

Name _____ Date _____

The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County by Mark Twain

In literature, **humor** refers to writing intended to evoke laughter. To accomplish this purpose, western humorists made extensive use of exaggeration and regional dialects in their writing.

1. Cite two passages within the story that you found to be particularly comic. Explain why you think they are humorous.

2. Find two examples of exaggeration in the story. How do these examples add to the humor within the story?

Part of what makes Wheeler's use of **dialect** amusing is his frequently unexpected or unusual choice of words....

3. What is unexpected or unusual about the choice of words in each of the following passages from the story?
 - "And a dog might tackle him and bullyrag him..."
 - "Now if you're ready, set him alongside of Dan'l, with his forepaws just even with Dan'l's..."

4. Why would the story be less effective if Wheeler spoke in standard English?

5. Why do you think Twain chose to italicize certain words?

To capture the flavor of the oral yarn or **tall tale** in writing, it is necessary for an author to help readers see the **narrator**, as well as, hear him speak.

6. What kinds of information does Twain give about Wheeler? How does this information add to the humor of the story and contribute to its status as a tall tale?

7. An old tradition of literature involves the classic situation of "the trickster tricked". Relate Smiley to this convention.
