

How does harper lee present and develop racial prejudice in 'to kill a mockingbir...

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



? How does Harper Lee present and develop the theme of racial prejudice in 'To Kill A Mockingbird' Harper Lee presents and develops racial prejudice in a very subtle way. The happenings in the novel are all seen from the point of view of an innocent, unbiased child, called Scout. As she is only young she sees the world in the simple, non-prejudiced way that adults would see. In my opinion this makes the novel more exciting, and makes the reader think and understand differently in the book. The word 'nigger' is freely used in Maycomb as they don't understand the concept of it.

In Chapter eight, on page seventy-two, Jem and Scout are building a snowman and as Jem puts dirt on the snowman, Scout states: 'Jem, I ain't ever heard of a nigger snowman,' in which he replies: 'He won't be black for long,'. This could suggest that Jem and Scout are naive about the use of the word 'nigger'. Similarly no one in the society of Maycomb and alike realized the insensitivity of the whole 'black and white' community. It was generally accepted by all of society, and even the African Americans tolerated and accepted that they were all 'niggers'. My second point is the way in which Mr Gilmer threatens Tom Robinson at court.

We find in this novel that at the beginning of the book we see the immaturity arise in Jem and of course Scout. In the court case and the few months before we see Jem mature and not be the typical young boy. Jem realizes and notices that Mr Gilmer is treating Tom Robinson in an animalistic way, by calling him 'a big buck'. Mr Gilmer mentions Tom and makes him feel small by calling him 'boy'. Later on in the chapter, we see that Dill is upset by the

court case and has to leave after the way ' that old Mr Gilmer was' talking to Tom Robinson in a racist way and fashion.