

Name _____ Period _____

Standards Focus: Jargon and Slang Chapters 4-7

Ever heard of *gnarly*, *radical*, *awesome*, *tubular*, *gag me with a spoon*, *moded*, or *grody to the max*? These are expressions of **slang**, fleeting expressions of pop culture that began in California's San Fernando Valley, but eventually moved into mainstream language in the 1980s. Similar to slang, **jargon** is a specific set of words used by a certain profession or specialized group. **Dialect** is the distinctive speech pattern of a particular region, class, or race. Unlike slang or jargon, dialect has a distinct system of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, and has usually been in existence for a long time.

Huck Finn, Jim, Tom and Pap all have their own slang and jargon, within some form of a Southern dialect. For example, Huck "don't take no stock in mathematics," meaning, he doesn't think math is important or necessary. By using such dialect and slang, Twain gives his characters a believable personality and contributes to the realism of the setting.

Directions: Below are sentences containing words used by the characters in Huck Finn. Rewrite each underlined word or phrase using a more updated or everyday expression that has the same meaning.

1. Huck says that when he got uncommon tired he would play hookey. _____
2. Judge Thatcher couldn't seem to make it out that Huck didn't want his money.

3. Pap says, "You've put on considerable many frills since I been away. I'll take you down a peg before I get done with you." _____
4. Pap says, "Looky here—mind how you talk to me; I'm a-standing about all I can stand now—so don't gimme no sass." _____
5. Pap went to Judge Thatcher's house and bullyragged him for the money. _____
6. Every time Pap got drunk he would raise Cain around town. _____
7. "By and by Pap got too handy with his hick'ry, and I couldn't stand it." _____

8. "While we laid off after breakfast to sleep up, both of us being about worn out, I got to thinking..." _____
9. "Another time a man comes a-prowling round here, you roust me out, you hear?" _____

10. "I took a good gap and a stretch, and was just going to unhitch when I heard a sound away over the water." _____
11. "It was kind of lazy and jolly, laying off comfortable all day, smoking and fishing, and no books to study." _____
12. "Pap warn't in a good humor--so he was his natural self." _____