CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

A Tramp Abroad

Mark Twain · *1880 · Twain's English*

One day it occurred to me that it had been many years since the world had been afforded the spectacle of a man adventurous enough to undertake a journey through Europe on foot. After much thought, I decided that I was a person fitted to furnish to mankind this spectacle. So I determined to do it. This was in March, 1878. Mark Twain, 1880, Project Gutenberg #119. For grades 9–12. Humor, not cruelty. Quote him, not a later travel film. The book is long; one map cannot teach the whole tramp.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read A Tramp Abroad as Twain opens it—a man who decides, in March 1878, that he is fitted to furnish the world the spectacle of a journey through Europe on foot—without treating the book as only a joke, or as a later film?

"One day it occurred to me that it had been many years since the world had been afforded the spectacle of a man adventurous enough to undertake a journey through Europe on foot."
Opening

One day it occurred to him that it had been many years since the world had been afforded the spectacle of a man adventurous enough to undertake a journey through Europe on foot. After much thought, he decided that he was a person fitted to furnish to mankind this spectacle. So he determined to do it. This was in March, 1878. Teach that opening, for grades 9–12, as his humor, not as cruelty, and not as a later travel film. The 1880 book, Project Gutenberg #119, is long; one map cannot teach the whole tramp. Quote Twain. This is not Innocents Abroad or Life on the Mississippi; name the work you are in.

KEY CHARACTERS

Mark Twain
Who decides, in March 1878, that he is fitted to furnish the spectacle of a journey through Europe on foot

The companion of the tramp
Who will enter after the opening determination; not a backdrop only

The Europe of 1878, as he walks it
The ground of the book, not a later postcard only

HOW TO BEGIN THIS TRAMP

> *"One day it occurred to me that it had been many years since the world had been afforded the spectacle of a man adventurous enough to undertake a journey through Europe on foot."*
> Opening

> *"So I determined to do it. This was in March, 1878. I looked"*
> Opening

Grades 9–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01
A Spectacle, on Foot
OPENING

It occurred to him that it had been many years since the world had been afforded the spectacle of a man adventurous enough to undertake a journey through Europe on foot. The book names itself as a spectacle, and as a walk.

- Keep "spectacle" and "on foot."
- 9–12.
- Humor, not cruelty.
- Quote Twain, not a later retelling.

> *"One day it occurred to me that it had been many years since the world had been afforded the spectacle of a man adventurous enough to undertake a journey through Europe on foot."*
> Opening

02
Fitted to Furnish It
OPENING

After much thought, he decided that he was a person fitted to furnish to mankind this spectacle. The decision is mock-solemn; teach the tone as his.

- Keep "after much thought" and "fitted to furnish."
- 9–12.
- Do not flatten the humor into a sneer.
- Quote this English.

> *"After much thought, I decided that I was a person fitted to furnish to mankind this spectacle. So I"*
> Opening

03
March, 1878
OPENING

So I determined to do it. This was in March, 1878. The tramp has a date.

- Keep March, 1878.
- 9–12.
- A dated start, then a long book.
- Not a later film.

> *"So I determined to do it. This was in March, 1878. I looked"*
> Opening

04
Humor, Not Cruelty
THE TONE OF THE BOOK

The opening is comic; the later chapters will wander through German and Alpine scenes with the same voice. Teach the humor without cruelty, and without making a spectacle of anyone's speech or manners.

- Tone is his; do not add contempt.
- 9–12.
- Quote him.
- The book is a tramp, not a guidebook only.

> *"After much thought, I decided that I was a person fitted to furnish to mankind this spectacle. So I"*
> Opening

05
The 1880 Book, Not Another Twain Travel
THE EDITION

Project Gutenberg #119 is A Tramp Abroad, 1880. Quote this book. The Innocents Abroad and other travel books are other hosted work; name the one you are in. For grades 9–12. The book is long; one map cannot teach the whole tramp.

- Name 1880.
- Humor, not cruelty.
- Not a film.
- A determined start, in March.

> *"One day it occurred to me that it had been many years since the world had been afforded the spectacle of a man adventurous enough to undertake a journey through Europe on foot."*
> Opening

A walk, called a spectacle | A dated determination | Humor without cruelty | Europe underfoot, 1878 | A long tramp, in his English

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 9–12

1. The opening: a spectacle of a journey through Europe on foot, and a man who, after much thought, finds himself fitted to furnish it. March, 1878.
2. Humor, not cruelty. Do not make a spectacle of anyone's speech or manners.
3. This is A Tramp Abroad, 1880, PG #119, for grades 9–12—not The Innocents Abroad or a later film.
4. The book is long; one map cannot teach the whole tramp. Quote Twain.

Quotations are verbatim from the Twain's English, Project Gutenberg #119, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/a-tramp-abroad/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.