Ecology Study Guide High School
The novel opens with Aunt Polly searching the house in search of her nephew, Tom Sawyer. She finds him in the closet, discovers that his hands are covered with jam, and prepares to give him a whipping. Tom cries out theatrically, “Look behind you!” and when Aunt Polly turns, Tom escapes over the fence. After Tom is gone, Aunt Polly reflects on Tom’s mischievousness and how she lets him get away with too much. Tom comes home at suppertime with his clothes all disheveled. Dressed up for the celebration, Aunt Polly asks him what he has been up to all day. Tom tells her he skipped school that afternoon and went instead to a promotional fair on the river.” Aunt Polly is satisfied, but Tom’s half-brother, Ben, is not. When the fair is over, Tom goes out with a group of boys to watch the whistling. While wandering the streets of St. Petersburg, Tom and the new arrival cross paths and eventually choose the newcomer as the way home.

When he arrives home in the evening, Tom finds Aunt Polly waiting for him. She notices his disheveled clothes and resolves to make him work the next day, a Saturday, as punishment.

On Saturday morning, Aunt Polly sends Tom out to whitenwash the fence. Jim passes by, and Tom tries to get him to do some of the whitewashing in return for a “white alley,” a kind of trade-off. Jim almost agrees, but Aunt Polly appears and chases him off, leaving Tom alone with his tasks.
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Tom comes home at supper-time. His face is pleased, but his clothes are still awry from an unspecified adventure. Aunt Polly is satisfied. Tom’s half-brother, Sid, also returns home. Aunt Polly inquires about his visit to school that afternoon and how many essays he has written. Sid informs her that he was expelled from school for ‘wandering and inattention.’ Aunt Polly is shocked, and Tom is immediately sent to bed. Aunt Polly is pleased that Tom has escaped.

Tom goes out of the house into the night. He is seen wandering through the streets of St. Petersburg. He is seen playing in the dark under a tree, and eventually chooses the newcomer of the way home.

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