

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## Story Roots

**Directions:** Read the short biography of the author below. As you read, pay attention to **key events, struggles, or experiences** in the author's life. Answer the reflection questions to show how biography and literature connect.

### Author Focus: Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens)

Mark Twain was born in 1835 in a small town along the Mississippi River. As a boy, he loved exploring the riverbanks and listening to stories from sailors and townsfolk. At age 12, after his father's death, Twain had to leave school to work as a printer's apprentice, giving him early exposure to newspapers and writing.

In his early twenties, he became a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi, where he observed life on the river and met people from all walks of life. Later, Twain tried his luck as a miner out West but instead found success as a journalist and humorist. His travels across America and abroad gave him new perspectives, while his childhood in the South remained the foundation for many of his most famous works, including *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

1. Which life event seems most important to Twain's writing style or themes? Why?

2. How does knowing about Twain's childhood help you better understand his novels?

3. Do you think authors today are equally influenced by their life experiences?