

A SAMPLE REPORT — Before this battery ever touched a client's book, the house stress-tested it on a masterpiece in the public domain. What follows is that report, exactly as a client receives it.

HONEST EDIT

Editorial Report

Book: *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* — Mark Twain

Service: Scan + Obvious Fixes

Date: October 14, 2026

Manuscript: 111,085 words · 444 standard pages (250 words per page)

Dear Author,

Thank you for trusting Honest Edit with your manuscript. Below you will find, in order: the result of the required first-step integrity screening, the findings from our full read of the book, a short section of passages that may *sound* machine-written to a casual reader or a detection tool (a friendly heads-up only — please read the note that introduces it, because this book gives that section something unusual to say), the list of obvious fixes covered by your service tier, and your itemized statement.

Nothing in this report is a judgment call made on your behalf. Where a change is a matter of taste or intent, we flag it and the decision stays yours. A word of honesty at the threshold: this manuscript is a calibration test for our own battery, run on a classic long in the public domain, and the report pulls no punches in either direction — which is the point of the exercise.

1. Integrity Screening — Result: NOT CLEAR

Every manuscript at Honest Edit begins with a content-integrity screening against the standards stated in our intake materials. Your book was screened in full. Two of our standards it meets without discussion; two it does not, and a report that smoothed that over would be worth nothing.

What the screening found:

- **The Lord's name: PASSES.** In 111,085 words there is no use of the Lord's name in vain, no blasphemy, no sacrilege — in narration or in dialogue. The five mentions of "Lord" are reverent or desperate ("O Lord, don't shoot!" — a cry for mercy from a man facing a pistol). Our one absolute standard on this point is met.
- **Printed profanity: PASSES, remarkably.** The word "damn" appears nowhere in this book. Swearing is everywhere *reported* — the narration notes cussing some forty times — and nowhere *printed*: the author minces every oath ("blamed," "dern," "by jings"). Whatever else this screen returns, the author's restraint on this axis is total.
- **Devil and occult content: DOES NOT PASS our stated standard.** Our intake standard excludes devil and occult content, and this book is steeped in folk occultism as its characters' working religion: a fortune-telling hair-ball consulted in earnest in Chapter IV, witch-lore throughout (24 mentions), sign-reading as a way of life, and the devil named 13 times. In fairness, and for the

record: the narration never endorses any of it as real power. The signs "come true" by coincidence and human nature, and the book's deepest scene turns on a boy choosing his conscience over the theology he was handed. Depiction is not endorsement — but our standard, as written, screens for content, and the content is present. We report the standard as it stands.

- **Language: DOES NOT PASS our stated standard.** The period racial slur appears 208 times, in dialogue and in the narration itself. It is authentic to the book's place, period, and people, and the book's moral arc — a boy and an enslaved man choosing each other, chapter by chapter, until the boy tears up the letter that would betray his friend — runs directly against the word's contempt. A house publishing today could not carry that word in a new submission under the standards this screen applies, and so the screen says so.

Verdict: NOT CLEAR. On a live submission, this result means the \$50 screening deposit is retained, the engagement ends at this step, and the manuscript is returned untouched with this report as the explanation. Because this run is the house's own calibration, the full scan below was completed anyway — a test that stops at the first failure teaches nothing — and every figure in Section 5 is marked as the as-if exercise it is.

In fairness, one more entry belongs in this section. Our standards also recognize redemption: a book in which wrong carries its cost and the story lands on the right side of its own hardest question. By that measure this manuscript's heart is sound — its climax is a boy deciding that loyalty to his friend outweighs the damnation he believes he has earned ("All right, then, I'll *go to hell*" — and the letter is torn). The two failures above stand as recorded; so does this.

2. Full Scan — Findings

We read the complete manuscript, front matter through Chapter the Last, with scripted scans over the whole text and a close judgment read of three chapters spread across the book (I, XXI, and the Last). The headline: **this is the most deliberately consistent "inconsistent" manuscript our battery has ever met.** Its narration breaks standard English on nearly every line — by design, announced in the author's own front matter, which distinguishes seven dialects and warns the reader that the shadings were made "not in a haphazard fashion, or by guess-work; but painstakingly." The scan's work was to test whether the breaking is controlled. It is. Nearly everything a mechanical pass flags in this book is the sound of a master keeping his hand steady.

A. Items for your decision (2)

1. The playbill contradicts the rehearsal — Chapter XXI. In the raft rehearsal the reader watches two star turns assigned: the duke "called himself Richard III" for the sword fight, and the king masters Hamlet's soliloquy until he can do it "first rate." The duke's printed bill then assigns Richard III to the king (billed as Mr. Garrick) and keeps the soliloquy for himself (billed as the Illustrious Kean). Either the author nodded between the rehearsal and the printing, or the duke — who had the bills printed — re-lettered the program in his own favor, which is entirely in character for the fraud the reader has just met. **Your call:** we lean toward the duke's vanity and would change nothing; a continuity scan that let

it pass unmentioned would not be doing its work, so it stands here for your ruling.

2. The shooting beats the clock — Chapter XXI. Colonel Sherburn sets his terms precisely: he will endure Boggs "till one o'clock," and only a word spoken after that hour will bring him out. The chapter then keeps its own time — "it would be one o'clock in about fifteen minutes," and "in about five or ten minutes" later Boggs is shot in the street, by the chapter's own arithmetic some minutes before the deadline Sherburn himself had named. **Your call:** this reads to us as Sherburn's pride rather than the author's arithmetic — the deadline was face, not contract, and the next chapter's great speech all but says so — but the chapter gives the reader the clock twice, and a careful reader will check it. Flagged as the single genuine logic seam our close read found in the book.

B. Suspected errors — confirmed as deliberate craft (8 clusters)

A scan is only trustworthy if it also reports what it suspected and cleared. These are the flags this book raised and the reasons each one stands as written:

- **The dialect itself.** The narration runs on nonstandard forms — *ain't* (376 instances), *warn't* (294), *hain't* (about 70), *I reckoned*, *by-and-by* (56) — held with machinelike steadiness across 43 chapters, while Jim speaks a second, deeper dialect of his own (*gwyne*, 46; *dey/dem/dat*, 177) that never once bleeds into Huck's voice or any other speaker's. Two spelling systems, two speakers, zero drift. That is not error; it is instrumentation.
- **The mangled soliloquy — Chapter XXI.** The duke's Hamlet is a patchwork of some twenty lines lifted from four other plays — Macbeth's Birnam Wood and "Wake Duncan," Richard III's "winter of our discontent" country, Othello's "pride, pomp, and circumstance" neighborhood — stitched into the soliloquy's frame. The text tells us plainly that the duke "pieced it out from memory." A quotation-accuracy pass that flags these lines has found the joke, not a mistake.
- **The money that appears to quarrel — Chapters XXIV–XXVII.** The figures \$3,000 and \$6,000 both attach to the Wilks estate, and the bag in the cellar comes up \$415 short of its stated sum. All three numbers are correct: the bequest splits the cash (\$3,000 in gold to the nieces, \$3,000 to the brothers Harvey and William), the letter's total is \$6,000, and the \$415 shortfall is a plotted episode — the impostors count the bag, find it light, and make up the difference from their own pockets to keep the girls' trust. A scan that cried inconsistency here would be misreading a sum the book does carefully.
- **The handbill that contradicts the book — Chapter XX.** The duke's printed runaway notice offers \$200 and has Jim fleeing "St. Jacques' plantation, forty mile below New Orleans." The book's true figures, established in Chapter XI, are a \$300 reward and a flight from St. Petersburg. The handbill is a fabrication *inside* the story — printed so the party can travel by daylight with a "captured" runaway — and its falsehood is the plot working, not the author slipping.
- **Names worn in dialect dress.** "King Sollermun" (7 instances, Jim's rendering) stands beside "Solomon" (3, in Huck's book-learned usage); "sivilize" appears in Chapter I and returns in the book's final sentence, pointedly unchanged. Each variant is assigned to the right mouth every time.

- **A name before its introduction — Chapter I.** Mary is named in the opening paragraph before any introduction. She arrives trailing the previous book, and the narrator says so in the same breath ("You don't know about me without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*"). A cross-book reference, openly declared; a series read would note the assumption and move forward.
- **Every doubled word in the book.** The repetition scan returned seventeen doubled-word candidates — "that that," "had had," "the devil had had his hands" — and every one is correct grammar or living dialect ("didn't think so so much"). Mechanical doubled words: none.
- **The refrains.** No full sentence of five words or more repeats anywhere in the book. What repeats is voice: "I says" (157), "the king and the duke" (15 as a unit), Huck's returns to "it warn't no use" and "I made up my mind" — a boy's verbal habits, varied in wording nearly every time they recur, exactly as speech behaves and padding never does.

C. Areas checked and confirmed clean

- **Names and spellings:** some thirty recurring names and places were counted and compared across the whole text — Grangerford, Shepherdson, Sherburn, Boggs, Wilks, Emmeline, Harney, Hotchkiss, Pikesville, Jackson's Island, St. Petersburg, Cairo — and every one is spelled a single way, every time. (The one near-variant is a title's dress: "Dr. Robinson" beside one spelled-out "Doctor Robinson," a matter of abbreviation style, not identity.)
- **Money and rewards, end to end:** the boys' \$6,000 apiece at a dollar a day in interest (six percent on \$6,000 is \$360 a year — the book's arithmetic is sound); the rewards stay fixed at \$300 for Jim and \$200 for Pap from Chapter XI forward; the king sells Jim for forty dollars in Chapter XXXI, and Tom gives Jim forty dollars in the final chapter "for being prisoner for us so patient" — the same sum, returned as wages. A mirror, not a mistake.
- **Planted details, all paid:** the corpse in the floating house (Chapter IX) is withheld from the reader's sight and revealed in the final chapter as Pap — explaining, chapters later, both Jim's refusal at the door and the money's safety. Jim's hairy-breast prophecy (Chapter VIII) is quoted back, fulfilled, in the book's closing pages. The ending earns the beginning: the last line's "sivilize me, and I can't stand it. I been there before" is Chapter I, come home.
- **Readability, measured:** the narration measures at roughly a sixth-to-seventh-grade level by formula (average sentence just under nineteen words) — and the formula understates the book, because it cannot hear dialect or weigh a conscience. We record the number because the pass requires it, and record its limits beside the number for the same reason.
- **Continuity of the frame:** the narrator who opens by disowning authorship closes by signing the book ("THE END. YOURS TRULY, *HUCK FINN*") — the frame holds at both ends, and the forty-one chapters between them never break it.

3. AI Sound-Alike Findings

A standing part of every Honest Edit report, offered to every author in the same spirit: a heads-up, never an accusation.

Some passages of otherwise human writing can *sound* machine-made — to a reader, and occasionally to the automated detection tools that schools, publishers, and platforms sometimes run. Those tools are **unreliable in both directions**: they have famously flagged genuine human writing and missed genuine machine writing, and no honest editor will promise you a "score." This book is the standing proof of the warning. It was published in 1884, decades before the machines in question existed — and it is included in this test run precisely to give this section a control experiment: a manuscript whose human authorship is beyond any possible dispute.

What the surface-pattern scan finds here is instructive. The features those tools hunt — patterned repetition, rhythmic regularity, formulaic phrasing — exist in this book mainly as a boy's refrains (Section 2B) and in two set speeches built from deliberate collage and courtroom rhetoric. Set against them is the least machine-like surface in American prose: two interlocking dialect systems, high irregularity at every level, objects and idioms on every page that no pattern generates. In our reading, perhaps **one passage in fifty** carries any of the surface patterns described — and every one of those passages is a set speech or a refrain with a human reason behind it.

Overall estimate, in plain language: if a detection tool ever returns a machine-authorship verdict on this manuscript, the tool has indicted itself, and this report is the evidence. That is the calibration this section exists to record — for this author, who needs no warning, and for every modern author who receives this section in earnest: the estimate is an editorial reading, never a verdict, and this book is why we print that sentence in every report we issue.

4. Obvious Fixes

Your tier includes correction of every obvious mechanical error we find. On this manuscript, the honest list is the shortest our house has ever produced:

- **Fixes applied: none required.** Our mechanical sweep found no misspellings by the book's own systems, no doubled words, no punctuation faults, no stray spacing in the body text. The dialect forms a standard spellcheck would flag by the thousand are the book's deliberate instrument (Section 2B) and were left untouched, as they should be.
 - The two items in Section 2A are judgment calls, not obvious fixes, and under your tier they are reported for your decision rather than changed. Both are listed there with our reading of each.
 - A note for the record: the integrity result in Section 1 would end a live engagement before this tier began. Nothing in this section was performed on a live basis; the scan was completed, as the statement below discloses, as the house's own test.
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5. Statement (as-if)

| Item | Detail | Amount | |---|---|---| | Integrity Screening (Gate Scan) | Required first step — result: NOT CLEAR (see Section 1) | \$50.00 | | Scan + Obvious Fixes | 444 standard pages (111,085 words ÷ 250) × \$2.00/page | \$888.00 | | Screening deposit credit | Credited in full on a CLEAR result — not applicable to this result in a live engagement; waived here, the run being the house's own | -\$50.00 | | **As-if balance** | | **\$838.00** | | **Total value of services** | | **\$888.00** |

TEST RUN — \$0 due. On a live submission the engagement would have ended at Section 1 with the deposit retained and the manuscript returned untouched; the full scan above exists because a calibration run's purpose is the whole picture.

Next steps

1. Read Section 2A and tell us your decisions on the two flagged items — we will apply exactly what you rule, nothing more. (For this author, both rulings are a matter of literary history, and we do not expect a reply.) 2. Section 3 needs no action at all; on this book it is the section that learned something, and what it learned is printed there for every future author's benefit. 3. Section 1 stands as the screen's honest word. A house that will publish its standards must also publish its refusals — and must be able to say, of the most famous boy in its national literature, exactly where he fails them and exactly why.

A thank-you, in advance: if you send another author our way and their job is completed and paid, we will credit your account with **10% of their job's price** toward your own future work — our referral thank-you, offered with every report.

Closing statement: your balance of \$888 is **paid in full**. (Gate Scan \$50 — not creditable on a NOT CLEAR result in a live engagement, and waived here. Scan + Obvious Fixes, 444 pages — \$888 total value. This test run was the house's gift to itself: \$0 due, \$0 owed.)

It was a privilege to read this book carefully. A scan is only worth trusting if it can stand in front of a master, raise every flag it owns, sort the flags honestly — and then say plainly where its own house rules, and not the book, are what keep the two apart. This book taught our battery its manners. We are grateful for the lesson.

Thank you very much for trusting Honest Edit with your work. We look forward to seeing you again in the future.

With appreciation,

Honest Edit *Nanette René Roberts, Owner/Editor*