To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Study Guide

Society in Literature

Ms. Culliton
Part I

Ch. 1

1. What relationship does Jem have to the narrator, Scout?

2. What happened to Jem when he was nearly thirteen?

3. How much older is Jem than the narrator?

4. What happened to the Finches as a result of the Civil War?

5. Who is the narrator’s father and what is his occupation?

6. Who is Alexandra?

7. In what town do the narrator and her family live? In what state?

8. What does John Hale Finch do?


10. Who is Calpurnia?

11. What happened to Scout’s and Jem’s mother?

12. How old are Jem and Scout the summer Dill first comes?

13. What were their “summertime boundaries”? 
14. What is Dill like?

15. How do people feel about the Radley place?
   What supposedly went on there?

Ch. 2

1. What trouble does Miss Caroline have on the first day of school?
   What is the root cause of this trouble?

2. What trouble does Scout have the first day of school?
   Why?

3. Describe what happens with Walter Cunningham.
Ch. 3

1. What does Walter do at the table, and how does Scout react?

2. Describe Burris Ewell.

4. What advice does Atticus give Scout to help her “get along with all kinds of folks”?

5. How are the Ewells different from the Cunninghams, even though both families are poorer and less educated than the Finches?

6. What does Atticus promise to keep doing for Scout?

   What must she do in return?

Ch. 4

1. Why doesn’t Scout like school?

2. What things do Jem and Scout find in the tree?

3. What sorts of games do Jem, Dill and Scout usually play?

4. What new game do they come up with?
5. What does Atticus have to say about his game?

6. What did Scout think she heard inside the Radley place?

Ch. 5

1. Do they keep on playing the Radley game?

2. Whom does Scout visit often that summer?
   Why?

3. What does Scout ask Miss Maudie?
   What does she reply?

4. What does Maudie say about the Radleys and their religion?
   How did they interpret the Bible, and what do they believe about women?
   How did they interpret the Bible?
   What do they believe about women?
   WHY do they believe this? (You’ll have to remember back to – or read—the story of the Creation in Genesis.)
5. What is in Jem’s and Dill’s note?

   Why did they write it?

   Whom is it for?

6. What does Atticus think of the note?

7. Did Atticus know that they were still playing the game?

Ch. 6

1. On Dill’s last night in Maycomb, what do he, Jem, and Scout do?

2. Why do they choose this night?

3. Do they see anything?

4. What happens to Jem?

5. What does Nathan Radley do?

   What does this action show us bout Mr. Radley?

6. What does Jem go and do later?
Ch. 7

1. What does Jem tell Scout about that night at the Radley place?

2. During this chapter, what items are found in the tree?
   
   Who probably left these there?
   
   What you think so?

3. What does Nathan Radley then do to the tree?
   
   WHY does he do this? What does it show about him?

4. How does Jem react to Nathan’s action?
   
   What does this show us about Jem versus Scout? Why does he react this way but Scout doesn’t?

Ch. 8

1. Who dies? What does Scout ask Atticus?

2. What is the weather like?

3. What do Jem and Scout make?

4. What happens to Scout during the fire?
   
   Who did this?
Why does Jem make such a fuss when Atticus suggests wrapping the blanket up and returning it?

5. How is Miss Maudie doing since the fire?

Ch. 9

1. Why does Scout fight Francis and almost fight Cecil Jacobs?

2. Why is Atticus taking Tom Robinson’s case, other than that he was asked to?

3. Why doesn’t Atticus think he can win the case?

4. What do the Finches always do on Christmas?

5. What do Scout and Jem get as presents?

6. What sort of person is Scout’s cousin Francis?

According to Francis, what is wrong with Dill?

What is wrong with Atticus?

From whom has Francis gotten these ideas?
Atticus and Alexandra were raised in the same household, by the same parents, not too many years apart. Why do you suppose Atticus does not share her prejudices?

What does Scout do to Francis because of the way he insults her loved ones?

7. What is Atticus worried about concerning his children, especially Scout?

Ch. 10

1. How old is Atticus?

2. In what other ways is he different from other fathers?

3. To whom is Scout going to confine her fighting?

4. What does Atticus tell Jem and Scout about rifles?

   What does Miss Maudie say about this?

5. Who is Heck Tate?

6. Why do Jem and Scout gain a new respect for their father now?

Ch. 11

1. Where does Mrs. Dubose live?
2. Why do Jem and Scout go past her house?

3. What does Mrs. Dubose say about Atticus? What does Jem do to get back at her?

4. What is Jem’s punishment for this?

5. Explain what happens to Mrs. Dubose.

6. How did Atticus feel about her? Why?

7. Why, according to Atticus, would he have sent Jem over there anyway, even if he hadn’t been being punished?

8. Do you agree with Atticus about Mrs. Dubose? Would you hold her up as a role model to your children? Explain.

Part II

Ch. 12

1. How old is Jem and what is he like now?

2. Why doesn’t Dill come as usual?
3. Where is Atticus right now?

4. Describe Cal’s church. How is it different from the one the Finches usually attend?

5. What happens with Lula, and what does this episode show us about prejudice?

6. What does Scout notice is different about Cal when they are at church?

   What does Cal say about this?

Ch. 13

1. Why has Alexandra come?

2. What does Alexandra say about other families?

3. According to her, what constitutes a “fine family”?

   What is wrong with this theory?

4. What information does Scout give us about Maycomb?

5. What does Alexandra want Atticus to explain to the children?

   What does Atticus think about this?
Ch. 14

1. Does Scout understand what rape is?

2. What trouble does Alexandra cause now?

3. What does Jem tell Scout that causes a fight?

   What does Atticus tell her regarding this issue?

4. What does Scout find under the bed?

5. Why are Dill and Scout mad at Jem now?

6. Why did Dill run away?

7. What does Dill suggest he and Scout do?

   What does this show about Dill? What problems is he having? Why? How would a baby help?

8. What do Dill and Scout say at this point about Boo Radley?

Ch. 15

1. What is decided about Dill?

2. Who are the men in the yard and why are they there?
What don’t the men really understand about Atticus?

3. What is going to happen to Tom Robinson?

4. What does Atticus say about the KKK?

Who was Sam Levy, and what happened concerning him?

WHY did it happen (Sam Levy was not black—consider his name)?

5. What are Atticus and Alexandra fighting about now?

6. Where does Atticus go?

   Why?

7. Who are the men who come to the jail and why are THEY there?

   What is the difference between this group and the one earlier in the yard?

8. At first, what does Scout not realize about these men?

9. How does Scout drive the entire group away eventually? Explain what she does to them, psychologically, especially as concerns the Cunninghams.

11. Do you think the whole jail scene is realistic? Could events have unfolded this way in real life? (There is no “right” answer,” but explain why you think as you do.)

Ch. 16

1. What does Scout do at home after the whole jail incident is over? What does she realize?

2. What does Atticus tell everyone about Mr. Underwood?

3. What does Alexandra say about this?

4. What does Atticus say about Mr. Cunningham?

5. What did the children do to Mr. Cunningham, according to Atticus?

6. Who is Dolphus Raymond?

7. What does Scout find confusing about people’s attitudes on Atticus’ defending Tom Robinson? What does she not understand about what most whites want Atticus to do?
8. Where do blacks sit in the courtroom?

9. Explain what Judge Taylor is like.

Ch. 17

1. Describe what Heck Tate says in his testimony.

2. Where and HOW do the Ewells live?

3. Where do the blacks live?

4. Describe Robert E. Lee Ewell’s attitude and testimony.

Ch. 18

1. Describe Mayella Ewell’s life.

Why did she think Atticus was mocking or making fun of her?

2. How does Mayella act on the witness stand?
3. What indication does Mayella give that she is lying?

Ch. 19

1. Describe Tom Robinson’s life.

2. According to Tom, what really happened the day of the alleged rape?

   Why did he run even though he wasn’t guilty?

3. What does Link Deas do during the trial?

4. What does Gilmer keep calling Tom as he is questioning him?

   What does this signify?

5. Why did Tom make a fatal mistake in saying that he felt sorry for Mayella?

6. Does Tom actually call Mayella a liar?

   Explain why.
7. Why does Dill cry? Why is he able to empathize so well with Tom’s situation? (Think about the things others have said about him.)

What does Dolphus Raymond tell Dill?

Ch. 20.
1. What do we find out here about Dolphus Raymond?

2. What does Dolphus say will happen to Dill in a few years?

3. What does Dolphus say about Atticus?

4. What does Jem predict about the trial’s outcome?

5. In his summation, what does Atticus tell the jury?

What does Atticus suggest Bob Ewell may have done?

Ch. 21
1. What does Rev. Sykes say about the verdict?
2. As the verdict is handed down, how does Jem react?

3. What do the blacks do as Atticus leaves the courtroom?

Ch. 22
1. What does Jem ask his father?

2. What does Atticus reply?

3. What do the blacks do for Atticus?

   How does he react?

4. What does Miss Maudie say about Atticus?

5. What does Bob Ewell intend to do?

Ch. 23
1. What does Ewell do?

2. What does Atticus tell Jem about Ewell?

   What does Alexandra say about him?
3. What does Atticus say about the jury; why weren’t they “reasonable men”?

4. Atticus remarks that the bigotry and injustice is “all adding up, and one of these days we’re going to have to pay the bill for it. I hope it’s not in you children’s time.” Explain what eventually did happen in future years concerning these issues. (Consider the African American Civil Rights Movement, Freedom Summer, Brown v. Board, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, as well as more current events.)

5. How does Atticus know the jury had at least a slight doubt about Tom’s guilt?

6. Who on the jury wanted to acquit Tom? Why?

7. What does Alexandra say about Walter?

8. What does Jem show Scout to cheer her up?

9. What are Jem’s opinions on different types of folks?

   What does Scout think?

10. What does Jem say about Boo?

    What has brought him to this conclusion?
Ch. 24

1. How do the ladies treat Scout?

2. What does Mrs. Farrow say?

   What does Mrs. Merriweather say about Atticus without actually mentioning his name?

3. What does Miss Maudie reply?

   What does she mean by this?

4. What does Scout say to the reader about men (part of her thought is supplied at the end by a word that someone else speaks)?

5. What difference does Mrs. Merriweather point out between the North and the South?

6. Explain what has happened to Tom Robinson.

Ch. 25

1. What are the townspeople now saying about Tom Robinson?

2. Explain what Mr. Underwood says in his editorial. To what does he compare Tom’s fate?
3. What is meant by the comment that “Tom Robinson was a dead man the minute Mayella Ewell opened her mouth and screamed”?

4. When Bob Ewell says “one man down and about two more to go,” to what three people is he referring?

Ch. 26

1. How have Scout’s feelings about Boo Radley changed?

2. What does Atticus let Scout know?

3. Why does Scout come to the conclusion that “people are just peculiar”?

4. Explain what happens with Cecil Jacobs’ current event, and what this incident shows about people’s prejudices.

Ch. 27

1. What happens to Bob Ewell in the WPA?

2. What happens to Judge Taylor?

3. What happens to Helen Robinson, and who protects her?
4. What is different about Halloween in Maycomb this year?

5. What is Scout playing in the pageant?

6. What **foreshadowing** is seen at the end of the chapter?

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Ch. 28

1. What does Cecil Jacobs do?

2. How does Scout perform?

3. Explain what happens to Jem and Scout as they are walking home.

4. What happens to Bob Ewell?

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Ch. 29

1. How did the costume save Scout’s life?

2. What does Heck Tate say about Bob Ewell?

3. How does Scout come to realize that the “country person” standing against the wall is really Boo Radley?
1. Why does Scout run to Jem’s bed?

2. What does Dr. Reynolds say to Boo?

3. Why don’t they all sit in the living room?

4. How does Scout feel as they walk to the porch?

5. Who does Atticus think killed Ewell?

6. When Heck says Jem didn’t kill Ewell, what does Atticus think Heck’s reason for saying this is?

7. What is Heck insisting happened?

   What does he say about Scout?

8. What does Heck mean when he says he’s “not thinking about Jem”? Of whom is he thinking? Who did stab Ewell? Why doesn’t Heck want anyone to know this?

9. What does Scout say about Heck’s not wanting anyone to know who killed Ewell – what would it be like if they told everyone?
Which two people can be seen as being like the mockingbird of the title? Why?

Ch. 31

1. What physical problem does Boo have?

2. What is the only thing Boo says?

   What is the significance of this line, do you think (why did the author have him say this instead of something else)?

3. About what does Scout feel sorry?

4. Through whose eyes is Scout seeing things here?

5. How does Scout feel as she walks home?

6. What is the significance of Atticus’ last words in the novel?

7. Does this novel have a “happy ending?” Explain why you think as you do.