

A group of several green and black jumping frogs are gathered on a grey, rocky surface. One frog in the center is facing forward, showing its bright yellow underbelly. Other frogs are scattered around it, some facing different directions. The background is blurred, showing more of the rocky terrain and some green foliage.

THE CELEBRATED JUMPING FROG OF CALAVERAS COUNTY

Mark Twain

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

*Published in 1865

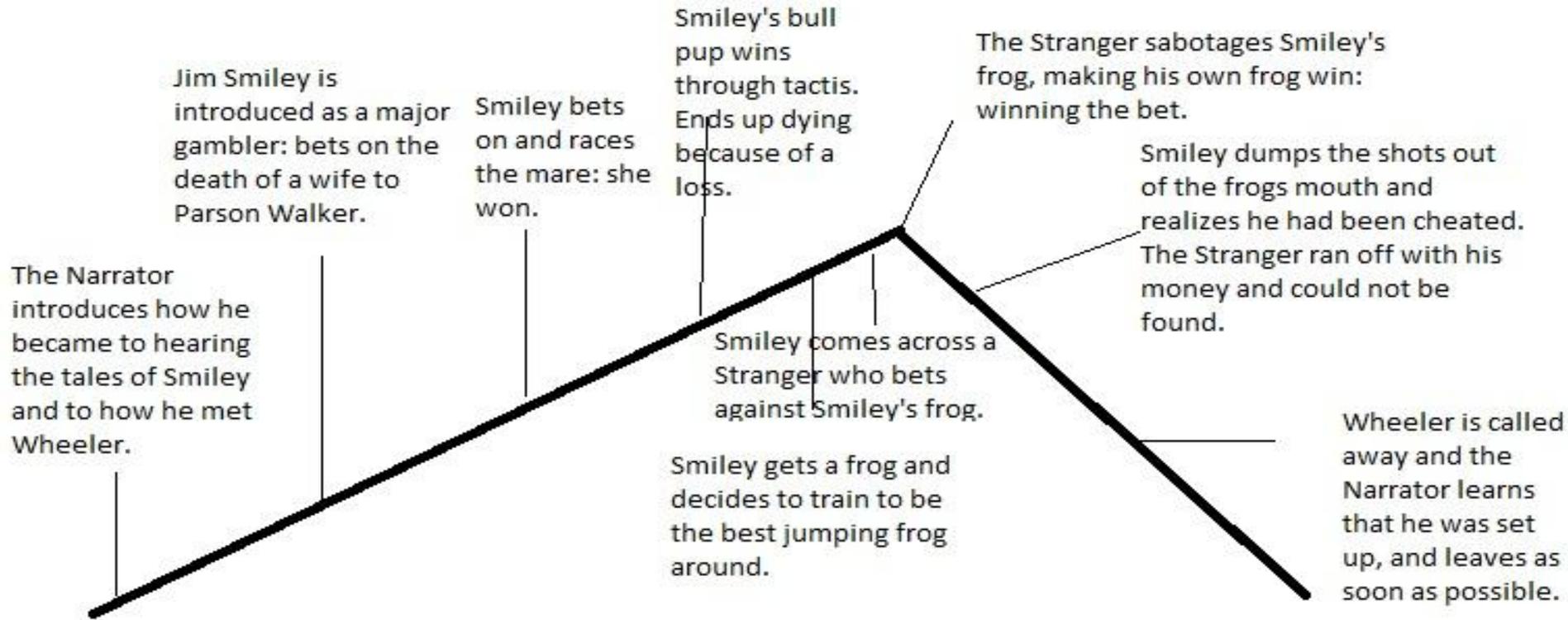
*First great success as a writer and brought him national attention

*Original title: “Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog”

*This version was a further developed idea that was then published as, “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of the Calaveras County”

SUMMARY

- Man from the East comes to a Western mining town
- Narrator speaks with Simon Wheeler-- Leonidas W. Smiley
- Tall Tale about Jim Smiley
- Bet on anything
 - Horse
 - Dog
 - Frog
- After the tall tales, narrator tries to escape the tedious tales.



The Celebrating Jumping Frog of Calaveras County



THE STARS OF THE SHORT STORY

★ Jim Smiley

- Gambling man
- Protagonist

★ The Stranger

- Cheater
- Antagonist

★ Simon Wheeler

- Story teller

★ The Narrator

- Educated man from the East
- Tricked by his friend

★ Dan'l Webster

- Smiley's Frog

★ Andrew Jackson

- Smiley's fighting dog

★ "Fifteen-minute Nag"

- Smiley's Mare

SETTING AND SYMBOLS

- Angel's Mining Camp
- In California
- Mid 19th century
- Andrew Jackson the Dog- seventh president
- Dan'l Webster the Frog- senator and Secretary of State

**"I found Simon Wheeler dozing comfortably by the barroom stove of the dilapidated tavern in the decayed mining camp of Angel's, and i noticed that he was fat and bald-headed, and had an expression of winning gentleness and simplicity upon his tranquil countenance."

Angels Camp
Home of the Jumping Frog

CONFLICTS

- The dog with no hinds legs
- The stranger did not have a frog to bet on against Smiley's frog
- Which frog out-jumped the other?
- Finding the Stranger



MAIN IDEAS

- The main idea is how the frog jumps
- The celebration from Smiley after winning all of his bets
- How Smiley never cheats

THEME AND MESSAGE

Theme:

- **Cunning and Cleverness**
 - Jim Smiley is able to win because he is clever.
 - The Narrator is conned by his friend to listen to the tales
- **Competition**
 - Gambling
 - Consistent betting
- **Lies and Deceit**
 - Smiley's animals look like nothing special, but deceives others because they are more than the average animal
 - Cheating stranger
- **Contrasting Regions**
 - Educated narrator from the East
 - Uneducated characters in the mining camp
 - Different word usage
 - West love tales, East find pointless

Messages:

- Sometimes people fail because you can't always accomplish your mission, and sometimes the hard work is rewarded.
- Equality for all Americans
- Sometimes cheating does get rewarded.

POINT OF VIEW- PERSPECTIVE

➤ First Person

- Narrator present the story of Jim Smiley told in Simon Wheeler's dialect
- Twain uses to contrast between:
 - East VS West
 - Educated VS Uneducated
 - Refined VS Coarse

TONE

Disparaging and disbelieving

--The narrator's attitude toward the subject is disbelief and annoyance.

--Narrator is slightly mocking Simon Wheeler

STYLE AND DICTION

Style: Clever and Colloquial

- The narrator uses educated diction to explain the story that Wheeler told.
- Wheeler tells the tales using his uneducated diction
- Mark Twain creates fluent sentences with contrasting the East and West



Diction:

Twain uses Westerner tongue and Eastern tongue to create the word choice for the short story.

Western- “Thish-yer”, “foller”,
“dangest feller”

Eastern- “Garrulous”, “Barroom”,
“dilapidated”

AUTHOR'S PURPOSE AND INTENDED AUDIENCE

Purpose:

- Twain wrote this to entertain
- Read out loud=laughter
- Fascinating

Audience:

- Tall tale fans
- Gambling likers
- Someone wanting a good laugh
- Easterner or Westerner



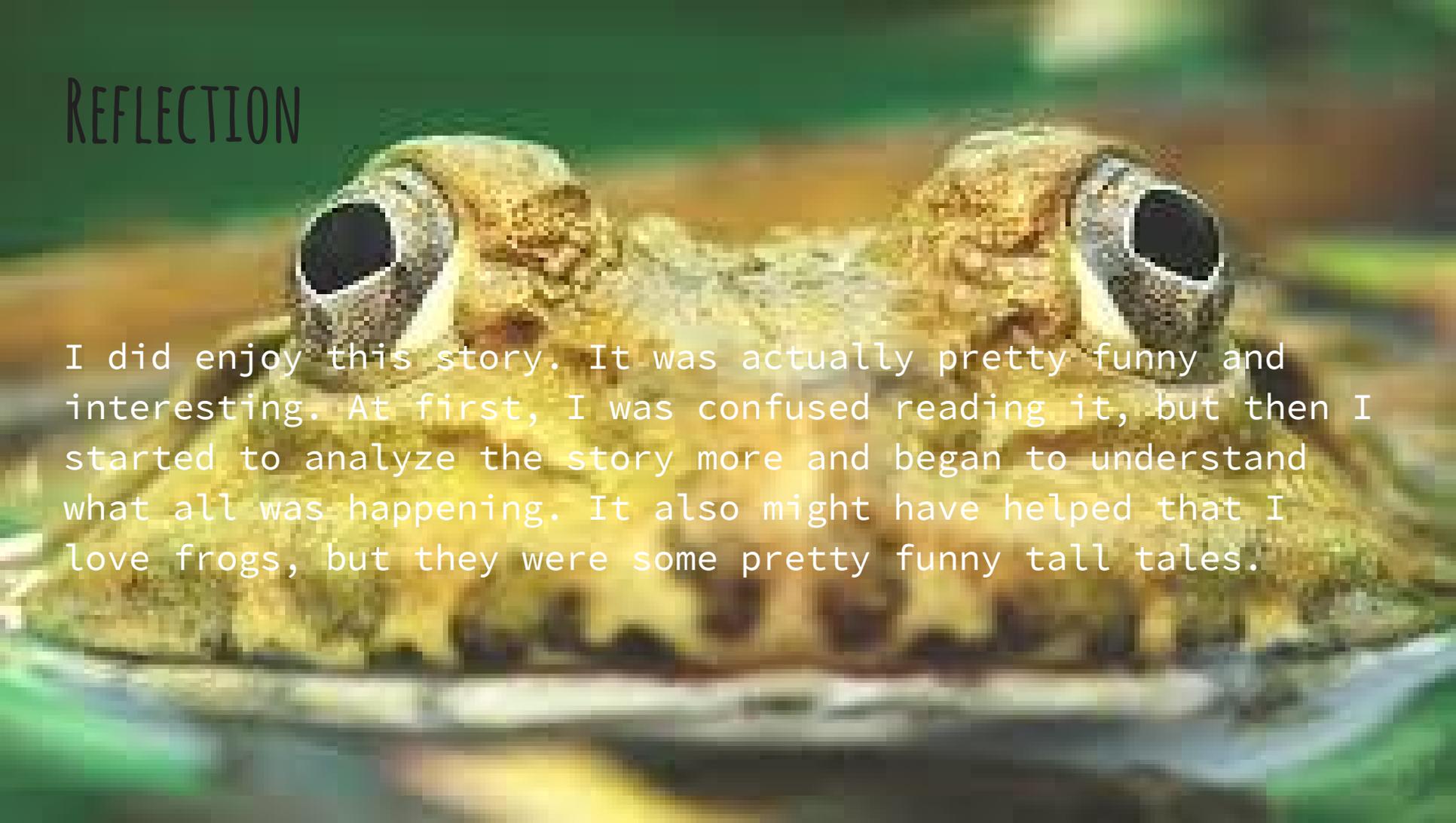
IMPORTANT VOCAB AND QUOTE

- Feller- nonstandard spelling of fellow
- Garrulous- excessively talkative, especially on trivial matters
- Tedious- too long, slow, or dull
- Finesse- an attempt to win a trick with something that is not a certain win
- Genius- exceptionally intelligent
- Education- receiving or giving instruction and acquiring general knowledge

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- "...so from from his imagining that there was anything ridiculous or funny about his story, he regarded it as a really important matter, and admired its two heroes as men of transcendent genius in *finesse*."
- "Smiley was monstrous proud of his frog..."
- "I don't see no p'intis about that frog that's any better'n any other frog."
- "And then he see how it was, and he was the maddest man--he set the frog down and took out after the feller, but he never ketched him."

REFLECTION

A close-up photograph of two small, fluffy, brown chicks sitting on a wooden surface. They have large, dark, round eyes and are looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred green and brown, suggesting an outdoor setting.

I did enjoy this story. It was actually pretty funny and interesting. At first, I was confused reading it, but then I started to analyze the story more and began to understand what all was happening. It also might have helped that I love frogs, but they were some pretty funny tall tales.

WORK REPRESENTS

Regionalism:

- Compares the West to the East through diction and word choice
- Shows contrast between personal beliefs between the Narrator and Wheeler



Naturalism:

- Smiley uses the natural abilities of each of the animals and just perfects them and uses their strengths against other animals.
- The Stranger believes all animals to be equal; none better than the other.

all different
all equal

SIMILAR WORKS

The Fall of the Athenian Empire

Goldilocks & Three Bears Sb-Apov

The Holy Barbarians

The Little Locksmith



Onward... to glory!

