



To Kill a Mockingbird



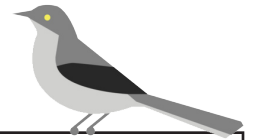
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To Kill a Mockingbird



Study Questions

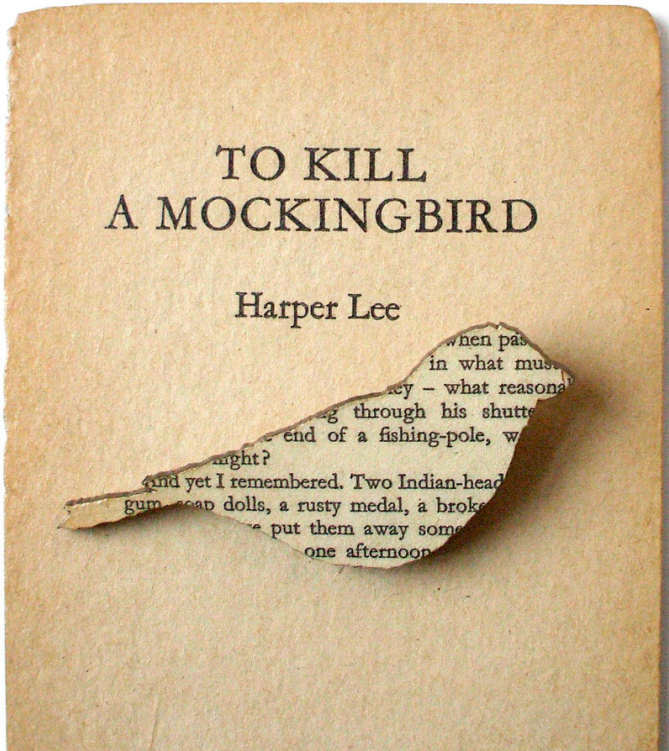
Record your answers on a separate sheet of paper. You must answer in complete sentences.

Chapter 1

1. Our narrator is Scout, a girl who will grow from age 6 to almost 9 during the story. What do you suppose we, as the readers, should be aware of as we listen to Scout tell her story? Is a child a reliable or unreliable narrator? Defend your answer.
2. Jem and Scout call their father by his first name, Atticus, instead of calling him "Dad" or "Daddy." What does this tell you about their relationship?
3. We know that the setting of this story will be Maycomb, Alabama, a sleepy Southern town that's a little rough around the edges. What is the time period of this story? Give evidence to support your conclusion about the time period of this novel.
4. Dill, the children's neighbor during the summer, is described as "a pocket Merlin, whose head teemed with eccentric plans, strange longings, and quaint fancies." What does this mean?
5. Who are the Radleys? Describe their house and yard.
6. Who were the Cunningham boys and what happened to them? What's the irony here?
7. According to Jem, how do you get a turtle to come out of its shell? In what way might this idea be an apt parallel to get people to do what they don't want to do? Give an real-world example to support your answer.
8. Find a simile from this chapter and write down the sentence in which it appears. Yes, I want you to write down the full sentence.

Chapter 2

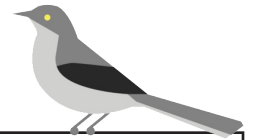
1. Why does Scout's ability to read and write annoy her teacher, Miss Caroline?
2. Atticus says that country people, like the Cunninghams, were hit the hardest by "the crash." To what is he referring? Why would country people be the ones to suffer the most?
3. Why are professional people also suffering?
4. Why does Jem not want Scout to acknowledge him at school? Is his behavior typical of an older brother?
5. An entailment is an unusual legality that prohibits a piece of land from being sold. It was designed to protect a family's interest in a piece of land because it could only be passed down to a member of the same family, never sold for profit. Jem describes an entailment as "a condition of having your tail in a crack," and Atticus later says that Jem's description is surprisingly accurate. How is this an apt description for the Cunningham family?
6. What do you think of Miss Caroline Fisher as a teacher?



TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

Harper Lee

To Kill a Mockingbird



Chapter 3

1. Why does Walter Cunningham drench his lunch in molasses/syrup?
2. When Scout criticizes Walter Cunningham's eating habits, Calpurnia scolds Scout, smacks her on the bottom as she sends the girl out of the room, and then lectures her on proper manners, saying, "Yo' folks might be better'n the Cunninghams but it don't count for nothin' the way you're disgracin' 'em." What does Calpurnia mean here? Is she right?
3. In the tiff between Scout and Calpurnia, Atticus takes Calpurnia's side. What does this show us?
4. Describe the way that Atticus treats Walter. What do you think of this?
5. Atticus tells Scout that you never really understand a person "until you climb into his skin and walk around in it." What does this mean? Give an example from your world to illustrate this idea.
6. What is the "compromise" which Atticus suggests at the end of the chapter?
7. Who are the Ewells? How are they the same as the Cunninghams? How are they different?
8. Why do Maycomb officials bend the rules for the Ewells? Is this the right thing to do?

Chapter 4

1. What does Scout think of her school's new style of education? What does this failing show us about adults?



2. What's the first thing Scout finds in the knothole of the tree on the edge of the Radley property? What's the second thing she finds? How many of each item was there? Significance of this? Who, do you suppose, put the items in the tree hole?
3. Scout has two reasons for wanting to quit Jem and Dill's Radley game. What are they?

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Chapter 5

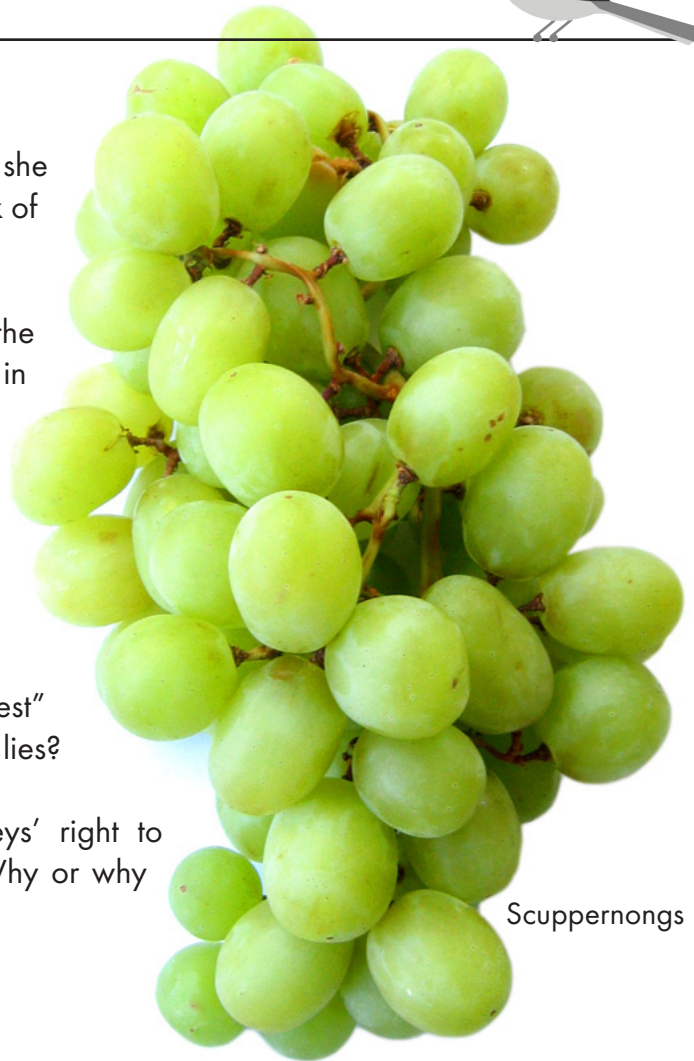
1. Describe Miss Maudie Atkinson. How typical is she of Maycomb's women? What do the children think of her?

2. Miss Maudie says, "...sometimes the Bible in the hands of one man is worse than a whiskey bottle in the hand of—oh, of your father." Explain what she means.

3. What does Miss Maudie tell Scout about Boo? How does this compare with what Scout already believes?

4. Scout says that "Dill Harris could tell the biggest" lies she ever heard. Why might Dill have told such lies?

5. Paraphrase Atticus' speech about the Radleys' right to privacy. Do you agree with his point of view? Why or why not?



Scuppernongs

Chapter 6

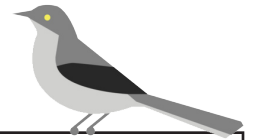
1. List the four reasons Jem and Dill give for deciding to peek into the Radley window on this particular night.

2. Find and write down the line from early in the chapter that foreshadows the trouble Jem will have when he tries to flee the Radley's backyard.

3. Jem wants to return to the Radley yard and fetch his pants so he can stay out of trouble with Atticus. Scout wants Jem to leave the pants where they are and face the consequences with Atticus. With which child do you agree? Why?



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Chapter 7

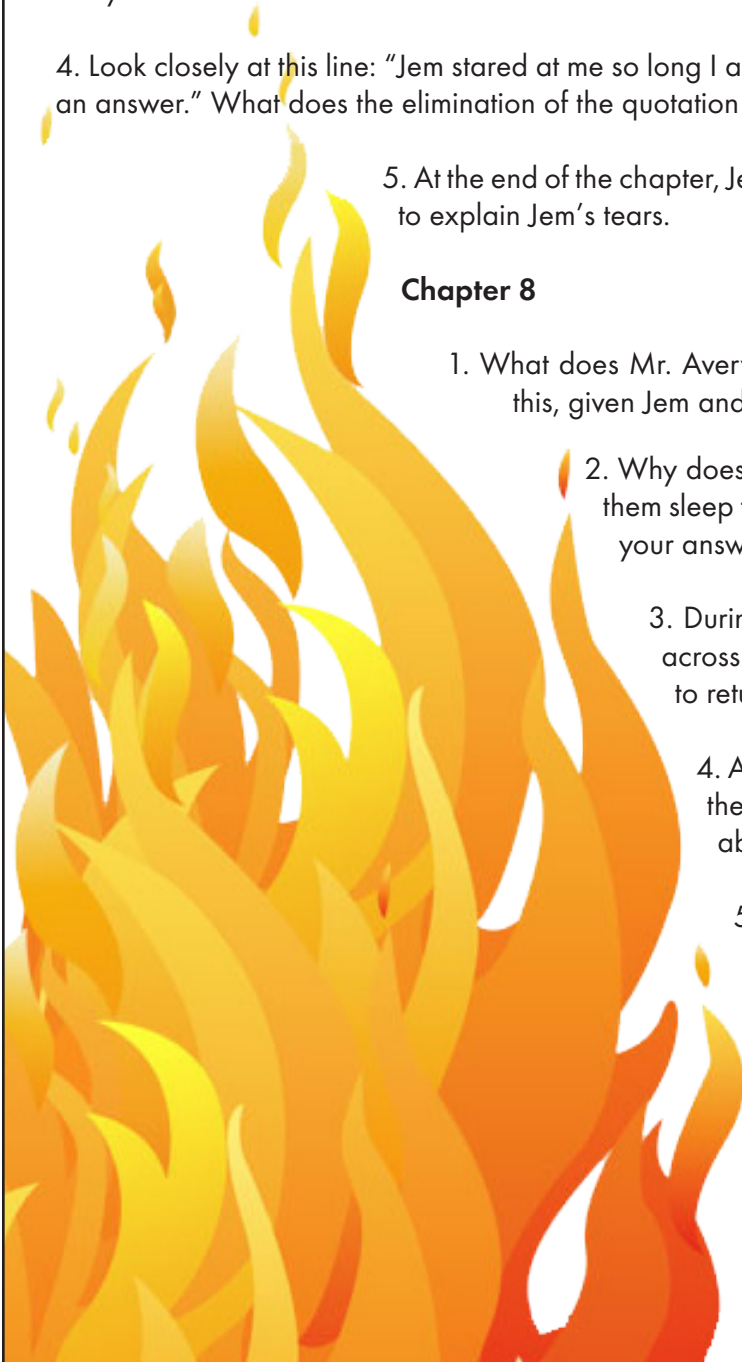
1. According to Scout, what's the only good thing about second grade?
2. What spooked Jem on the night of the Radley house incident? Who, do you suppose, did this?
3. After they find the soap dolls, what does Jem realize that Scout does not yet understand?



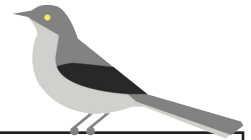
4. Look closely at this line: "Jem stared at me so long I asked what was the matter, but got Nothing, Scout for an answer." What does the elimination of the quotation punctuation do for this passage?
5. At the end of the chapter, Jem quietly cries alone on the porch. Give two reasons to explain Jem's tears.

Chapter 8

1. What does Mr. Avery say that bad children cause? What's ironic about this, given Jem and Scout's reaction to the snow?
2. Why does Atticus awaken Jem and Scout instead of just letting them sleep through the fire incident? Give a line of text to support your answer.
3. During the fire, Boo Radley has quietly placed a blanket across Scout's shoulders. Why doesn't Jem want his father to return the blanket to the Radley family?
4. After the fire is over, how does Miss Maudie feel about the destruction of her house? What does this tell you about her character, her values?
5. Write down the line of text from this chapter that shows Jem believes that he and Scout are no better than anyone else in their town.
6. Once you've finished the chapter, go back and look at the portion that describes Jem and Scout's snowman, which is covered with white snow on the outside, but has a core of dark mud. Symbolically connect the snowman to either Mr. Avery (go beyond the "Morphodite's" physical similarity to Mr. Avery) or Boo Radley. How could the snowman be seen as a symbol for one of these men?



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Chapter 9

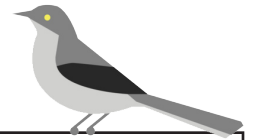
1. When Atticus speaks of defending Tom Robinson, he says, "Simply because we were licked a hundred years before we started is no reason for us not to try to win." To what is Atticus referring? Why would it be worthwhile to fight a battle that you know you're going to lose?
2. Think about Scout's fight with Francis and Atticus' message to Uncle Jack about children being able to "spot an evasion quicker than adults." How do these two elements connect to the value of having Scout, a child, be the narrator of this story?
3. Atticus is worried about "ugly things" that the family will face in the next few months. Although we haven't read this part of the story yet, what sorts of things do you suppose have Atticus worried?
4. Thinking back to earlier chapters, what do we know about the Ewells? From this chapter, what do we know about Tom Robinson? Given this, why would the townsfolk be more likely to accept Mr. Ewell's testimony than Mr. Robinson's?
5. According to Atticus, what is Maycomb's "usual disease?" Why is he worried that his children will catch it?
6. Read the final sentence of this chapter. Explain in your own words what it means. In what way is his conversation with his brother also a message for his daughter?



Chapter 10

1. Record the line of text that includes the reference to the title. Explain its meaning in the scene *and* take a guess as to the idea's larger meaning. I know you haven't finished the book yet, but I still want you to guess about how this line connects to the message of the novel.
2. At the beginning of the chapter, Scout is critical of Atticus because he seems old and doesn't do anything that she deems impressive. By the end of the chapter, her opinion has changed. Why?
3. Why isn't Atticus proud of his shooting ability?
4. What is Miss Stephanie Crawford's reaction to the death of Tim Johnson?

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Chapter 11

1. When Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose pushes Jem too far, he loses his mind a bit, destroying her flowers and breaking Scout's baton. What other rough thing does he do in that moment? What message can we take from this part of the incident?
2. What was Jem's punishment? Did it fit his crime?
3. Atticus is not upset that Mrs. Dubose calls him foul names behind his back. To Scout, he explains, "...it's never an insult to be called what somebody thinks is a bad name. It just shows you how poor that person is, it doesn't hurt you." Explain his meaning. Do you agree or disagree with him? Why? Finally, give a real-world example from your life to illustrate your point.



4. Why does Mrs. Dubose keep the children a few minutes longer each day?
5. In what ways was Mrs. Dubose heroic?
6. Other than living on the same street, what do Boo Radley, Atticus, and Mrs. Dubose all have in common? What larger message is supported by examination of these three characters?
7. Look back over this chapter and record two similes. Yes, I want you to write down the full sentence in which each simile appears.
8. Look back over this chapter and record what you think is the best line. Be prepared to defend your answer in class tomorrow.

Chapter 12

1. Why do Jem and Scout go to church with Calpurnia? Where is Atticus?
2. Why is the church named First Purchase?
3. Does Lula speak for the majority opinion in the congregation? Why does the author include her in the church scene?
4. What is the crime that's been charged against Tom Robinson?
5. Why can't Helen Robinson work and support her three children?
6. During the church service, we find out that Calpurnia is one of the few African-American residents of Maycomb who can read. The children get to know Cal better during this Sunday and realize lots of things about her that they didn't know, including that she's older than they realized. Look closely at this passage:

"But, Cal," Jem protested, "you don't look even near as old as Atticus."

"Colored folks don't show their ages so fast," she said.

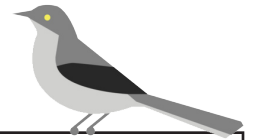
"Maybe because they can't read..."

What's humorous or interesting about this short passage?

7. What nasty surprise awaits the children at the very end of the chapter?



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Chapter 13

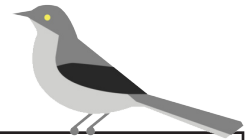
1. Scout and Aunt Alexandra communicate very poorly with each other. Is the fault more with one than the other, or are they equally at fault? Explain your answer.
2. What's the reason the children are given as to why Aunt Alexandra has come to stay with them? What do you think is the real reason?
3. Atticus says to Scout, "Your aunt's doing me a favor as well as you all. I can't stay here all day with you, and the summer's going to be a hot one." There's a double-meaning to this line. Explain.
4. Aunt Alexandra is critical of many of Maycomb's families. According to Jem, what's ironic about this?
5. What did Cousin Joshua do and how does he become a wedge between Aunt Alexandra and Atticus?
6. Look at the last short paragraph of the chapter. What was Atticus trying to do? Why is this sort of thing, according to Scout, better left to a woman?

Chapter 14

1. How does Aunt Alexandra feel about Calpurnia? Explain why this is "in character" for Aunt Alexandra?
2. Comment on Atticus' explanation of rape. Why does Atticus explain the crime in this way?
3. What does Jem do that, to Scout, symbolizes the end of his childhood?
4. Dill tries to explain to Scout why he did not want to stay with his mother and new stepfather. State his reasons briefly in your own words.
5. Twice now, Scout has considered running away. Dill did, in fact, run away from home. Why, according to Dill, hasn't Boo Radley ever run away from his terrible home?



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Chapter 15

1. What was the “sickening comic aspect” of Atticus’ exchange with the small mob of men? What does this show us about the men in the small mob? About Atticus?
2. Why does Jem openly defy Atticus and refuse to leave?
3. What does Scout’s childish attempt at conversation accomplish? Explain.
4. Why was Atticus so affectionate toward Jem, even after Jem disobeyed him?

Chapter 16

1. What does Scout learn about mob mentality?
2. Mr. Dolphus Raymond is evidently a complicated and interesting person. Describe his way of life and comment on its effect upon the town.

3. Why did Mr. Dolphus Raymond’s fiancée die? What does this show the reader about life in Maycomb?

4. Jem says that “mixed” children are sad because they don’t belong anywhere. What does he mean? Is having a sense of belonging important in life? Explain your thoughts.

5. Judge Taylor’s appearance and his ability are two different things. What comment

might the author be making in building the judge in this way?

6. Symbolically, what does the physical structure of the courthouse show us about the people of Maycomb?

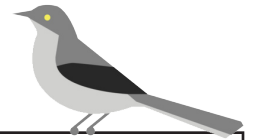
7. Why didn’t Atticus tell his children that he had to defend Tom Robinson, that he was appointed by the court and didn’t really have a choice about taking the case?

8. Why do the four men give up their seats for Jem, Scout, Dill, and Reverend Sykes? What does this show us?

9. As the examination begins, Atticus’ table is bare. What does this show us?



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Chapter 17

1. Scout says that Atticus has an “infinite capacity for calming turbulent seas.” What does she mean by this? Is this true?
2. In history, who was Robert E. Lee? Feel free to look up this info. and write down what you discover. What’s interesting about this man being Mr. Ewell’s namesake?
3. Looking at the Ewell property, what item stands out as not belonging with all of the other broken junk? What might this symbolize?
4. Reverend Sykes has second thoughts about allowing the children to stay and listen to the graphic testimony, but ultimately relents to Jem and allows them to stay. Why doesn’t Rev. Sykes force them to leave?
5. Judge Taylor refuses to close the courtroom and says, “People generally see what they look for, and hear what they listen for, and they have the right to subject their children to it...” What does he mean?
6. Why didn’t Mr. Ewell have a doctor check out his daughter? What does this show us about the man?
7. What’s compelling about the fact that Mr. Ewell is left-handed?
8. Look at the last line of the chapter. What is the old saying that Scout refers to here? How is this an appropriate idiom for this point in the trial?

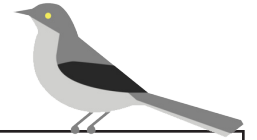
Chapter 18

1. What does Atticus do that makes Mayella Ewell think that he’s making fun of her? What does this show us about Mayella’s life?
2. What is so important about Tom Robinson’s physical appearance? What, according to the testimony, does this prove beyond a doubt?
3. Is Mayella like her father or different from him?
In what ways?
4. What does Scout notice about Mayella as she leaves the witness stand and passes Atticus’ defense table?



Red
Geraniums

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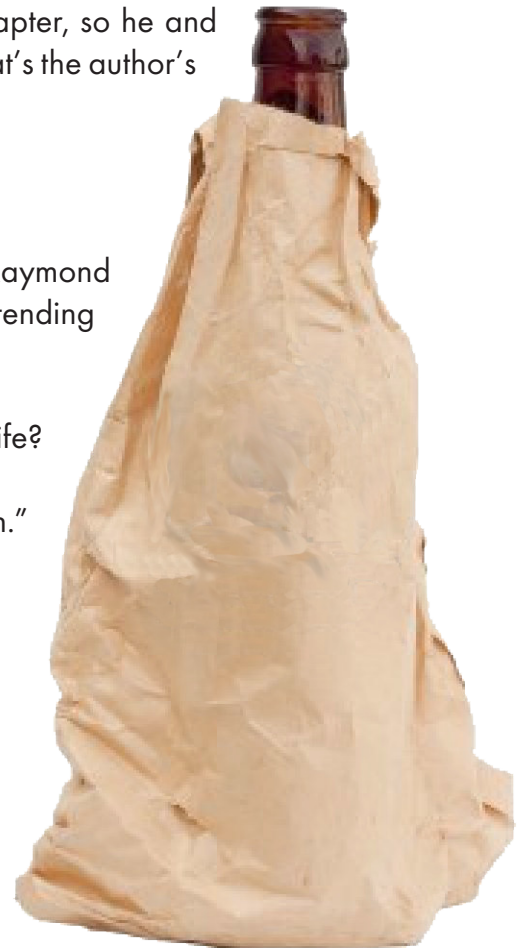


Chapter 19

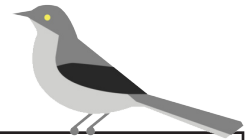
1. Why does Atticus mention Tom's previous record of conviction?
2. Explain Tom's version of the events on the evening of Nov. 21.
3. In that moment with Mayella, Tom is in a no-win situation. Explain the "subtlety of Tom's predicament."
4. How is Mr. Link Deas heroic?
5. Why was it a "mistake" for Tom to say that he felt sorry for Mayella?
6. Miss Maudie once said that Atticus Finch is "the same in the courtroom as he is on the public streets." What makes this such an awesome compliment?
7. Dill becomes physically sensitive at the end of the chapter, so he and Scout leave to get some fresh air. Is Dill too sensitive? What's the author's message in having Dill become ill?

Chapter 20

1. At the beginning of the chapter, we find out that Mr. Raymond sips only Coca-Cola from a paper sack, deliberately pretending to be drunk. Why does he do this?
2. Why does Mr. Raymond tell Scout and Dill about his life?
3. Scout says that Mr. Dolphus Raymond was "an evil man." Is she right? Explain your answer.
4. Why, according to Atticus, did Mayella throw her false accusation at Tom?
5. According to Atticus, what is the only institution that can serve as an equalizer of men? Do you agree with this idea?



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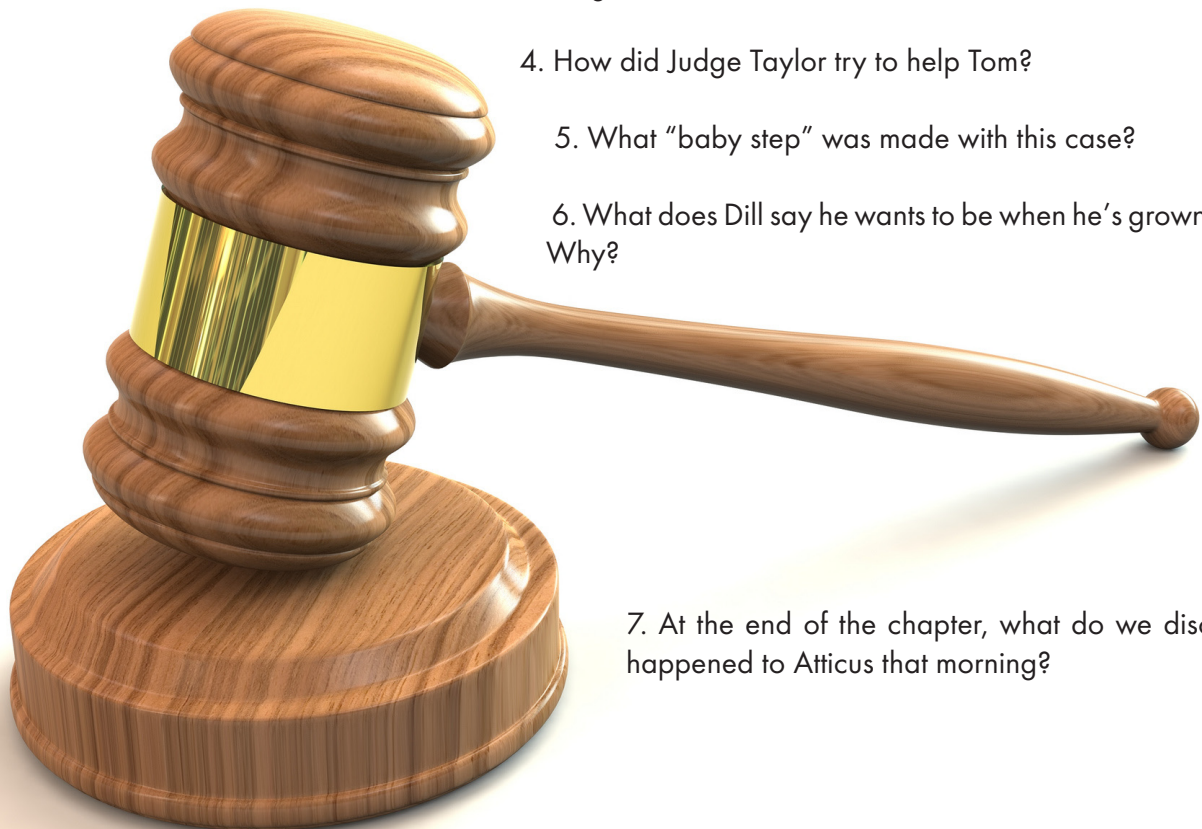


Chapter 21

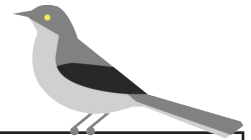
1. Jem is confident that Atticus has won the case, but Atticus is not as certain. Write the line of text that shows Atticus knows he'll lose, but that he's not ready to take away Jem's hope.
2. Why is a long-deliberating jury a good sign?
3. How does Scout "know" the verdict before she hears it?
4. Why do the people in the balcony gallery stand when Atticus leaves the courtroom?

Chapter 22

1. Aunt Alexandra tries to scold Atticus for allowing the children to attend the trial, but Atticus says, "This is their home, sister...We've made it this way for them, they might as well learn to cope with it." Explain Atticus' message.
2. Atticus lost the case, yet the black community has reacted with generosity, filling his kitchen with food. Why did people drop off so much food?
3. What's interesting about Miss Maudie's cake?
4. How did Judge Taylor try to help Tom?
5. What "baby step" was made with this case?
6. What does Dill say he wants to be when he's grown? Why?
7. At the end of the chapter, what do we discover happened to Atticus that morning?



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Chapter 23

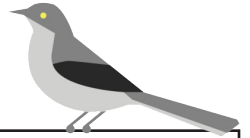
1. How does Atticus react to Bob Ewell's threat against him?
2. What is "circumstantial evidence" and what does it have to do with Tom's case?
3. In thinking about the injustices faced by Tom and other members of the African-American community, Atticus says, "Don't fool yourselves - it's all adding up and one of these days we're going to pay the bill for it. I hope it's not in you children's time." What is his concern/prediction about the future?
4. Aunt Alexandra accepts that the Cunninghams may be good people, but she still thinks "they're not our kind of folks." Later, she calls them "trash." This book was first published in 1960 and set in the 1930s, yet these class distinctions are still with us today. Why do you think, as Scout says so clearly toward the end of the chapter, folks just don't get along with each other? Why do we allow this separation of race and class to still exist?
5. At the end of this chapter, Jem forms a new theory about why Boo Radley rarely leaves his house. What is this? How likely is it to be true?

Chapter 24

1. Do you think the missionary ladies are sincere in worrying about the "Mrunas," a tribe in Africa? Give reasons for your answer. Be sure to include any ironic elements you notice in this part of the chapter.
2. Scout feels she prefers men to women. Why? Do you agree with her reasons?
3. Compare the reactions of Miss Maudie and the other ladies when Scout says she is wearing her "britches" under her dress.
4. Explain briefly how Tom was killed. What is Atticus' explanation for Tom's attempted escape? Do you agree with Atticus?
5. Miss Maudie says, "We're paying the highest tribute we can pay a man." What does she mean?
6. Toward the end of this chapter, we see Aunt Alexandra in a new light. How so? Explain how Miss Maudie becomes a sudden supporter of Alexandra.



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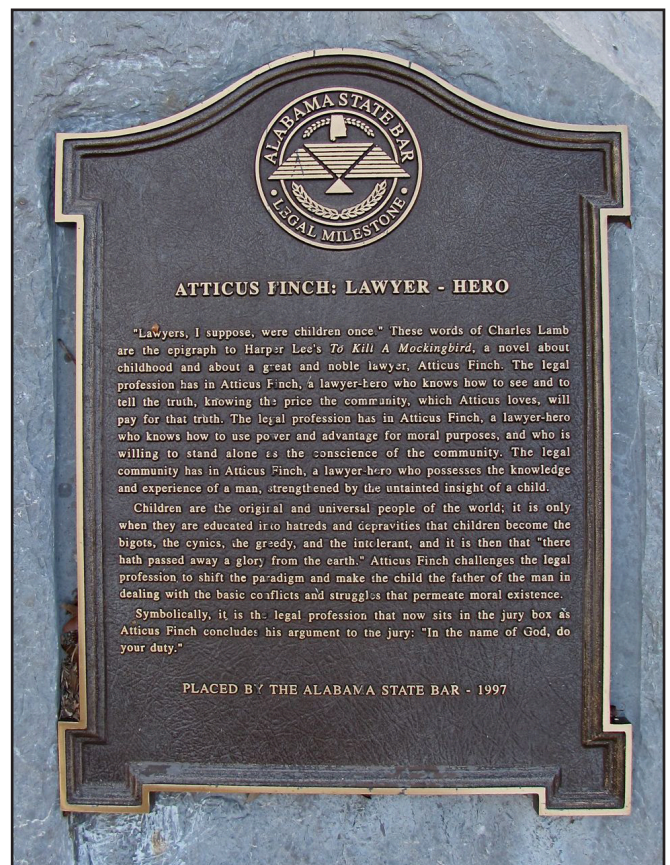


Chapter 25

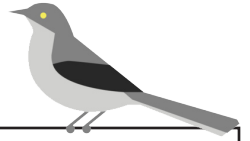
1. Explain how Scout's treatment of the roly-poly bug mirrors the way the town of Maycomb treated Tom Robinson.
2. Everyone in town talks about Tom's death, most saying it's "typical." What do they mean?
3. Write the line from the end of the chapter in which Mr. Underwood's editorial in the Maycomb Tribune echoes Atticus' earlier advice to Jem and Scout when they were given their guns. Then, explain how this connects to the title of the novel. Who is the mockingbird?
4. At the end of the book, the children find out that Mr. Ewell was thrilled to hear about the death of Tom and reportedly "said it made one down and about two more to go." Who, do you suppose, are the "two more" that Mr. Ewell is targeting? Do you believe his threat?

Chapter 26

1. Apparently, Atticus has known all along about the night Jem lost his pants on the Radleys' fence, but he never felt the need to say anything about it. What physical evidence led Atticus to make his realization?
2. Despite the drama of the summer, Atticus wins an unopposed re-election to the state legislature in the fall. Give two possible meanings that could be taken from this.
3. In her lesson on Hitler, Miss Gates says that Americans "don't believe in persecuting anybody." What's ironic about her statement?
4. Why does Scout's question upset Jem?



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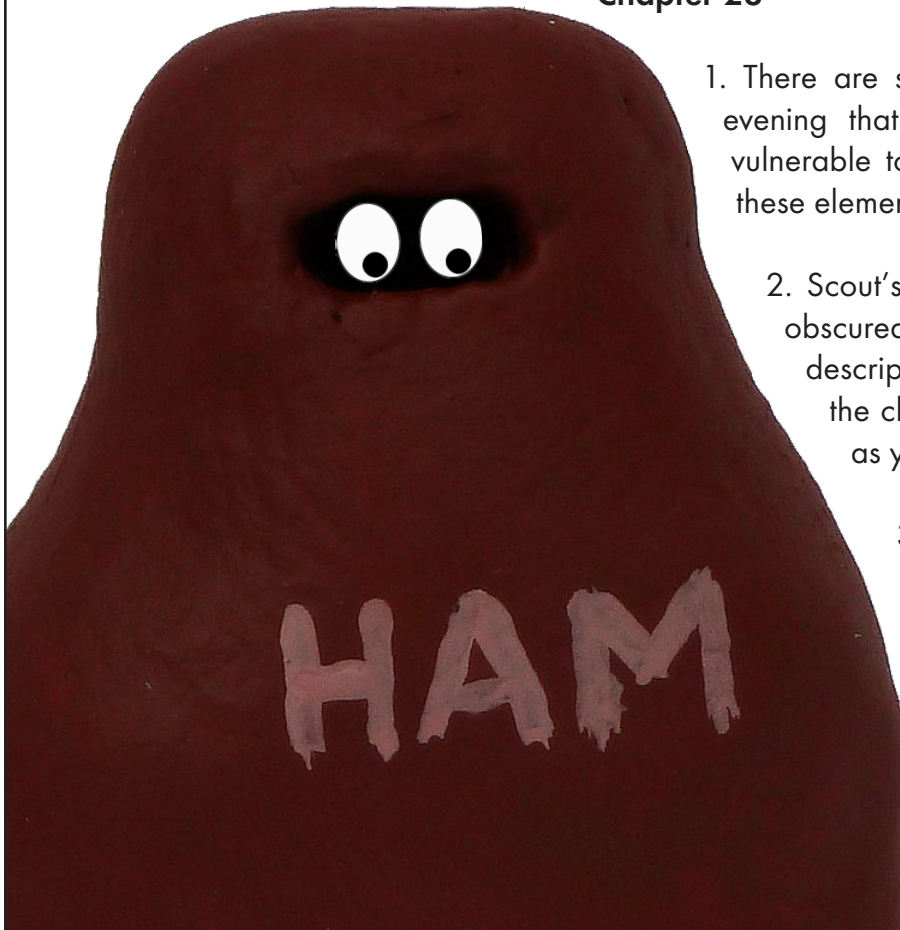


Chapter 27

1. What were the three notable things that happened in Maycomb by the middle of October? How does the circumstance of each show the reader something about Bob Ewell's character?
2. What part of the Mruna family structure do the Maycomb ladies find particularly offensive? What do you think of this system?
3. Why do Atticus and Aunt Alexandra not intend to go to the Halloween pageant?
4. The last line of the chapter gives a sense of foreboding to the reader because, clearly, something dark and nefarious is going to happen this evening. Look back over the chapter and write down another line of text or paraphrase a plot element that contributes to this foreshadowing of something bad to come.

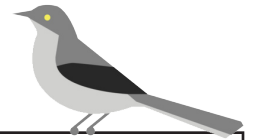


Chapter 28



1. There are several unfortunate elements to the evening that leave Jem and Scout especially vulnerable to Mr. Ewell's attack. Name four of these elements.
2. Scout's view of the events in the field are obscured by her ham costume. Using her descriptions and information from the end of the chapter, retell the events of the attack as you understand them.
3. What's significant about the clothing that Aunt Alexandra hands to Scout when she arrives home?
4. We don't know yet who the stranger is that carried Jem home, but you might have a good idea. Take a guess.

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Chapter 29

1. What does Atticus think was wrong with Mr. Ewell? What does Heck Tate think was wrong with Mr. Ewell? With whom do you agree and why?
2. What causes the "shiny clean line" on the otherwise "dull wire" of Scout's costume?
3. Briefly describe the meeting between Scout and Boo.

Chapter 30

1. When Atticus first thinks that Jem was the one who killed Bob Ewell, what is Atticus ready to do? What does this show the reader about Atticus?
2. Atticus and Heck Tate have a heated argument, as Atticus assumes Heck is ready to cover up Bob Ewell's killing as a move to protect Jem. Who is Heck really trying to protect? Why does Heck fight so hard to protect this person?
3. Heck Tate has tampered with evidence to make it appear that Ewell was killed by falling on his own knife. What piece of evidence did Heck remove from the scene of the crime?
4. Did Heck Tate do the right thing? Explain your answer.
5. Scout, who was confused about the actual cause of Mr. Ewell's death, agrees with Heck Tate's decision and utters an elegant line in support of him. Write that line.

Chapter 31

1. After she takes Boo home, Scout understands many new things because she is able to see the street from his point of view. Explain some of the things she now understands about Boo's perspective.
2. In what way is Scout's neighborhood/street similar to the Mruna tribe in Africa?
3. Reread the first line from chapter 1. How do the events in the final chapters connect to this line? Do you find this storytelling technique effective? Why or why not?
4. At the end of the novel, Atticus reads to Scout as she drifts off to sleep. How does the topic of the story connect to one of this novel's major themes?

