**Mark Twain**

In my opinion, I think mark twain is easily one of the most influential writers during the realistic time period. Why you might ask? Well, anyone who lived the life he lived would have several things to write about, too.

First of all, he was the 6th child in his family, born on November 30, 1835. I don’t know about you, but I can hardly live with one brother, and he had to live with six. That must have been irritating. Secondly, he was sick practically his entire childhood, and he could never play outside and have fun like a normal kid. His father was a judge and was really strict, but he made good money so Samuel (Twain’s real name) was able to attend a good private school around the age of nine.

When Samuel was at age twelve, his father died of pneumonia. Watching your father die when you’re that young would be devastating to anyone, including Mark Twain. A year after his father died, he left home, and became a printer’s assistant. It was here where he found out he could actually become a writer. At age seventeen, he left his job at the printing press and went to a river pilot’s apprentice, where he got his river pilot’s license in 1958. This is where Samuel Clemens got his pen name, Mark Twain. Mark Twain is a river pilot’s term which means it is safe to navigate through the twelve feet of water.

Because the civil war brought river trade to a standstill in 1861, Mark Twain quit his job and starting roaming the United States and worked for various newspapers writing articles. Imagine traveling all around the U.S. by yourself. Maybe some people would enjoy it, but, I would get so lonely, but apparently, Mark Twain lived through it.

He eventually got tired of being by himself, and married Olivia Langdon in 1870. In total, they had four kids, but sadly, one died in infancy, and two more died in their twenties. The one surviving daughter, Clara, had one child, but, Clara’s child did not have kids, so there are no descendants of Mark Twain living currently.

Finally, he started gaining fame at age thirty, because his short story “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” was published in the newspaper. He wrote many books after that, including the famous The Adventures of Tom Sawyer in 1876, and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn in 1885.

Mark Twain died April 21, 1910, but he is still remembered and taught with every day. His birthday is celebrated in New York City by giving walking tours near the places that Mark Twain visited, there is a museum in Hannibal (the place he grew up), and there is a fair in Calaveras County every year in his name.