

# Advice to Little Girls

Mark Twain

## How does Twain imitate moral advice in order to undermine it?

|                   |                                             |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b>TOTAL TIME</b> | TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION                   |
| <b>30 minutes</b> | Satirical advice essay - complete selection |

### TEACHER SETUP

Open the work in the Enhanced Reader and cue the span using the START and END anchors below.

|                   |                                                                    |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>START</b>      | Good little girls ought not to make mouths at their teachers       |
| <b>END</b>        | You ought never to "sass" old people unless they "sass" you first. |
| <b>PASSAGE ID</b> | sec-twain-advice-girls-01                                          |

### THE MOVE

Analyze how satire depends on a recognizable form whose rules are quietly reversed.

### WHY THIS PASSAGE

Twain borrows the voice of respectable conduct literature but fills it with strategic misbehavior. The comedy works because the sentences sound proper while the advice exposes the absurdity of rigid moral formulas.

### MARK

Underline phrases that sound like conventional advice. Circle the moment each piece of advice turns mischievous. Box the sentence whose polite tone most clashes with its actual meaning.

### NOTICE

- What makes the speaker sound authoritative at first?
- Where does the logic become obviously comic?
- Why is the serious tone necessary for the satire to work?

**THINK**

Answer provisionally: How does Twain imitate moral advice in order to undermine it? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

**WRITE**

Write a short evidence-based response. Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

**CLOSE**

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.

**STRONG ANSWER**

Twain satirizes moral instruction by preserving its formal tone while reversing its values. The speaker sounds reasonable and proper even when recommending manipulation or retaliation, so the form itself becomes part of the joke.

**EVIDENCE**

Use one conventional-sounding phrase and one reversal that exposes the satire.

**WATCH FOR**

Do not summarize the jokes. Explain how the respectable voice creates the satire.

**SOLO**

Read independently.

**SUPPORTED**

Narration + highlighting.

**LISTENING**

Listen; same evidence task.

**STUDENT PAGE · GRADE 9 · LESSON 330**

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**How does Twain imitate moral advice in order to undermine it?**

|                           |                                             |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| WORK                      | Advice to Little Girls                      |
| TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION | Satirical advice essay - complete selection |
| PASSAGE ID                | sec-twain-advice-girls-01                   |

Your teacher will open or cue the work in the Enhanced Reader. Use the location and verbatim anchors below to confirm the assigned span.

**START**

Good little girls ought not to make mouths at their teachers

**END**

You ought never to "sass" old people unless they "sass" you first.

READ / LISTEN TO THE ASSIGNED PASSAGE SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration and highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the assigned passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK Underline phrases that sound like conventional advice. Circle the moment each piece of advice turns mischievous. Box the sentence whose polite tone most clashes with its actual meaning.
2. NOTICE What makes the speaker sound authoritative at first? Where does the logic become obviously comic? Why is the serious tone necessary for the satire to work?
3. THINK Answer provisionally: How does Twain imitate moral advice in order to undermine it?
4. WRITE Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.
5. CLOSE Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.