



The Nation's Favorite Fun Family Newspaper  
**Kidsville News! Brainworks Worksheet**  
**May Enrichment Activities**  
**Grades 3-6**



**Students: After reading “Connections,” use an empty cereal box, a few pieces of plain white paper, pencil, scissors and tape or glue to make a cereal box biography report as directed below. Note: Grades 3-6 should add extra details and facts found in the “Around the World” article.**

### **Cereal Box Front**

1. On an 8 1/2” x 11” piece of white copier paper, draw a picture of Samuel Clemens, better known as Mark Twain. Use the picture of him in “Connections” as an example. Make your drawing take up most of the paper. Add a title for your report above the picture in large, bold letters. A title could be “Who was Mark Twain?” or “Getting to Know Mark Twain,” etc. Add a line below the picture on which to write your name as the report author. Use crayons or colored pencils to decorate the picture. Glue or tape the completed page onto the front of the box.

### **Cereal Box Back**

Draw a picture or pictures to show a setting. This could be a steamboat on the water or the Mississippi River, such as that shown in the “Around the World” article, or a picture of Twain writing, just to name a few ideas. Use the whole page to draw your scene and be creative. Use crayons or colored pictures to decorate the picture or pictures you draw. Glue or tape the completed page onto the back of the box.

### **Cereal Box Side 1**

Using another sheet of 8 1/2” x 11” sheet of paper, cut a long vertical strip to fit on one side of the cereal box. Before gluing or taping the strip in place, write ten facts about Samuel Clemens’ life using the information you read in “Connections.” Write the facts in your own words. Find more facts in the “Around the World” *Kidsville News!* article in this same publication.

### **Cereal Box Side 2**

Use the remainder of the paper used for side 1 to cut another long vertical strip to fit on the opposite side of the cereal box. Before gluing or taping the strip in place, write 10 facts about Mark Twain, using the information you read in “Connections.” Write the facts in your own words. Find more facts in the “Around the World” *Kidsville News!* article in this same publication.

### **Cereal Box top and bottom**

Cut more strips of paper to fit onto the cereal box top and bottom so that all sides of your cereal box are covered. Before gluing or taping these strips in place, draw more symbols or pictures of Samuel Clemens’, alias Mark Twain’s, life. To show Clemens as a writer, you could draw a picture of a pen and paper or a character from one of his books. You could sketch a suitcase since Clemens wrote travel stories or draw tools because he was also an inventor. Reread “Connections” or “Around the World” and decide what you want to draw.

### **Finish**

Glue or tape all papers in place to cover the cereal box. Put objects inside as more symbols if you wish. Share your cereal box report with a parent, teacher or friend.



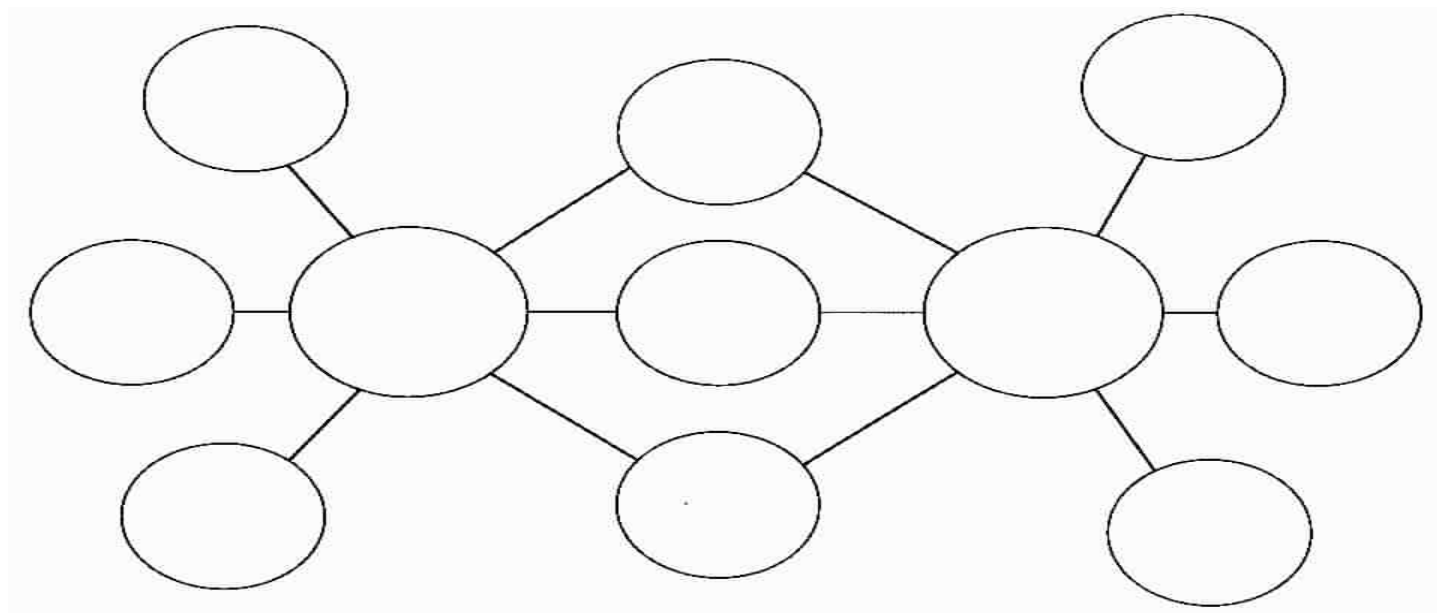
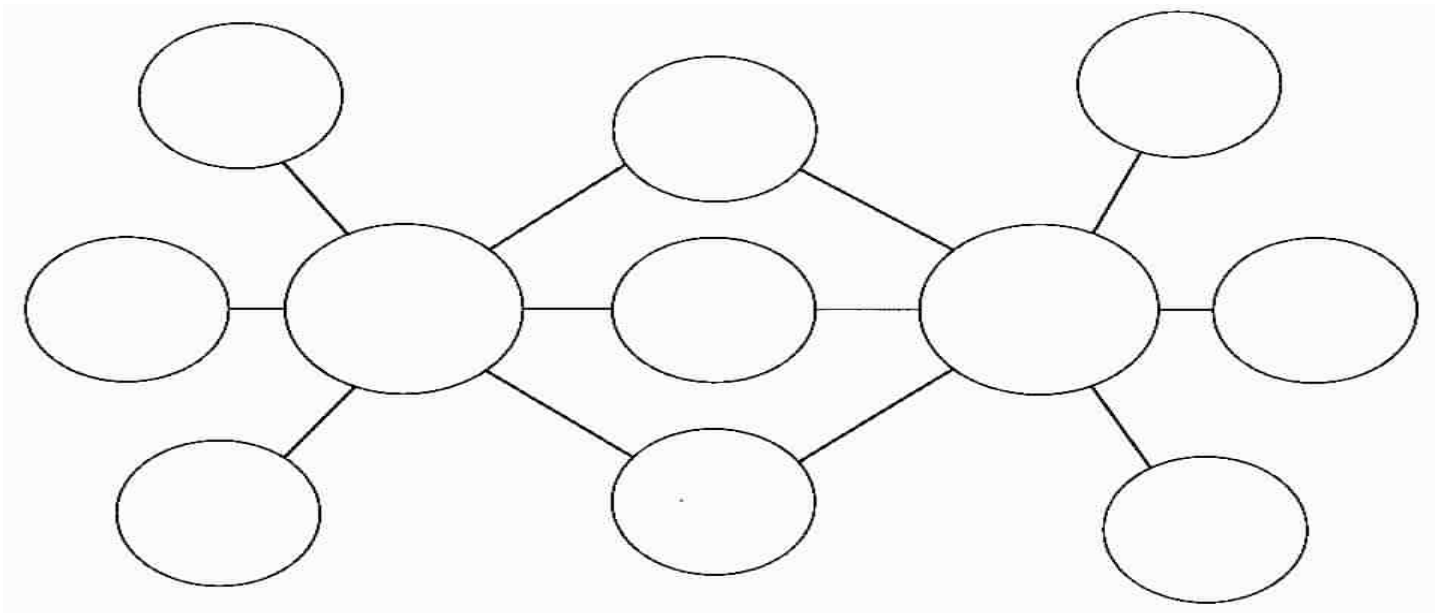


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Grades 3-6

Students: After reading "Wildville," compare and contrast the similarities and differences in the four types of catfish described in the article, using the double bubble maps below. The names of two catfish types go in the large center bubbles. The outside three bubbles are for listing differences and the inside three bubbles are for likenesses. Repeat with two different catfish types for the second comparison map.





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Answer Key



**Students:** After reading “Connections,” use an empty cereal box, a few pieces of plain white paper, pencil, scissors, and tape or glue to make a cereal box biography report as directed below. **Note:** Grades 3-6 should add extra details and facts found in the “Around the World” article. **Teachers:** Products will vary. Check for accuracy of information listed on side one and side two below. Drawings of symbols will vary.

**Facts about Samuel Clemens which could be included on side one:**

- He was born Samuel Langhorne Clemens on Nov. 30, 1835.
- He was the sixth child of John and Jane Clemens.
- Clemens lived in Florida, Missouri until age 4 and then moved to Hannibal, Missouri.
- His hometown was on the river and had three blacksmith shops, a distillery, tobacco factory and two slaughterhouses.
- He spent a lot of time on the Mississippi River swimming and watching steamboats go by. His time on the river is where he got his idea for his pen name.
- Clemens wrote under the pen name Mark Twain and was a writer in the 1800s.
- He was also a journalist, lecturer, entrepreneur, inventor and steamboat pilot. Before he was a pilot, he worked on a steamboat named the *Pennsylvania*.
- Clemens' younger brother, Henry, was his shipmate on that boat. Clemens left in 1858, but Henry stayed and was killed when the ship's boiler exploded.
- His brother's death hurt him greatly, but he stayed on steamboats until 1861, the beginning of the American Civil War and the end of the Mississippi River boat traffic.
- He wrote his first story with his alias at age 27. It was a funny travel story.
- In 1883 he published a memoir and travel book titled, *Life on the Mississippi*.
- His writings were charming but controversial.

**Facts about Mark Twain which could be included on side two:**

- Mark Twain was a famous writer whose real name was Samuel Langhorne Clemens.
- He is best known for his classic books, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, published in 1876 and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, published in 1884.
- Mark Twain's name first appeared on a funny travel story.
- Twain means the number two. Boatmen used to yell “mark twain” to record when a boat was at two fathoms, or 12 feet in depth. That was the depth for safe boat travel.
- Twain's name came from Clemens' time as a steamboat pilot.
- Twain's writings were charming, but controversial. His books were restricted in high schools and in children's libraries repeatedly.
- One of his most famous characters, Huckleberry Finn, was the wild-spirited son of the town drunk who ran away on a raft with Jim, his friend who was an escaped slave.



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Answer Key

**Students:** Use the “Around the World” article to write a journal entry from a day on the Mississippi River. Pretend you are Samuel Clemens in 1883, living by or traveling on the river from Missouri to other states. What do you see? What is life like? Be creative and give at least three details about the Mississippi River or other facts from the article.

**Teachers:** Journal entries will vary, but should include at least three of the facts or details below. Student writing should tell an imaginative narrative.

**Facts from “Around the World” which could be included in a journal entry:**

- Clemens lived in Hannibal, Missouri, along the Mississippi River.
- He wrote *Life on the Mississippi* in 1883, using the pen name Mark Twain. It was about his days as a steamboat pilot and passenger on the Mississippi River before and after the American Civil War.
- Clemens spent time swimming with friends and watching the steamboats come by on the river.
- The Mississippi River is the third-longest river in North America and flows 2,340 miles from beginning to end.
- The Mississippi River winds through or borders the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana.
- Life in river towns was bustling in the 1800s due to waterway activity. In Hannibal, three steamboats arrived daily, bringing many people to and from the town.
- The steamboats were part of a much larger river network of trade and transportation that stretched along the Ohio and Missouri rivers down the Mississippi to New Orleans, Louisiana, nearly 1,000 miles south.
- Before he had his river-pilot license, Samuel Clemens worked on a steamboat named the *Pennsylvania*.
- He helped his younger brother, Henry, to get a job on that boat, too. The brothers were shipmates until early June 1858, when the older Clemens left.
- When Henry was still working aboard the *Pennsylvania*, its boiler exploded while the boat was near Memphis, Tennessee. Many people on board, including Henry, lost their lives.
- Although devastated by his brother's death, Samuel Clemens continued to work on Mississippi River steamboats until 1861, the beginning of the American Civil War began and the end of the Mississippi river traffic.



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Answer Key



**Students:** After reading "Wildville," compare and contrast the similarities and differences in the four types of catfish described in the article using the double bubble maps below. The names of two catfish types go in the large center bubbles. The outside three bubbles are for listing differences and the inside three bubbles are for likenesses. Repeat with two different catfish types for the second comparison map. **Teachers:** Examples are below, but will vary.

