

**\* Mark Twain**  
**The Prince and Pauper**

Mark Twain was born in Florida, Missouri on November 30th, 1835 as Samuel Clemens. Soon after Mark Twain's birth, his family moved to Hannibal, Missouri.

Mark Twain started his career as a journalist by writing for the small local paper called Hannibal Journal. Between 1857 and 1861 Mark Twain worked as a Mississippi riverboat pilot. The Civil War put an end to the steamboat river traffic, so Twain moved to Virginia City.

In 1864 Mark Twain moved to San Francisco, California, where he worked as a reporter.

“The Innocence Abroad” written in 1869 gained Mark Twain wide popularity and was his first bigger financial success as an author.

In 1870 Mark Twain married Olivia Langdon, and they settled in Hartford, Connecticut. The couple had two daughters.

While living in Hartford Mark Twain wrote one of his best works «The Prince and the Pauper» (1882), a children’s novel.

During 1890’s Twain found himself in big debt, due to the failure of his publishing business. He started a world lecture tour, in order to recover from his financial loss. The travel book “Following The Equator” (1897) was result of his encounters on this tour.

During his writing career, Mark Twain also wrote a considerable number of essays, published in various magazines.

Twain died on April 21, 1910.



Tom Canty youngest son of a family living with the dregs of society in Offal Court has always aspired to a better life, encouraged by the local priest who has taught him to read and write. Loitering around the palace gates one day, he sees a prince the Prince of Wales – Edward VI. Tom is nearly caught and beaten by the Royal Guards; however, Edward stops them and invites Tom into his palace chamber. There the two boys get to know one another, fascinated by each other's life and their uncanny resemblance. They decide to switch clothes "temporarily". Prince Edward is trying to escape the cruelty of Tom's abusive, drunken father; Tom, posing as the prince, tries to cope with court customs and manners. His fellow nobles and palace staff think "the prince" has an illness which has caused memory loss, and fear he will go mad. They repeatedly ask him about the missing "Great Seal", but he knows nothing about it. However, when Tom is asked to sit in on judgments his common-sense observations reassure them his mind is sound. Edward soon meets Miles Hendon, a soldier and nobleman returning from war. Although Miles does not believe Edward's claims to royalty, he humors him and becomes his protector. Meanwhile, news reaches them that King Henry VIII has died and Edward is now the king.

As Edward experiences the brutish life of a pauper firsthand, he becomes aware of the stark class inequality in England; in particular, he sees the harsh, punitive nature of the English judicial system when women are pilloried and flogged. He realizes that the accused are convicted on flimsy evidence, and vows to reign with mercy when he regains his rightful place. When Edward unwisely declares to a gang of thieves that he is the king and will put an end to unjust laws, they assume he is insane and hold a mock coronation.

After a series of adventures (including a stint in prison), Edward interrupts the coronation with help from Miles as Tom is about to celebrate it as King Edward VI. Tom is eager to give up the throne; however, the nobles refuse to believe that the beggarly child Edward appears to be is the rightful king until he produces the Great Seal that he hid before leaving the palace. Edward and Tom switch back to their original places, and Miles is rewarded with the rank of earl and the family right to sit in the presence of the king. In gratitude for supporting the new king's claim to the throne, Edward names Tom the "king's ward". They live happily for some time, although Edward dies at a young age.

## The Main Idea of this story

Mark Twain had said that *The Prince and the Pauper* was a tale for young people of all ages. Primarily, it is a children's book, and the dominant themes running through the books are of childhood fairy tales: death of a parent, cruel substitute parents, abandonment, lost identity, and injustice. However, the two most major themes opposed each other, there are lost identity and injustice with justice and mercy.

# Main characters

**Edward Tudor** - Mark Twain portrays Edward Tudor as a prince who goes through the experience of a pauper in order to emerge as a worthy king. In the novel, Edward travels from the security of Westminster to a cruel poverty. As he progresses in his journey, he transforms himself from an innocent and impulsive child-prince to a mature and enlightened young man ready to wisely rule a country.

**TomCanty** -Tom Canty, the son of a drunkard, is unlike his father in his nature and behavior. Born a pauper, he dreams of becoming a prince. Though driven to the streets by John Canty, he hates to extend his hand to beg. Instead, he loves to read and, under the tutelage of a kind old priest, even learns Latin.

**John Canty** - is the uneducated and uncultured father of Tom Canty. He is a ruffian and a drunkard who begs and steals for a living and mistreats his wife and children.

**Miles Hendon** is the lovable protector and Edwards friend. Handsome, chivalrous, fair-minded, and capable, he has all the qualities of a hero.

Tom and Edward are the main characters in this book. Edward is the prince, and Tom is the pauper. They got to switch places for a while. Tom is wandering around and sees the palace. Edward sees him and invites him in. They start talking. Edward is fascinated by the idea of being free and able to play in the mud. Tom is fascinated by the idea of being a prince because of all the riches and never having to beg or steal. They switch clothes, and Edward runs to get something. I think Edward learned a lot of different from this experience. Being in the streets and seeing how poor people lived made him a better leader who was able to help people more. I don't think Tom learned as much through his experience as Edward learned by becoming a pauper. At first he misses his family but then forgets about them and starts enjoying having everything he wants when he wants it. But he was able to stop some of the injustice occurring with the common people in the kingdom. I really enjoyed reading this book. I think it teaches a good lesson about being kind to others and showing mercy.