

The Prince and the Pauper

Novel by Mark Twain

Dramatized by Joellen Bland



Video link at
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Who would you **BE** if you could?

COMMON CORE

RL 3 Describe how a particular drama's plot unfolds as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

Most of us can name at least one person who has a life we sometimes envy. This person may be an actor, an athlete, a singer, or even a friend. However, you might not envy him or her if you knew what his or her life was really like. In *The Prince and the Pauper*, two characters learn unexpected lessons about themselves and each other when they trade places.

ROLE-PLAY With a classmate, choose two famous people whose lives you admire. Make a list of questions you would want to ask them and think of the answers the people would give. Be sure to include things in their lives that might not be perfect. Then take turns being the interviewer and present your interviews of the famous people to the class.



Meet the Author

Mark Twain

1835–1910

Boyhood Adventures

Two of Mark Twain's best-known works focus on the adventures, or misadventures, of two young boys—Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer. In developing these stories, Twain drew upon his own experiences and those of his childhood friends. Many of his tales take place along the Mississippi River, where Twain spent much of his time as a child and young adult.

Have Pen, Will Travel

Twain loved to travel. His frequent trips throughout the United States and to Europe resulted in a series of funny and clever stories. Twain set some of his novels, including *The Prince and the Pauper*, in England, where he was greatly admired. Though he wrote *The Prince and the Pauper* as a novel, Joellen Bland later adapted the story as a play.

BACKGROUND TO THE PLAY

True Royalty

The prince in Twain's story is based on Edward, son of King Henry VIII of England. After Henry's death in 1547, the nine-year-old Edward took the throne, becoming King Edward VI.

● TEXT ANALYSIS: CONFLICT IN DRAMA

In drama, as in short stories, the **plot** revolves around a central **conflict**. Since drama is meant to be performed by actors, a drama's conflict usually unfolds through action and dialogue (conversation between characters).

Unlike a book, which has chapters, a play is divided into acts and scenes. This play takes place in eight scenes that revolve around two boys who switch identities. As you read, notice how their behavior affects the plot and how the boys change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

● READING STRATEGY: READING A PLAY

In a drama, **stage directions** provide key information that readers would normally see or hear in a performance, such as

- the setting, scenery, and props (*Westminster Palace, England, Scene 1, line 2*)
- the music, sound effects, and lighting (*Fanfare of trumpets is heard, Scene 3, line 282*)
- the characters' movements, behavior, or ways of speaking (*surprised, standing up quickly, Scene 4, line 345*)

As you read the play, record examples of stage directions and tell what they help you to understand.

Stage Direction	Type of Direction	What It Tells Me
<i>Fanfare of trumpets is heard (Scene 3, line 282)</i>	<i>Sound effects</i>	<i>Someone is entering.</i>

▲ VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

Replace each boldfaced word below with a different word or words that have the same meaning.

1. The king expected his son to be his **successor**.
2. Tom looked like a prince, but he was a **pauper**.
3. An **affliction** seemed to make the prince forgetful.
4. The king began to doubt that his son was **sane**.
5. The boy had no **recollection** of where he put the seal.
6. Was he the real prince or an **impostor**?

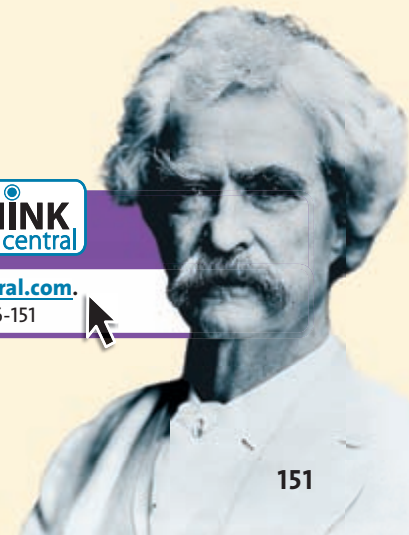


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The Prince and the Pauper

Mark Twain
Dramatized by Joellen Bland

CHARACTERS

Edward, Prince of Wales

Tom Canty, the Pauper

Lord Hertford

Lord St. John

King Henry VIII

Herald

Miles Hendon

John Canty, Tom's father

Hugo, a young thief

Two Women

Justice

Constable

Jailer

Sir Hugh Hendon

Two Prisoners

Two Guards

Three Pages

Lords and Ladies

Villagers

SCENE ONE

Time: 1547.

Setting: *Westminster Palace, England. Gates leading to courtyard are at right. Slightly to the left, off courtyard and inside gates, interior of palace anteroom¹ is visible. There is a couch with a rich robe draped on it, screen at rear, bellcord, mirror, chairs, and a table with bowl of nuts, and a large golden seal on it. Piece of armor hangs on one wall. Exits are rear and downstage.*

1. **anteroom** (ăn'tē-rōōm'): an outer room that leads to another room and is often used as a waiting room.



At Curtain Rise: Two Guards—one at right, one at left—stand in front of gates, and several Villagers hover nearby, straining to see into courtyard where Prince may be seen through fence, playing. Two Women enter right.

1st Woman. I have walked all morning just to have a glimpse of Westminster Palace.

2nd Woman. Maybe if we can get near enough to the gates, we can have a glimpse of the young Prince. (Tom Canty, *dirty and ragged, comes out of crowd and steps close to gates.*)

Tom. I have always dreamed of seeing a real Prince! (*Excited, he presses his nose against gates.*)

1st Guard. Mind your manners, you young beggar! (*Seizes Tom by collar and sends him sprawling into crowd. Villagers laugh, as Tom slowly gets to his feet.*)

Prince (*rushing to gates*). How dare you treat a poor subject of the King in such a manner! Open the gates and let him in! (*As Villagers see Prince, they take off their hats and bow low.*)

Villagers (*shouting together*). Long live the Prince of Wales! (*Guards open gates and Tom slowly passes through, as if in a dream.*)

Prince (*to Tom*). You look tired, and you have been treated cruelly. I am Edward, Prince of Wales. What is your name?

Tom (*looking around in awe*). Tom Canty, Your Highness.

Prince. Come into the palace with me, Tom. (*Prince leads Tom into anteroom. Villagers pantomime conversation, and all but a few exit.*)
40 Where do you live, Tom?

Tom. In the city, Your Highness, in Offal Court.

Prince. Offal Court? That is an odd name. Do you have parents?

Tom. Yes, Your Highness.

Prince. How does your father treat you?

Tom. If it please you, Your Highness, when I am not able to beg a penny for our supper, he treats me to beatings.

Prince (*shocked*). What! Beatings? My father is not a calm man, but he does not beat me. (*looks at Tom thoughtfully*) You speak well and have an easy grace. Have you been schooled?

Tom. Very little, Your Highness. A good priest who shares our house in Offal Court has taught me from his books.

Prince. Do you have a pleasant life in Offal Court?

Tom. Pleasant enough, Your Highness, save when I am hungry. We have Punch and Judy shows, and sometimes we lads have fights in the street.

Prince (*eagerly*). I should like that. Tell me more.

Tom. In summer, we run races and swim in the river, and we love to wallow in the mud.

Prince (*sighing, wistfully*). If I could wear your clothes and play in the mud just once, with no one to forbid me, I think I could give up the crown!

Tom (*shaking his head*). And if I could wear your fine clothes just once, Your Highness . . .

Prince. Would you like that? Come, then. We shall change places. You can take off your rags and put on my clothes—and I will put on yours. (*He leads Tom behind screen, and they return shortly, each wearing the other's clothes.*) Let's look at ourselves in this mirror. (*leads Tom to mirror*)

Tom. Oh, Your Highness, it is not proper for me to wear such clothes.

80 **Prince** (*excitedly, as he looks in mirror*). Heavens, do you not see it? We look like brothers! We have the same features and bearing.² If we went about together, dressed alike, there is no one

2. **features and bearing:** parts of the face and ways of standing or walking.



who could say which is the Prince of Wales and which is Tom Canty!

Tom (*drawing back and rubbing his hand*). Your Highness, I am frightened. . . .

Prince. Do not worry. (*seeing Tom rub his hand*) Is that a bruise on your hand?

90 **Tom**. Yes, but it is a slight thing, Your Highness.

Prince (*angrily*). It was shameful and cruel of that guard to strike you. Do not stir a step until I come back. I command you! (*He picks up golden Seal of England³ and carefully puts it into piece of armor. He then dashes out to gates.*) Open! Unbar the gates at once! (*2nd Guard opens gates, and as Prince runs out, in rags, 1st Guard seizes him, boxes him on the ear, and knocks him to the ground.*)

100 **1st Guard**. Take that, you little beggar, for the trouble you have made for me with the Prince. (*Villagers roar with laughter.*)

Prince (*picking himself up, turning on Guard furiously*). I am Prince of Wales! You shall hang for laying your hand on me!

1st Guard (*presenting arms; mockingly*). I salute Your Gracious Highness! (*Then, angrily, 1st Guard shoves Prince roughly aside.*) Be off, you mad bag of rags! (*Prince is surrounded*
110 *by Villagers, who hustle him off.*)

Villagers (*ad lib,⁴ as they exit, shouting*). Make way for His Royal Highness! Make way for the Prince of Wales! Hail to the Prince! (*etc.*)

Tom (*admiring himself in mirror*). If only the boys in Offal Court could see me! They will

3. **Seal of England**: a device used to stamp a special design, usually a picture of the ruler, onto a document, thus indicating that it has royal approval.

4. **ad lib**: talk together about what is going on, but without an actual script.

not believe me when I tell them about this.
(*looks around anxiously*) But where is the
Prince? (*Looks cautiously into courtyard. Two*

120 *Guards immediately snap to attention and salute.*
He quickly ducks back into anteroom as Lords
Hertford and St. John enter at rear.)

Hertford (*going toward Tom, then stopping and*
bowing low). My Lord, you look distressed.
What is wrong?

Tom (*trembling*). Oh, I beg of you, be merciful.
I am no Prince, but poor Tom Canty of Offal
Court. Please let me see the Prince, and he will
give my rags back to me and let me go unhurt.
(*kneeling*) Please, be merciful and spare me!

130 **Hertford** (*puzzled and disturbed*). Your
Highness, on your knees? To me? (*bows quickly,*
then, aside to St. John) The Prince has gone
mad! We must inform the King. (*to Tom*)
A moment, your Highness. (*Hertford and*
St. John exit rear.)

Tom. Oh, there is no hope for me now. They
will hang me for certain! (*Hertford and St.*
John re-enter, supporting King. Tom watches
in awe as they help him to couch, where he sinks
140 *down wearily.*)

King (*beckoning Tom close to him*). Now, my
son, Edward, my prince. What is this? Do you
mean to deceive me, the King, your father, who
loves you and treats you so kindly?

Tom (*dropping to his knees*). You are the King?
Then I have no hope!

King (*stunned*). My child, you are not well.
Do not break your father's old heart. Say you
know me.

150 **Tom**. Yes, you are my lord the King, whom
God preserve.

King. True, that is right. Now, you will not
deny that you are Prince of Wales, as they say
you did just a while ago?



Tom. I beg you, Your Grace, believe me. I am the lowest of your subjects, being born a **pauper**, and it is by a great mistake that I am here. I am too young to die. Oh, please, spare me, sire!

King (*amazed*). Die? Do not talk so, my child.
160 You shall not die.

Tom (*gratefully*). God save you, my king! And now, may I go?

King. Go? Where would you go?

Tom. Back to the alley where I was born and bred to misery.

King. My poor child, rest your head here. (*He holds Tom's head and pats his shoulder, then turns to Hertford and St. John.*) Alas, I am old and ill, and my son is mad. But this shall pass. Mad
170 or **sane**, he is my heir and shall rule England. Tomorrow he shall be installed and confirmed in his princely dignity! Bring the Great Seal!

Hertford (*bowing low*). Please, Your Majesty, you took the Great Seal from the Chancellor two days ago to give to His Highness the Prince.

King. So I did. (*to Tom*) My child, tell me, where is the Great Seal?

Tom (*trembling*). Indeed, my lord, I do not know.

180 **King.** Ah, your **affliction** hangs heavily upon you. 'Tis no matter. You will remember later. Listen, carefully! (*gently, but firmly*) I command you to hide your affliction in all ways that be within your power. You shall deny to no one that you are the true prince, and if your memory should fail you upon any occasion of state, you shall be advised by your uncle, the Lord Hertford.

Tom (*resigned*). The King has spoken. The
190 King shall be obeyed.

King. And now, my child, I go to rest. (*He stands weakly, and Hertford leads him off, rear.*)

Tom (*wearily, to St. John*). May it please your lordship to let me rest now?

St. John. So it please Your Highness, it is for you to command and us to obey. But it is wise that you rest, for this evening you must attend the Lord Mayor's banquet in your honor. (*He pulls bellcord, and Three Pages enter and kneel before Tom.*)
200

Tom. Banquet? (*Terrified, he sits on couch and reaches for cup of water, but 1st Page instantly seizes cup, drops on one knee, and serves it to him. Tom starts to take off his boots, but 2nd Page stops him and does it for him. He tries to remove his cape and gloves, and 3rd Page does it for him.*) I wonder that you do not try to breathe for me also! (*Lies down cautiously. Pages cover him with robe, then back away and exit.*)

210 **St. John** (*to Hertford, as he enters*). Plainly, what do you think?

Hertford. Plainly, this. The King is near death, my nephew the Prince of Wales is clearly mad and will mount the throne mad. God protect England, for she will need it!

St. John. Does it not seem strange that madness could so change his manner from what it used to be? It troubles me, his saying he is not the Prince.

220 **Hertford.** Peace, my lord! If he were an **impostor** and called himself Prince, that would be natural. But was there ever an impostor, who being called Prince by the King and court, denied it? Never! This is the true Prince gone mad. And tonight all London shall honor him. (*Hertford and St. John exit. Tom sits up, looks around helplessly, then gets up.*)

Tom. I should have thought to order something to eat. (*sees bowl of nuts on table*) Ah! Here are
230 some nuts! (*looks around, sees Great Seal in armor, takes it out, looks at it curiously*) This will make a good nutcracker. (*He takes bowl of nuts, sits on couch and begins to crack nuts with Great Seal and eat them, as curtain falls.*)

SCENE TWO

Time: *Later that night.*

Setting: *A street in London, near Offal Court. Played before the curtain.*

At Curtain Rise: Prince limps in, dirty and tousled. He looks around wearily. Several Villagers pass by, pushing against him.

Prince. I have never seen this poor section of London. I must be near Offal Court. If I can only find it before I drop! (John Canty steps out of crowd, seizes Prince roughly.)

Canty. Out at this time of night, and I warrant you haven't brought a farthing⁵ home! If that is the case and I do not break all the bones in your miserable body, then I am not John Canty!

Prince (eagerly). Oh, are you his father?

Canty. His father? I am *your* father, and—

Prince. Take me to the palace at once, and your son will be returned to you. The King, my father, will make you rich beyond your wildest dreams. Oh, save me, for I am indeed the Prince of Wales.

Canty (staring in amazement). Gone stark mad! But mad or not, I'll soon find where the soft places lie in your bones. Come home! (starts to drag Prince off)

Prince (struggling). Let me go! I am the Prince of Wales, and the King shall have your life for this!

Canty (angrily). I'll take no more of your madness! (raises stick to strike, but Prince struggles free and runs off, and Canty runs after him)



SCENE THREE

Setting: *Same as Scene 1, with addition of dining table, set with dishes and goblets, on raised platform. Throne-like chair is at head of table.*

At Curtain Rise: A banquet is in progress. Tom, in royal robes, sits at head of table, with Hertford at his right and St. John at his left. Lords and Ladies sit around table eating and talking softly.

Tom (to Hertford). What is this, my Lord? (holds up a plate)

Hertford. Lettuce and turnips, Your Highness.

Tom. Lettuce and turnips? I have never seen them before. Am I to eat them?

Hertford (discreetly). Yes, Your Highness, if you so desire. (Tom begins to eat food with his fingers. Fanfare of trumpets⁶ is heard, and Herald enters, carrying scroll. All turn to look.)

5. **farthing:** a former British coin worth one-fourth of a British penny.

6. **fanfare of trumpets:** a short tune or call, usually indicating that something important is about to occur.

Herald (*reading from scroll*). His Majesty, King Henry VIII, is dead! The King is dead! (*All rise and turn to Tom, who sits, stunned.*)

All (*together*). The King is dead. Long live the King! Long live Edward, King of England! (*All bow to Tom. Herald bows and exits.*)

290 **Hertford** (*to Tom*). Your Majesty, we must call the council. Come, St. John. (*Hertford and St. John lead Tom off at rear. Lords and Ladies follow, talking among themselves. At gates, down right, Villagers enter and mill about. Prince enters right, pounds on gates and shouts.*)

Prince. Open the gates! I am the Prince of Wales! Open, I say! And though I am friendless with no one to help me, I will not be driven from my ground.

300 **Miles Hendon** (*entering through crowd*). Though you be Prince or not, you are indeed a gallant lad and not friendless. Here I stand to prove it, and you might have a worse friend than Miles Hendon.

1st Villager. 'Tis another prince in disguise. Take the lad and dunk him in the pond! (*He seizes Prince, but Miles strikes him with flat of his sword. Crowd, now angry, presses forward threateningly, when fanfare of trumpets is heard offstage.* Herald,

310 *carrying scroll, enters up left at gates.*)

Herald. Make way for the King's messenger! (*reading from scroll*) His Majesty, King Henry VIII, is dead! The King is dead! (*He exits right, repeating message, and Villagers stand in stunned silence.*)

Prince (*stunned*). The King is dead!

1st Villager (*shouting*). Long live Edward, King of England!

Villagers (*together*). Long live the King!
320 (*shouting, ad lib*) Long live King Edward!
Heaven protect Edward, King of England! (*etc.*)

Miles (*taking Prince by the arm*). Come, lad, before the crowd remembers us. I have a room at the inn, and you can stay there. (*He hurries off with stunned Prince. Tom, led by Hertford, enters courtyard up rear. Villagers see them.*)

Villagers (*together*). Long live the King! (*They fall to their knees as curtains close.*)

SCENE FOUR

Setting: Miles' room at the inn. At right is table
330 *set with dishes and bowls of food, a chair at each side. At left is bed, with table and chair next to it, and a window. Candle is on table.*

At Curtain Rise: Miles and Prince approach table.

Miles. I have had a hot supper prepared. I'll bet you're hungry, lad.

Prince. Yes, I am. It's kind of you to let me stay with you, Miles. I am truly Edward, King of England, and you shall not go unrewarded. (*sits at table*)

340 **Miles** (*to himself*). First he called himself Prince, and now he is King. Well, I will humor him. (*starts to sit*)

Prince (*angrily*). Stop! Would you sit in the presence of the King?

Miles (*surprised, standing up quickly*). I beg your pardon, Your Majesty. I was not thinking. (*Stares uncertainly at Prince, who sits at table, expectantly. Miles starts to uncover dishes of food, serves Prince and fills glasses.*)

350 **Prince**. Miles, you have a gallant way about you. Are you nobly born?

Miles. My father is a baronet,⁷ Your Majesty.

Prince. Then you must also be a baronet.

Miles (*shaking his head*). My father banished me from home seven years ago, so I fought in

7. **baronet**: a rank of honor in Britain, below a baron and above a knight.

the wars. I was taken prisoner, and I have spent the past seven years in prison. Now I am free, and I am returning home.

Prince. You have been shamefully wronged!

360 But I will make things right for you. You have saved me from injury and possible death. Name your reward and if it be within the compass of my royal power, it is yours.

Miles (*pausing briefly, then dropping to his knee*). Since Your Majesty is pleased to hold my simple duty worthy of reward, I ask that I and my **successors** may hold the privilege of sitting in the presence of the King.

Prince (*taking Miles' sword, tapping him lightly on each shoulder*). Rise and seat yourself. (*returns sword to Miles, then rises and goes over to bed*)

Miles (*rising*). He should have been born a king. He plays the part to a marvel! If I had not thought of this favor, I might have had to stand for weeks. (*sits down and begins to eat*)

Prince. Sir Miles, you will stand guard while I sleep? (*lies down and instantly falls asleep*)

Miles. Yes, Your Majesty. (*With a rueful look at his uneaten supper, he stands up.*) Poor little chap. I suppose his mind has been disordered with ill usage. (*covers Prince with his cape*) Well, I will be his friend and watch over him. (*Blows out candle, then yawns, sits on chair next to bed, and falls asleep. John Canty and Hugo appear at window, peer around room, then enter cautiously through window. They lift the sleeping Prince, staring nervously at Miles.*)

Canty (*in loud whisper*). I swore the day he was 390 born he would be a thief and a beggar, and I won't lose him now. Lead the way to the camp Hugo! (*Canty and Hugo carry Prince off right, as Miles sleeps on and curtain falls.*)

SCENE FIVE

Time: *Two weeks later.*

Setting: *Country village street.*

Before Curtain Rise: Villagers *walk about*. Canty, Hugo, and Prince *enter*.

Canty. I will go in this direction. Hugo, keep my mad son with you, and see that he doesn't 400 escape again! (*exits*)

Hugo (*seizing Prince by the arm*). He won't escape! I'll see that he earns his bread today, or else!

Prince (*pulling away*). I will not beg with you, and I will not steal! I have suffered enough in this miserable company of thieves!

Hugo. You shall suffer more if you do not do as I tell you! (*raises clenched fist at Prince*) Refuse if you dare! (*Woman enters, carrying wrapped 410 bundle in a basket on her arm.*) Wait here until I come back. (*Hugo sneaks along after Woman, then snatches her bundle, runs back to Prince, and thrusts it into his arms.*) Run after me and call, "Stop, thief!" But be sure you lead her astray! (*Runs off. Prince throws down bundle in disgust.*)

Woman. Help! Thief! Stop, thief! (*rushes at Prince and seizes him, just as several Villagers enter*) You little thief! What do you mean by robbing a poor woman? Somebody bring the 420 constable! (*Miles enters and watches.*)

1st Villager (*grabbing Prince*). I'll teach him a lesson, the little villain!

Prince (*struggling*). Take your hands off me! I did not rob this woman!

Miles (*stepping out of crowd and pushing man back with the flat of his sword*). Let us proceed gently, my friends. This is a matter for the law.

Prince (*springing to Miles' side*). You have come just in time, Sir Miles. Carve this rabble to rags!

430 **Miles.** Speak softly. Trust in me and all shall go well.

Constable (*entering and reaching for Prince*).
Come along, young rascal!

Miles. Gently, good friend. He shall go
peaceably to the Justice.

Prince. I will not go before a Justice! I did not
do this thing!

Miles (*taking him aside*). Sire, will you reject
the laws of the realm, yet demand that your
440 subjects respect them?

Prince (*calmer*). You are right, Sir Miles.
Whatever the King requires a subject to suffer
under the law, he will suffer himself while he
holds the station of a subject. (*Constable leads
them off right. Villagers follow. Curtain.*)

SCENE SIX

Setting: *Office of the Justice. A high bench is
at center.*

At Curtain Rise: *Justice sits behind bench.
Constable enters with Miles and Prince,
450 followed by Villagers. Woman carries wrapped
bundle.*

Constable (*to Justice*). A young thief, your
worship, is accused of stealing a dressed pig
from this poor woman.

Justice (*looking down at Prince, then Woman*).
My good woman, are you absolutely certain
this lad stole your pig?

Woman. It was none other than he, your
worship.

460 **Justice.** Are there no witnesses to the contrary?
(*All shake their heads.*) Then the lad stands
convicted. (*to Woman*) What do you hold this
property to be worth?

Woman. Three shillings and eight pence, your
worship.

Justice (*leaning down to Woman*). Good woman,
do you know that when one steals a thing above
the value of thirteen pence, the law says he shall
hang for it?

470 **Woman** (*upset*). Oh, what have I done? I would
not hang the poor boy for the whole world! Save
me from this, your worship. What can I do?

Justice (*gravely*). You may revise the value,
since it is not yet written in the record.

Woman. Then call the pig eight pence, your
worship.

Justice. So be it. You may take your property
and go. (*Woman starts off, and is followed by
Constable. Miles follows them cautiously down
480 right.*)

Constable (*stopping Woman*). Good woman,
I will buy your pig from you. (*takes coins from
pocket*) Here is eight pence.

Woman. Eight pence! It cost me three shillings
and eight pence!

Constable. Indeed! Then come back before his
worship and answer for this. The lad must hang!

Woman. No! No! Say no more. Give me the
eight pence and hold your peace. (*Constable
490 hands her coins and takes pig. Woman exits,
angrily. Miles returns to bench.*)

Justice. The boy is sentenced to a fortnight⁸ in
the common jail. Take him away, Constable!
(*Justice exits. Prince gives Miles a nervous glance.*)

Miles (*following Constable*). Good sir, turn
your back a moment and let the poor lad
escape. He is innocent.

Constable (*outraged*). What? You say this to
me? Sir, I arrest you in—

500 **Miles.** Do not be so hasty! (*slyly*) The pig you
have purchased for eight pence may cost you
your neck, man.

8. **fortnight:** 14 days.

Constable (*laughing nervously*). Ah, but I was merely jesting with the woman, sir.

Miles. Would the Justice think it a jest?

Constable. Good sir! The Justice has no more sympathy with a jest than a dead corpse! (*perplexed*) Very well, I will turn my back and see nothing! But go quickly! (*exits*)

510 **Miles** (*to Prince*). Come, my liege.⁹ We are free to go. And that band of thieves shall not set hands on you again, I swear it!

Prince (*wearily*). Can you believe, Sir Miles, that in the last fortnight, I, the King of England, have escaped from thieves and begged for food on the road? I have slept in a barn with a calf! I have washed dishes in a peasant's kitchen, and narrowly escaped death. And not once in all my wanderings did I see a courier¹⁰ searching for
520 me! Is it no matter for commotion and distress that the head of state is gone?

Miles (*sadly, aside*). Still busy with his pathetic dream. (*to Prince*) It is strange indeed, my liege. But come, I will take you to my father's home in Kent. We are not far away. There you may rest in a house with seventy rooms! Come, I am all impatience to be home again! (*They exit, Miles in cheerful spirits, Prince looking puzzled, as curtains close.*)

SCENE SEVEN

530 **Setting**: *Village jail. Bare stage, with barred window on one wall.*

At Curtain Rise: Two Prisoners, *in chains, are onstage*. Jailer *shoves Miles and Prince, in chains, onstage. They struggle and protest.*

Miles. But I tell you, I am Miles Hendon! My brother, Sir Hugh, has stolen my bride and my estate!

Jailer. Be silent! Impostor! Sir Hugh will see that you pay well for claiming to be his dead
540 brother and for assaulting him in his own house! (*exits*)

Miles (*sitting, with head in hands*). Oh, my dear Edith . . . now wife to my brother Hugh, against her will, and my poor father . . . dead!

1st Prisoner. At least you have your life, sir. I am sentenced to be hanged for killing a deer in the King's park.

2nd Prisoner. And I must hang for stealing a yard of cloth to dress my children.

550 **Prince** (*moved; to Prisoners*). When I mount my throne, you shall all be free. And the laws that have dishonored you shall be swept from the books. (*turning away*) Kings should go to school to learn their own laws and be merciful.

1st Prisoner. What does the lad mean? I have heard that the King is mad, but merciful.

2nd Prisoner. He is to be crowned at Westminster tomorrow.

Prince (*violently*). King? What King, good sir?

560 **1st Prisoner**. Why, we have only one, his most sacred majesty, King Edward the Sixth.

2nd Prisoner. And whether he be mad or not, his praises are on all men's lips. He has saved many innocent lives, and now he means to destroy the cruelest laws that oppress the people.

Prince (*turning away, shaking his head*). How can this be? Surely it is not that little beggar boy! (*Sir Hugh enters with Jailer.*)

Sir Hugh. Seize the impostor!

570 **Miles** (*as Jailer pulls him to his feet*). Hugh, this has gone far enough!

Sir Hugh. You will sit in the public stocks for two hours, and the boy would join you if he were not so young. See to it, jailer, and after

9. **my liege** (lĕj): my lord.

10. **courier** (kōōr'ē-ər): messenger.

two hours, you may release them. Meanwhile, I ride to London for the coronation!¹¹ (Sir Hugh exits and Miles is hustled out by Jailer.)

Prince. Coronation! What does he mean? There can be no coronation without me! (*curtain falls.*)

SCENE EIGHT

580 **Time:** *Coronation Day.*

Setting: *Outside gates of Westminster Abbey, played before curtain. Painted screen or flat at rear represents Abbey. Throne is in center. Bench is near it.*

At Curtain Rise: *Lords and Ladies crowd Abbey. Outside gates, Guards drive back cheering Villagers, among them Miles.*

Miles (*distraught*). I've lost him! Poor little chap! He has been swallowed up in the crowd!

590 (*Fanfare of trumpets is heard, then silence. Hertford, St. John, Lords and Ladies enter slowly, in a procession, followed by Pages, one of whom carries crown on a small cushion. Tom follows procession, looking about nervously. Suddenly, Prince, in rags, steps out from crowd, his hand raised.*)

Prince. I forbid you to set the crown of England upon that head. I am the King!

Hertford. Seize the little vagabond!

600 **Tom.** I forbid it! He is the King! (*kneels before Prince*) Oh, my lord the King, let poor Tom Canty be the first to say, "Put on your crown and enter into your own right again." (*Hertford and several Lords look closely at both boys.*)

Hertford. This is strange indeed. (*to Tom*) By your favor, sir, I wish to ask certain questions of this lad.

11. **coronation:** the act of crowning someone king or queen. In England coronations usually take place at a large church in London called Westminster Abbey.



Prince. I will answer truly whatever you may ask, my lord.

610 **Hertford.** But if you have been well trained, you may answer my questions as well as our lord the King. I need a definite proof. (*thinks a moment*) Ah! Where lies the Great Seal of England? It has been missing for weeks, and only the true Prince of Wales can say where it lies.

Tom. Wait! Was the seal round and thick, with letters engraved on it? (Hertford *nods*.) I know where it is, but it was not I who put it there. The rightful King shall tell you. (*to Prince*)
620 Think, my King, it was the very last thing you did that day before you rushed out of the palace wearing my rags.

Prince (*pausing*). I recall how we exchanged clothes, but have no **recollection** of hiding the Great Seal.

Tom (*eagerly*). Remember when you saw the bruise on my hand, you ran to the door, but first you hid this thing you call the Seal.

Prince (*suddenly*). Ah! I remember! (*to St. John*)
630 Go, my good St. John, and you shall find the Great Seal in the armor that hangs on the wall in my chamber. (St. John *hesitates, but at a nod from Tom, hurries off*.)

Tom (*pleased*). Right, my King! Now the scepter¹² of England is yours again. (St. John *returns in a moment with Great Seal*.)

All (*shouting*). Long live Edward, King of England! (Tom *takes off his cape and throws it over Prince's rags. Trumpet fanfare is heard*. St. John *takes crown and places it on Prince. All kneel*.)
640

Hertford. Let the small impostor be flung into the Tower!

Prince (*firmly*). I will not have it so. But for him, I would not have my crown. (*to Tom*) My poor boy, how was it that you could remember where I hid the Seal, when I could not?

Tom (*embarrassed*). I did not know what it was, my King, and I used it to . . . to crack nuts. (*All laugh, and Tom steps back. Miles steps forward, staring in amazement*.)
650

Miles. Is he really the King? Is he indeed the sovereign of England, and not the poor and friendless Tom o' Bedlam¹³ I thought he was? (*He sinks down on bench*.) I wish I had a bag to hide my head in!

1st Guard (*rushing up to him*). Stand up, you mannerless clown! How dare you sit in the presence of the King!

660 **Prince.** Do not touch him! He is my trusty servant, Miles Hendon, who saved me from shame and possible death. For his service, he owns the right to sit in my presence.

Miles (*bowing, then kneeling*). Your Majesty!

Prince. Rise, Sir Miles. I command that Sir Hugh Hendon, who sits within this hall, be seized and put under lock and key until I have need of him. (*beckons to Tom*) From what I have heard, Tom Canty, you have governed
670 the realm with royal gentleness and mercy in my absence. Henceforth, you shall hold the honorable title of King's Ward! (Tom *kneels and kisses Prince's hand*.) And because I have suffered with the poorest of my subjects and felt the cruel force of unjust laws, I pledge myself to a reign of mercy for all! (*All bow low, then rise*.)

All (*shouting*). Long live the King! Long live Edward, King of England! (*curtain*)

12. **scepter** (sĕp'tĕr): a baton or other emblem of royal authority.

13. **Tom o' Bedlam**: an insane person, such as someone hospitalized at St. Mary of Bethlehem Hospital, or Bedlam Hospital, in London.

Comprehension

- 1. Recall** How do most of the adults explain the boys' claims that they are not who they appear to be?
- 2. Clarify** Explain how the constable tricks the woman into selling the pig. How does Miles use the trick to get Edward released?
- 3. Summarize** How has Edward's experience as a pauper influenced him?

Text Analysis

- 4. Make Inferences** Scan the play to find examples of how Miles treats the prince and how the members of the royal court treat Tom. What motivates their behavior toward the boys?
- 5. Evaluate Stage Directions** Look over the stage directions you listed in your chart. Which ones seemed most useful for understanding the play?
- 6. Analyze Conflict in Drama** Use a chart like the one shown to summarize the main events of each scene. This will help you see how the conflict develops and the boys change over the course of the play. In which scene is the conflict resolved?

Scene 1: The guards mistake the Prince for Tom, and the King thinks that Tom is the Prince.

Scene 2:

- 7. Analyze Character** Tom's behavior at court leads people to believe the "prince" is mad. Why does Tom behave this way? How does the boys' behavior affect the plot?
- 8. Evaluate Resolution** What lessons did the boys learn about themselves and each other by trading places?

Extension and Challenge

- 9. Inquiry and Research** During the time of Henry VIII and Edward VI, the British king was very powerful. Since then, the power of the royal family has decreased. Research Henry VIII's reign and compare it with that of Queen Elizabeth II. Focus on how royal powers and responsibilities have changed over time. Present your findings to the class.

Who would you **BE** if you could?

What does *The Prince and the Pauper* teach readers about wanting to be someone else?

COMMON CORE

RL 3 Describe how a particular drama's plot unfolds as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. **W 7** Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources.



King Henry VIII