative there ran a vein of impressive earnestness and sincerity, which showed me plainly that, so far from his imagining that there was any thing ridiculous or funny about his story, he regarded it as a really important matter, and admired its two heroes as men of transcendent genius in finesse. To me, the spectacle of a man drifting serenely along through such a queer yarn without ever smiling, was exquisitely absurd.

List 5 character traits of Simon Wheeler.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Bonus Question:

What does this quotation from the passage tell you about Wheeler?
"Simon Wheeler backed me into a corner and blockaded me there with his chair..."

Optional Answer Key

Answers for Vocabulary Unlocked

1. **Garrulous**- excessively talkative in a rambling, roundabout manner
2. **Conjectured**- form an opinion about (something) on the basis of incomplete information
3. **Infernal**- irritating and tiresome
4. **Dilapidated**- in a state of disrepair or ruin as a result of age or neglect
5. **Countenance**- facial expression
6. **Roused**- bring out of sleep; awaken
7. **Monotonous**- dull, and repetitious; lacking in variety and interest
8. **Interminable**- endless
9. **Transcendent**- beyond or above the range of normal or merely physical human experience
10. **Tranquil**- free from disturbance; calm
11. **Exhorter**- to urge by strong, often stirring argument, advice, or appeal
12. **Cavorting**- jump or dance around excitedly

Answers For Activity 3: Actual student's answers will vary. Example of correct answers.

Key
Calm
Sincere
Friendly
Lonely
Boring
Odd
Pushy
Serious
Slow
Talkative

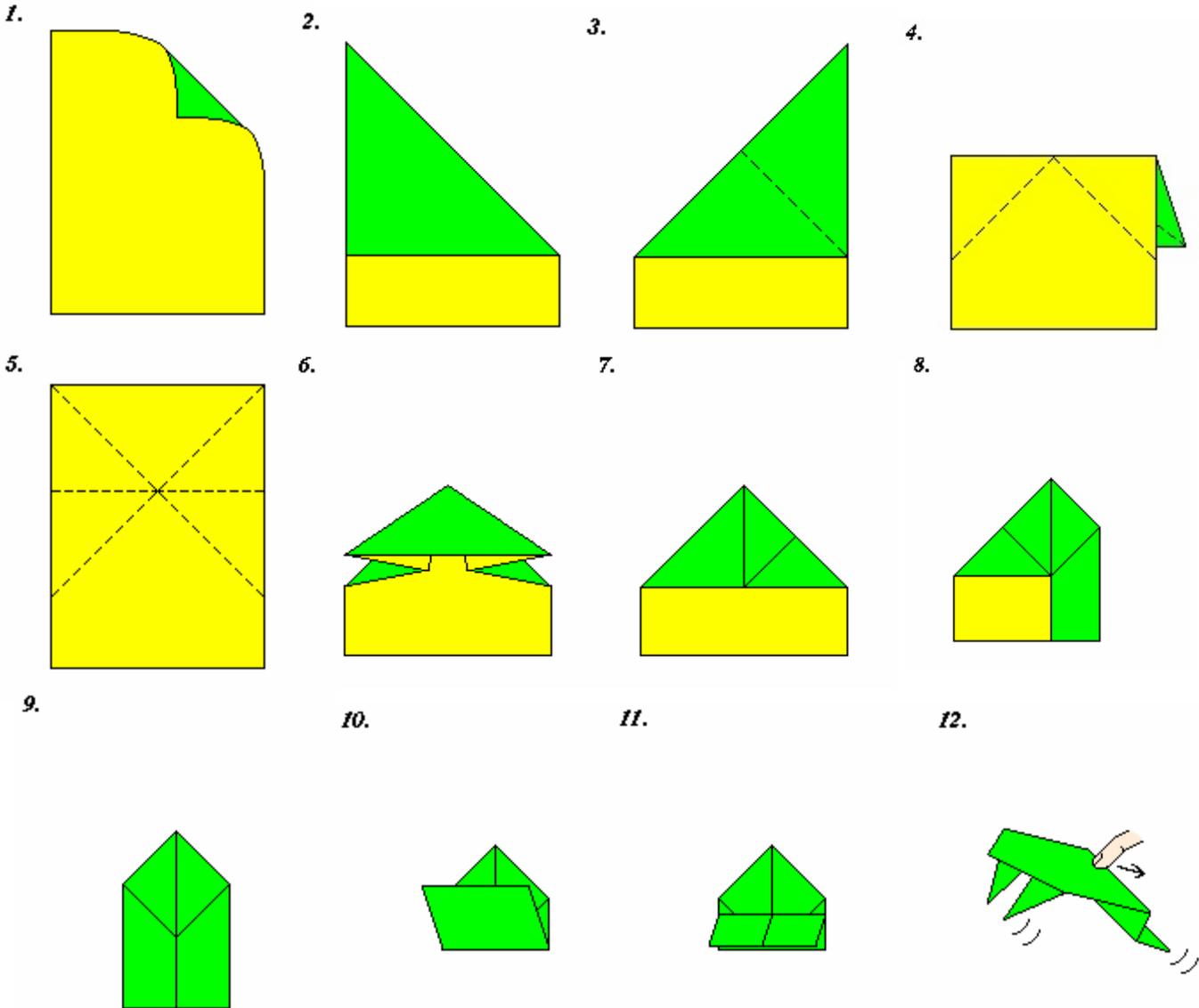
Bonus Question Answer Example: He trapped the narrator into listening to his story, so he was very forceful.

Math Activity

Make an Origami Frog!

Complete the origami frog in class.

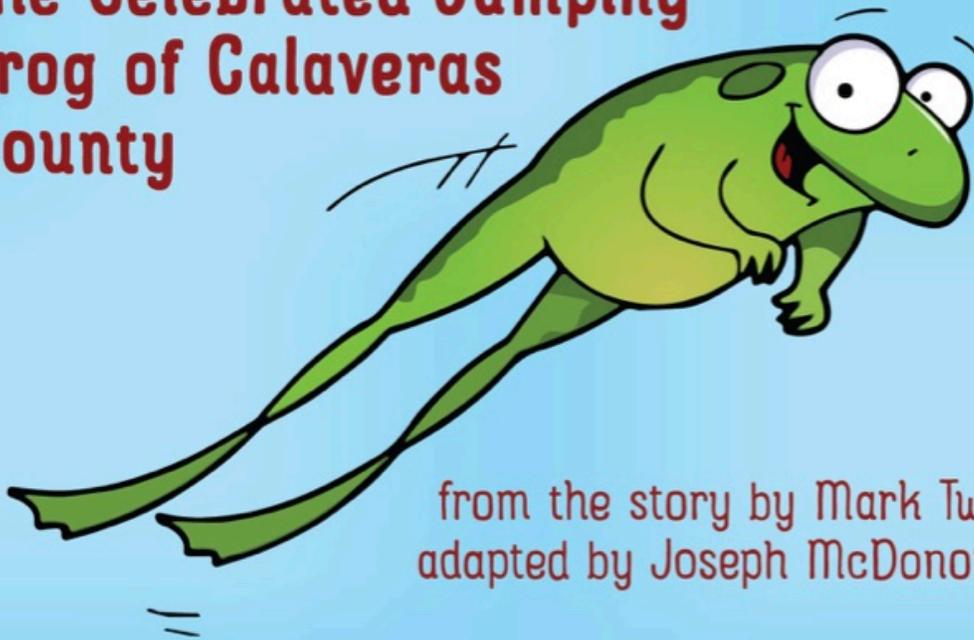
The students will have their frogs jump and then measure the distance!



Note: Many people seem to be confused by step 12. The drawing shows how to make the froggy hop: run your finger down his back, compressing his back legs like a spring.

After the Play Activities!

**The Celebrated Jumping
Frog of Calaveras
County**



from the story by Mark Twain
adapted by Joseph McDonough

Write About the Play!

At the beginning of the play, what famous character comes out to start the story?

List three characters you met in *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*?

Who was the first person Jim Smiley tricked into a contest with him? What was the contest?

What was the name of the dog in the play? What did Jim Smiley say was special about him?

What are the main things that happen in the middle of the story?

How did the School Teacher teach Jim Smiley a lesson?

What lesson did you learn from *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*?

Jim Smiley's Word Puzzle!

H T H H P P Q V Z U
 Z C U S C Q I T T F K O P T
 D G E C N A N E T N U O C D K W O Z
 G R A M X I B L I T T L E R A S C A L S
 L O E R O S A U A T T E R O L M A E T C G D
 U A L Y R N R K U E E N P R F L L S
 X V N D W U O O A D A L I R E E P I Q
 D F R M A L T O O S G A A G T N L U R H
 F E V E I S O O W O G L T W B R T T Q C T H
 E S E F N M U N V L I U K T Z O Y Z N B E P
 F R U I N E O S O X L E A L K G H T I A O D V C
 T W O X I R T E U R J E B O R A X P L R N T I U
 L H R X M M U F S K X M Q F A M E H V T H H I T
 F M I S S I S S I P P I R I V E R M A T L O B R E D N U H T
 E O T G D S Y T N U O C S A R E V A L A C B G M U O I P X S
 F G O V N D T R A N S C E N D E N T A Q F R P H J W K U P W
 S I M O N W H E E L E R W A M E R I C A N H U M O R I S T I
 P J A N D R E W J A C K S O N N N I F Y R R E B E L K C U H
 T A B Y E W Q D A N I E L W E B S T E R U R F G C B R L
 O Z Y Y I D I L A P I D A T E D M T G A J O S Q U L
 P K L U G O R F G N I P M U J W H I Q B Q U V
 X W B K F T G D R Q
 D O C W K J H M P N
 I V V L Y V H K T E R Y
 T K I I A I H N M I N T E R M I N A B L E Z O L
 F A P U O L L K U R E H C A E T L O O H C S
 C O N J E C T U R E D I V G O L D Z H M
 B S A M U E L C L E M E N S Q K G Y
 S A A G D J I M S M I L E Y
 C A V O R T I N G H

WORD LIST:

AMERICAN HUMORIST
 ANDREW JACKSON
 CALAVERAS COUNTY
 CAVORTING
 CONJECTURED
 COUNTENANCE
 DANIEL WEBSTER
 DILAPIDATED

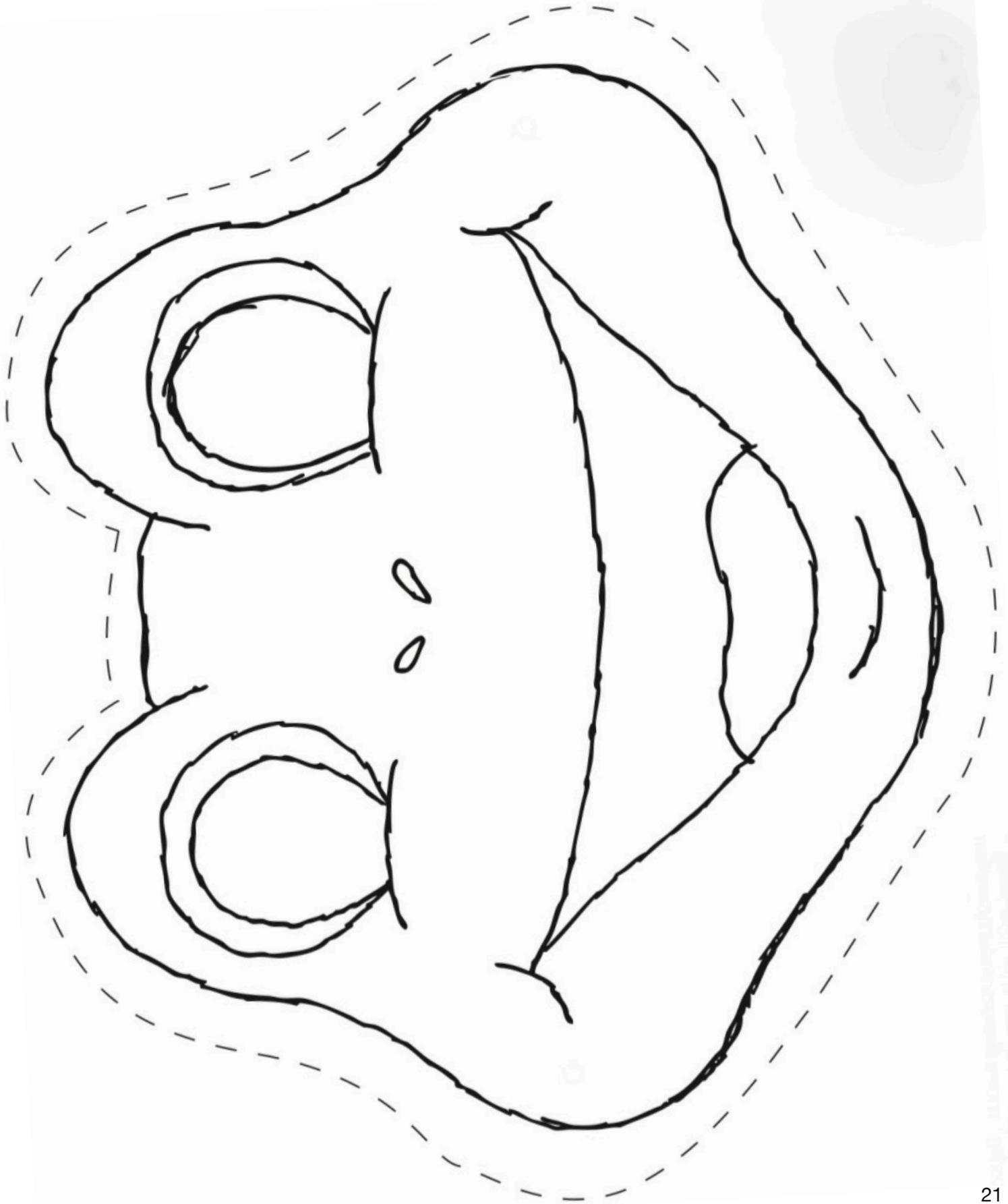
EXHORTER
 FOLK TALE
 GARRULOUS
 GOLD MINER
 HUCKLEBERRY FINN
 INFERNAL
 INTERMINABLE
 JIM SMILEY

JUMPING FROG
 LITTLE RASCALS
 MARKTWAIN
 MISSISSIPPI RIVER
 MONOTONOUS
 ROUSED
 SAMUEL CLEMENS
 SCHOOL TEACHER

SIMON WHEELER
 TEAM LORETTA
 THUNDERBOLT
 TOM SAWYER
 TRANQUIL
 TRANSCENDENT

Make a Jumping Frog Mask!

Supplies needed: Frog Template, Paper Plates, Crayons, and Popsicle Sticks. Instructions 1. Color your frog template 2. Using scissors cut out your frog 3. Glue your frog to the back of a paper plate. 4. Use masking tape or glue to attach a popsicle stick. Rabbit! (If you have access to card stock you can use that instead of the paper plates!)



Teacher Evaluation Form—The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Name: _____ School: _____

What is your overall reaction to the production?

How do you feel about the production values of the performance (costumes, set, performers, etc?)

How did your students react to the production?

Did you utilize the study guide materials? Why or why not? (We would love to see some of the work your students have done!)

Please comment on the educational value of the program.

What is your overall reaction to the question and answer (talk-back) session?

What other plays would you like for your students to see?

Please list other comments and observations.

Student Evaluation Form—
The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

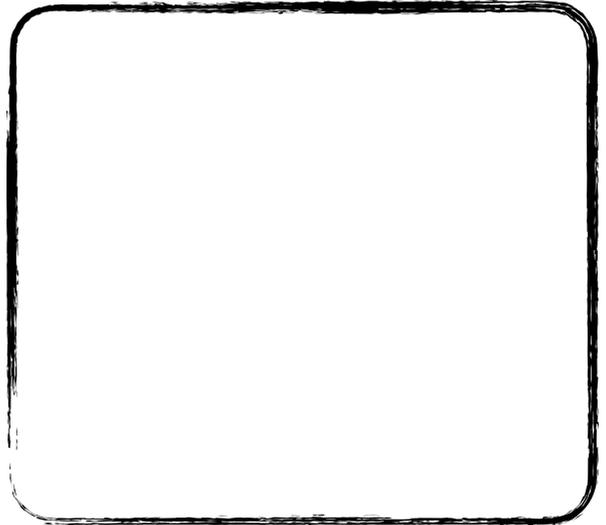
Name: _____

School: _____

What was your favorite part of the play?

What did you think about the costumes, props, and set? How would you have changed them if you were the designer?

Who was your favorite character? Draw a picture of them here!



What lesson did the people learn at through the of the play?

What did Jim learn at the end of the play? What can we learn from his mistakes?

What else would you like to tell us about the play?

Share your thoughts with us! Return this form to your teacher!

Extended Learning



Angel's Camp where Twain first heard the story.

More on the history of Mark Twain:

<http://www.history.com/news/history-lists/8-things-you-may-not-know-about-mark-twain>

History Activities:

To explore the background history, New Stage suggests these websites:

<http://californiathroughmylens.com/angels-camp-mark-twain>

<http://www.historichwy49.com/angel/anghist.html>

<https://www.gocalaveras.com/information/california/gold-country/angels-camp-california/history-culture/>

To explore the Gold Rush in California, New Stage suggests these websites:

<http://www.history.com/shows/america-the-story-of-us/videos/gold-rush>

<http://www.history.com/topics/gold-rush-of-1849>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxekRM5-uMU>

Science Activities

To learn more about frogs, New Stage suggests this website to explore:

www.allaboutfrogs.org

To explore the scientific elements of gold and Fool's gold, New Stager suggests these websites:

<https://www.thoughtco.com/interesting-gold-facts-607641>

<http://www.ducksters.com/science/chemistry/gold.php>

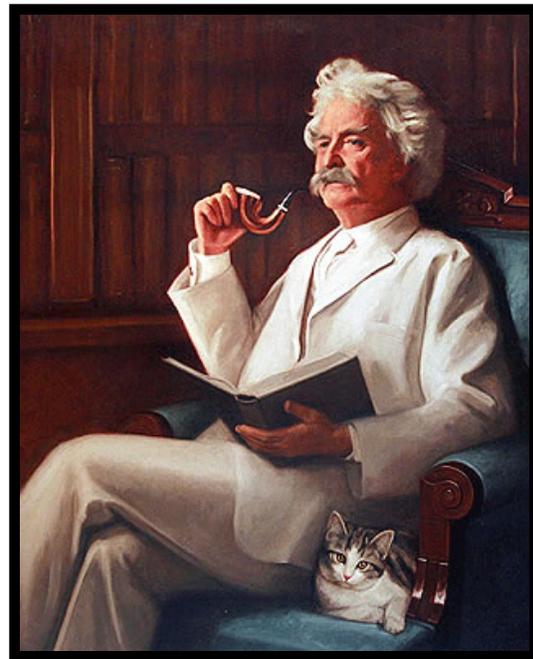
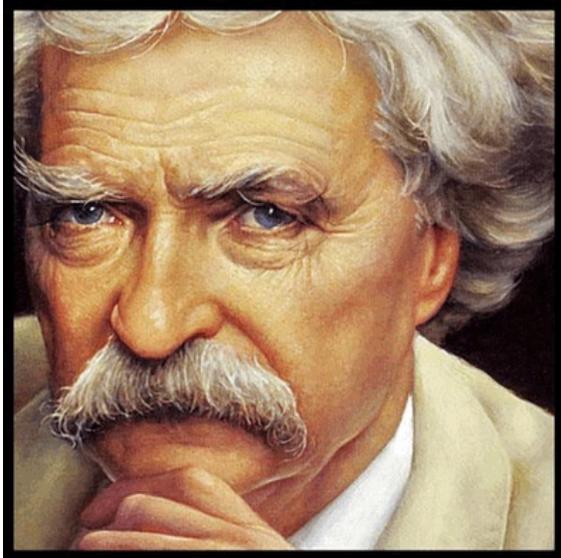
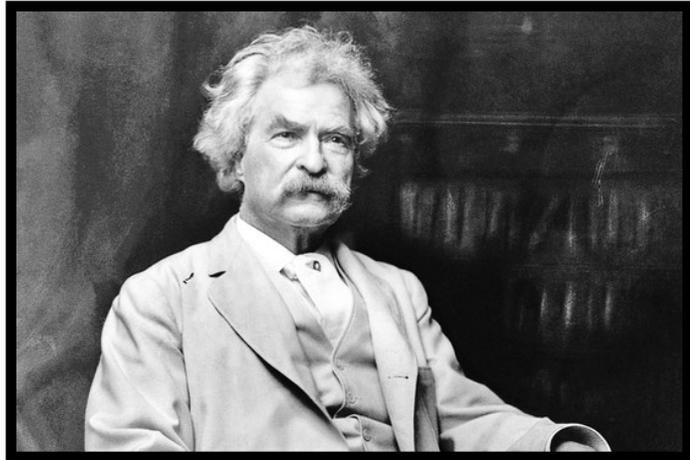
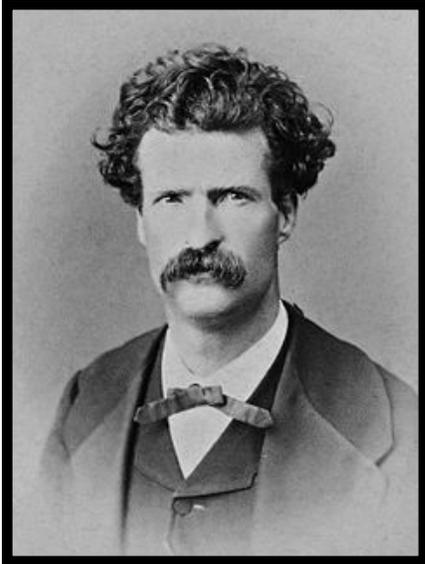
<https://www.thermofisher.com/blog/mining/pyrite-the-real-story-behind-fools-gold/>

<http://www.gold-traders.co.uk/gold-information/what-is-fools-gold-made-of.asp>

<http://geology.com/minerals/pyrite.shtml>

Thanks for visiting Calaveras County!!

“When all else fails, write what your heart tells you. You can't depend on your eyes, when your imagination is out of focus.” Mark Twain



PORTIONS OF THIS STUDY GUIDE WERE GENEROUSLY PROVIDED WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF NANCY LOVE!

Other resources: The Origami Frog came from Deg Farrelly.

The mask template came from printablecolouringpages.co.uk