**To Kill a Mockingbird Study Questions**

**Answer each question on your own paper.**

**Chapter 1**

1. Chapter 1 introduces readers to the town of Maycomb, Alabama, its appearance, its inhabitants, and the

particular attitudes of many of its people. Find a sentence or paragraph which illustrates each of the following

attitudes/ideas. Quote at least a portion of the sentence or paragraph and give the page number.

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|  | -pride in ancestry and tradition |
|  | -pride in conformity and distrust of those who are different |
|  | -awareness of the difference in social classes |
|  | 2. Summarize the information given in this chapter about Atticus Finch and his family.  3. Who is Calpurnia? Describe her.  4. What do you learn about Dill’s character?  5. What, briefly, had happened to Arthur “Boo” Radley?  6. Why does the Radley place fascinate Scout, Jem, and Dill? |

**Chapter 2**

1. Why is Scout looking forward to school?

2. Scout makes three mistakes during her first day at school. What are her mistakes, and why do they make

Miss Caroline so angry?

3. What do you think of Miss Caroline as a teacher? Why?

4. Why are the professional people in Maycomb poor at this time?

5. What is the WPA, and why won't Mr. Cunningham work for it?

**Chapter 3**

1. Describe Walter Cunningham. What does his behavior during lunch suggest about his home life?

2. Calpurnia lectures Scout when Scout criticizes Walter's manners and Atticus supports Calpurnia. What does

this tell you about how both Calpurnia and Atticus feel about the way to treat others?

3. Burris Ewell, Walter Cunningham, and Chuck Little are all from extremely poor families. However, there are

great differences in both appearance and attitudes, particularly between the Cunninghams and the Ewells.

What are those differences and why do you suppose they exist?

4. What is Scout’s real name?

5. Atticus tells Scout, "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of

view...until you climb in his skin and walk around in it." What does he mean? What are some of the things

that Scout begins to realize at this point?

6. Why does Atticus say that the law is rigid for "common folk," but it is bent in certain ways for the Ewells?

7. What is the "compromise" which Atticus suggests?

**Chapter 4**

1. What does Scout think of the current fashions in education?

2. What superstitions do the children have in connection with the Radley house?

3. Where do you suppose the gum and pennies are coming from? What makes you think so?

4. What do the children pretend in the “Radley Game”?

5. Scout has two reasons for wanting to quit the "Radley Game." What are they?

6. What might be the cause of the laughter from inside the house?

**Chapter 5**

1. Based on the descriptions of Miss Maudie and her conversations with Scout, write a brief character analysis

of Miss Maudie. Give your evidence.

2. Explain Miss Maudie's statement "...sometimes the Bible in the hands of one man is worse than a whiskey

bottle in the hand of--oh, of your father."

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

4. Scout claims that “Dill could tell the biggest ones” she ever heard. Why do you think Dill tells lies?

5. Paraphrase Atticus' speech about the Radleys’ right to privacy. Do you agree with his point of view? Why or

why not?

**Chapter 6**

1. What reasons do Jem and Dill give for trying to peek into the Radley window on this particular night?

2. Why does Scout disapprove? What final statement by Jem makes Scout finally go along with the plan?

3. After the incident, Jem's desire is not just to recover his pants but to keep on good terms with Atticus.

What does this tell you about Jem's relationship with his father?

4. Why does Dill’s explanation of Jem’s state of dress almost land him in trouble?

**Chapter 7**

1. What was the condition of Jem's pants when he found them? Why did their condition frighten him further?

2. What gifts are left in the tree? Why are they left there?

3. Explain why Mr. Nathan Radley fills the hole in the tree with cement. Why does Jem cry about this?

**Chapter 8**

1. What does Atticus tell Scout about his visit to the Radley house?

2. What is the “near libel” that the children put in the front yard? How do Miss Maudie and Atticus react to it?

3. When Atticus asks Scout about the blanket around her shoulders, what does Jem realize?

4. Why does Atticus decide to keep the blanket incident a secret?

5. After the fire, how does Miss Maudie feel about the destruction of her house? What does this show about her

character and values?

**Chapter 9**

1. How well does Atticus feel he should defend Tom Robinson? Why?

2. How well do many people in Maycomb feel he should defend Tom Robinson? Why?

3. Scout and Jem have “mixed feelings” about Christmas. What are these feelings and why do they feel them?

4. What does Francis tell Scout that reveals an unpleasant aspect of Aunt Alexandra?

5. What does Scout learn from overhearing Atticus’s conversation with Uncle Jack?

6. Read the final sentence of this chapter. Explain in your own words what it means and why it might be

important to the story.

**Chapter 10**

1. At the beginning of this chapter, Scout is ashamed of Atticus. List his faults as she sees them.

2. Explain why it is “a sin to kill a mockingbird.”

3. Why does Atticus shoot Tim Johnson?

4. What does Miss Maudie say to explain Atticus' excellent marksmanship and his lack of pride in it?

5. Why won't Jem allow Scout to brag at school about Atticus? Do you agree with Jem? Why?

**Chapter 11**

1. How does Atticus advise Jem to react to Mrs. Dubose’s insults?

2. What does Mrs. Dubose say about Atticus? How does Jem feel about this?

3. What does Jem do to retaliate against Mrs. Dubose?

4. What is Jem’s punishment?

5. Describe Mrs. Dubose. What happens to her while Jem is reading?

6. How does Atticus explain the term “nigger-lover”? Explain what Atticus thinks of insults in general.

7. Why did Mrs. Dubose have “fits”?

8. What does Atticus mean when he says that Mrs. Dubose is a model of real courage rather than “a man with a

gun in his hand”? Do you agree? Why or why not?

**Chapter 12**

1. Jem is now 12. There is a widening gap of understanding between Jem and Scout. Write two examples which

illustrate the emotional distance between them.

2. How do you explain Lula's antagonism toward Jem and Scout?

3. Scout finds the church service to be similar to her own except for a few differences. Explain the differences.

4. Why does Cal speak one way around colored people and another way around white people? Is she being

honest or hypocritical in what she does? Why?

5. What new information does Scout learn about how the black people of Maycomb live?

**Chapter 13**

1. What are the first two things Aunt Alexandra says? What does this show about her character?

2. Why does Aunt Alexandra come to stay with Atticus and the children?

3. How does Aunt Alexandra involve herself in Maycomb’s social life?

4. Summarize Aunt Alexandra’s ideas about breeding and family. Why does Atticus tell the children to forget

them?

5. With whose point of view do you agree--Alexandra’s or Atticus’? Why?

**Chapter 14**

1. What is Atticus’s explanation of rape? How suitable is this as an answer to Scout? Why?

2. Why does Alexandra think that Atticus should fire Calpurnia? How does Atticus respond to this suggestion?

3. Why is Scout so happy about the brawl with Jem?

4. Explain how Jem "broke the remaining code of our childhood."

5. Dill tries to explain to Scout why he did not want to stay with his mother and stepfather. Explain his reasons.

**Chapter 15**

1. What is the “nightmare” that now descends upon the children?

2. What was (and is) the Ku Klux Klan? What does Atticus say about it?

3. Describe events prior to the scene at the Maycomb jail that show the tension and unrest of the town.

4. Why does Jem openly defy Atticus and refuse to leave?

5. What happens at the Maycomb jail?

6. What does Scout's childish attempt at conversation accomplish? Why do you think this happens?

**Chapter 16**

1. What “subtle change” does Scout notice in her father?

2. Paraphrase how Atticus explains the mob's actions to Scout.

3. Why do you suppose a man like Mr. Underwood (who is a known hater of Negroes) was covering Atticus at

the jail?

4. Mr. Dolphus Raymond is evidently a complicated and interesting person. Describe his way of life and

comment upon its effect on the town.

5. Where do Scout, Jem, and Dill sit in the courtroom?

6. Contrast Judge Taylor's appearance and his ability.

**Chapter 17**

1. Summarize Mr. Tate’s testimony.

2. Why does Atticus focus on Mayella Ewell's injuries? What do her injuries reveal?

3. Describe the Ewells’ living conditions.

4. Describe Bob Ewell’s physical appearance and personality.

5. Summarize Bob Ewell’s testimony.

6. Why does Atticus ask Bob Ewell to write his name? What does this prove?

**Chapter 18**

1. Describe Mayella Ewell’s physical appearance and personality.

2. Why does Mayella think Atticus is mocking her?

3. Summarize Mayella’s testimony.

4. What is unusual about Tom Robinson's physical appearance?

5. Why do you think Mayella glares at Atticus with such hatred when she leaves the stand?

**Chapter 19**

1. What kind of person is Tom Robinson?

2. Why does Atticus mention Tom's previous record of conviction?

3. According to Tom's testimony, what actually happened on November 21?

4. How does Tom’s physical disability support his testimony?

5. Why was it a "mistake" for Tom to say that he felt "sorry" for Mayella?

6. Why does Dill cry?

**Chapter 20**

1. What drink does Mr. Raymond give Dill?

2. Why does Mr. Raymond pretend to be a drunk?

3. Why does he tell Scout and Jem about his life?

4. What reason does Mr. Raymond give for Dill crying?

5. Paraphrase Atticus' remarks about the value of the court system in his summation to the jury.

**Chapter 21**

1. Why does Calpurnia come to court? What does Atticus allow the children to do?

2. How does Scout "know" about the verdict before she hears it?

3. Why do the Negroes stand when Atticus leaves the courtroom?

**Chapter 22**

1. How does Atticus feel when the verdict is announced?

2. After Jem expresses disillusionment over the trial and the verdict, Miss Maudie defends the town and its

people. Paraphrase what she says to Jem.

3. What causes Miss Maudie to say at least they have made a "baby step" in the right direction?

4. What kind of clown does Dill decide to be? Explain his reasoning.

**Chapter 23**

1. What did Bob Ewell do and say to Atticus outside the post office? Why did he do this, considering Atticus

lost the case?

2. How does Atticus react to Bob Ewell's threat against him?

3. Explain Atticus' point of view about the following:

a. circumstantial evidence

b. reasonable doubt

c. "When it's a white man's word against a black man's, the white man always wins."

d. "People have a way of carrying their resentments right into the jury box."

e. "It's all adding up, and one of these days we're going to pay for it."

4. Which member of the jury argued for Tom Robinson’s acquittal? Why is Jem so surprised?

5. What does Aunt Alexandra say about the Cunninghams? What is Scout’s reaction?

6. Why can't Jem accept Scout's opinion that “there’s just one kind of folks. Folks"?

**Chapter 24**

1. How does Scout feel about “ladies in bunches”? Why do you think she feels this way?

2. Explain the contrast of Mrs. Merriweather's admiration for J. Grimes Everett and her attitude toward the trial.

3. Why does Miss Maudie become angry? What does she say to the women, and what does it mean?

4. What bad news does Atticus relate? What happened? Why do you think Tom did this?

5. What does Miss Maudie mean by "We're paying the highest tribute we can pay to a man"?

**Chapter 25**

1. How does most of the town react to Tom's death?

2. What does Mr. Underwood's write in his editorial in the Maycomb Tribune? How does this relate to the title

of the book?

3. What does Scout realize is Mr. Underwood’s meaning?

**Chapter 26**

1. What grade is Scout in?

2. What are Scout’s feelings now about the children’s former games concerning Boo Radley?

3. What does Scout imagine would happen if she met Boo?

4. What is the irony of Miss Gates' lecture on democracy when compared to her comments on the trial?

5. When Scout tries to tell Jem about Miss Gates, why does he react so violently?

6. Explain Atticus' answer to Scout about Jem’s reaction.

**Chapter 27**

1. What three out-of-the-ordinary things happen in Maycomb by the middle of October?

2. Why does Atticus say that Bob Ewell is saying and doing these things?

3. What Halloween trick did children play on Misses Tutti and Frutti last year? How does this change the

Halloween celebration this year?

4. What is the subject of the Halloween pageant? What is Scout’s costume?

**Chapter 28**

1. What does Cecil Jacobs do before the pageant which helps set up the incidents which occur after the pageant?

2. How does Scout “ruin” the pageant? Why does she wear her costume home?

3. What do Jem and Scout hear on their way home?

4. Summarize what happens when Jem and Scout are near the big oak tree.

5. Scout realizes that how many people are involved in the skirmish under the tree?

6. What does Scout see under the street light?

7. Describe Jem’s injuries.

8. Who attacked Jem and Scout? What is his condition?

**Chapter 29**

1. What is the condition of Scout’s costume? Why is this important?

2. Atticus and Heck Tate disagree over the character of Bob Ewell. What does each man think?

3. With whom do you agree (Atticus or Heck Tate) and why?

4. Who saved Jem and Scout? Describe this man.

5. Briefly describe the meeting between Scout and Boo. How does this compare to how she imagined the

meeting would be?

**Chapter 30**

1. At first, what does Atticus think happened to Bob Ewell?

2. What does Heck Tate say happened?

3. Who is Heck Tate really protecting? What does he say will happen if the townspeople know the truth?

4. How does Scout assure Atticus that Mr. Tate is right?

**Chapter 31**

1. What does Boo do to the sleeping Jem? What does this show about Boo?

2. What does Boo ask Scout to do for him?

3. What makes Scout sad?

4. What does Scout realize when she sees the street from the Radley’s porch?

5. Explain your thoughts and feelings about the closing scene.