

To kill a mockingbird overview

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



To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee All new material ©2009 Enotes. com Inc. or its Licensors. All Rights Reserved. No portion may be reproduced without permission in writing from the publisher. For complete copyright information please see the online version of this text at <http://www.enotes.com/mockingbird>

Table of Contents

Introduction..... 1

Overview..... 2 Harper Lee

Biography..... 4

Summary..... 6 Image Pop-Up..... 6 Summary and

Analysis..... 9 Chapter 1 Summary and Analysis 9 Chapter 2 Summary and Analysis 11 Chapter 3 Summary and Analysis 14 Chapter 4 Summary and Analysis 16 Chapter 5 Summary and

Analysis
18 Chapter 6 Summary and
Analysis
19 Chapter 7 Summary and
Analysis
20 Chapter 8 Summary and
Analysis
21 Chapter 9 Summary and
Analysis
23 Chapter 10 Summary and
Analysis
24 Chapter 11 Summary and
Analysis
26 Chapter 12 Summary and
Analysis
27 Chapter 13 Summary and
Analysis
29 Chapter 14 Summary and
Analysis
30 Chapter 15 Summary and
Analysis
32 Chapter 16 Summary and
Analysis
34 Chapter 17 Summary and
Analysis

36 Chapter 18 Summary and
Analysis

36 Chapter 19 Summary and
Analysis

37 Chapter 20 Summary and
Analysis

38 Chapter 21 Summary and
Analysis

39 Chapter 22 Summary and
Analysis

40 Chapter 23 Summary and
Analysis

41 Chapter 24 Summary and
Analysis

41 Chapter 25 Summary and
Analysis

43 Chapter 26 Summary and
Analysis

44 Chapter 27 Summary and
Analysis

45 Chapter 28 Summary and
Analysis

46 Chapter 29 Summary and
Analysis

48 Chapter 30 Summary and

Analysis
49 Chapter 31 Summary and
Analysis
49
Quizzes.....
..... 50 Chapter 1 Questions and
Answers.....
50 Chapter 2 Questions and
Answers.....
51 Chapter 3 Questions and
Answers.....
52 Chapter 4 Questions and
Answers.....
53 Chapter 5 Questions and
Answers.....
54 i Table of Contents Quizzes Chapter 6 Questions and
Answers.....
55 Chapter 7 Questions and
Answers.....
56 Chapter 8 Questions and
Answers.....
57 Chapter 9 Questions and
Answers.....
58 Chapter 10 Questions and
Answers..... 59

Chapter 11 Questions and Answers.....	60
Chapter 12 Questions and Answers.....	61
Chapter 13 Questions and Answers.....	62
Chapter 14 Questions and Answers.....	63
Chapter 15 Questions and Answers.....	64
Chapter 16 Questions and Answers.....	65
Chapter 17 Questions and Answers.....	66
Chapter 18 Questions and Answers.....	67
Chapter 19 Questions and Answers.....	68
Chapter 20 Questions and Answers.....	69
Chapter 21 Questions and Answers.....	70
Chapter 22 Questions and Answers.....	71
Chapter 23 Questions and	

Answers..... 72

Chapter 24 Questions and
Answers..... 72

Chapter 25 Questions and
Answers..... 73

Chapter 26 Questions and
Answers..... 74

Chapter 27 Questions and
Answers..... 75

Chapter 28 Questions and
Answers..... 76

Chapter 29 Questions and
Answers..... 77

Chapter 30 Questions and
Answers..... 78

Chapter 31 Questions and
Answers..... 79

Characters.....
..... 80

Themes.....
..... 85

Style.....
..... 89 Historical

Context.....
..... 91 Critical

Overview.....
..... 93 Character

Analysis
..... 94 Essays and

Criticism.....
..... 97 Symbols of Race in To Kill a

Mockingbird..... 97 The

Class System in Maycomb

County..... 98 Why

Scout? Gender in To Kill a

Mockingbird 100

Growing Pains: Levels of Maturity in To Kill a

Mockingbird..... 101 Narrative structure of

To Kill a Mockingbird: Protesting Prejudice and Racism

102 The Mockingbird's

Song.....

.... 104 In Defense of To Kill a

Mockingbird.....

107 ii Table of Contents Suggested Essay

Topics.....

..... 112 Sample Essay

Outlines

..... 116 Compare and

Contrast.....

..... 119 Topics for Further

Study
 120 Media

Adaptations.....
 121 What Do I Read

Next?.....
 122 Bibliography and Further

Reading.....

.. 123 iii Introduction When *To Kill a Mockingbird* was published in 1960, it brought its young first-time author, Harper Lee, a startling amount of attention and notoriety. The novel replays three key years in the life of Scout Finch, the young daughter of an Alabama town's principled lawyer. The work was an instant sensation, becoming a best-seller and winning the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Scout's narrative relates how she and her elder brother Jem learn about fighting prejudice and upholding human dignity through the example of their father. Atticus Finch has taken on the legal defense of a black man who has been falsely charged with raping a white woman. Lee's story of the events surrounding the trial has been admired for its portrayal of Southern life during the 1930s, not only for its piercing examination of the causes and effects of racism, but because it created a model of tolerance and courage in the character of Atticus Finch. Some early reviewers found Scout's narration unconvincing, its style and language too sophisticated for a young girl. Since then, however, critics have hailed Lee's rendering of a child's perspective—as told by an experienced adult—as one of the most technically proficient in modern fiction. A regional novel dealing with universal themes of tolerance, courage, compassion, and justice, *To Kill a*

Mockingbird combined popular appeal with literary excellence to ensure itself an enduring place in modern American literature. Introduction 1

Overview Background To Kill a Mockingbird is set in Maycomb, a small Southern town in Alabama in the 1930s. The reader is not told the date until more than halfway through the book, but the references to the NRA, Hitler, and the quote " we have nothing to fear but fear itself" set the time in the reader's mind. The racially divided town and the strict class system help the reader to visualize life in the South during this time period. List of Characters

Atticus Finch–A Southern lawyer and the father of Scout and Jem. Scout Finch (also known as Jean Louise)–Atticus' daughter. She is six years old when the story begins. Jem Finch (also known as Jeremy Atticus)–Atticus' son, who is ready for fifth grade when the story begins. Charles Baker Harris (Dill)–A six-year-old who visits his Aunt Rachel Haverford in Maycomb. Calpurnia and Zeebo–The cook for the Finch family and her son, who also drives a garbage truck. Aunt Alexandra Hancock–Atticus' sister, who is married to Jimmy Hancock. She has one son named Henry and a seven-year-old grandson named Francis. Mr. and Mrs. Radley–The parents of Arthur and Nathan Radley. Arthur Radley (a. k. a. " Boo Radley")–A recluse in the neighborhood and the younger brother of Nathan Radley. Mr. Walter Cunningham and Walter Cunningham–A proud but poor father and son. The son is Scout's classmate. Cecil Jacobs–Scout's classmate. Mr. Robert Ewell–The irresponsible father of Burns and Mayella. He spends his welfare checks on alcohol. Burns Ewell–Robert Ewell's son who attends Scout's class for one day. Mayella Ewell–Robert Ewell's daughter; she accuses Tom Robinson of raping her. Little Chuck Little–A well-mannered classmate of Scout. Miss

Carolina Fisher and Miss Gates—Scout's first and third-grade teachers. Miss Maudie Atkinson—A friend of Jem and Scout who lives up the street. Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose—An elderly woman on Jem and Scout's street. They call her the "meanest old woman in the world." Miss Stephanie Crawford and Mr. Avery—Two neighborhood gossips. Dr. Reynolds—The family doctor.

Overview 2 Eula May—The telephone operator. Tom Robinson and Helen Robinson—Husband and wife; Tom is accused of rape. Jack Finch—Atticus's brother, who is a doctor. Heck Tate—The sheriff. Lula—An argumentative member of Calpurnia's church. Reverend Sykes—Preacher of the First Purchase A. M. E. Zion Church. Mr. B. B. Underwood—Editor of Maycomb Tribune. Dolphus Raymond—A white man who lives with blacks. Judge Taylor—The judge who presides at Tom Robinson's trial. Mrs. Grace Merriweather, Mrs. Gertrude Farrow, Mrs. Perkins, Mrs. Gates—Members of the missionary circle. Sarah and Frances Barber (also known as Tutti and Frutti)—Two deaf sisters.

Summary of the Novel Two plots run through the book *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The first is the mystery of the Radley Place and its inhabitant Boo Radley. The children work throughout the first part of the novel to bring him out or to see him inside the house. The second plot is that of the accusation of Thomas Robinson as a rapist, his trial, and his conviction. Even though Tom is convicted, Mr. Robert Ewell and Mayella are not believed; Robert Ewell is determined to seek revenge on Atticus. When Bob Ewell seeks to kill Jem and Scout, Boo Radley hears the commotion and manages to kill Ewell before he can harm the children further. The sheriff refuses to tell the story of Boo Radley to the community; he protects him and his privacy.

Estimated Reading Time The total reading time for the 281-page

book should be about 9 1/2 hours. Reading the book according to the natural chapter breaks is the best approach. Overview 3 Harper Lee Biography

Although Harper Lee has long maintained that *To Kill a Mockingbird* is not autobiographical, critics have often remarked upon the striking similarities between the author's own childhood and that of her youthful heroine, Scout Finch. Nelle Harper Lee was born in 1926, the youngest of three children of Amasa Coleman Lee, a lawyer who practiced in the small town of Monroeville, Alabama. Like Scout, who could be bullied into submission with the remark that she was "gettin' more like a girl," Lee was "a rough 'n' tough tomboy," according to childhood friends. Harper Lee Summers in Monroeville were brightened by the visits of young Truman Capote who stayed with the Lees' next-door neighbors and who would later become well-known for his book *In Cold Blood* and for his short stories and novels, including *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. The games young Nelle and her brother played with Capote were likely the inspiration for the adventures Scout and Jem had with Dill, their own "summer" friend. After graduating from the public schools of Monroeville, Lee attended a small college in nearby Montgomery before attending the University of Alabama for four years. She left school six months short of earning a law degree, however, in order to pursue a writing career. In the early 1950s, the author worked as an airline reservations clerk in New York City, writing essays and short stories in her spare time. After her literary agent suggested that one of her stories might be expanded into a novel, Lee quit her airline job. With the financial support of some friends, she spent several years revising the manuscript of *To Kill a Mockingbird* before submitting it to publishers. Several more months of

revision followed the feedback of her editors, who found the original version more like a string of short stories than a cohesive novel. The final draft was finally completed in 1959 and published in 1960. The novel was a dramatic success, earning generally positive reviews and achieving bestseller status. Lee herself attained considerable celebrity as the novel won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1961 and was made into an Oscar-winning film in 1962. Harper Lee Biography 4 Horton Foote adapted the book into the 1962 film. The Motion Picture Guide, Volume T-V, 1927-1983, states that the screenplay so wonderfully followed the spirit of Lee's novel that it prompted the author to remark, " I can only say that I am a happy author. They have made my story into a beautiful and moving motion picture. I am very proud and grateful." The Academy of Motion Pictures presented Foote with the academy award for Best Adapted Screenplay. Gregory Peck starred as Atticus; he took the Academy Award for Best Actor. Since then, aside from a few magazine pieces in the early 1960s, the reclusive author has published nothing, although she has been reported to have been working on a second novel. Despite the lack of a follow-up work, Lee's literary reputation remains secure and even has grown since the debut of her remarkable first novel. Harper Lee Biography 5 Summary Part One Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird depicts the life of its young narrator, Jean Louise " Scout" Finch, in the small town of Maycomb, Alabama, in the mid-1930s. Scout opens the novel as a grown woman reflecting back on key events in her childhood. The novel covers a two-year period, beginning when Scout is six and ending when she is eight. She lives with her father, Atticus, a widowed lawyer, and her older brother, Jem (short for Jeremy). Their black housekeeper, Calpurnia,

tends to the children. Scout and Jem's summer playmate, Dill Harris, shares the Finch children's adventures and adds imagination and intrigue to their game playing. In the novel, we see Scout grow in awareness and come to new understandings about her town, her family, and herself. Image Pop-Up Map of Maycomb During the summer before Scout enters school, the children become fascinated with Arthur " Boo" Radley, a reclusive neighbor. Radley's father, a religious fanatic, confined Boo to the house because he was arrested for youthful pranks as a teenager. Some years later, Boo casually stabbed his father in the leg with a pair of scissors, confirming people's worst fears about him. The children are naturally afraid of and intrigued by such a " malevolent phantom," as Scout calls him. Yet they only approach the house once, when Jem runs and touches the porch on a dare. Scout enters first grade the following September and must confront new challenges and learn new ways to deal with people. She cannot understand, for instance, her young teacher's lack of familiarity with the town families and their peculiarities, such as the Cunningham children's poverty and pride. Later, Atticus explains to Scout that she must put herself in others' places before judging them, one of the many lessons she learns by making mistakes. With summer's return, Dill arrives and the children's absorption with Boo Radley begins again in earnest. Ultimately, they attempt to look in the house to see Boo, but a shotgun blast from Nathan Radley, Boo's brother, drives them off. In their panic, Jem catches his overalls in the Radley fence and must abandon them. Later that night, he returns to retrieve them and finds them neatly folded on the fence with the ripped fabric poorly re sewn. Their contact with Boo Radley continues into the school year. Before

the previous summer, Scout and Jem had discovered gum and Indian head pennies in a knot-holed tree by the Radley house. Now more objects begin to appear in the knothole, including replicas of Scout and Jem carved in soap. They decide to leave a note for whoever is leaving the objects, but before they can, Nathan Radley fills the hole with cement, upsetting Jem. Scout soon encounters trouble at school when a schoolmate condemns Atticus for "defending niggers." Atticus confirms that he is defending a black man named Tom Robinson, who is accused of raping a white woman, and that his conscience compels him to do no less. He warns her that she will encounter more accusations of this kind and to remember that despite their views, the people who cast slurs at them are still their friends. Atticus later tells his brother Jack that he hopes he can guide his children through this time without them becoming bitter and "without catching Maycomb's usual disease" of racism. That Christmas, Atticus gives the children air-rifles and admonishes them to shoot no mockingbirds. Miss Maudie Atkinson, their neighbor, explains Atticus's reasons when she says that "Mockingbirds don't do one Summary 6 thing but make music for us to enjoy." Hence, it is a sin to kill them. At this time, the children feel disappointed in Atticus because he is old (almost fifty) and does nothing of interest. They soon learn, however, about one of their father's unique talents when he shoots a rabid dog that threatens the neighborhood, killing the beast with one shot. The neighbors tell them that Atticus is the best shot in the county, he just chooses not to shoot a gun unless he must. Scout admires Atticus for his shooting talent, but Jem admires him for his gentlemanly restraint. Part Two The family's involvement in Tom Robinson's trial dominates Part Two of the novel. One

personal inconvenience of the trial is the arrival of Aunt Alexandra, Atticus's sister, who comes to tend to the family. Scout finds her presence unwelcome because Aunt Alexandra disapproves of her tomboyish dress and activities and tries to make Scout wear dresses and attend women's socials. The time for the trial arrives, and Atticus guards the jail door the night Tom Robinson is brought to Maycomb. The children, including Dill, sneak out to watch over him and soon become involved in a standoff. Carloads of men drive up and demand that Atticus let them have Tom Robinson, and he gently refuses. Scout recognizes a schoolmate's father, Mr. Cunningham, and asks him polite questions about his legal debt to Atticus, who did work for him, and about his son. Scout's innocent questioning of Mr. Cunningham shames him, and he convinces the men to leave. The children also sneak to the courthouse to attend the trial. They sit in the balcony with the black townspeople because no seats are available on the ground floor. Atticus's questioning of Bob Ewell and Mayella Ewell, both of whom claim Tom Robinson beat and raped Mayella, reveals their lies. Mayella was beaten primarily on the right side of her body by a left-handed man. By having Bob Ewell sign his name, Atticus shows him to be left-handed. Tom Robinson's left arm, however, is crippled from a boyhood accident. Tom's story rings truer. He contends that Mayella invited him into the house and tried to seduce him, a story made credible by Mayella's and Tom's descriptions of her lonely life. Tom resisted her advances, but before he could leave Bob Ewell discovered them. Tom ran and Ewell beat Mayella. To avoid social disgrace, the Ewells claimed Tom had raped her. Despite the evidence, Tom is convicted. Atticus has expected this verdict and believes he can win on

appeal. Jem has difficulty accepting the injustice of the verdict. Others, however, remain angry over Atticus's sincere defense of Robinson, particularly Bob Ewell. Ewell confronts Atticus, threatens him, and spits on him. Soon after, Tom Robinson's story ends in tragedy as he is shot trying to escape from prison. He ran because he believed he could find no justice in a white-dominated legal system. The following October, Scout dresses as a ham for the school Halloween pageant. On the way home from the pageant, she and Jem are followed, then attacked. Scout cannot see their assailant because of her costume, but she hears Jem grappling with him and hears Jem being injured. After the confused struggle, she feels a man lying on the ground and sees another man carrying Jem. She follows them home. The doctor arrives and assures her that Jem is alive and has suffered only a broken arm. The man who carried him home is standing in Jem's room. To Scout's tearful amazement, she realizes that he is Boo Radley. Sheriff Heck Tate informs them that Bob Ewell attacked them and that only Scout's costume saved her. Ewell himself now lies dead, stabbed in the ribs. Atticus believes Jem killed Ewell in self-defense, but Tate makes him realize that Boo Radley actually stabbed Ewell and saved both children's lives. The men agree to claim that Ewell fell on his knife in order to save Boo the spectacle of a trial. Scout walks Boo home: He had to stoop a little to accommodate me, but if Miss Stephanie Crawford was watching from her upstairs window, she would see Arthur Radley escorting me down the sidewalk, as any gentleman would do. Image Pop-Up 7 We came to the street light on the corner, and I wondered how many times Dill had stood there hugging the fat pole, watching, waiting, hoping. I wondered how many times Jem and I had

made this journey, but I entered the Radley front gate for the second time in my life. Boo and I walked up the steps to the porch. His fingers found the front doorknob. He gently released my hand, opened the door, went inside, and shut the door behind him. I never saw him again. Neighbors bring food with death and flowers with sickness and little things in between. Boo was our neighbor. He gave us two soap dolls, a broken watch and chain, a pair of good-luck pennies, and our lives. But neighbors give in return. We never put back into the tree what we took out of it; we had given him nothing, and it made me sad. She returns home to Atticus, who stays up all night waiting for Jem to awake. Image Pop-Up 8 Summary and Analysis Chapter 1 Summary and Analysis New Characters Atticus Finch: a Southern lawyer and the father of Scout and Jem. Scout: the six-year-old daughter of Atticus and the innocent narrator of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Dill: a six-year-old summer visitor to Maycomb and a friend of both Scout and Jem. The Radley Family: Mr. and Mrs. Radley and their sons, Arthur and Nathan, who are the antagonists for the first 11 chapters of the novel. Jem: the ten-year-old son of Atticus and the brother of Scout. Miss Stephanie Crawford: the neighborhood gossip, a woman in her late sixties who has never been married. Calpurnia: the cook for the Finch family. Miss Rachel Haverford: Dill's aunt with whom Dill is spending the summer. Summary Scout is the narrator of and a main protagonist in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Scout's real name is Jean Louise Finch, and she is the only daughter of Atticus Finch. She is a very precocious child, but she still has an air of innocence about her. In Chapter 1 she is six, but she is recalling the events of the novel from a later time in her life. Mystery surrounds the Radley Place. Summary and Analysis 9 Ten-year-old Jem is the

only son of Atticus Finch. Jem was six when his mother died and Scout believes he still misses her badly; but since Jem is at times secretive, Scout cannot be sure. Scout says she reckons time from when 13-year-old Jem broke his arm, but she does not give the complete details. To find out more about this event, one must read further. Calpurnia, the cook for the Finch family, is described through Scout's eyes as " a tyrannical presence as long as I can remember. " Scout explains that Calpurnia calls her home before she is ready to come and is always supported by Atticus. The children call Calpurnia and Atticus by their first names; they address all other adults with a title. Charles Baker Harris—better known as Dill—is the nephew of Miss Rachel Haverford, the next-door neighbor of the Finch family. In Chapter 1, Dill is seven when he comes from Meridian, Mississippi, for his first summer visit in Maycomb. Dill is described by Scout as a " pocket Merlin, whose head teemed with eccentric plans, strange longings, and quaint fancies. " It is Dill who challenges the others to help draw Boo from his home. The Radley family—Mr. and Mrs. Radley, their older son Nathan, and " Boo, " lives next door to the Finch family. The Radley family, which is headed now by Nathan, is a very aloof one. Mr. Radley is described by Miss Stephanie Crawford as being " so upright he took the word of God as his only law. . . . " When Boo breaks the law and resists arrest as a teenager, Mr. Radley no longer allows him out of the house; even the death of Mr. Radley cannot free Boo, because Nathan assumes his father's role. Miss Stephanie Crawford is the " neighborhood scold. " It is from her that Scout is able to find out most of the information about the Radley family—including the fact that Boo stabbed his father in the leg. Miss Stephanie even declares that Boo looked straight

through her window one night. Discussion and Analysis Chapter 1 sets the stage for *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It introduces the characters who live on the main residential street in Maycomb and lets Dill and the reader know of the mystery surrounding the Radley Place. The reader finds out that Boo has been inside his home for years. Through Miss Stephanie the children have learned how Boo ran with the wrong crowd when he was a teenager. On one occasion Boo and his friends drove backwards around the courthouse square and resisted arrest. Mr. Radley asked to handle the matter himself, promising that his son would give no further trouble. He confined his son to the house where he became a recluse. According to local gossip, the next time Boo was seen or heard was the day he stabbed his father in the leg with a pair of scissors while cutting items from the newspaper for his scrapbook. Mr. Radley ran screaming into the street, and the sheriff locked Boo in the courthouse basement. After a short while he was returned to the Radley home and was never heard from again. When Mr. Radley dies, Nathan moves back home to take charge. Dill is fascinated with the story and determined to draw out Boo Radley. As we learn the story of the Radley family, we also learn of certain conflicts between and even within the characters of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The children, provoked by their curiosity about the reclusive Boo Radley, concentrate on learning as much as possible about him. They spend the long, slow summer days thinking of ways to catch a glimpse of him. As they become caught up in the stories and superstitions surrounding him, they seem to lose sight of him as a person and think of him instead as a ghost or a hidden spectacle. They even use him to compete with each other, as they try to prove who can get closest to him and who is least afraid of

him. Throughout the book characters struggle to overcome inner fears, and in Chapter 1, we encounter a childish version of this. For the children, approaching Boo's house despite their fear is a thrill or a game. Later in the novel characters acting despite their fear will have much more serious results. Chapter 1 Summary and Analysis 10 The Radley family, in cutting itself off from society, also forms a pattern that will become more important later in the novel. All of the many kinds of people in Maycomb fit together to form an intricate social balance. When a family becomes cut off from this, they seem to have trouble surviving on their own. Harper Lee (through Scout's narration) uses many stylistic devices in Chapter 1. Scout uses personification, which is the representation of a thing, quality, or idea as a person. She does this when she describes the picket fence at the Radley Place as drunkenly guarding the yard and when she states that "pecan trees shook their fruit. . . ." Lee uses simile when she likens one thing to another through the use of the words as and like. For instance, Scout says that the Radley Place drew Dill "as the moon draws water" and that "by nightfall the ladies were like soft teacakes with frostings of sweat and sweet talcum. " Scout uses a metaphor when she calls one thing something else. For example, she says that the Radley home is occupied by a "malevolent phantom. " Humor is another stylistic device employed. For instance, when Miss Stephanie describes Mr. Radley as being "so upright that he took the word of God as his only law, " Scout does not understand and agrees that Mr. Radley's posture was indeed "ramrod straight. " Scout uses excellent grammar and has an extensive vocabulary for her age. The characters she quotes, however, often use the everyday speech or Southern dialect of the

1930s. For instance, a reference is made twice in Chapter 1 to the occupation of buying cotton, which Scout explains is "a polite term for doing nothing"; another time Jem tells Dill, "You look right puny for goin' on seven."

The plot order employs flashback, an interruption in the continuity of a story by the narration of an earlier episode. Scout begins by saying, "When he was nearly thirteen, my brother Jem got his arm badly broken at the elbow." She then states that, "When enough years had gone by to enable us to look back on them, we sometimes discussed the events leading to the accident." Lee then uses flashback when she refers to the days of Andrew Jackson. Dill serves an important role in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Upon his arrival, Scout tells him about Maycomb, the Radleys, and some of the other residents of the town. Through Dill's introduction, the reader can meet the characters and tour Scout's and Jem's territory—the boundaries of which have been set by Calpurnia's calling voice. The education of Scout and Jem is a major theme running throughout *To Kill a Mockingbird*. In Chapter 1 Atticus teaches two lessons. First, he tells the children to mind their "own business and let the Radleys mind theirs, they had a right too. . . ." His second lesson to the children is that there are many ways "of making people into ghosts." The children, however, do not immediately understand. This idea of ghosts, superstitions, and the sober, haunted atmosphere of the Radley Place is a secondary theme which permeates Chapter 1 and appears in other chapters throughout the book. Bravery versus cowardice is another theme that appears in the chapter. Scout states that Jem passed the Radley Place "always running" and that, "A Negro would not pass the Radley Place at night. . . ." Dill's aunt locks up tight at night because of her fear of Arthur.

Dill dares Jem to touch the house and contrasts the bravery of the folks in Meridian with the cowardliness of the people in Maycomb. The chapter ends with a sense of foreboding; the last words are that the Radley " house was still. " Chapter 2 Summary and Analysis New Characters Miss Caroline: the new first-grade teacher and Scout's antagonist. Walter Cunningham: a poor but proud member of the Cunningham family and Scout's classmate.

Chapter 2 Summary and Analysis 11 Summary Chapter 2 describes Scout's first day in school. The new teacher, Miss Caroline Fisher, spans Scout's hand before the morning is over. The conflict between Scout and Miss Fisher begins when Miss Fisher finds out that Scout can read; Miss Fisher tells Scout not to allow her father to teach her anymore. Scout says that her father did not teach her to read and proceeds to tell Miss Fisher of Jem's belief that Scout was swapped at birth and that she was born reading *The Mobile Register*. Miss Fisher closes the conversation by saying that Atticus does not know how to teach. Scout's first day in school. Miss Fisher next comes in conflict with Walter Cunningham. She tries to get him to take a quarter to buy his lunch. Scout explains that Walter is a Cunningham who will not take " anything off of anybody, " but Miss Fisher will not listen and spans her hand. The class does not understand what has happened at first, but when they realize that Scout has been whipped, they begin to laugh. Miss Blount, the sixth-grade teacher, threatens the whole first-grade class because her class cannot concentrate with all the noise in Scout's class. As the morning-and the chapter-end, Scout leaves for her lunch and sees Miss Fisher crying. Scout concludes by thinking, " Had her conduct been more friendly toward me, I would have felt sorry for her. " Discussion and Analysis There is a

conflict between Scout and Miss Caroline when the new teacher discovers that Scout can read. She shames Scout by saying that Atticus should not teach her anymore because he does not know how to teach. Miss Caroline vows to undo the damage Atticus has done with his teaching. Chapter 2 Summary and Analysis 12 Miss Caroline proves her insensitivity once again in a conflict with Walter Cunningham. When Miss Caroline inspects the children's lunches and finds Walter Cunningham does not have one, she tries to lend Walter money. Walter will not accept the loan. Although he is poor, he is proud. The conflict is heightened when Scout tries to explain about the Cunninghams and about Maycomb society to the new teacher, but the teacher—unlike Dill—is unwilling to listen. Miss Caroline tells Jean Louise that she has had enough of her, spans her hand with a ruler, and threatens the class. The conflict reaches a climax when the sixth-grade teacher comes in and personally reprimands the whole class because they are too noisy. In Chapter 2, Scout struggles with herself to stay quiet when she realizes she has annoyed her teacher. Later on, however, she abandons her resolve and tries to explain things to Miss Caroline. Scout has difficulty with her words; she wants to explain the Cunninghams' view as Atticus would have done, but she realizes it is beyond her ability. Miss Caroline's ignorance about the workings of Maycomb prove once again how intricately the society is constructed. Even the Cunningham's poverty is part of this system. Miss Caroline, a stranger to this system, does not understand it, and causes chaos in the classroom when she tries to interfere with it. She does not recognize that Scout is trying to show her how it works. In Chapter 2, Harper Lee continues to employ stylistic devices in her writing. Foreshadowing, or a hint

as to what is to come, is employed when Scout, in her narration, tells the reader that before " the first morning was over, Miss Caroline Fisher, our teacher, hauled me up to the front of the room and patted the palm of my hand with a rule, then made me stand in the corner until noon. " The reader is unsure why this happens and wants to read more. The statement also gives the reader a hint that more unpleasantness may be in store for Scout in the afternoon. The reader is hooked by the second chapter and must continue to explore the progressive plot to find out the answers to the many unanswered questions. Harper continues to use simile. For instance, Scout says that her new teacher looks and smells " like a peppermint drop. " The humor used by Scout in describing her first day helps the reader to endure with her the shame and mortification brought about by public education. For example, when the teacher asks if the students recognize the alphabet, the narrator (Scout) tells the reader that most of the students did; they had encountered them last year-their first year in first grade. Scout does not recognize Jem's malapropism, a ridiculous misuse of words. The new teacher is using the Language Experience Approach of Experiential Learning; John Dewey, a prominent educator of the time, advocates this method. Jem, however, mistakenly refers to the method as the Dewey Decimal System, a system of cataloging library materials. Scout also believes Jem when he attempts to explain the meaning of the word entailment; Jem tells her it is " a condition of having your tail in a crack. " These errors, however, serve to add humor to the chapter. Scout continues to give examples of the 1930s Southern dialect in the speech of Walter Cunningham. At one time Walter responds to his teacher by saying, " Nome thank you ma'am. " Another time

he mumbles " Yeb'm. " Harper continues to use flashback. For example, Scout begins, " My special knowledge of the Cunningham tribe . . . was gained from events of last winter. " Scout proceeds to explain the situation that gave her this information. Lee also uses irony, an action which is unexpected or contrary to what one would expect. Miss Caroline says she uses experiential learning yet she tells Scout not to read at home. It is ironic that Miss Caroline tries to curb Scout's experiences with reading when she purports to teach through the use of experiences. The irony is increased when Miss Caroline tells Scout that her father does not know how to teach; since Scout is reading Chapter 2 Summary and Analysis 13 easily and well, Atticus evidently does know how to teach. Through Scout's explanations of Maycomb society to the new teacher (and to Dill in Chapter 1), the reader is apprised of the intricacies of the Alabama town. The reader, unlike Miss Caroline, is able to profit from the information presented to the new teacher. The motif of education is continued in Chapter 2. The reader is made aware of the sharp contrast between Atticus's methods of instruction and those of the new teacher. The patience of Atticus is opposed to the impatience of Miss Caroline. The corporal punishment used by Miss Caroline is quite different from the gentle reasoning employed by Atticus. Scout learned to read at home by experiential learning: she sat on Atticus's lap and watched his moving finger as he read. Miss Caroline, however, forbids her to read anymore at home. Bravery versus cowardice is found again in this chapter. Scout, though aware of the possible consequences, still comes to the aid of Walter, her classmate—a good example of bravery. When the teacher herself is faced with opposition in the form of Miss Blount, she buckles under the

pressure. It is Scout who shows bravery and the teacher who shows cowardliness. Chapter 3 Summary and Analysis New Characters Little Chuck Little: Scout's polite, brave classmate. Burris Ewell: Scout's surly classmate who attends school once a year. Summary Chapter 3 occurs over a six-hour period from lunchtime until nightfall of Scout's first day in school. Scout takes out her frustration with school and especially with Miss Caroline by rubbing Walter's nose in the dirt of the school yard as the lunch break begins. Jem stops the slaughter and Scout quickly explains that Walter made her start school " on the wrong foot. " Jem serves as a peacemaker and invites Walter to their home for lunch. Scout pledges not to fight him again. Chapter 3 Summary and Analysis 14 Scout and Atticus On the way home, the three pass the Radley Place and a discussion of the fears and superstitions associated with the house ensues. Walter remembers eating pecans supposedly poisoned by Boo Radley and recalls how sick he was. At home Atticus accepts Walter as an equal; there is no class differentiation in the Finch home. During lunch Calpurnia disciplines Scout for commenting on the way that Walter pours syrup on his food. Even though it means walking past the Radley Place alone on her way back to school, Scout remains behind to advise " Atticus on Calpurnia's inequities. " Atticus, however, only reminds Scout of the trouble she causes Calpurnia who works so hard for her. Atticus refuses to fire the cook as Scout suggests. A new conflict develops in the afternoon between the teacher and Burris Ewell, another student. Miss Caroline sees a louse on Burris and becomes hysterical. Little Chuck Little tries to smooth things out. When Miss Caroline asks Burris to sit down, he becomes angry. Little Chuck Little tells Miss Caroline to " Let him go

ma'am. . . . He's a mean one. . . . and there's some little folks here. " Scout describes how Little Chuck Little's hand goes to his pocket and he threatens Burris with " I'd soon's kill you as look at you. Now go home. " The end result is that Burris hurls insults at Miss Caroline and leaves the class. Miss Caroline cries but she manages to recover and tells the class a story about a toad and a hall, probably Wind in the Willows. That night Calpurnia surprises Scout with crackling bread. After supper Scout asks Atticus if she can leave school like Burris, but Atticus says that she must obey the law. He tries to teach Scout a lesson about walking around in another person's skin. Atticus and Scout do reach one compromise: if she will go to school, they will continue reading at night. As an aside, he asks her not to mention their reading at school.

Discussion and Analysis Although every member of the Finch family understands the way Maycomb society works, they do not Chapter 3 Summary and Analysis 15 conform to Maycomb's rules of class. Walter is welcomed into the home by Atticus. The Ewell family, on the other hand, in no way fits into Maycomb society. They even live on the edge of town. Burris and his father refuse to obey the school attendance rules and the hunting regulations of Maycomb. Society elects to turn a blind eye on these activities. Scout learns several lessons in Chapter 3. Calpurnia teaches Scout that when people differ, Scout is not " called on to contradict ' em. . . . " Scout also learns from Calpurnia that guests in her home should be treated as such. Atticus teaches her to consider things from another person's point of view in order to understand that person. He indicates that sometimes it is better to bend the law a little in special cases. He also tells Scout that at times it is best to ignore things. He reminds her that Maycomb overlooks

Burriss's skipping school and Robert Ewell's hunting out of season. He applies this to Jem in the tree house; if Scout will ignore Jem, Jem will come down.

Harper Lee continues to use many stylistic devices in Chapter 3. The repetition of sounds, or alliteration, is used often. For instance, the reader finds words like "snorted and slouched" and "snot-nosed slut." Scout uses an idiom when she says that Walter made her start off "on the wrong foot."

Walter's dialect is apparent as he says, "Almost died first year I come to school and et them pecans-folks say he pizened 'em and put 'em over on the school side of the fence." Once again the children must prove their

bravery in the face of many threats. Often, this is easier in a group. The children walk by the Radley Place when they are together, but go by "at a full gallop" when they are alone. The children fake bravado in front of their peers, but they allow free rein to their feelings when they are unobserved.

Bravery versus cowardice also occurs with the confrontation of Little Chuck Little and Burriss in the classroom. Little Chuck Little, one of the smallest children in the class, displays bravery and is able to confront Burriss, "a hard-down mean one." Chapter 4 Summary and Analysis New Characters Mrs.

Henry Lafayette Dubose: "the meanest old woman who ever lived." Cecil Jacobs: one of Scout's classmates. Summary Scout's first-grade year finally ends; her conclusion is that she has been cheated out of something. Each day she runs by the Radley Place 30 minutes before Jem. One day she finds gum in the tree near the Radley home. When she tells Jem about the gum, he makes her spit it out. On the last day of school the two children walk home together. They find a package covered with foil and containing two scrubbed, Indian-head pennies in the tree near the Radley Place. The

children cannot figure out the source of the treasures. Chapter 4 Summary and Analysis 16 Scout and Jem find a package in a tree. When Dill arrives for the summer, the children reestablish their friendship. Their conversations are centered around ghosts and superstitions. On one of their first days of freedom, Jem gives Scout first push in the tire. Scout does not realize that Jem is angry with her until he pushes the tire with all the strength in his body. Dizzy and nauseated, Scout finds herself in front of the Radley house. Hearing the two boys scream loudly, Scout runs for her life and leaves the tire behind. It is Jem who finally retrieves the tire. Dill invents a new game: Boo Radley. The children dramatize Boo's story from the bits of gossip and legend they have heard and from their own additions. If Mr. Nathan passes by, they immediately stand still and silent. One day when they are involved in the game, they fail to see Atticus approach. He asks them what they are doing, but Jem replies, " Nothing. " Atticus takes the scissors from them and asks them if the game has to do with the Radleys. Jem denies that it does and Atticus goes inside. The children debate whether to continue the game. Because Scout does not want to, Jem complains that she is acting like a girl. Scout reminds them that she believes Atticus knows about the game. She keeps to herself her second reason for wanting to quit the game: laughter she heard when the tire landed near the Radley house. Discussion and Analysis In Chapter 4, the children still regard the Radley family with childish fascination. They act out their visions of the Radleys in much the same way they had previously acted out stories they had read. This shows that they regard the family as almost fictional. They give little thought to the fact that their game may be hurtful to Chapter 4 Summary and Analysis 17 thinking,

feeling humans behind the Radley windows. In his quiet way, Atticus tries to teach them about this. Later in the novel Atticus will try to teach a similar lesson to the inhabitants of Maycomb during the trial of Tom Robinson. It is a good thing that Atticus is such a good teacher, because Scout is sorely disappointed with the formal education she is receiving. It seems to her that the school system, an arm of society, is devised to keep her from learning. This causes Scout to believe that she " was being cheated out of something. " Fears and superstitions associated with the Radley Place comprise an important theme in this chapter. To further intrigue the reader, Harper Lee uses foreshadowing with the quotation, " There was more to it than he knew, but I decided not to tell him. " Chapter 4 is a cliffhanger; the open ending of the chapter is the sentence " Someone inside the house was laughing. " Imagery is the predominant stylistic device employed in Chapter 4. Through the effective descriptions of Harper Lee, the reader is able to visualize Jem retrieving the tire. " Jem . . . ran down the sidewalk, treaded water at the gate, then dashed in and retrieved the tire, " is countered with the equally strong image of " Atticus standing on the sidewalk looking at us, slapping a rolled newspaper against his knee. " Bravery versus cowardice (a secondary theme) is found throughout the chapter. The reader finds Scout running past the Radley Place in fear each day since she must go home alone from school; on the last day of school Jem and Scout walk together, rather than run, past the gloomy house. Later Jem conquers his fear long enough to go into the yard of the Radley Place to retrieve the tire while Dill and Scout look on at the performance. Bravery seems to occur when there are others watching rather than when the children are alone. Chapter 5 Summary and Analysis

New Characters Miss Maudie Atkinson: the neighbor who had grown up with Jack Finch. Uncle Jack Finch: Atticus's doctor-brother, ten years his junior.

Summary Scout begins to spend more time with Miss Maudie. The two talk about religion and anything else Scout wants to discuss. Miss Maudie treats Scout as an equal. She tells Scout to call Boo Radley by his real name: Arthur Radley, and she believes that Arthur does not come out of the house because he wants to stay inside. When Scout tells her that Jem believes he has died and been stuck up the chimney, Miss Maudie compares Jem to his Uncle Jack. It is apparent that Maudie and Atticus have similar views about the rights and dignity of the Radleys and of all people. Jem and Dill (with Scout looking on) try to send a message to Boo by tying it on a fishing pole and casting it toward his window. Because Dill fails to ring the bell which he is to use at the first sign of anyone approaching, Atticus catches them. Atticus gives them several rules to obey: They are not to play the game he had seen them playing, make fun of others, or go to the Radley Place unless they are invited. Jem is silent until Atticus is out of hearing. Then he yells that he is not sure that he wants to be a lawyer.

Discussion and Analysis

Once again, in this chapter, we see how an individual who separates himself from society can become a spectacle for those who fit in. Furthermore, we see again that Atticus, though he himself is a member of society, does not chastise others for choosing not to be. He tries to understand why they choose to remain Chapter 5 Summary and Analysis 18 apart. Boo Radley continues to be a recluse and continues to arouse the curiosity of Maycomb. Atticus, however, does not condemn Arthur for living alone. He reminds the children that " What Mr. Radley does is his own business. " Miss Maudie, also,

reminds Scout that Arthur Radley is a human being despite the rumors spread about him. She says that he deserves to be left alone if he prefers. Their attitudes are not typical of the rest of Maycomb society which continues to condemn and whisper about Arthur. To Kill a Mockingbird is a novel of maturation. The reader sees the growth and the coming maturity of Scout, Jem, and Dill. Chapter 5 emphasizes, however, that though Scout has grown, she still has innocence. For instance, when Miss Stephanie accuses Arthur Radley of looking in her window, Miss Maudie loudly asks Miss Stephanie if she moved over in bed for him. Scout misses the sexual implication and thinks it is Miss Maudie's loud voice that shuts Miss Stephanie up for a while. In Chapter 5, Harper Lee continues to stress the motif of fears and superstitions associated with the Radley Place. Scout discusses her fears and superstitions with Miss Maudie. Miss Maudie reflects that the stories about Arthur are "three-fourths colored folks and one-fourth Stephanie Crawford." If Maycomb society cannot get him to conform, they will make him what they will through their stories. When the curious and frightened children try to deliver a note to Arthur and are caught by Atticus, they are given certain rules to follow—another evidence of the education motif that pervades To Kill a Mockingbird. In this chapter, once again, the Radley Place serves as a challenge for the children, a chance for them to prove who is brave and who is cowardly. Scout admits to feeling terror just thinking of delivering a note to Boo Radley, but she suggests that Jem "just knock the front door down. . . ." Jem uses a pole to try to deliver a message to Boo; this shows his bravery is limited. Jem does not talk back to Atticus until he is out of earshot—a concession of cowardliness to the others who

observe him. Who is brave and who is cowardly has not yet been established. Chapter 6 Summary and Analysis New Character Mr. Avery: a neighbor who boards across the street from Mrs. Dubose. Summary On Dill's last night in town for the summer, Jem and Dill decide to peep in the window at the Radley Place to see if they can see Boo. Scout comes along. A shadow appears and the children run in fear. When shots ring out, Jem leaves his pants caught on the barbed-wire fence. The children join the other Maycomb residents who have come out into the night to see what has happened. Later in the night Jem and Scout return to the Radley Place for Jem's pants.

Chapter 6 Summary and Analysis 19 Scout, Jem and Dill peep in the window at the Radley Place Discussion and Analysis The children have violated the trust of the adults in their lives. The only way they can explain Jem's missing trousers is to lie. Dill says that they were playing strip poker. Scout and Jem fear losing the respect of Atticus, and Dill faces the anger of his Aunt Rachel. The judgment of the whole neighborhood is upon them when Jem appears in the crowd without pants and Dill tells his falsehood before the neighbors. In Chapter 6, for the first time, the children must face their fear of the Radley Place for a more serious reason than to prove their bravery to one another. The danger that Jem faces in retrieving his trousers is no longer ghostly and insubstantial, and in a sense, his bravery is more real as well. This chapter includes a major departure: Jem is the only one of the children to show bravery near the Radley Place even though he is not being observed by others. The reader will find later that he resists for a while his urge to tell Scout something that happens on this errand. For the first time a child elects to approach the Radley Place without the direct observation of a peer. Jem

shows bravery in going to the fence at night. The opinion of his father is more important than anything which might happen to him there. He is beginning to prioritize values in his life. To Kill a Mockingbird continues to be a novel of maturation, or a bildungsroman. Although the reader has directly observed the growth and maturity of the narrator Scout, Chapter 6 emphasizes the maturity of Jem, her brother. When Jem insists that he must return for his pants despite his fears, Scout does not understand his compulsion. She recognizes that he is no longer following childish motivations. She admits, " It was then, I suppose, that Jem and I first begin to part company. " Chapter 7 Summary and Analysis Summary Scout starts second grade. The children continue to look in the knothole and find presents: a ball of twine, two dolls carved from soap which resemble Jem and Scout, gum, a spelling medal, and a watch and pocketknife on a chain. Jem becomes very quiet. He finally tells Scout that the trousers he retrieved had been mended and neatly folded when he returned for them. After Scout and Jem write a thank-you note and place it in the knothole, they return to find the knothole in the tree has been filled with cement. Mr. Radley admits he filled up the hole, using the excuse that the tree was Chapter 7 Summary and Analysis 20 sick. Jem seems to be spending a lot of time thinking. Scout believes that on one occasion he was crying as he watched the Radley Place. Discussion and Analysis In Chapter 7 the children find themselves pitted against Nathan—not Arthur—Radley. When Nathan fills up the knothole where the children have been finding presents, they are devastated. Their fears and superstitions about Boo Radley are beginning to fade. Their conflict with Nathan Radley is more real to them now. This marks a passing of invented

childish fears. Instead of battling ghosts, they are learning the complexities of communicating with real people, as an adult must. Jem, especially, is showing signs of growing up. He becomes moody and private as he tries to absorb all that he is discovering about the real world. For quite some time he keeps a secret: the trousers he lost on the fence had been mended when he returned for them. Jem is struggling to control his emotions. When he goes by himself to cry the night after the knothole is filled in by Mr. Nathan Radley, it is not a childish display, but a sign that he is maturing. Stylistic devices are evident in Chapter 7. Harper Lee makes use of many hyperboles (exaggerations) to express the feelings that Scout is experiencing. For instance, Scout remarks that " if I had gone alone to the Radley Place at two in the morning, my funeral would have been held the next afternoon. " Symbolism is an important part of Chapter 7. Atticus continues to be the last word when any dispute arises. He is the symbol of stability in To