The novel opens with Aunt Polly scouring the house in search of her nephew, Tom Sawyer. She finds him in the closet, discovers that his hands are covered with jam, and prepares to give him a whipping. Tom cries out theatrically, "Look behind you!" and when Aunt Polly turns, Tom escapes over the fence. After Tom is gone, Aunt Polly reflects sadly on Tom's mischievous and how she lets him get away with too much.

Tom comes home at suppertime alone, astounded by the event. He has had an adventure and is eager to tell his sister about his escapade. During supper, Aunt Polly announces that Tom will be skipped school that afternoon and that he must go to his Aunt Polly is satisfied. Tom goes out of the house into the coolness of the evening and the great trees that line the borders of the town. He walks down the street of St. Petersburg, looking about him in wonder and astonishment. Tom and the new arrival are both so different and yet so alike, both in appearance and eventually choose the newsroom at the end of the street.

When he returns home in the evening, Tom finds Aunt Polly waiting for him. She notices his dirty clothes and resolves to make him work the next day, a Saturday, as punishment.

On Saturday morning, Aunt Polly sends Tom out to whitewash the fence. Jan passes by, and Tom tries to get him to do some of the whitewashing in return for a "white alley," a kind of marble. Jan almost agrees, but Aunt Polly appears and chases him off, leaving Tom alone with his task.
The novel opens with Aunt Polly scrounging the house in search of her nephew, Tom Sawyer. She finds him in the closet, discovers that his hands are covered with jam, and prepares to give him a whipping. Tom cries out theatrically, “Look behind you!” and when Aunt Polly turns, Tom escapes over the fence. After Tom is gone, Aunt Polly reflects wistfully on Tom’s mischief and how she lets him get away with too much.

Tom comes home at suppertime to discover that his mother has about his adventure. During supper, Aunt Polly tells him that he should be stripped of his shoe and socks and put to bed. Tom is determined to avoid being punished. After the meal, Tom goes out to the tobacco field and throws his shoe away. He then goes back to the house and takes his socks off. Tom and his new acquaintance, Mark Twain, play hooky from school and run away. Tom is determined to avoid being punished.

The following day, Tom goes out for a walk in the woods. While wandering, he meets a crowd of boys who are playing a game called “whitewashing.” Tom is determined to join in and is soon chosen to whitewash a fence. Tom and the boys all meet at the house of Mr. Wilson, who is the owner of the fence. Tom is determined to avoid being punished.

When he returns home in the evening, Tom finds Aunt Polly waiting for him. She notices his dirty clothes and resolves to make him work the next day, a Saturday, as punishment.

On Saturday morning, Aunt Polly sends Tom out to whitewash the fence. Tom passes by, and Tom tries to get him to do some of the whitewashing in return for a “white alley,” a kind of naughty. Tom almost agrees, but Aunt Polly appears and chooses him off, leaving Tom alone with his chores.