

Master Storyteller



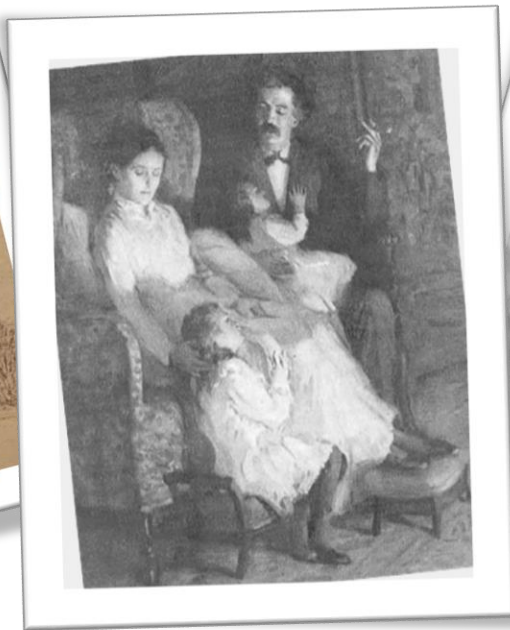
the **Mark Twain**
House & Museum



For Grades K-5

20 - 45 Minutes

During the time that Mark Twain and his family lived in their home on Farmington Avenue, his daughters—Susy, Clara, and Jean Clemens—could always rely on him to come up with fantastical stories to entertain them. He would invent these stories seemingly out of thin air, just by using items in their grand library as inspiration.





LEFT:
The Library today.

BELOW:
The Library during Mark Twain's time. Pictured is Mrs. Langdon, his mother-in-law and Susy, Clara, and Jean's Grandmother.

He would always use the same objects, which he called “bric-a-brac,” that ran alongside the enormous mantelpiece in the center of the room.





He would always
start the stories
by using a
painting of a cat
wearing a ruffled
collar...



...And after using every bit of bric-a-brac along the mantelpiece...



...he would end the stories by using a watercolor painting of a woman, who his daughters named “Emmeline.”

Do you think you can
invent your own story
using Mark Twain's
library bric-a-brac?

We think you can!





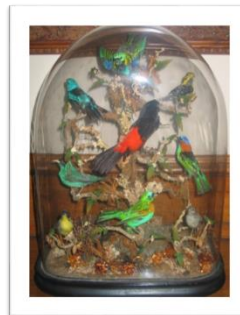
By flipping through this booklet, you can use the pictures of objects from Mark Twain's home to create your own story.

You will start with the painting of the Cat in the Ruff, and end with the painting of "Emmeline."

You will have twelve objects in total that you will need to include in your story, and there will be a number in the bottom right hand corner of each page, telling you how many objects you have left before you need to end your story.

These objects do not need to show up in your story exactly as they appear in the pictures. You can turn them into character, items, places, or events. You can even be inspired by a detail you notice on an object.

You can tell your story out loud to someone at home, or write it down to share later!



Remember, a great story has:

Characters

- Who is your story about?
- Who is the hero/protagonist?
- Who is the villain/antagonist?
- What are their defining traits/personalities?



Setting

- Where does your story take place?
 - On a steamboat?
 - In outer space?
 - In a spooky old house?
- When does your story take place?
 - A long time ago in the past?
 - Today?
 - Far off in the future?



Plot

- What will your main characters do?
- What big problem or conflict will your characters have to face?
- Will they solve it?
- Will your story have a happy ending?

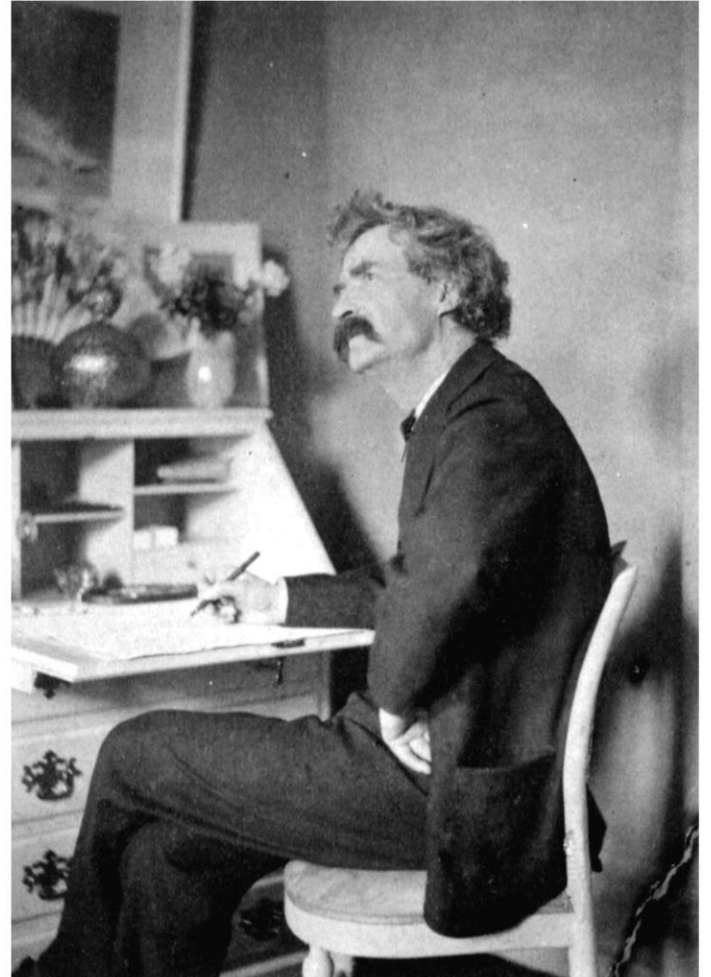


And remember:

This is your story! Let your imagination run wild!

Great storytellers aren't born that way. They become great storytellers by practicing, experimenting, and by inventing silly things that are fun, even if they're not perfect.

Don't be afraid to think outside of the box!



Are you ready?



“Once upon a time...”

Cat in the Ruff



11 objects left...



10 objects left...



9 objects left...



8 objects left...



7 objects left...



6 objects left... You are halfway there!



5 objects left...



4 objects left...



3 objects left...



2 objects left...



1 object left...



Emmeline

The End.



Great job!

Do you think you could tell another brand new story with those same objects? (We bet you could.)

Is there a room where you live with its' own bric-a-brac?

What kind of stories could you invent using your home?



*“I like a good story well told.
That is the reason I am sometimes forced to
tell them myself.”*
-Mark Twain

