

To kill a mockingbird study guide and activities

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



To Kill a Mockingbird Study Guide and Activities SHORT ANSWER STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS - To Kill A Mockingbird * Chapters 1-3: 1. Identify Atticus Finch, Jean Louise (Scout) Finch, Jem Finch, Maycomb, Calpurnia, Charles Baker (Dill) Harris, The Radley Place, Stephanie Crawford, Arthur (Boo) Radley, Miss Caroline Fisher, Walter Cunningham, and Burris Ewell. -Scout- Scout is the Narrator of the story. In the beginning she is going into the first grade, though, for her age she is extremely smart. Throughout the book you begin to realize that Scout speaks her mind, and isn't timid. She is extremely curious. -Atticus Finch- Atticus is Scout's Father. He is an older man, and because of this, he is extremely wise. When Scout gets in trouble, he doesn't tell her if what she did was right or wrong. He simply tells her that she needs to see it from the other person's POV and she figures it out for herself. He is very understanding of his children and is easy-going. He has one brother and one sister -Jem Finch- Jem is Scout's Older Brother and Atticus' eldest son. In the beginning of the book, he is going into the Fifth Grade. He is very supportive of Scout, and is just as curious as she is. The two of them still have this similar innocence. -Maycomb- Maycomb is where the story takes place. -Calpurnia- Calpurnia, or 'Cal' as she is sometimes called, works for the Finches. She is what you could call a housemaid. She cleans, cooks and watches Jem and Scout when Atticus is at work. She is a well-respected person even though she is black. Sometimes throughout the book, you will see Cal acting as a motherly figure to Scout -Dill- Dill is a young boy that Scout and Jem meet in the beginning of the book, he is very small for somebody of his age, he is weak. He doesn't live in Maycomb with Jem and Scout, but he comes down every summer to spend time with them. He is

curious. -The Radley Place- The Radley place, is where Boo Radley and his family live. They hardly ever go out, except to get the paper. The home of Mr. Nathan Radley, who is unfriendly. Nobody ever goes there. -Stephanie Crawford- Stephanie was the " all knowing gossip queen" of Maycomb. She knew everything about everything. -Boo Radley- Boo comes from a family of " foot-washing Baptists. " He used to hang outside the barbershops and go dancing with girls; and these things used to be considered as crimes. Since his family was so strict when it comes to religion, his father locked him away in the house in fear of his son going to Hell. Boo (Arthur) is highly misunderstood. Nobody really knows who he is anymore. In the book, he leaves things in a tree for Scout and Jem to find. These were his only means of communication. The children used to describe Boo as a six-foot tall monster that ate neighborhood cats raw. Though none of the things they said were actually true. Boo has one older brother- Nathaniel- who appears as a small role in the book who takes care of Arthur and almost acts as his father. At the end of the book, when Bob Ewell attacks the children, it is Boo who runs out of the Radley House and defends the children by stabbing Mr. Ewell fatally so that the kids could get away with little harm. The sheriff lies to the court about what happened saying that Ewell fell on his own knife, because he knew the court system was unjust and wouldn't understand what really happened. -Miss Caroline- Miss Caroline is Scout's teacher. She is the teacher Scout hates because she punishes her when she stands up for Walter. Miss Caroline tells Scout to stop reading because she is " doing it all wrong." -Walter Cunningham- Walter is a Cunningham. His family is extremely poor. On the first day of school, he didn't have his lunch but he

didn't accept her quarter because he knew he couldn't pay her back. His family is grateful for everything they get. Though they will not repay you with money, they can give you their stories, firewood, and other things like that to repay you over time. Walter comes over to the Finch's house on the first day of school for lunch. He pours molasses over his meat and vegetables. At the sight of what Walter was doing, Scout comments that that isn't normal, but since Walter was a guest, Scout had no right to comment on his eating habits. Calpurnia noticed and scorned her for the incident. -Burriss Ewell- Burriss Ewell is one of the eight children of Bob Ewell. He had cooties and Miss Caroline sent him away because she was disgusted. He and his family only go to school for the first day every year, then leave, and are very proud of that. The Ewell Family is very ignorant and poor, and their father is awfully mean and the town drunk. Burriss (like the rest of his family) is incredibly rude, yet doesn't know how to be any other way. 2. What did Dill dare Jem to do? Touch the Radley House 3. What was Scout's first "crime" at school? Knowing how to read exceptionally well for her age. 4. What was Calpurnia's fault? Scout said it was Calpurnia's fault that she could write. This also caused trouble for her at school. Miss Caroline asked Scout to tell her father to stop teaching her. 5. Why did Scout rub Walter Cunningham's nose in the dirt? Scout stood up for Walter in class and tried to explain the Cunningham ways to Miss Caroline. For her explanations, Scout got in more trouble with Miss Caroline, so she took out her revenge on Walter. 6. Scout said, "He isn't company, Cal, he's just a Cunningham." What did she mean by that, and what was Cal's answer? After commenting on Walter's unusual eating habits Scout was sternly talked to by Calpurnia. When Scout

commented that " he's just a Cunningham," it was based on the fact that in Maycomb. The Cunninghams were not looked upon as common townsfolk because of their poor status. She is just repeating what she hears in the community where she lives, and really doesn't mean any harm by it.

Campania's reply is somewhat rude. She is quick to correct her. " Hush your mouth. Don't matter who they are, anybody sets foot in this house's you company, and don't let me catch you remarking' on their ways like you was so high and mighty! You' folks might be better' the Cunninghams but it don't count for nothing' the way you're disgracing' them - if you can't act fit to eat at the table you can just set here and eat in the kitchen!" 7. What two

mistakes did Miss Caroline make on the first day of school? She offered Walter a quarter to get lunch, and 8. Why didn't the Ewells have to go to school? The Ewell's were given " special privileges" like missing school because their father was extremely poor and spent all his money on alcohol.

They had a very dysfunctional and nobody really wanted to get involved with

them. * Chapters 4-7: 1. What did Scout and Jem find in the Radleys' tree? 2

Indian head pennies, a spelling bee medal, 2 carved dolls, gum, and a watch

2. Identify Mrs. Dubose. An elderly, ill-tempered, racist woman who lives near the Finches. Although Jem believes that Mrs. Dubose is a thoroughly bad

woman, Atticus admires her for the courage with which she battles her morphine addiction. At one point they destroy her flower and rose garden

and Atticus has the children go over to her house to read to her / spend time with her as punishment. She eventually passes away, and Jem and Scout

understand why she was the way she was. 3. How did Jem get even with Scout for contradicting him about " Hot Steams?" When it was her turn to

ride in the tire, he gave her an extra-hard shove. She ended up in the Riddles' front yard. 4. What was the Boo Radley game? It was when Dill, Scout and Jem would act out the stories they heard about Boo Radley. It was a mostly fictional game since there was no proof what so ever that what they were acting out really happened. The would always start with Boo (Arthur) getting sentenced to the industrial school but his father not allowing him to go. The climax then always ended with Boo (always played by Jem) stabbing his father (played by Dill) in the leg with a pair of scissors. They played the game until Scout thought that it would offend Boo and made Jem stop. 5. Identify Miss Maudie. Miss Maudie was the nice neighbor who allowed Jem and dill and scout to play on her spacious yard. she is a widow and enjoys working on her garden and baking the kids cake. 6. What does Miss Maudie think of the Radleys? She thinks they have a right to do whatever they want to do as long as they are not bothering anyone else, and she believes they have a right to their privacy 7. Why do Dill and Jem want to give Boo Radley a note? What does Atticus say when he finds out about their plan? They want to invite him out to play with them; they think he might enjoy that. Atticus tells the boys to leave Arthur Radley alone, that if he wanted to be outside, he would. Atticus also tells them that the proper way to extend the invitation would be at the Radley front door instead of putting a note on a fishing pole and sticking that through the window. 8. How did Jem lose his pants? What did he find when he went back for them? Jem, Scout and Dill went to look into the Radley house. When they were discovered, they ran. Jem got caught on the fence, and in an effort to free himself, he took off his pants and left them on the fence. When he went

back for them, they were mended and folded, sitting on the fence. 9. What else did Jem and Scout find in the Radleys' tree? They found a ball of twine, two figures (resembling themselves) carved from soap, and a broken watch

10. Why would there be no more surprises in the tree? Because Boo's older brother filled the hole in the tree with cement so nothing else could be sent back and forth between him and the children. * Chapters 8-9: 1. What happened to Miss Maudie's house? What was her reaction? Maudie's house burnt down. When it happened, she was very upset, but she was calm. 2. Identify Cecil Jacobs. Cecil Jacobs is the little boy in the schoolyard that told all the kids Scout Finch's Daddy defends niggers. Scout almost got in a fight with him 3. What "disaster" happened at Christmas between Scout and Francis? Francis was tormenting Scout saying that her daddy was a "Nigger Lover"; Scout began to shrug it off because she thought she was too old to fight. But she finally punched Francis. 4. What did Scout's Uncle Jack learn from Scout and Atticus? He learned to always listen to both sides of the story from Scout. He learned from Atticus that if a child asks you what something means, always tell them. * Chapters 10-11 1. What brave thing does Atticus do in Chapter 10? Why are Scout and Jem shocked? Atticus shoots a mad dog. They are shocked because until this day, they think of Atticus as having no real talents or anything to be proud of. He never touched a gun, to their knowledge, and he did not believe in fighting. Thus, they are very surprised to find out about "One-Shot Finch." 2. What did Jem do when Mrs. Dubose said Atticus "lawed for niggers?" He took Scout's birthday baton and, waving it madly, cut the tops off of all of Mrs. Dubose's camellia bushes. 3. What was Jem's punishment? He had to read to her. 4. What did Jem learn from his

encounter with Mrs. Dubose and following her death? He learned that people aren't always what they seem, that one can't understand someone else until one has all the facts, and, most importantly, that there is a different kind of courage than physical courage. * Chapters 12-14

1. How does Jem change? Jem is growing up. He is trying to make sense of things he sees, trying to be like Atticus, and trying to put behind him childish games and youthful pranks. Consequently, he is moody sometimes and occasionally seems to lord his authority over Scout. She resents his new "airs."
2. Identify Lula, Zeebo and Reverend Sykes. Lula was the woman at Calpurnia's church who made Scout and Jem feel unwelcome. Zeebo, Cal's son, makes them feel welcome, as does Reverend Sykes, the preacher at Calpurnia's church.
3. What does Scout learn about Calpurnia? Scout learns that Cal leads a double life. She talks and acts like her black friends and neighbors when she is with them, and she talks and acts more like white people when she is with them. Scout thinks this is interesting and asks to visit Cal at her home one day.
4. Who was waiting for the children when they came home from the church service? Why had she come? Aunt Alexandra was waiting for them. She had come to stay and "help out" while Atticus would be busy with the Robinson trial.
5. "Aunt Alexandra fitted into the world of Maycomb like a hand in a glove, but never into the world of Jem and me." Explain. Alexandra knew all the proper social things to say and do, and she knew a great deal of the history of the local families. She joined some clubs and entertained at her home, and generally did fit right into the town's society. However, Alexandra didn't understand or agree with the values by which Atticus was raising his children. Therefore, she did not understand the children's

behavior. Because their value systems were different, they were more often than not at odds. 6. Atticus and Alexandra disagree about how to deal with the children. How does Atticus handle the situation? Atticus makes the children obey Alexandra, but he lets them know that their relationship with him will always be the same as it was. He tries to appease Alexandra when he can, but on the major issues, he puts his foot down. 7. Describe Jem and Scout's relationship through these chapters as Jem matures. Jem and Scout seem to grow apart, but they don't really. They fuss more often than they had, mostly because Scout resents Jem's telling her what to do.

Actually, though, they are still very close and join forces when their pride is at stake. 8. Why did Dill run away from home back to Maycomb? Dill had everything a boy could want, except his parents didn't spend any time with him. He didn't feel like they needed him. He went back to Maycomb because he always saw how much attention Jem and Scout got. He wanted that

attention. * Chapters 15-17 1. What did Mr. Heck Tate's mob want? They wanted to make sure that Atticus and Robinson would be alright 2. What was the purpose of Walter Cunningham's mob? Cunningham's mob wanted to get to Tom Robinson to inflict their own justice upon him. If that meant they had to beat up Atticus, they were willing to do that. 3. Why did Mr. Cunningham's mob leave? Scout, Jem and Dill arrived on the scene. Scout came forward, and, while making her entrance and looking at the crowd, she noticed Mr. Cunningham. She identified him and began speaking to him on a personal basis, saying she was in his son's class and that he had come to lunch. She also reminded him that Atticus had done some legal work for him. All of these things were said in an innocent conversation to Mr. Cunningham. How

could he hurt this man when his kids were right there? 4. Identify Mr. Dolphus Raymond. Mr. Dolphus Raymond was a white man who married a black woman and lived with the black community. Jem has heard a story that Mr. Raymond is always drunk. (However, we learn later that this is just an act.) 5. Identify Tom Robinson, Mr. Gilmer, Bob Ewell, Mayella Ewell, and Judge Taylor. Tom Robinson supposedly raped Mayella Ewell, Bob Ewell's daughter. Mr. Gilmer is the prosecuting attorney. Judge Taylor will be the judge during Tom's trial. 6. What was the importance of Mayella's bruises being primarily on the right-hand side of her face? Bruises on her right side indicate that a left-handed person inflicted the wounds. * Chapters 18-21

1. What was Mayella's account of the incident with Tom Robinson? Mayella said she asked Tom to come into the yard to break up a chiffarobe. When she went into the house to get him a nickel, he had followed her in and then he grabbed her around the neck and hit her. He " chunked [her] on the floor an' choked [her] 'n took advantage of [her]." Her father came in and was standing over her, and then she fainted. 2. What was Tom's side of the story? Mayella asked Tom to come fix the hinges on the door in the house. Mayella had saved enough nickels to send all of the kids out for ice cream so she and Tom would be alone. She asked Tom to climb up on a chair to get a box, and as he stood there, she grabbed him around the legs. When he hopped down off the chair, she jumped on him. She kissed him on the side of the face. Tom wanted out and had to push Mayella away from the door. She was not hurt. He ran away before Mr. Ewell could catch him. 3. What was Tom's handicap? Why was it important to his case? Tom's left arm had been rendered useless in an accident. He could not have bruised Mayella's right

side and he more than probably would not have physically been able to force himself on a strong, violently resisting young woman. 4. What do Dill and Scout learn from Mr. Raymond? Dill and Scout learn that people aren't always as they appear to be. They learn that Mr. Raymond lives as he does because that's simply what he wants to do. Since people could never accept that, he gives them a "reason to latch onto" so they can accept his behavior. 5. What were Atticus' closing remarks to the jury? He said there was no medical evidence to suggest that Mayella had been raped, that the only evidence was the questionable testimony of two witnesses. He painted a picture of Mayella as a victim of poverty and ignorance, a lonely young woman who tempted and kissed a Negro and then had to get rid of him, the evidence, of her crime against society's unspoken laws. He tried to remind the jury of Thomas Jefferson's words that "all men are created equal," and that their job as a jury was to give a fair trial to the defendant. 6. What was the jury's verdict? Guilty. * Chapters 22-25 1. Why did Jem cry? He didn't believe that Tom Robinson was guilty because the jury had no real proof. Also, when Tom was convicted, he was amazed that the people he was raised around and grew up with could be so unjust to a man just because of the color of his skin. 2. What was "'round the back steps" when Calpurnia came in on Monday morning? The black community had left all kinds of food for Atticus and his family as a gesture of their thanks and respect of him for his defending Tom Robinson. 3. What was the significance of Maudie's two little cakes and one large one? Maudie had two little cakes for Scout and Dill, but Jem got a slice from the big cake. This was Maudie's symbolic way of saying she accepted Jem as a young man instead of a boy. 4. Describe Bob

Ewell's meeting with Atticus at the post office. Bob Ewell wanted to fight with Atticus. Atticus just said he was too old to fight, and he walked away. Bob Ewell threatened to get even. 5. What is Atticus' reaction to Ewell's threats? He rationally understands that Ewell is upset, and he allows Mr. Ewell the right to be upset. However, he does not believe that Bob Ewell would actually do any terrible physical harm to anyone. 6. Alexandra doesn't want Scout playing with Walter Cunningham. Why not? Alexandra thinks the Cunninghams are trash because they don't have the "background" of the Finches. 7. Jem said. " I think I'm beginning to understand why Boo Radley's stayed shut up in the house all this time . . . it's because he wants to stay inside." Why does he say that? The world is starting to look mighty complicated to Jem. The jury decision, all the talk about social class and the problem of what exactly " background" means, and Mr. Raymond's false drinking problem are all weighing on his mind, and he's trying to get things all sorted out with nice, neat definitions. He is learning that things in the real world just aren't easy to sort-out and understand. 8. Mrs. Merriweather of the missionary circle complains about her cooks and field hands. What does that tell us about her? As a member of the missionary circle, she is very concerned about the personal welfare of many Africans, but in her own back yard, Mrs. Merriweather is as prejudiced as she can be. 9. What happened to Tom Robinson? Tom was shot when he tried to escape from prison. 10. What more do we learn about Alexandra after Atticus and Calpurnia leave? Alexandra is given a more rounded personality in this section. We see clearly for the first time that she loves and is concerned for her brother. We see her take the news of Tom's

death with great difficulty, yet she gathers herself together and carries on with her guests. She seems a bit more human and a bit more noble than she has been painted prior to this. 11. What did Mr. Underwood's editorial say?

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What was Scout's fantasy regarding Arthur (Boo) Radley? 2. What did Scout hear Miss Gates say at the courthouse? In class, Miss Gates said, " That's the difference between America and Germany. We are a democracy and Germany is a dictatorship. . . . We don't believe in persecuting anybody.

Persecution comes from people who are prejudiced." What does this tell us about Miss Gates? 3. What happened to Judge Taylor? 4. What happened to Helen Robinson? 5. What was Scout's part in the pageant? She was a ham 6. Why did Scout and Jem not leave the school until almost everyone else had gone? 7. What happened to Jem and Scout on the way home from the pageant? Mr. Bob Ewell attacked the kids with a switchblade. 8. Who saved Jem and Scout? Who killed Bob Ewell? Boo Radley saw what was happening and grabbed the kitchen knife. He ran out and stabbed Ewell to death 9. Why did Heck Tate insist that Bob Ewell fell on his own knife? Because if people found out that Boo did it, they would never leave him alone, nor would they understand why he did it. 10. Scout arranged things so that " if Miss Stephanie Crawford was watching from her upstairs window, she would see Arthur Radley escorting [her] down the sidewalk, as any gentleman would

do." Why did she do that? 11. As Scout leaves the Radley porch, she looks out at the neighborhood and recounts the events of the last few years from the Radleys' perspective. Why