

"to kill a mockingbird": how does lee's narrative structure assignment

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The novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee is unique because it contains two plot lines and climaxes. Harper Lee has skillfully combined the two plots in the one story to enhance the impact of the novel on the reader. The two plots are strategically interwoven in the novel and make the novel more interesting as well as emphasizing the themes and symbolism contained in the novel. One of the plot lines involves Gem and Scout's adventures with Boo Radley, while the other is about Atticus Finch and his fight for Tom Robinson.

The narrative structure employed by Harper Lee is both interesting and effective and contributes greatly to the impact of the novel on the reader. On first thought the two plots are apparently quite different, and are yet in another aspect quite the same. The first plot line, that involving Boo Radley, seems a lot more of a childish, interesting plot. The children wonder about Boo Radley, and at the beginning view him as a monster. As the plot advances, and Gem and Scout mature through their experiences and age, they begin to realize that he is also, like them, a human being.

This plot is kept quite alive throughout the book, with small climaxes long the way, like when Boo Radley covers Scout in the blanket. It finally reaches its climax when Boo Radley makes his appearance and saves Gem and Scout. The other plot is a lot more serious, but yet quite similar. It is also about a man who is initially prejudiced against in society. Tom Robinson, a Negro, for whom Atticus stands up to defend. This plot essentially relies on the first one, in how Scout judges the attitudes of the people in Maycomb.

By the use of the two interwoven plot lines, Harper Lee effectively communicates the developing maturity of the children, and the system of social prejudice that exists. Harper Lee also uses her unique narrative structure in order to emphasize and explain the themes and symbolism she uses in her novel. Both the plot lines are similar, in the way that both deal with the theme of prejudice, social and racial prejudice. Both plot lines also develop the symbol of the mockingbird.

Boo Radley and Tom Robinson are both mockingbirds in their respective plot lines and Harper Lee uses this symbol to develop the theme. Boo Radley is a man who is prejudiced against by society. As the first plot advances we begin to see him as the mockingbird, an innocent man who has been prejudiced against by society. We see the prejudice that occurs, and how Gem and Scout develop a sense of this. Atticus was right. One time he said you never really know a man until you stand in his shoes and walk around in them. Just standing on the Radley porch was enough. Tom Robinson is also a mockingbird, an innocent man who is sentenced because he is black. Gem and Scout are both shocked at this decision, and yet none of the adults are very surprised. The two children are still not fully aware of the extent to which the prejudice exists in the town. Atticus explains that 'They've done it before and they did it tonight and they'll do it again and when they do it - seems that only children weep. Again Harper Lee uses the plot line to show prejudice and racism, and shows what its consequences may be.

The two interwoven plot lines express the same symbolism, having a greater impact on the reader and emphasizing the theme of prejudice. Harper Lee's unique narrative structure is very effective in contributing to the impact of the novel. Both plot lines centre in on the same theme, using different people and yet similar symbolism. As the plot lines develop we as the reader also see the children develop, mature and learn through their experiences. We see how the children begin to understand about the prejudice that occurs and we the readers are also made to think about these issues.

The plot lines intersect at the end of the novel and Scout stands in Boo Radley's shoes, and understands his reasons for his actions. The narrative structure and interwoven plots shows the maturity and development of Jem and Scout, and as a result, we also see the system of prejudice that occurs in that society. The narrative structure contributes greatly to the impact of the novel, as it both helps to explain as well as emphasize the themes and symbols Harper Lee uses in the novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*.