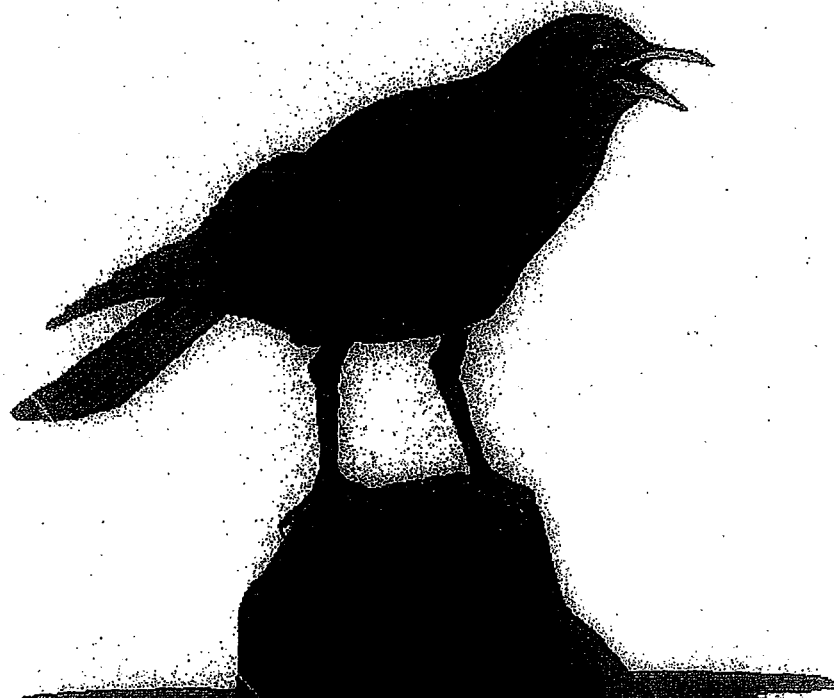


To Kill a Mockingbird Study Guide

To Kill a Mockingbird

by Harper Lee



To Kill a Mockingbird Study Guide

“Harper Lee's novel is one of the best-selling books in the nation’s history. Within a year *To Kill a Mockingbird* had sold 500,000 copies. By 1975, 11,113,909 copies had sold, and by 1982 over 5,000,000 had sold. By 1992, 18 million copies of paperback editions alone had sold. It has never been out of print in 35 years. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is frequently cited by readers as the book that has made the biggest difference in their lives. The novel’s enduring impact goes beyond the period when integration and the struggle for equal rights were paramount Its influence has been enduring because it allows the reader, through, the lives of children, ‘to walk around in the shoes’ of people who are different from ourselves. The novel challenges our stereotypes - of the Southerner, the African American, the eccentric, the child, the young lady. At the same time that many people see characters and social situations in different ways after reading the novel, they also recapture some part of their own youth in the story With its characters. The novel’s universal and lasting appeal comes in part from the reader’s nostalgia for the time of innocence in which children live before harsh truths enter their lives.”

—Claudia Durst Johnson

Nelle Harper Lee, the author of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, had many childhood experiences that are similar to those of her narrator. Scout Finch.

Harper Lee’s Childhood:

Jean Louise Finch’s Childhood:

Grew up in 1930s - rural southern Alabama town

Father - Amasa Lee - attorney who served in /state legislature in Alabama

Older brother and young neighbor (Truman Capote) are playmates.

Harper Lee - an avid reader

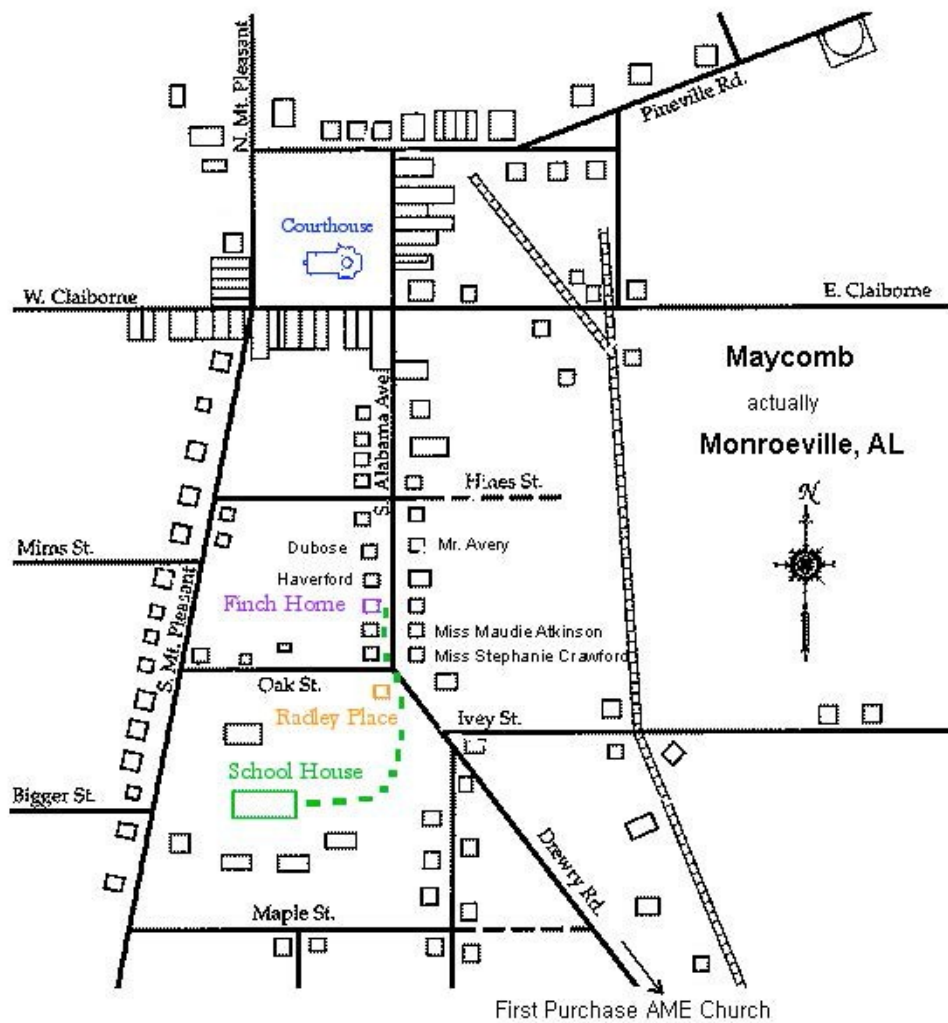
Six years old when Scottsboro trials were meticulously covered in state and local newspapers

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Lee, Harper - *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Map of Maycomb (Monroeville, AL, 1930)

Monroeville AL, where Harper Lee grew up, might well have served as model for Maycomb (*To Kill a Mockingbird* is set in a town called Maycomb) You find the courthouse the jail the schoolhouse, etc.



Map courtesy of The Monroe County Council for EducETH, 2000

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English 9

To Kill a Mockingbird: Chapter 1

The first chapter of this novel is dense and somewhat confusing. The narrator gives us a lot of important information, but since we haven't yet read the book, we don't understand why we are getting it.

To help you read the first chapter, think of it in the following chunks. For each, write down some main ideas in note form that will help you remember this chapter and see the big picture.

I. First 3 paragraphs: the disagreement

II. The story of the Finch family
Beginning "Being Southerners..."

III. Maycomb and the current Finch family
Beginning "Maycomb was an old town"

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IV. Dill is introduced

Beginning "That was the summer Dill came to us"

v. The story of the Radley family

Beginning "The Radley place fascinated Dill"

vi. The children are curious about Boo Radley

Beginning "The more we told Dill about the Radleys.."

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Chapter 1 - "That was the summer Dill came to us"

1. In what state does the novel take place? _____
2. What does the children's father, Atticus Finch, do for a living? _____
3. From whose point of view will the story be told? _____
4. Who is Calpurnia and what is she like? _____
5. What game does Dill invent? _____
6. What did Arthur (Boo) Radley do (at age 33) that landed him temporarily in the county jail.

7. According to Jem's description, what does Boo look like? _____
8. What act of "courage" on Jem's part ends the chapter? _____

Chapter 2 - "We'll do like we always do at home" [Jem] said, "but you'll see - school's different"

1. On her first day of school, what does Scout get in trouble for? List three things.

2. How does Miss Caroline Fisher feel at the end of her first day?
How do you know? _____
3. What are the Cunninghams like? _____

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Chapter 3 " "You'll never really understand a person until you consider thing from his point of view"

1. How does Scout solve her problem with Walter Cunningham? _____
2. How does Jem solve Scout's problem with Walter Curmingham? _____
3. Why can't Walter Cunningham pass the first grade? _____
4. What scared and shocked Miss Caroline? (Do you know another name for this creature?)

Chapter 4 - "Grown folks don't have hidin' places."

1. What is the first gift that appears in the hollow tree? _____
2. What new facts does Dill offer about his father? _____
3. How has the Boo Radley game changed? _____
4. When Scout rolls into the Radley front yard in the tire, what does she hear? _____

Chapter 5 - "His name's Arthur and he's alive."

1. What does Scout admire about Miss Maudie? _____
2. What do you learn about Uncle Tack? _____
3. What new plan do the boys devise to get Boo to come out? Why doesn't it work?

4. What does Dill say that causes Scout to accuse him of lying?

5. What direct order does Atticus give the children?

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Chapter 6 - "It was then, I suppose, that Jem and I first began to part company"

1. How do the children plan to spend Dill's last night in Maycomb?

2. What goes wrong with the children's escape?

3. At whom does Mr. Nathan think he has fired his gun? _____

4. How do the children claim to have spent the evening?

5. What makes Jem decide to return to the Radley, yard that night?

Chapter 7 - "As Atticus had one advised me to do, I tried to climb into Jem's skin and walk around in it"

1. What does Jem tell Scout about "that night" at Boo Radley's?

2. What new gifts, do they find in the knothole? (There are five)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

3. What ends the knothole gifts?

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Chapter 8 - "the coldest winter in 1885"

1. Who dies this winter? _____

2. What "aberration of nature" frightens Scout? _____

3. What method does Jem devise to make a snowman?

4. When Miss Maudie's house begins to burn, what other possibility is the Finch family worried about?

5. Why doesn't Atticus help carry out Maudie's furniture? _____

6. Whom will Scout someday want to thank for keeping her warm on the night of the fire?

Chapter 9 - the-beginning of a rather thin time for Jem and me"

1. Who is Tom Robinson? _____

2. What gift does Uncle Jack give the children? _____

3. What new habit has Scout picked up that bothers Uncle Jack? _____

4. What does cousin Frands tell Scout about Dill's home life?

5. Why does Scout fight her cousin after the Christmas dinner at Finch's Landing?

6. What is "Maycomb's usual disease"?

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Chapter 10 - "Shoot all the blue jays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember It's a sin to kill a mockingbird."

1. In Scout's eyes, what is Atticus's chief fault? _____

2. What reason does Uncle Jack give for Atticus's unwillingness to teach the kids to shoot?

3. What crisis shows the children a surprising skill their father possesses?

4. Who is Heck Tate? _____

5. What is Atticus's old nickname? _____

Chapter 11 - "I wanted to see what courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin anyway and you see it through' no matter what"

1. What makes the children hate and fear Mrs. Dubose?

2. What two comments specifically infuriate Jem to the point that he can't control his temper?

- _____
- _____

3. What does Jem do to get revenge?

4. What is his punishment?

5. What did Mrs. Dubose vow to do before she died?

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Chapter 12 - "If s not necessary to tell all yon know. It's not ladylike in the second place, folks don't like to have somebody around knowin' more than they do."

1. Why doesn't Dill plan to come to Maycomb this summer?

2. What is the purpose of this Sunday's collection at First Purchase African Methodist Episcopal Church?

3. Why are Jem and Scout so welcome in this church?

4. Why can't Helen Robinson get work?

5. What do the children notice about Calpurnia's behavior in her church community?

Chapter 13 - "For no reason I felt myself beginning to cry, but I could not stop. This was my father."

1. Why has Aunt Alexandra come?

2. Why does Aunt Alexandra get angry with Atticus?

3. What does Atticus tell the children about being *Finches*?

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Chapter 14 - "From rape to riot to runaways."

1. When Aunt Alexandra finds out that Jem and Scout have attended Cal's church, what does she want Atticus to do about it?

2. "Then [Jem] rose and broke the remaining code of our childhood" What new violation causes Scout to make this comment?

What earlier breach of the childhood code can you remember?

3. What solution does Atticus offer to the problem of Dill's presence?

Chapter 15 - "A nightmare was upon us."

1. Why have the neighbors gathered in the Finches' front yard?

2. Who is Mr. Underwood?

3. Where to the children find Atticus at ten o'clock on Sunday?

4. What is the mob's intention?

5. How does Scout manage to end the danger?

6. At the end of the chapter, who do we hear from for the first time in the novel?.

7. What has Mr. Underwood been doing during the mob scene?

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Chapter 16 - "Don't talk like that in front of them"

1. In the eyes of the community, what is Doiphus Raymond's problem?

2. Why isn't Miss Maudie going to court?

3. What fact about Athens's defense of Tom Robinson does Scout learn from the Idlers Club?

4. Where do the children sit for the trial? What does this tell you?

Chapter 17 - "People generally see what they look for, and hear what they listen for"

1. What is the first point Atticus tries to make in court?

2. During what discussion of Mayella's injuries, what key fact seems important to Atticus?

3. What detail in the description of the Ewell cabin makes the reader guess that perhaps Mayella is different from the rest of her family?

4. Why does Atticus ask Mr. Ewell to write his name?

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Chapter 18 "What on earth was her life like?"

1. Why does Mayella Ewell break into tears at the beginning of her testimony?

2. What makes Mayella think Atticus is mocking her?

What does this tell you about her?

3. What dramatic fact do we learn about Tom Robinson at the end of Mayella's testimony?

4. Atticus is trying to get Mayella to make a confession. What does he want her to admit?

Chapter 19 - "Mr. Finch, if you was a nigger like me, you'd be scared too."

1. According to Tom's story, **when** did he "bust up the chiffarobe"?

2. On the day of Tom's "crime," where were the seven Ewell children?

3. When Mr. Ewell arrived on the scene, what did he see through the window that infuriated him?

4. Who is Link Deas? _____ and _____ ?

What (unsolicited) comment does he add to the proceeding?

5. What two points does Mr. Gilmer try to make in cross-examining Tom?

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Chapter 20 - "This case is as simple as black and white"

1. What aspect of Mr. Raymond's reputation do the children find to be false?

2. Why is he willing to let the children in on his secret?

3. What does Atticus say is "the worst thing you can do"?

4. What "crime" does Atticus say Mayella feels guilt for?

5. What "facts about Negroes" does Mr. Ewell rely on to make the jury bring in a guilty verdict?

- ---
- ---
- ---

Chapter 21 - "Miss Jean Louise, stand up. Your father's passin"

1. Why has Cal come to court?

2. How long was the jury out?

Why isn't this a trivial question?

3. How does Scout know that Tom has **not** been acquitted even before the jury reports?

4. What happens as Atticus leaves the courtroom?

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Chapter 22 – “only children weep”

1. What does Atticus find in the kitchen on the morning after the trial?

2. What is the feeling among the white neighbors (Maudie included) on Atticus's defeat?

3. What has Dill decided to be when he grows up?

Why?

4. What is Bob Ewell's response to the verdict?

Chapter 23 - "We generally get the juries we deserve."

1. What are the children worried about at the beginning of Chapter 23?

2. Where is Tom Robinson in this chapter?

3. How does Atticus define "trash"?

How does Aunt Alexandra?

4. Why does Aunt Alexandra not want Walter Cunningham in the house, even though the Cunningham's are admittedly "good folks"?

5. List the categories in Jem's social hierarchy — the four kinds of folks in the world.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What kinds of folks are in Scout's hierarchy?

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Chapter 24 - "I guess Tom was tired of white men's chances and preferred to take his own"

1. What does the "business" part of the Missionary Society consist of?

2. Why does Scout prefer the world of men to the world in which "fragrant ladies rocked slowly, fanned gently, and drank cool water"?

3. Who are the "hypocrites" Mrs. Merriweather mentions?

- Why does she consider them hypocrites?

4. What news does Atticus bring to Aunt Alexandra, Maudie, and Scout?

Chapter 25 - in the secret courts of men's hearts Atticus had no case."

1. What causes Scout to comment that *Jem* was acting more like a girl every day?

- What definition of "girl" does this imply?

2. How does Scout learn about Helen's reaction to the news of her husband's death?

3. Mr. Ewell said Tom's death meant "one down and about two more to go." What does he mean?

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Chapter 26 - "So many things had happened to us. Boo Radley was the least of our fears."

1. Although she thought it had escaped his notice. Scout learns in this chapter that Atticus had known of one of her "crimes" for a long time. Which one?

2. What strikes you as important about Miss Gates's lesson on democracy?

3. What has Scout overheard that confuses her about Miss Gates's view of Hitler?

Chapter 27 - "Thus, began our longest journey together."

1. Who does Bob Ewell blame for his loss of the WPA job?

2. What happened at Judge Taylor's house?

3. What two services does Link Deas perform for Helen Robinson because he "felt right bad about the way things turned out"?

- ---
- ---

4. What event has been added to the fall social calendar in Maycomb?

5. What is Scout's Halloween costume?

- What are the chief drawbacks?

-

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Chapter 28 - "Run, Scout! Run! Run!"

1. Who scares the Finch children on the way to the pageant?

2. How does Scout's performance go?

3. What is the first clue the children have that they are not alone on their walk home?

4. Who are the "four people under the tree"?

- ---

- ---

- ---

5. How does Jem get home?

6. What questions does Scout ask again and again?

7. Who is the children's attacker?

Chapter 29 – "Hey, Boo' I said."

1. What unexpected advantage did the ham outfit supply?

2. What does Boo really look like?

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Chapter 30 - "Thank you for my children, Arthur."

1. Who killed Bob Ewell? (Be careful with this one.)

2. What was the murder weapon?

3. What does the switchblade Heck Tate uses for demonstration have to do with all this?

Chapter 31 - "I had never seen our neighborhood from this angle"

1. Describe the manner in which Scout walks Boo home?

2. What do you learn about the plot of *The Gray Ghost*

CHARACTER MAP

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CHARACTERS	DO	SAY	FEEL	LOOK LIKE	OTHERS SAY
ATTICUS					
JEM					
SCOUT					
TOM					
DILL					
BOO RADLEY					
CALPURNIA					
BURRIS EWELL					
MISS MAUDIE					
AUNT ALEXANDRA					