

To Kill A Mockingbird

the Haman Dignity That Unites Us All

larper

by Harper Lee

Teacher's Guide

Written By Mary Ellen Snodgrass

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Synopsis

Part I Chapter 1

In the fictional town of Maycomb, Alabama, in summer 1933, six-year-old Jean Louise "Scout" Finch reflects on her tomboyish ways. Since her mother's death from a heart attack four years previously, she is reared by her father, attorney Atticus Finch, and Cal, a black The Timeless Classic of Growing Up and

housekeeper. Scout looks back on her first years at Maycomb Elementary School and her consuming curiosity about Arthur "Boo" Radley, a reclusive neighbor reputed to be dangerous. After fifteen years indoors, at age 33, he had stabbed his father's leg with scissors.

Accompanied by Charles Baker "Dill" Harris of Meridian, who visits his Aunt Rachel early in the summer, Scout and Jem, her ten-year-old brother, keep watch on the Radley house. Late in August, Dill decides to make Boo come out of hiding. Atticus, who is aware of the children's curiosity and rowdiness, encourages them to develop courtesy and compassion for others.

Chapter 2

Dill returns home in September. Jem accompanies Scout to her first day at school. In Miss Caroline Fisher's class, Scout dismays the teacher by reading and explains she learned at home. Scout is aware that Walter Cunningham has no lunch bucket and tells the teacher that his family accepts no charity.

Chapter 3

Scout invites Walter home for lunch. Calpurnia scolds her for commenting that he drowns his food in syrup. In class, Little Chuck Little is infested with cooties. Atticus counsels Scout on compromise.

Chapter 4

On the way home from school, Scout finds two pieces of chewing gum in a knothole in the Radleys' live oak. Before Dill returns the next summer, Jem and Scout find a small, foil-wrapped box containing two polished pennies. Atticus stops them and Dill from acting out Boo's attack on his father.

Chapter 5

Scout questions Miss Maudie about Boo. Jem tries to extend a note on a fishing pole to Boo's window. Atticus orders him to stop tormenting Boo.

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Chapter 6

On Dill's last night, the trio tries to look into Boo's window. At sight of Boo on his back porch, they flee to the schoolyard. When they return, they learn that Nathan Radley shot at a Negro in the collard patch. Jem explains that he lost his pants in a game of strip poker. At 2:00 A. M., he retrieves his pants from Boo's yard.

Chapter 7

Two weeks later, Jem says that he found the pants folded across the fence. In October of

Scout's second year in school, they find in the knothole soap carvings of a boy and girl. The next week, they find a spelling medal; four days later, a pocket watch, chain, and knife. They compose a letter, but, the next morning, the knothole is filled with cement.

Chapter 8

Mrs. Radley dies that winter. The next day, it snows. Jem turns his snowman into a caricature of Mr. Avery. At 1:00 A. M., Miss Maudie's house is blazing. The houses collapses; at dawn, the fire trucks leave. During the night, Boo puts a blanket around Scout's shoulders.

Chapter 9

Atticus is going to defend Tom Robinson, a 25year-old black laborer accused of raping 19-yearold Mayella Ewell. The Ewells are a white trash family of nine living in a four-room hovel behind the town dump. At Christmas at Finch's Landing, Cousin Francis slanders Atticus for defending Tom. Uncle Jack comes to Atticus' house. In private, Atticus confides that the court case is unfavorable for his client.

Chapter 10

In an attempt to discourage Jem from shooting birds with his air rifle, Atticus warns that it is a sin to kill a mockingbird. When a neighbor's bird dog, Tim Johnson, appears rabid in February, Atticus drops him with one shot.

Chapter 11

After Mrs. Dubose scorns Atticus for defending Tom Robinson, Jem cuts the tops of her camellia bushes. As a punishment, he must read to her six afternoons a week for a month. A month after he completes his readings, Mrs. Dubose dies. Atticus admires her courage in defeating morphine addiction.

Part II

Chapter 12

That summer, a cartoon in the *Montgomery Advertiser* mocks Atticus. Calpurnia takes the children to Sunday services at the First Purchase A.M.E. Church, where Reverend Sykes collects money for Tom's family. When they return home, they find Aunt Alexandra waiting.

Chapter 13

Alexandra moves in and tries to instill respect for the genteel members of the Finch family.

Chapter 14

Alexandra advises Atticus to fire Cal. Atticus insists that the children love Cal. A runaway Dill spends the night at the Finch house.

Chapter 15

As tensions mount in the days before the trial, Sheriff Heck Tate summons Atticus to stop a mob at the jail. Armed only with a light, Atticus confronts a mob intent on lynching Tom Robinson. Scout shames them away by asking Mr. Cunningham about Walter.

Chapter 16

The trial draws heavy attendance, including Jem and Scout. By the time they are seated, Judge John Taylor is presiding as Tate takes the stand.

Chapter 17

Atticus discredits Bob Ewell for failing to summon a doctor to tend his daughter's injuries. Atticus draws attention to Ewell's left-handedness.

Chapter 18

Mayella testifies about the rape. Atticus has Tom stand to display his withered left hand. Scout fears that Mr. Underwood will tell Atticus that his children are attending the trial.

Chapter 19

Tom testifies about his work for Mayella. Dill begins to cry during the cross-examination. Scout leads him out to a shade tree.

Chapter 20

Dolphus Raymond offers Dill a sip of Coca-Cola and extols Atticus' character. On return to the courtroom, the children find Atticus in the middle of his summation to the jury. As he finishes, Calpurnia walks toward him with a note.

Chapter 21

To Alexandra's concern about the missing children, Mr. Underwood points out that they have been in the black balcony since 1:18 P. M. Atticus sends them home. An hour after dinner, they return and wait until after 11:00, when the jury announces a guilty verdict. As Atticus departs the courtroom, black members of the audience respectfully stand.

Chapter 22

Atticus defends the children's right to observe racism. The next morning, Cal discovers that grateful blacks have placed gifts of food on his porch. Miss Maudie champions Atticus' Christian deed. Neighbors warn the children that Ewell spat in their father's face that morning at the post office and threatened him.

Chapter 23

Jem worries about the threat; Aunt Alexandra fears some sneaky retribution. Late in summer, Tom goes to Enfield Prison Farm. Atticus takes heart that the jury stayed out so long and is glad he accepted Cunningham on the panel.

Chapter 24

Late in August at Alexandra's missionary circle, Scout helps Calpurnia serve charlotte and tarts. Atticus arrives home to tell Cal that Tom, disheartened by the white court's injustice, attempted to escape from Enfield Prison Farm and was shot to death by white guards. Alexandra admires her brother for his character and regrets his sufferings.

Chapter 25

Accompanied by Cal, Atticus visits Helen Robinson with the news of Tom's death.

Chapter 26

In fall, Cecil Jacobs brings a current event article about Hitler's persecution of Jews.

Chapter 27

In mid-October, Ewell loses his job with the WPA. He leaves a hate note at the judge's home. Helen gets a job with Link Deas and must walk around the Ewells' house to avoid rock throwing. After Deas intervenes, Ewell stalks Helen and croons foul words. Atticus knows that few people believed that Tom raped Mayella. In mid-October, Scout prepares for a part in the school Halloween pageant.

Chapter 28

On Saturday night, October 31, 1935, Ewell accosts Jem as he leads Scout, dressed in a ham costume, on the way home from the pageant. In the dark school yard, an unidentified rescuer saves the children and stabs Ewell under the ribs with a kitchen knife. Jem is carried home and his broken arm treated.

Chapter 29

As Atticus discusses the attack on Scout with Tate, Boo appears at Jem's bedside.

Chapter 30

The sheriff realizes Boo's role in the defense of the Finch children, yet chooses to label the incident a mishap by claiming that Ewell fell on his own knife.

Chapter 31

Scout, her curiosity about Boo satisfied at last, escorts him home.

Timeline of the Action

1883	Atticus Finch is born.
1923	lem Finch is born.
	Harper Lee is born in Monroeville,
	Alabama.
1927	Jean Louise "Scout" Finch is born.
1928	Atticus Finch's wife dies.
1929	The Depression begins.
1932	The case of <i>Powell v. Alabama</i> rules that
	defendants in the Scottsboro trial
	received inadequate counsel.
Jan. 30, 1933	Adolf Hitler is appointed German chan-
	cellor.
March 23	Hitler becomes dictator of Germany.
summer	Atticus and Cal, a black housekeeper, rear Scout and Jem.
	Dill visits his Aunt Rachel. He and the Finch children keep
	watch on the Radley house.
June 16	Congress establishes the National
	Recovery Administration.
late August	Dill decides to make Boo come out of hiding.
September	Dill returns home. Scout starts first grade. Boo leaves two
	pieces of chewing gum in a knothole in the Radleys' live
	oak.
1934	In late spring, Jem and Scout find a small box containing
_	two polished pennies.
August 2	Hitler achieves the rank of Führer.
late August	Jem, Scout, and Boo try to look in Boo's window. Nathan
0.4.4	Radley fires a shotgun.
October	Jem and Scout find soap carvings of a boy and girl in the knothole.
next week	
four days	They find a spelling medal.
later	They find a pocket watch, chain, and knife.
	The knothole is filled with cement.
	Mrs. Radley dies.
next day	Jem turns his snowman into a caricature of Mr. Avery.
1:00 A. M.	Miss Maudie's house burns. Boo puts a blanket around
	Jem's shoulders.
before	
Christmas	Atticus defends Tom Robinson, who is accused of raping
	Mayella Ewell.
Christmas	At Finch's Landing, Cousin Francis slanders Atticus for
	defending Tom.
1935	The second Scottsboro decision finds
	that blacks were excluded from the jury.
late winter	Jem is punished for cutting the tops of Mrs. Dubose's
	camellia bushes.
two months	
later	Mrs. Dubose dies after defeating a morphine addiction.
May 6	Franklin Delano Roosevelt establishes
	the Works Progress Administration.

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that summer	Aunt Alexandra moves in.
before the	
trial	Heck Tate summons Atticus to stop a mob at the jail.
during the	
trial	Scout and Jem sit in the colored balcony. The jury finds
	Tom guilty.
next morning	Cal discovers gifts of food on Atticus' porch.
late August	Tom is shot while attempting to escape from prison.
September	The Nuremburg Laws revoke Jewish
	rights.
fall	Cecil Jacobs brings a current events article about Hitler's
	persecution of Jews.
mid-October	Ewell loses his job with the WPA, leaves a hate note at
	the judge's home, and stalks Helen. Scout prepares for a
	part in the school Halloween pageant.
October 31	Ewell accosts Jem and Scout. Boo stabs Ewell with a
	kitchen knife. Sheriff Tate declares that Ewell fell on his
	own knife. Scout escorts Boo home.
1948	Truman Capote uses Lee as the model
	for Idabel Thompkins in Other Voices, Other
	Rooms.
1953	Attorney Thurgood Marshall pursues the
	case of Autherine Lucy against the
	University of Alabama.

Author Sketch

A product of the Deep South and distant relative of General Robert E. Lee, Nelle Harper Lee, the last of Frances Finch



and Amasa Coleman Lee's children, following two sisters and a brother, was born forty miles north of the Florida panhandle in Monroeville, Alabama, on April 28, 1926. She lived next door to Sook Faulk, aunt of Truman Capote, her lifelong friend and literary colleague, who spent summers in Monroeville. A reader of Jane Austen, Charles Lamb, Mark Twain, Samuel Butler, Henry Fielding, Marcel Proust, and Robert Louis Stevenson, she attended public school in Monroeville. After a year at Huntington College, in 1945, Lee followed her father and sister Alice's example and entered the University of Alabama law school. She studied for a year on an exchange program at Oxford University in England, but ended her education in 1950 without completing a degree.

Reestablished in New York City, Lee worked as a

reservations clerk for Eastern Air Lines and British Overseas Airways, then dedicated herself to full time writing, a decision which, for lack of funds, thrust her into a dismal, substandard cold-water flat. During this period of deprivation and arduous work, her father's illness forced her to make frequent trips back to Alabama. She submitted three short pieces of fiction and two essays to a literary agent for scrutiny. At his suggestion, she developed one of the stories into her first novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1960.

Lee, who relaxes with golf, reading, and music, is a private person who shuns interviews and the other trappings of fame. She values the importance of logic in her work and credits her legal training as a worthy adjunct to creativity. Perhaps the best summary of her character comes from Capote, who said that she is "someone rare ... a writer with the liveliest sense of life and the warmest, most authentic humor." Dividing her time between Monroeville and New York City, she has published no subsequent novels and but contributed reflective essays to *Vogue* and *McCall's* magazines.

Critic's Corner

The writing of *To Kill a Mockingbird* did not come easily because Lee writes slowly, working from noon to late afternoon, completing only a few pages per day, and setting them aside for later revision. She utilized her hometown as the prototype for Maycomb and chose Truman Capote as the model for Dill. The live oak in which Scout and Jem left gifts for Boo stood behind Monroeville's elementary school until disease took it; the old Hodge place served as the spooky home of the Radleys; Monroeville boosters raised money to restore the courtroom where her father defended clients and which she used as a major backdrop.

More crucial to the novel is Lee's creation of Atticus, modeled on her father, Amasa Lee, who died in 1962. The fictional Atticus serves as a symbol of conscience, typifying the Southern idealist confronting the obscenity of racial injustice. In retrospect, she described her gentle father as a man without ego, beloved by Alabamans for his warmth and goodness. She dedicated the book to him and to her sister Alice, "in consideration of Love & Affection." Upon the book's initial submission to J. B. Lippincott Company in 1957, Lee was told that her work, which focuses on a courtroom, law office, and small southern town, read like loosely connected short stories. Guided by her editor, she worked over two years on a revision. Upon publication, the work became a bestseller and earned praise from most quarters. Even critics who allotted guarded positive comments acknowledged the book's perceptive, engrossing qualities as well as its gentle humor and wit.

To Kill a Mockingbird earned acclaim from the Alabama Library Association, Literary Guild, Book-of-the-Month Club, British Book Society, and *Reader's Digest* Condensed Books. An unprecedented success of a first novel, it remained on the bestseller list for 73 weeks and made Lee the second woman to win a \$500 Pulitzer Prize. *To Kill a Mockingbird*, with its sympathetic look at the problems of growing up, has earned a niche in the canon of adolescent literature in the United States and Europe and has been translated into ten languages. The book placed her name among Eudora Welty, Reynolds Price, Zora Neale Hurston, William Faulkner, Flannery O'Connor, and other outstanding writers of the South.

In 1962, Popular Library produced a large print edition; Miller-Brody published an audiocassette narrated by Maureen Stapleton; in 1970 Christopher Sergel wrote a stage version for Dramatic Publications. The 1962 black-and-white film, narrated by Kim Stanley and starring Gregory Peck as Atticus, Philip Alford as Jem, and a Mary Badham, as Scout, was scripted by Texas playwright Horton Foote, who won an Oscar. The film earned Academy Award nominations for best picture, director, photography, music, and female lead. The movie, which Lee claims initiates "a new era of responsibility in Hollywood," is among the most popular literary titles viewed for classroom study. To honor Peck's Oscar-winning performance and his resemblance to her father, Lee gave him Amasa Lee's gold pocket watch inscribed "To Gregory from Harper, 1962."

Lee's Published Works

To Kill a Mockingbird, 1960

"Love—In Other Words," *Vogue*, April 15, 1961 "Christmas to Me," McCall's, *December*, 1961.

Related Reading

Maya Angelou, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings William Armstrong, Sounder Toni Cade Bambara, "Blues Ain't No Mockin' Bird" Olive Ann Burns, Cold Sassy Tree Forrest Carter, The Education of Little Tree Bryce Courtenay, The Power of One William Faulkner, "That Evenin' Sun Go Down" and "Two Soldiers" Ernest Gaines, The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman and A Lesson Before Dying Lorraine Hansbury, Raisin in the Sun Joy Kogawa, Obasan Carson McCullers, The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter and Member of the Wedding Toni Morrison, The Bluest Eye Scott O'Dell, Sing Down the Moon Cynthia Rylant, Missing May Theodore Taylor, The Cay Mark Twain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, and Pudd'nhead Wilson Eudora Welty, "A Worn Path" Ruth White, Belle Prater's Boy Eliot Wigginton, "Aunt Airie" in Foxfire Richard Wright, Black Boy

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General Objectives

- 1. To analyze the structure and significance of social class
- 2. To contrast society's expectations for blacks and whites
- 3. To differentiate between physical and moral courage
- 4. To evaluate the role of pride and dignity in human motivation
- 5. To discuss the destructive nature of racial prejudice
- 6. To examine the importance of family history
- 7. To discuss the theme of understanding as an organizing motif
- 8. To account for the importance of compassion
- 9. To enumerate minor conflicts that echo the major conflict
- 10. To note the effect of a limited point of view on the plot

- 11. To characterize the date, size, and locale of the setting
- 12. To define neighborliness as it applies to the novel
- 13. To discuss the role of major and minor acts of violence

Specific Objectives

- 1. To discuss Scout's attempts to cope with growing up motherless
- 2. To analyze Atticus Finch's relationship with racist community members
- 3. To isolate techniques by which Cal, Atticus, Aunt Alexandra, Miss Caroline Fisher, Mr. Cunningham, and Uncle Jack cope with children
- 4. To delineate the role of authority figures, such as Reverend Sykes, Sheriff Heck Tate, Mr. B. B. Underwood, and Judge John Taylor
- 5. To characterize Atticus' courtroom style
- 6. To comment on community response to the charge of rape against Tom Robinson and to his death during flight from Enfield Prison Farm
- 7. To name abnormal character traits in Boo Radley and Mayella Ewell
- 8. To characterize Mayella's relationship with her father
- 9. To account for Atticus' nobility
- 10. To delineate the role of a minor character, particularly that of Miss Maudie, Walter Cunningham, Dolphus Raymon, Little Church Little, or Link Deas
- 11. To explain the significance of the title

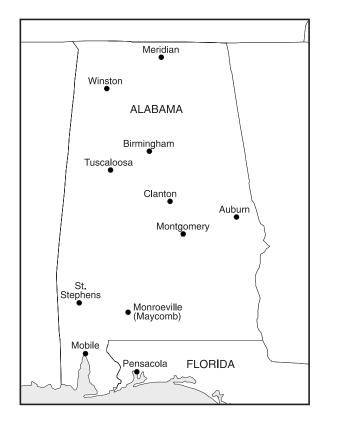
Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Harper Lee's fiction, present the following terms and applications:

Bildungsroman: literally a "formation novel," which describes the coming-of-age of an untried or naive youth. The story of Scout and Jem's dawning maturity during Tom Robinson's trial juxtaposes young, impressionable minds in contact with difficult concepts. They must account for the strident outcry of the community against their father and comprehend his quiet courage before the mob, at the post office, and during and after the trial. Their value systems must accept the black figures standing in respect and the silent offerings of food on the back porch as community reflections on courage and honor. In addition to the major confrontations, the Finch children must also reflect on Atticus' advice about living next door to a recluse, respecting an aged drug addict, refraining from scorning Walter's table manners, aiding a neighbor during a house fire, respecting private property, and valuing quiet courage over sharpshooting.

Irony: an implied discrepancy between what is said or done and what is meant. The moving scene before the jail counters mounting community outcry and an armed guard in the shadows with an unarmed man and his child who face down challenge with candor. The quiet good manners of Scout's greeting disarms a mob that threatens both Atticus and Tom Robinson. Emulating her father, Scout speaks without malice to Mr. Cunningham, blunting his will to seize Tom Robinson and turn him over to vengeful racists.

Symbol: a concrete object that stands for a complex or abstract idea or relationship and implies more than the literal meaning of the word or words, for example, the cheery-throated mocking-bird, the vulnerable bit of nature that Jem must protect from random shots with his air rifle. At Jem's bedside in the final scenes, Boo's appearance



and the sheriff's surmise about the stabbing lead to another vision of vulnerability. Like the mockingbird, Boo deserves protection for his inability to function in a threatening world.

The Importance of Setting

The milieu of To Kill a Mockingbird is essential to the action because it draws on the pre-civil rights South for a study of community violence. Against a potentially explosive local issue of black sexual violence against a white woman, the actions and outbursts of Atticus' white middle-class neighbors reflect rural Alabama's racism and hasty judgments against blacks. Lee salts the story with flora and fauna that link harmless visions of azaleas and camellias, chinaberry and live oak trees with the squalor of poor whites living on the outer edge of the city dump. Just as the snow-on-the-mountain demonstrates Southern pride in gardening, Mayella Ewell's yearning for a touch of beauty leads her to cultivate geraniums in discarded slop jars.

Specific to the action is the view of a Southern courthouse and an African Methodist Episcopal church. The social mechanisms that separate blacks into the court's colored balcony and into their own churches are the dominant factors in Tom's trial. Lee focuses on architectural and sociological constructs—the courtroom is a microcosm of Southern justice; the church is a microcosm of black solidarity and faith. Because the school represents the segregated South, its social microcosm depicts working-class children in classes alongside poor whites. Scout, who has benefited from cultivation at home, excels ahead of those who regularly fail and who come each day without a lunch because their families are poor laborers who bear the brunt of the Depression.

Because Lee limits the settings to Southern institutions and neighbors, she confines the motifs and themes to personal face-offs, bias, scorn, gossip, and surmise. The characters who flourish on the edge of respectability, particularly Dolphus Raymond, Bob and Mayella Ewell, Little Chuck Little, and the Cunninghams, demonstrate the coping mechanisms necessary for the have-nots in a world of more privileged and educated people. Atticus is the rare figure who stands in the breach: a symbol of honor and humanism, he rejects dividing lines and honors all citizens as human beings deserving of honor.

Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* should include these aspects:

Themes

- maturity
- loss
- repression
- isolation
- discovery
- justice
- neighborliness
- ridicule
- character
- respect

Motifs

- loss of family members
- learning compromise
- coping with gossip
- witnessing a divisive community conflict
- defending the vulnerable

Cross-Curricular Sources

For more information about character, Alabama, Franklin Roosevelt, the Scottsboro trials, the Depression, and other subjects and issues deriving from the novel, consult these sources:

Acting on Your Values, Rosen Publishing Group Characters in Crisis, Center for Humanities Foxfire, University of North Carolina Press No Man Is an Island, Center for the Humanities Stand Tall, AGS Media

Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page numbers are given so that you can note the context from which the item is taken.

 "Tell you, Atticus," Cousin Ike would say, "the Missouri Compromise was what licked us, but if I had to go through it agin I'd walk every step of the way there an' every step back jist like I did before an' furthermore we'd whip 'em this time ... now in 1864, when Stonewall Jackson came around by—I beg your pardon, young folks. Ol' Blue Light was in heaven then, God rest his saintly brow...." (Chap. 9, p. 76)

(As Atticus explains to Scout why he chooses to defend a black man, she sees a similarity between Atticus' use of war imagery and that of Cousin Ike Finch, "Maycomb County's sole surviving Confederate veteran." Ike maintains that the South could have won the Civil War if Congress had not established a compromise in March 1820 creating a balance between slave and free states. Under the law, fostered by Speaker of the House Henry Clay, Maine entered the Union as a free state and Missouri was accepted as a slave state.

Another great blow to Southern strength was the untimely death of Thomas Jonathan "Stonewall" Jackson, Lee's able lieutenant and major strategist who was accidentally shot by his own troops at Chancellorsville on May 2, 1863. His shattered arm was amputated, but the treatment failed to save his life. His death from pneumonia eight days later greatly weakened the Confederate army's morale because his absence lessened General Lee's effectiveness.

In this scene, the theme of futility permeates three layers of personal battles: Cousin Ike's attempts to replay crucial turns of the Civil War, Atticus' acceptance of a court case which he has little chance of winning, and Scout's personal war against school children who taunt her because her father is violating their code of racial prejudice. The author tinges this serious discussion with a note of humor. Scout, who feels noble because she has shouldered Atticus' burden by refusing to fight her tormentor, Cecil Jacobs, remains steadfast in her father's defense until the holidays. "Then," she states, "Christmas came and disaster struck.")

2. First Purchase African M. E. Church was in the Quarters outside the southern town limits, across the old sawmill tracks. (Chap. 12, p. 118) (*The First Purchase African M. E. Church where Scout attends morning worship is typical of southern black churches. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, black Methodists split from the white Methodist assembly and formed their own African Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal Zion, and Black Methodist Episcopal churches. This particular congregation, though poor, represents the cohesion of black society in Maycomb, where a free-will offering for Tom Robinson, one of its respected members, is appropriate.*

The history of First Purchase indicates black pride in worship and community development. There is a steeple and bell atop the "ancient paint-peeled frame building," which takes its name

from the investment of emancipated slaves. Scout notes the care lavished on the simple graves and the members' gestures of respect as she enters with Cal. A brief confrontation erupts between Lula, a quarrelsome troublemaker, and Cal. Lula prefers that black churches remain exclusively black. The members side with Cal, who expresses amusement that Lula is outnumbered. The children are welcomed as Cal's "comp'ny.")

3. "Ku Klux got after some Catholics one time." (Chap. 15, p. 147)

(Jem, concerned that the lynch mob might return to harm Atticus, recalls mention of Ku Klux Klan activities. Atticus, intent on calming his son's anxiety, remarked that "Way back about nineteen-twenty there was a Klan, but it was a political organization more than anything. Besides they couldn't find anybody to scare."

Organized in Pulaski, Tennessee, in 1866 during Reconstruction in the turbulent years that followed the Civil War, the first clan, a secret terrorist brotherhood, evolved from working class discontent with the encroachment of free blacks. As Atticus indicates, the movement had a second rise in popularity between 1915 and the early 1920s, when a surge of patriotism spread Klan activities farther from its southern roots. During this period, participation reached a million and a half members. It was this era that produced the novel The Clansman and the film The Birth of a Nation.

Evolving its name from kyklos, the Greek word for circle, the Klan emphasized keeping blacks "in their place" by burning buildings, terrifying isolated families, and maiming and murdering black males who refused to demonstrate what racists considered an appropriate subservience to the superior white race. Atticus is wrong in concluding that Klan activity subsided for good in the 1920s, for a third emergence of a coordinated hate campaign began in the 1950s.)

4. "Hey, Mr. Cunningham. How's your entailment gettin' along?" (Chap. 15, p. 153)

(As Scout penetrates the clutch of citizens menacing the jail where Tom Robinson is incarcerated, in her innocence, she searches for a casual topic of conversation to engage Walter Cunningham. She chooses his entailment, a restriction or limitation on the sale or transfer of property, which is a subject that "Atticus had once described . . . at length." The dramatic situation between a curious child and a vituperative lynch mob develops into an unforeseen contretemps which deflates the group's urge to spill blood.

Scout pursues trivial conversation, noting that she and Walter, Jr., are in the same grade in school and that, according to Atticus, an entailment "takes a long time sometimes . . . that you all'd ride it out together." The intense moment ends when Cunningham stoops, grasps Scout by the shoulders, and acknowledges her greeting to his son. As the mob disperses, Atticus demonstrates his relief by turning his face to the jail wall and blowing his nose on his handkerchief.)

5. The Maycomb County courthouse was faintly reminiscent of Arlington in one respect: the concrete pillars supporting its south roof were too heavy for their light burden. (Chap. 16, p. 162)

(As Scout and Jem draw near the courthouse, Scout observes the melange of architectural detail—the body of the courthouse was early Victorian. The preserved pillars from the original edifice, which burned in 1856, were a heavier style—"Greek revival columns [which] clashed with a big nineteenth-century clock tower housing a rusty unreliable instrument, a view indicating a people determined to preserve every physical scrap of the past."

The preservation of the past, as indicated by Maycomb's haphazard architectural monuments, reflects the county's philosophy—a belief system dating back to slave days, which had ended seventy years previous to the story. Life in Maycomb displayed its human patchwork of styles, both humane and vitriolic, compounded of Christian love and neighborliness to whites and a blend of superciliousness and intense persecution of blacks. As the children make their way upstairs through "sundry sunless county cubbyholes," they permeate an atmosphere of rarefied decay, tinged with dampness, dust, and the odor of urine. The city workers are "little gray-faced men," who are so removed from the real world that they appear to have no contact with "wind or sun." As the author implies, the moral climate of the community is ripe for change.)

6. "There's not a seat downstairs. Do you all reckon it'll be all right if you all came to the balcony with me?" (Chap. 16, p. 164) (*Jem, Dill, and Scout move through the unusually crowded passage to the courtroom, taking their time so that they can avoid being spotted by Atticus. Ironically, as Scout becomes separated from the boys and lingers amid the Idlers' Club, her dalliance causes a propitious change of plans: because no seats remain among white spectators, Reverend Sykes offers the children a place among blacks in the Colored balcony, which "ran along three walls of the courtroom like a second-story veranda, and from it we could see everything."*

Symbolic of their existence apart from Maycomb's inbred prejudices, the Finch children view the trial from a better vantage point, both physically and morally. Four blacks exhibit more courtesy than the Idlers' Club and relinquish their front-row seats for the children and Reverend Sykes. Seated among the dispossessed of the South's citizens, Jem and Scout watch their father do battle with a social system centuries old.) 7. Judge Taylor was on the bench, looking like a sleepy old shark, his pilot fish writing rapidly below in front of him. (Chap. 16, p. 164-165) (One of Harper Lee's most effective mechanisms in balancing her narrative is the judicious placement of comic relief. As the tension mounts in Maycomb for the long-awaited trial, the children look down on the participants in the scenario, one of whom is their father. Scout perceives Judge Taylor as a shark who operates professionally but without extensive formality. To prove that he is a capable man for the job, she narrates an anecdote about a mock serious litigation between the Cunninghams and their relatives, the Coninghams. The crux of the humor is that Jeems *Cunningham's mother, who committed the spelling error in* question, "was an uncertain speller, a seldom reader, and was given to looking far away sometimes when she sat on the front gallery in the evening."

The comic nature of this diversion relieves the intensity of the courtroom drama while preparing the reader for an essential truth about the South of the 1930s—illiteracy and ignorance are dual perpetuators of the bigotry that divides Maycomb and leads to the unjust verdict against Tom Robinson. As Atticus questions Mayella, he indirectly reveals the squalid, substandard lifestyle of the Ewell family, who live in a hovel formerly occupied by blacks.

The episode ends with a secondary theme. Even though smoking is permitted in the courtroom, Judge Taylor prefers to chew his cigars rather than to light them. Scout, repulsed by his filthy habit, wonders how his wife could kiss a man with tobacco breath. Atticus assures her that the Taylors, who are elderly, rarely kiss. This passage of light humor introduces the motif of lovelessness, the chief reason for Mayella's attempt to seduce Tom Robinson and the impetus which leads her to concoct an accusation of rape against an innocent party.)

8. "... Robert E. Lee Ewell!" (Chap. 17, p. 169) (The author draws on the stereotypical picture of the southern male cracker—a shiftless ne'er-do-well imbued with more pride than his lifestyle can support. Ewell, decked out with the name of the great Confederate general, struts and crows like a bantam rooster. The color of his neck allies him with the term "redneck," a close associate of "cracker" and one of the least admirable of southern social classes.

Bob is an ignoble character. Physically, he lacks grace and grooming. He has wispy, ill-controlled hair, a pointed nose, and a weak chin that fades into "his crepey neck." Scout comments that his family avoids education and constantly requires welfare assistance and care from the health department for "diseases indigenous to filthy surroundings." His home, a ramshackle abandoned cabin near the town dump, rests on "lumps of limestone." His family augments their meager subsistence by combing the dump for food, tools, and odds and ends.

In contrast to Bob's squalid lifestyle, there exists one small proof that Mayella, the eldest of eight children and a makeshift mother figure, yearns to raise the family's standard of living. Opposite a heap of discarded items reposes a row of slop jars filled with "brilliant red geraniums," tended with affection, a single spot of beauty in the otherwise wretched residence of the Ewell family.)

9. "Maybe things'll strike him as being—not quite right, say, but he won't cry, not when he gets a few years on him." (Chap. 20, p. 201) (After Scout escorts Dill from the balcony because of his tearful response to Horace Gilmer's cross-examination of Tom Robinson, the children encounter Dolphus Raymond in the yard. Dolphus, an eccentric by Maycomb's standards, chooses to live among blacks and reveals to the children that the bottle he habitually conceals in a paper bag is really Coca-Cola. To soothe Dill, he offers him a sip to settle his stomach. Scout, ignoring an inner voice warning her away from this anomalous figure, is fascinated by "a being who deliberately perpetrated fraud against himself."

In answer to her question of why he divulged his secret to the children, Dolphus replies, "Because you're children and you can understand it." He adds that Dill, who is more child than man, is still true to his inner compulsions and gives in to the emotions he experiences when he observes injustice. He approves of Dill's forthright weeping: "Cry about the simple hell people give other people—without even thinking. Cry about the hell white people give colored folks, without even stopping to think that they're people, too."

Dolphus serves the author's purpose by praising the qualities of character which set Atticus apart from the ordinary. "Miss Jean Louise, you don't know your pa's not a run-of-the-mill man, it'll take a few years for that to sink in—you haven't seen enough of the world yet." Moved to stay and hear more of Dolphus' condemnation of Maycomb-style racism, Scout instead heeds the call to return to the courtroom to hear the remainder of the prosecuting attorney's cross-examination.)

10. "I simply want to tell you that there are some men in this world who were born to do our unpleasant jobs for us. Your father's one of them." (Chap. 22, p. 215) (*Miss Maudie Atkinson, a stern, but motherly figure in the daily*

lives of the Finch children, plays the role of chorus, countering the antiphony of Miss Stephanie Crawford's mean-spirited gossip and shoring up Jem's flagging spirits. She instructs Jem concerning his father's role as Christian in a community that refuses to demonstrate humanity: "We're so rarely called on to be Christians, but when we are, we've got men like Atticus to go for us."

Jem, who is too immature to grasp the concept of martyrdom, wishes that other people shared Miss Maudie's faith in his defeated father. She cheers him with the news that there are others—blacks, the judge and Sheriff Tate. She places in perspective Atticus' victory: he lost the case, but he made a tiny inroad against local prejudice by keeping the jury out longer than normal.)

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers with quotations from the novel.

Questions 1 - 5 (Literal Level)

1. Describe the settings.

(To Kill a Mockingbird, told in retrospect by Jean Louise Finch, takes place in a small Alabama town. The action focuses on the Depression from 1933 to the fall of 1935, as indicated by the extreme poverty of some of the citizens, such as those who pay Atticus for legal work with produce, by Bob Ewell's expulsion from the WPA, and by the third graders' study of Hitler's rise to power in 1935. Much of the action takes place on a main street in the residential section of Maycomb, where Scout and Jem are allowed to play "within calling distance of Calpurnia," that is, as far north as Mrs. Dubose's house and as far south as the Radley Place. Dill, their companion, at times visits with his Aunt Rachel next door. A crucial family scene occurs when the Finches spend Christmas at Finch's Landing, twenty miles to the east of town.

Other locales of minor importance are Atticus' office, the jail, the elementary school, Miss Maudie Atkinson's house, the inside of Mrs. Dubose's house, the front yard of the Radley Place, First Purchase African M. E. Church, the Ewell house, and beyond to the Robinson house in the negro quarter, which lies down the dirt road from the town dump. The crux of the plot unfolds in the courthouse, where the children occupy seats in the colored balcony and can look down on the proceedings that take place on the first floor.)

2. Explain Scout's difficulties in growing up. (Scout, whose mother died of a heart attack when Scout was two, enjoys the light, but steady hand of her fifty-year-old father, who is often away at work when Scout is playing. In contrast to Atticus, the keeper of family discipline, Calpurnia, exhibits more firmness and less willingness to equivocate in matters of right and wrong. Scout, who rejects the fussy gentility of southern womanhood as easily as she gives up the name Jean Louise, pals around with her brother Jem, who is four years her senior, and with a neighbor's nephew, Dill Harris, who visits every summer. Many of the children's clashes with authority figures concern their obsession with Arthur Radley, a mentally defective adult who lives two doors down and whose reclusive ways intrigue the children's imaginations.

Scout suffers most in the time span surrounding Tom Robinson's arrest and trial. Constrained from shooting songbirds with her air rifle or engaging in fist fights, she chafes at a hostile community that taunts her for her father's support of a black man accused of raping a white woman. Scout's equanimity gives way to anger when she violates family strictures during Christmas at Finch's Landing, wallops Francis for denigrating Atticus, and is punished by her Uncle Jack. Like Jem, she cannot abide epithets directed at Atticus, whom she worships for his gentle ways and goodness of heart.

The situation worsens after Aunt Alexandra arrives to become the third authority figure in the Finch house. Her Victorian notions of what young ladies can discuss and do clash with Atticus' liberal ways. Jean, on the sidelines on the rare occasions when Atticus quarrels with another adult, in part perceives that their differences of opinion pertain to her freedom of movement to a black church and to a courtroom where testimony may offend her innocent sensibilities. In the end, just as Atticus predicts, Scout proves far more capable of sorting out controversy than Aunt Alexandra assumes. As a result, Scout demonstrates her understanding and acceptance of Atticus' belief that most people are worthy of respect.)

3. How does Atticus become involved in controversy?

(Contrary to the usual arrangement, Atticus, a mild-mannered southern lawyer, is appointed as counsel to Tom Robinson, a twenty-five-year-old laborer and resident of the negro section on the outskirts of town, who is accused of raping a white woman. The most damning evidence against him, aside from the victim's testimony, is the eyewitness account given by the victim's father, Bob Ewell, who claims to have observed the rape. The social climate inveighs so heavily against blacks that whites are outraged at the crime and associate Atticus' defense of the accused man with forbearance of the crime itself.

To Scout, who questions her father about his part in the trial, Atticus provides a sensible answer based on his understanding of his role as attorney. "Simply by the nature of the work, every lawyer gets at least one case in his lifetime that affects him personally. This one's mine, I guess." Later, he clarifies his personal philosophy by stating his definition of morality: "Before I can live with other folks I've got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rules is a person's conscience."

The swirl of gossip, innuendo, and diatribe climaxes the night that the lynch mob marches on the jail. Atticus, fully apprised of their intent, arms himself with light, drop cord, and office chair and stakes out the front of the building. His courageous stand, backed up by Mr. Underwood with his shotgun and Scout's childish prattle to the leader of the disorderly group, suffices to defuse potential mob rule.

The denouement of the story returns to violence after Bob Ewell spits in Atticus' face and vows to get even for public humiliation at the trial. Atticus, who minimizes the threat, comes near to tragedy after Bob threatens Scout and Jem. The intervention of Boo Radley ends the stand-off between Bob and Atticus.)

4. What minor incidents pertain to the theme of fighting a losing battle?

(Several minor incidents in the story reflect the major theme. Jem, out of anger, uses Scout's baton to destroy Mrs. Dubose's snow-on-the-mountain, a prize camellia. After she requests that he read to her six afternoons a week, he learns the meaning of courage in the face of defeat. Following Mrs. Dubose's death, Atticus impresses on Jem that she used his reading aloud to her along with her alarm clock as a means of battling morphine addiction, a state she fell prey to unintentionally while treating a terminal illness. Her gift to Jem—a perfect white camellia bloom nestled in a candy box— symbolizes the purity of her spirit, which met death free of the onus of drugs. Atticus dignifies her struggle by calling her a "great lady."

Another minor detail indicates that Mayella Ewell, like Mrs. Dubose, was also capable of warring against overwhelming odds. Amid the squalor of the family dwelling and alongside the town dump, she apparently coaxes red blooms from geraniums, which she planted in discarded slop jars. Her desire for beauty and her loneliness grow out of the poverty which engulfs her family, making them permanent recipients of county handouts. The silent symbolism of flowers in a dead-end existence suggests that Mayella, with her primary education, drunken father, and seven needy siblings, manages the best she can.)

5. What is Boo Radley's role in the novel? (Arthur Radley, who hovers like an unseen phantom throughout the novel and makes his first formal appearance in the final chapter, is the neighborhood bogeyman, the legendary killer of children, hulking menace, and doer of evil. His family resides behind shuttered windows, a departure from the open hospitality of a southern town. Boo's incarceration stemmed from adolescent high spirits, which got him in trouble with the law when he was eighteen. His father promised the judge that Boo would give no more trouble if he were excused from a term at the state industrial school.

Locked away in the forbidding Radley home, Boo remained indoors for twenty-five years. At age thirty-three, he stabbed his father with scissors. The incident was reported in the Maycomb Tribune. Minor incidents bring Boo in contact with Dill, Scout, and Jem. Until Nathan cements over the live oak on the Radley property, gum, pennies, and toys appear in a knothole. Jem's pants are draped on a fence, and an unseen person places a blanket on Scout while the children watch Miss Maudie's house burn.

It takes the menace of a greater evil, Bob Ewell armed with a knife, to bring Boo fully into community life once more. He stabs Ewell, thereby rescuing the children from a stalking villain. As Sheriff Tate questions the children, Boo appears in the Finch house. Dr. Reynolds assumes that Boo breaks his quarter century of isolation because he wants visible evidence that Jem is still alive.

The physical appearance of a ghostly pale, thin face and hands quiets Scout's fears of a deadly neighborhood apparition. She welcomes Boo as an honored guest and directs him to the porch, where Atticus and the sheriff discuss the killing. Atticus is grateful for the children's rescue and states his thanks; Alexandra allows Boo to touch Jem. The Finch family's contact with the unknown quantity, the legendary Boo Radley, symbolizes innocence, an embodiment of the gentle mockingbird which does no harm.)

Questions 6-8 (Interpretive Level)

6. Contrast Mayella's account of the crime with that of Tom.

(Mayella, who testifies after Sheriff Tate and Bob Ewell give their evidence, first answers general questions from Atticus, then recounts the details of the crime. She declares that she offered Tom Robinson a nickel to chop apart a discarded bureau with a hatchet. When he entered the cabin, she alleges that he cursed, choked, hit, and raped her while she yelled and fought. Her response was to scream when she saw her father through the window.

Tom, whose testimony contradicts most of Mayella's version of the incident, states that Mayella asked him to repair a broken door hinge, then invited him into the cabin to reach a box from a tall cabinet. When he stretched upward, she grasped him about the waist and kissed him, causing him to overturn the chair he was standing on. Tom vows that he tried to escape without harming her, but that Bob intervened and called his daughter a whore. Tom then fled the scene.) 7. What details from the trial give Scout a clearer view of Mayella's dismal life? (Various details from the testimony congeal in Scout's mind, causing her to pity Mayella, whose life with a tyrannical alcoholic is obviously a nightmare. First of all, Mayella is the oldest of a motherless tribe of eight poorly educated and unwashed children. The facilities at hand for caring for home and family are meager. The children are left to their own devices in matters of personal cleanliness.

To rid herself of loneliness, Mayella probably saved up seven nickels, sent the younger children to town for ice cream, then waited until Tom came down the road and invited him in under pretense of needing help with household chores. The fact that so belligerent a racist as Mayella would chase a handicapped black man proves that she was desperate for love.

The fact that Bob did not think of calling a doctor to examine Mayella suggests that he did not worry too much about physical injury. More damning to the situation is the sheriff's testimony that Mayella's injuries were on the right side of her face and neck, clearly lining up with her left-handed father's reach rather than with Tom's, which was hampered by a cotton gin accident which shortened and weakened his left arm.

Atticus hammers away at the jury with the overall picture: Mayella is "white and she tempted a Negro. She did something that in our society is unspeakable: she kissed a black man." Claiming to be a victim, she fabricates a tale of assault and rape, knowing full well that Tom will be executed if he is found guilty. Scout, who is perceptive for an eight-year-old, compares Mayella to Boo. She comprehends the loneliness and isolation of a white trash girl living on the rim of the black community. "She was as sad, I thought, as what Jem called a mixed child: white people wouldn't have anything to do with her because she lived among pigs; Negroes wouldn't have anything to do with her because she was white." True to her father's philosophy of withholding condemnation until you have inhabited a person's skin, Scout is able to offset the wrong done to Tom with compassion for Mayella.)

8. Describe the aftermath of the trial. (Bone weary from his effort to free Tom of false accusation, Atticus exits the courtroom up the center aisle. The black spectators stand in respect. Jem, incapable of rational outrage, cries because "It ain't right." Aunt Alexandra, waiting up in her dressing gown, comforts Atticus, who replies to her complaints about the unseemliness of the trial for children with more discourtesy than is his habit. Asking not to be disturbed next morning, he goes to bed to sleep off his fatigue. The next day, Atticus, out of bed at his usual hour, is gratified to discover that more than children weep for injustice. For breakfast he receives chicken from Tom Robinson's father and rolls from "Estelle down at the hotel." More gifts load the kitchen table—pork, vegetables, scuppernongs, and pigs' knuckles. Atticus, moved to tears by such an outpouring of thanks during hard times, asks Cal to stop black supporters from depriving themselves of food.

Other responses are mixed. Dill, a champion of right, disdains his aunt's cynical comment about Atticus wanting to "butt his head against a stone wall." Miss Stephanie, never slack with gossip, probes the children for answers to titillating questions, such as "Did Atticus put us up there as a sort of—?" and "Did Scout understand all the—?" Miss Maudie, a more liberal neighbor, shushes Stephanie and smooths over the children's disillusion about justice with fresh cakes and praise for their father's noble deed. The morning climaxes with news that Bob Ewell, consumed with hatred, spat in Atticus face and threatened to seek vengeance.)

Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)

9. What are the unifying factors which hold this novel together?

(Harper Lee combines the childish concerns of Scout and Jem with the grim reality of racial injustice. Her method of bringing all segments of the novel together relies both on point of view and theme. By limiting commentary to the perceptions of a little girl, she intersperses the major plot with numerous minor concerns, particularly the whereabouts and proclivities of Boo Radley. By intermeshing the innocence of Scout toddling home in a ham costume with the lurking evil of Bob Ewell armed with a kitchen knife, she brings the action of the novel to a believable conclusion and deftly dispatches the villain with his own knife at the same time that she reveals the shy and gentle Boo.

The second unifying factor is theme, which dwells on the nature of innocence and the responsibility civilized people have to curb violence and protect helpless beings. Throughout the plot, minor incidents, such as the shooting of songbirds, Scout's killing of insects, and the harassment of Boo Radley, remind the reader that meanness works on various levels in the human community. Atticus, the controlling image of gentility and respect for others, constantly states his philosophy, paring it to fit the situation. Just as he will not have Walter humiliated at the table for his habit of pouring syrup over his food, so he will jeopardize his standing in the white community by defending an innocent black man.

By presenting a theme of nonviolence and justice through the eyes of a child, the author achieves her purpose. The novel, which young adult readers revere for its honest portrayal of childhood,

drives home a universal image of protection for the innocent and defense for the weak. Although critics find the perceptions of the maturer Scout an intrusion on her outlook at age six, overall, the emphasis on naivete and sincerity convince the audience of her suitability as central intelligence.)

10. How does the novel transcend southern racial prejudice and approach a broader interpretation?

(Much of the novel is pertinent to a southern setting, particularly southern dialect, customs, and attitudes toward the Civil War. In Chapter 26, however, Scout confronts the world picture of intolerance and persecution during "Current Events period." Cecil Jacobs, one of the town children who can afford a newspaper from which to clip a news item, summarizes facts about Hitler's persecution of European Jews.

The reminder that racial intolerance originating in Germany produced internment, imprisonment, and confiscation of property, a situation that proved more horrifying ten years later after the Allies opened the gates of Auschwitz and Buchenwald and shocked the world with eyewitness accounts of wartime atrocities, broadens the theme of democracy to a global perspective. Miss Gates, attempting to make a point about Cecil's presentation, presses Scout for a definition of democracy. Well schooled by her father's philosophy, Scout replies, "Equal rights for all, special privileges for none."

Since this discussion occurs shortly after Tom's trial and death, readers should recognize the grim irony in Miss Gates' bitter denunciation of Hitler and in Cecil's comment, "ain't no cause to persecute 'em. They're white, ain't they?" Neither the teacher nor the majority of her students seem aware of the parallel between Hitler's persecution of the Jews and the persecution of blacks in Maycomb, Alabama.

Only Scout makes the connection and wonders aloud, "how can you hate Hitler so bad an' then turn around and be ugly about folks right at home—." As a child, Scout sees what many adults cannot—the hypocrisy of white supremacy. Basically kind and decent people like Miss Gates maintain prejudiced attitudes toward blacks that result in persecution little different from Hitler's anti-Semitism.)

Questions 11 - 15 (Creative Level)

- 11. Explain in a short speech why it is worthy and noble for Atticus to accept the challenge of a losing battle when an innocent party's life hangs in the balance.
- 12. Make a time line of the civil rights movement. Emphasize events that took place in Alabama,

particularly the boycott of the Montgomery bus lines in 1957, Autherine Lucy's attempt to attend graduate school at the University of Alabama, the Scottsboro trials, sit-ins in Birmingham in 1963, and the clash during a march for voting rights in Selma in 1965. Note Dr. Martin Luther King's role in the fight for equal rights for blacks.

- 13. Compose a critique of the movie version of the novel. Determine whether the director, photographer, and actors preserve Harper Lee's original intent. List characters and events deleted from the film, particularly Uncle Jack and Francis.
- 14. Give a speech about the role of the southern woman in determining manners and public deportment. Use as examples Cal, Aunt Alexandra, Miss Maudie, and other female characters from the novel.
- 15. Suggest several avenues of criminal investigation that might have helped Tom gain his freedom. For example, there might have been witnesses to the seven Ewell children spending their nickels for ice cream. Also, people close to the Ewells might have seen evidence of parental abuse on other occasions. Name other community members who might serve as corroborative witnesses.

Across the Curriculum

Cinema

 View several realistic films and television series on life in the south before Civil Rights, for example, *Roots, Hurry Sundown, The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman, Sounder, The Ditchdigger's Daughters, Fried Green Tomatoes, Rosewood*, and *Huckleberry Finn*. Discuss with a small group the types of friendships that blossom among neighbors and the types of disagreements that create tension.

Science and Health

1. Compose a chalkboard lecture on the causes of emotional distress. List examples of Scout's coming of age. Beside each entry on your list, comment on worthy and ignoble aspects of character which she demonstrates. Comment on the effects of her mother's death on Scout's rowdiness. Express the influence of Cal and Aunt Alexandra on her evolving womanhood.

- 2. Project how life may change for Boo following the stabbing of Bob Ewell and the rescue of Jem Finch. Name some agencies that help families of retarded adults, for example, church day care centers, sheltered workshops, and mental health bureaus.
- 3. What sort of illnesses would Mayella Ewell have to deal with since she lived so close to a dump?
- 4. Sketch a diagram illustrating the physics involved in Atticus' shooting the rabid dog. Remember to to use the approximate distance to the target.
- 5. Compile a flora collection using both the scientific names and common names of the items. Designate where the item was mentioned in the book (for example, camillias in Mrs. Dubose's yard.)
- 6. Morphine addiction was a common problem in the 1800s and still occurred after that. Research how the addiction usually started and why it was difficult to stop. What are the parameters defining such an addiction?
- 7. Show an example of the various principles which became usable for the production of television during this time period. What advances have occurred since?

Geography

- 1. Create a mural or web site that introduces these real and fictional Alabama settings: Monroeville, Maycomb County, Cornwall, Mobile, St. Stephens, Montgomery, Meridian, Old Sarum, Enfield, Clark's Ferry, Clanton, Auburn, Tuscaloosa, Pensacola, Winston City, Abbottsville, and Chester and Baldwin counties.
- 2. Compose a paragraph typifying the play area of Dill and the Finch children. Include names of neighbors and the landmarks associated with the yards, particularly the live oak, collard patch, snow-on-the-mountain camellia, and frozen azalea bushes.

Art and Music

1. Using desk-top publishing or other artistic

media, create a schematic drawing of Maycomb, Alabama, labeling the areas where Cal, the Finches, Robinsons, Cunninghams, and Ewells live as well as the elementary school, courthouse, jail, First Purchase African M. E. Church, dump, and the scene of the crime.

- 2. Create street signs for the jail, Atticus' office, and Braxton Underwood's newspaper.
- 3. Research and design a typical outfit worn during the early 1930s by any of the characters in the novel.
- 4. Folksinger Woody Guthrie developed much of his material during this period. Discuss with the class the themes he used.
- 5. Create a 3-dimensional model of the courthouse or of Scout's neighborhood.

Law

- Launch an Internet web site explaining the legal ramifications of rape, assault, and incest. Comment on evidence that points to ongoing family violence in the Ewell household.
- 2. Determine the rights and responsibilities of an attorney in defending a client from charges of a capital offense. Explain the benefits of change of venue.
- 3. Research the rights of those declared mentally disabled. Determine what right, if any, Boo's father had to confine him to the the house for the period for which he did. What rights was Boo denied?
- Prepare an oral report documenting the effects of civil rights cases from this era. Explain how these could have affected Tom's case.

Economics

- Write an essay describing Southern attitudes toward money, power, racial equality, and social class in the 1930s. Quote Judge Taylor, Tom Robinson, Bob Ewell, Dolphus Raymond, Reverend Sykes, Aunt Alexandra, Atticus Finch, Miss Maudie, Miss Stephanie, and Dill to support your thesis.
- 2. Contrast the total income of a school teacher, sheriff, lawyer, and newspaper editor with that of a family on public relief.
- 3. Contrast the lifestyles and attitudes of the Finches, Robinsons, Ewells, and Cunninghams. Note the importance of the Depression as a factor in local tensions.

Social Studies

- 1. Make a time line of the history of Southern literature. Mark the birthplaces of famous authors on a map of the South.
- Characterize in a paragraph the era of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Note how the failing economy and the national outlook changed from the Depression into World War II. Comment on current events affecting the poor.
- 3. Lead a panel discussion of the effects of poverty, death, ignorance, disease, loneliness, racial prejudice, abuse, neglect, and superstition on family life. Support your opinions with details from the novel.
- The Great Depression was worldwide. Compare the depression era in another country with the United States during the 1930s.
- 5. Research social programs such as Social Security that were created during the 1930s. Does the program still exist? Is it still working as intended?
- 6. Scout notes that Hitler's treatment of the Jews was very similiar to the prejudice she had already observed. Were there any other occurances that she might have observed at this time? Using statistics of imprisonment, terrorism, and deaths, creat a chart comparing them.

Psychology

- 1. Compose chalkboard definitions of economic depression, destructive personality, repression, mental defect, elitism, and vengeance.
- 2. Add a chapter to the book expressing the opinions of Cal, Aunt Alexandra, Boo, Uncle Jack, Francis, Jem, Walter Cunningham, Jr., Nathan Radley, Dill, or Heck Tate toward Atticus' heroism. Contrast biased views from Ewell and other racists.
- 3. Using the background given in the book, theorize how much of Boo's mental illness is due to a physical source and how much to the environment to which he had to adapt.
- 4. Isolation is a form of sensory deprivation. Research studies of the various forms of sensory deprivation and chart the subjects' responses. Did any of the characters in the novel exhibit these responses?
- 5. Analyze Atticus' parenting techniques. Is there a pattern that appears? If so, does it conform to any formally named technique? In what ways?

Mathematics and Computers

- 1. Using desktop publishing or other media, create a family tree including current and past members of the Finch family. Include dates and places to each entry.
- 2. Supply state-by-state information about the number of people each year who are killed while trying to escape prison or work gangs. Cite your sources.

Language and Speech

- 1. Compose individual posters explaining the significance of these terms: Rosetta Stone, Tom Swift, The Gray Ghost, canans, charlotte, dewberry, chinaberry, live oak, eddy, Franklin stove, Indian-heads, cooties, NRA, WPA, philippic, Thomas Jefferson, prison farm, Mrunas, slop jar, chifforobe, and mockingbird.
- 2. Compose a short speech in which you summarize Atticus' tone and objectives in his summation to the jury.

3. Characterize in separate paragraphs the difference between Alexandra's view of the South and the reality of Maycomb.

Literature

- 1. Read Faulkner's short story "That Evening Sun Go Down." Compare the interaction between privileged white children and poor blacks as it appears in the story and in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
- 2. Rewrite passages of conversation from the novel, replacing dialect with standard English. Make a list of grammatical changes, stresses, and elisions that mark Maycomb's dialect, for example, "Do-o-o Je-sus." Compare it with other Southern regional speech, particularly Cajun, Gullah, Southern mountain, and Tidewater.
- 3. Citing specific examples of loyalty and conflict compare the relationship of Scout and Jem to siblings in *Tom Sawyer*, *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter, Black Boy, Sounder, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, and *Member of the Wedding*.
- 4. Write an extended discussion of the title. Explain the role of the mockingbird in conveying theme and in symbolizing innocence.

Education

- Brainstorm ways that classroom teachers can assist troubled students in coping with personal and family trauma, particularly through keeping a journal, reading young adult fiction, discussing personal topics aloud, and writing first-person poetry.
- 2. Compose a social studies lesson on Hitler's Germany. Contrast anti-Semitic hate crimes with Southern racism.
- 3. Contrast the amount of time and effort applied to school subjects in the 1930s with the most equivalent subjects today. Debate whether today's educational requirements fulfill the student's need for preparation for life as well as they did in the 1930s.

Student Involvement Activities

- Organize a panel discussion of bias. Discuss how the novel contrasts human situations and teaches Scout and Jem to respect and honor their father for his character and courage.
- 2. Launch a discussion group of advice to a single parent like Atticus Finch on dealing with a rude, disobedient, or impertinent child such as Scout or Jem. Suggest punishments for lying or misrepresenting the truth or for sassing Aunt Alexandra.
- 3. List questions to ask at an interrogation of witnesses concerning Bob Ewell's death. For example, suggest information about Ewell's past behavior and state of mind, the length of time he had pursued vengeance, recent economic setbacks, and his attitude toward Atticus Finch.
- 4. Using desktop publishing, compose a web site naming enjoyable literature about families, such as Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer*, Kaye Gibbons' *Ellen Foster*, or Cynthia Rylant's *Missing May*. Display scenes that express positive family situations, for example, shared meals, church and school attendance, learning to swim or fire an air rifle, Christmas at Finch's Landing, birthdays, reunions with Dill, building a snowman, and the Halloween pageant.
- 5. Explain with a collage or mobile how events in the early 1930s affect the whole Finch family. Depict Scout's mother's death, Cal's work as substitute mother, Tim Johnson's death, the burning house, Uncle Jack's affection for children, Mrs. Dubose's death, Tom Robinson's trial, the mob at the jail, and Aunt Alexandra's missionary circles.
- 6. Dramatize a meeting between Bob Ewell and Judge Taylor. Set out the purpose and structure of Tom Robinson's court trial. Explain the role of prosecutor and defense attorney. Note how jury members are selected.
- 7. Create a list of images from the novel that appeal to the five senses. Use these as mod-

els:"Jem camel-kicked me when I tried to say where we had found [the medal],""The sheriff hadn't the heart to put him in jail alongside Negroes, so Boo was locked in the courthouse basement,""Whenever he performed a minor service for Jem and me, as removing a splinter from a foot, he would tell us exactly what he was going to do, give us an estimation of how much it would hurt, and explain the use of any tongs he employed,""Bob Ewell's lyin' on the ground under that tree down yonder with a kitchen knife stuck up under his ribs," and "Well, it'd be sort of like shootin' a mockingbird, wouldn't it?"

- 8. Write a scene in which Jem and Scout reconstruct the events of Halloween night. Express Scout's gratitude for the chicken wire frame of her ham costume and for Boo's quick action to save Jem from Bob Ewell's knife.
- 9. Discuss the effects of gossip, slander, public spitting and ridicule, defeat, and loss on the Finch family. Summarize Atticus' behavior during the worst of his family's trials.
- 10. Draw a cause-and-effect diagram illustrating the changes that take place in Jem and Scout as they learn to appreciate their father.

Alternate Assessment

- 1. List examples of fairness, honor, public humiliation, learning, loyalty, defeat, and courage among members of the Finch family.
- 2. Compile a list of actions that demonstrate how local people cope with poverty during the Depression.
- 3. Compose a scene in which Helen thanks Cal and Atticus for their visit.
- 4. Make a character list and explain the character flaws of each.
- 5. Account for Boo's role in the story.

Teacher's Notes

Vocabulary

In the sentences below, underline pairs of words to complete the thought.

- 1. We had just come to her gate when Jem (**savored**, **disdained**, **snatched**, **imbued**, **misfigured**) my baton and ran (**eluding**, **flailing**, **ingratiating**, **desecrating**, **interrogating**) wildly up the steps into Mrs. Dubose's front yard, forgetting everything Atticus had said, forgetting that she packed a pistol under her shawls, forgetting that if Mrs. Dubose missed, her girl Jessie probably wouldn't.
- Slowly but surely I began to see the pattern of Atticus's questions: from questions that Mr. Gilmer did not (deem, configure, deter, relegate, lambaste) sufficiently irrelevant and (immaterial, apoplectic, nondescript, tactful, irascible) to object to, Atticus was quietly building up before the jury a picture of the Ewells' home life.
- 3. The name Ewell gave me a (dissimilar, bumptious, simultaneous, queasy, bland) feeling. Maycomb had lost no time in getting Mr. Ewell's views on Tom's (edification, demise, foliage, relativity, rotogravure) and passing them along through that English Channel of gossip, Miss Stephanie Crawford.
- 4. Had I ever harbored the mystical notions about mountains that seem to (undulate, emulsify, detect, radiate, obsess) lawyers and judges, Aunt Alexandra would have been (viscous, analogous, prominent, formidable, appalling) to Mount Everest: Throughout my early life, she was cold and there.
- 5. With these (attributes, palliations, contemporaries, scuppernongs, gaits), however, he would not remain as (erratic, contemptuous, cantankerous, inconspicuous, vilified) as we wished him to: that year, the school buzzed with talk about him defending Tom Robinson, none of which was complimentary.
- 6. I wasn't sure what Jem resented most, but I took (pronouncement, propensity, umbrage, acquiescence, entailment) at Mrs. Dubose's assessment of the family's mental (premise, rudiment, relic, reconnaissance, hygiene).
- 7. His sermon was a (forthright, cordial, magisterial, chameleon, lessened) denunciation of sin, an austere declaration of the motto on the wall behind him: he warned his flock against the evils of (impassive, ramshackle, husky, heady, ecclesiastical) brews, gambling, and strange women.
- 8. Starkly out of place in a town of square-faced stores and steep-roofed houses, the Maycomb jail was a miniature (staccato, melancholy, unobtrusive, oblivious, Gothic) joke one cell wide and two cells high, complete with tiny battlements and flying (divinity, buttresses, futility, temerity, sentimentali-ty).
- 9. To reach the courtroom, on the second floor, one passed (benign, eccentric, obstreperous, sundry, corroborative) sunless county cubbyholes: the tax assessor, the tax collector, the county clerk, the county solicitor, the circuit clerk, the judge of (distraction, indentation, probate, dispensation, diminution) live in cool dim hutches that smelled of decaying record books mingled with old damp cement and stale urine.
- 10. Miss Maudie's (benevolence, integrity, imposition, subtlety, prerogative) extended to Jem and Dill, whenever they paused in their pursuits; we (tyrannized, reaped, alienated, caricatured, rebutted) the benefits of a talent Miss Maudie had hitherto kept hidden from us.

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Identification (30 points)

Identify the character who is speaking. You may use some names more than once.

1. You're lucky, you know. You and Jem have the benefit of your father's age. I	f
our father was thirty you'd find life quite different.	
2. Reason I can't pass the first grade, Mr. Finch, is I've had to stay out ever' spr	ing
n' help Papa with the choppin', but there's another'n at the house now that's field size.	5
3. He's in my grade and he does right well. He's a good boy a real nice b	ov.
4. People generally see what they look for, and hear what they listen for, and	
ave the right to subject their children to it, but I can assure you of one thing: you will receive what you	
nd hear in silence or you will leave	
5. He got me round the neck, cussin' me an' sayin' dirt—I fought 'n' hollered, b	out
e had me round the neck.	
6. I was glad to do it, Mr. Ewell didn't seem to help her none, and neither did	the
hillun, and I knowed she didn't have no nickels to spare.	
7. We decided that it would be best for you to have some feminine influence	•
8. Ewell probably found that kitchen knife in the dump somewhere. Honed it	:
lown and bided his time just bided his time.	
9. Your father does not know how to teach. You can have a seat now.	
10. This was all 'round the back steps when I got here this morning. They—the	y
preciate what you did, Mr. Finch.	
11. I destroyed his last shred of credibility at that trial, if he had any to begin w	/ith.
he man had to have some kind of comeback, his kind always does.	
12. You live in a Christian home with Christian folks in a Christian town. Out th	ere
n J. Grimes Everett's land there's nothing but sin and squalor.	
13. Will you take me home?	
14. There goes the meanest man ever God blew breath into	
15. Ah—I won 'em from himWe were playin' strip poker up yonder by the fishpo	ol.
art II: True/False (20 points)	
Nark the following statements either T for true or F for false.	
1. One triumph for Atticus' defense is the length of time the juny deliberator before finding Tem	

- 1. One triumph for Atticus' defense is the length of time the jury deliberates before finding Tom guilty.
- _____ 2. Atticus chastises Scout for ridiculing Walter, who is a guest at their table.
- _____ 3. When Scout enters first grade, Jem is in the seventh grade and attending high school.
- _____ 4. Atticus does not take seriously Bob's threats.
- _____ 5. A grating noise at Atticus' house indicates that Bob may have tried to break in.
- _____ 6. One reason that the community is prejudiced is that Maycomb has grown into a large racially prejudiced city.
- _____ 7. Atticus is eager to defend Tom Robinson of the charge of rape because Tom is a friend of Cal.
- 8. One night, Boo attacked his parents with scissors and was taken to the Enfield Prison Farm.
- 9. Mayella challenges the men in the courtroom by calling them cowards if they fail to find Tom guilty.
 - _____10. According to Dr. Reynolds, it's a sin to kill a mockingbird because they drive off other birds.

Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

Part III: Completion (20 points)

Fill in each blank with a word from the list that follows.

1 111 11		i nom the list ti			
air rifles Alabama baseball Bob Ewe	a chewing tobacco chicken wire	football	limb	Mr. Dolphus Raymond One-Shot Finch	switchblade Tim Johnson
1.	Bob Ewell's lyin' on the his ribs.	ground under t	hat tree down yon	der with a	stuck up under
2.	Mr. Nathan, Mr. Arthur, _		's comin!		
3.	She couldn't live like		, who preferm	ed the company of Negro	es, because she did-
	n't own a riverbank and	she wasn't from	n a fine old family.		
4.	He declined to let us ta	ke our	to	the Landing and said	if we made one false
	move he'd take them av	way from us for	good.		
5.	You're real nice,		, an' I reckon I love	you even after what you	did, but you don't
	understand children m	uch.			
6.	Of course	anta	agonized me some	etimes until I could kill hir	n, but when it came
	down to it he was all I h	nad.			
7.	She tried to bring them	up according t	o her lights, and _	's light	s are pretty good—
	and another thing, the	children love he	er.		
8.	You know rape's a capit	al offense in			
9.	He went out for		, but was too sl	ender and too young yet	to do anything but
	carry the team water bu	uckets.			
10.	Mr. Nathan Radley was	standing inside	his gate, a	broker	ı across his arm.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Describe the effect of Scout's behavior on Atticus, Cal, Aunt Alexandra, Reverend Sykes, Uncle Jack, and Miss Caroline Fisher.
- 2. Contrast Dill, Scout, and Jem in their attitudes toward Boo.
- 3. Predict changes in Scout as she enters her teen years.
- 4. Discuss the white community's treatment of blacks.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Short Answer (30 points)

Supply an answer to each of the following questions.

1.	Who places a blanket around Scout's shoulders during the fire at Miss
	Maudie's house?
2.	Who seals up the hole in the tree?
3.	Who writes the Halloween pageant?
4.	Who wants to fire Cal?
5.	Where does Atticus' family spend Christmas?
6.	Who carries an office chair and a light to the jail?
7.	How old is Atticus?
8.	Who dresses the Finch children especially well before church?
9.	Who urges Scout to stand up out of respect for Atticus?
10.	Whom does Scout comfort about legal problems with an entailment?
11.	Who demonstrates skill in reading to Miss Caroline Fisher?
12.	Whose education does Atticus help finance?
13.	Who asks Scout to escort him home?
14.	Whose arm is badly broken at the elbow and set by Dr. Reynolds?
15.	Who leaves shoes at the school?

Part II: Description (30 points)

Place an X by every true statement.

- _____ 1. The Finch family lives on a main street in Maycomb.
- _____ 2. Uncle Jack stands taller than his brother and sister.
- _____ 3. The story opens a few months after the death of Atticus' wife.
- _____ 4. Jem exhibits fear of the dark and tries to convince Dill and Scout that he is brave.
- _____ 5. Dill is a double first cousin to Jem and Scout.
- 6. Atticus orders Scout to obey both Cal and Aunt Alexandra and to apologize for rudeness.
- _____ 7. At one time, Atticus had a reputation as a sharpshooter.
- 8. Atticus succeeds as a father because he respects his children and treats them like adults.
- 9. Jem is punished for cutting the prized camellias of a woman who is fighting drug addiction.
- _____10. Atticus is not alarmed to find his children in the balcony of the courtroom during the trial.
- _____11. Aunt Alexandra demonstrates her affection for Atticus by calling him "brother."
- _____12. The Finch family is not closely related to the people in Maycomb County.
- _____13. Atticus and Cal are pleased as they watch Scout's part in the Halloween pageant.
- 14. Atticus tries to teach his children to consider the point of view of others before making harsh judgments.
- ____15. Atticus earns a great deal more money than most residents of Maycomb County.

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: Matching (20 points)

Match the following beginnings of sentences with their conclusions.

- _____ 1. Don't fool yourselves—
- 2. Son, I have no doubt that you've been annoyed by your contemporaries about me lawing for niggers, as you say, but
- _____ 3. This case, Tom Robinson's case, is something that goes to the essence of a man's conscience—
- _____ 4. I wanted you to see something about her—
- _____ 5. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and
- _____ 6. The law says 'reasonable doubt,' but
- _____ 7. Those are twelve reasonable men in everyday life, Tom's jury, but
- _____ 8. There's something in our world that makes men lose their heads—
- 9. The one place where a man ought to get a square deal is in a courtroom, be he any color of the rainbow, but
- _____10. As you grow older, you'll see white men cheat black men every day of your life, but
- A. to do something like this to a sick old lady is inexcusable.
- B. you saw something come between them and reason.
- C. you see it through no matter what.
- D. I think a defendant's entitled to the shadow of a doubt.
- E. people have a way of carrying their resentments right into a jury box.
- F. it's all adding up and one of these days we're going to pay the bill for it.
- G. I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand.
- H. let me tell you something and don't you forget it—whenever a white man does that to a black man, no matter who he is, how rich he is, or how fine a family he comes from, that white man is trash.
- I. they couldn't be fair if they tried.
- J. Scout, I couldn't go to church and worship God if I didn't try to help that man.

Part IV: Essay (20 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Contrast Atticus, Bob Ewell, and Walter Cunningham as parents.
- 2. State the facts in the court case.
- 3. Give evidence that Dill, Scout, and Jem are maturing.
- 4. Discuss the significance of Finch's Landing to county history.
- 5. Analyze the theme of intolerance as it applies to many of the residents of Maycomb County.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

- 1. snatched, flailing
- 2. deem, immaterial
- 3. queasy, demise
- 4. obsess, analogous
- 5. attributes, inconspicuous
- 6. umbrage, hygiene
- 7. forthright, heady
- 8. Gothic, buttresses
- 9. sundry, probate
- 10. benevolence, reaped

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Identification (30 points)

1. Miss Maudie 9. Miss Caroline Fisher

11. Atticus

12. Mrs. Merriweather

- 2. Walter 10. Cal
- 3. Scout
- 4. Judge Taylor
- 5. Mayella 13. Boo
- 6. Tom Robinson 14. Cal
- 7. Aunt Alexandra 15. Dill
- 8. Sheriff Heck Tate

Part II: True/False (20 points)

1. T	б.	F
2. T	7.	Т
3. F	8.	F
4. T	9.	Т
5. F	10.	F

Part III: Completion (20 points)

- 1. kitchen knife 6. Jem
- 2. mad dog 7. Cal
- 3. Mr. Dolphus Raymond 8. Alabama
- 4. air rifles
 - 10. shotgun

9. football

Part IV: Essay (20 points)

Answers will vary.

5. Uncle Jack



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COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Short Answer (30 points) 1. Boo 11.

- 11. Scout
- 2. Nathan 12. Uncle Jack
- 3. Mrs. Merriweather 13. Boo
- 4. Aunt Alexandra 14. Jem
- 5. Finch's Landing 15. Scout
- 6. Atticus
- 7. fifty
- 8. Cal
- 9. Reverend Sykes
- 10. Walter Cunningham

Part II: Description (30 points)

1.	X	6.	Х	11. X
2.		7.	Х	12.
3.		8.	Х	13.
4.	Х	9.	Х	14. X
5.		10.		15.

Part III: Matching (20 points)

1. F	6.	D
2. A	7.	В
3. J	8.	Ι
4. G	9.	Е
5. C	10.	Н

Part IV: Essay (20 points)

Answers will vary.

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