

English 9 Honors: Summer Reading

Directions: During the summer break, you are to read *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. Please note, you do not need to submit these questions; they are merely guiding you through each set of chapters. Upon our return to school, we will have several writing assignments pertaining to this novel, along with a test.

Chapters 1-5:

1. What narrative point of view does Harper Lee use to begin the story? What can the reader expect to learn from this narrative point of view?
2. What is the setting of the story? How does Harper Lee use this setting to set the tone?
3. Why does Jem tell Scout (the narrator) not to ask Dill about his father? What can the reader infer about Jem and Scout's relationship from this exchange?
4. Briefly describe how the Radleys are different from the other people in Maycomb.
5. Briefly describe Boo Radley. What purpose does Boo serve in this story?
6. Why does Miss Caroline hit Scout with the ruler? Is Scout's first day of school what she expected? Why or why not?
7. How does Harper Lee show that Miss Caroline is not familiar with Maycomb customs?
8. Why does Jem invite Walter to dinner? What social issue does Lee introduce with the character of Walter Cunningham?
9. What does Atticus mean when he says to Scout, "—until you climb into his skin and walk around in it?"
10. Compare and contrast Walter Cunningham and Burris Ewell. What is Lee illustrating with the differences in these two characters?
11. Briefly describe the symbolism of Scout's nickname and how it is appropriate.
12. How does Scout's conversation with Miss Maudie develop the reader's sympathy for Arthur (Boo) Radley?
13. Why is Atticus angry with Jem, Scout, and Dill?

Chapters 6-10:

1. What examples does Lee use to show that Scout does not act like a proper, Southern young lady?
2. Describe Scout's internal conflict when Jem decides to go get his pants.
3. What does Scout mean when she says, "It was then, I suppose, that Jem and I first began to part company?"
4. What does the reader learn about Jem's character in this chapter when he decides to write a letter?
5. Why does Lee periodically have Jem and Scout find something in the tree?
6. What does Lee accomplish by having Jem ask Nathan Radley about the cement in the knot hole?
7. Why does Atticus start to get angry at the children after the fire?
8. What does the blanket symbolize?

9. How might the reader's impression of Aunt Alexandra be different if Lee had written the story in third person?
10. What does the reader learn about Dill?
11. What can the reader infer about Lee's purpose for introducing Uncle Jack in this chapter?
12. What upsets the children the most about Atticus taking on the Robinson case? What is Lee's purpose for having the children hear the community's attitude toward Atticus?
13. Briefly describe Atticus' character.
14. How does Lee introduce the significance of the book's title? What does it symbolize?

Chapters 11-15:

1. What is Lee's purpose for introducing Mrs. Dubose?
2. Why does Jem destroy Mrs. Dubose' camellia bushes?
3. How does the reader benefit from Scout telling the story about Mrs. Dubose as an adult looking back at her childhood?
4. How does Atticus use Mrs. Dubose's death to teach the children about courage?
5. Why is Scout so surprised when Jem says, "It's time you started bein' a girl and acting right...?"
6. Why is Calpurnia so concerned about the children's appearance when she takes them to First Purchase?
7. Why does Lee introduce the character of Lula into the story?
8. Why does Calpurnia speak differently at First Purchase than she does with the children in their home? What is Lee illustrating with this switch and Scout's questions about it?
9. How does Lee use the children's experience at First Purchase to show the similarities and differences between the African-American and the white religious communities?
10. Why did Aunt Alexandra come to stay with Atticus, Jem, and Scout? What does her arrival tell the reader and the people of Maycomb about her relationship with Atticus?
11. How does Lee use humor to show that she does not approve of using family heritage as a way to judge people? How is this significant to the character of Aunt Alexandra?
12. What does Scout mean when she says, "I know now what he was trying to do, but Atticus was only a man. It takes a woman to do that kind of work."
13. Give two examples of Jem's increasing maturity, and explain each example along with Scout's response.
14. Why did Dill really run away? How does Lee use Dill's explanation to create sympathy for him?
15. If Dill were the narrator, how might he respond to Aunt Alexandra's attention? How does his relationship with his mother and step-father affect his possible response to Aunt Alexandra?
16. What is Lee's purpose for having Scout jump into the circle of men unexpectedly at the jail?
17. What is surprising about Mr. Underwood's comments from the dark?

Chapters 16-20:

1. Briefly describe the atmosphere in town the day of the trial. What clues does Lee give the reader about the atmosphere?
2. What does Lee illustrate with Jem's explanation of Mr. Dolphus Raymond's behavior?
3. Describe the impression that Tate gives the reader through his recount of the event and Atticus' cross-examination. What conclusion can the reader draw about Lee's purpose for Tate's testimony?
4. What can the reader infer from Atticus' emphasis on the location of Mayella's injuries and Bob Ewell's dominant hand?
5. What is the irony about Bob Ewell's response to Mr. Gilmer's question about being ambidextrous?
6. Compare Jem's and Scout's attitudes at the end of this chapter regarding the progress of the trial. What do their attitudes tell the reader about their understanding of race relations in Maycomb?
7. What is Lee's purpose in having the Ewell family accuse Tom Robinson of rape?
8. How does Scout's initial description of Mayella Ewell show Scout's character growth?
9. How does Lee create sympathy for Mayella?
10. Why does Atticus ask Tom to stand up?
11. Why does Atticus ask Tom about previously being in trouble with the law?
12. What is the significance of Tom Robinson admitting that he felt sorry for Mayella? How does Mr. Gilmer further emphasize Tom's error?
13. What is the implication of Mr. Gilmer calling Tom a boy? Why is Dill the one who gets upset by these references?
14. Why does Lee have Link Deas interrupt the trial?
15. Why does Raymond constantly carry a brown bag with Coca-Cola in it? What does the bag represent?

Chapters 21-25:

1. Compare Scout and Jem's opinions of the length of the jury deliberations.
2. Why does Reverend Sykes make Scout stand up as her father walks by?
3. What is the significance of Aunt Alexandra saying, "I'm sorry, brother..." to Atticus?
4. What does Atticus mean when he says, "They've done it before and they did it tonight and they'll do it again and when they do it—it seems that only children weep?"
5. What does Bob Ewell's confrontation with Atticus foreshadow?
6. Describe how Atticus' response to Ewell's threat is consistent with his character.
7. What does Jem misunderstand about the length of the jury's deliberations? What is the significance of this jury's deliberations and the effect they have on Jem?
8. Describe how Aunt Alexandra's response to Scout's comment about Walter Cunningham is consistent with her character.
9. Why does Miss Maudie get so angry at Mrs. Merriweather?
10. How does Aunt Alexandra's reaction to Tom's death mirror Jem's distress after the trial?
11. What is the significance of Jem's reaction to Scout when she starts to kill the roly-poly?

Chapters 26-31:

1. Why did Jem get so angry at Scout?
2. How does Lee use other Maycomb citizens to build suspense?
3. Briefly describe Scout's relationship with Aunt Alexandra at this point in the story.
4. How does Lee increase the level of suspense as the children being walking home?
5. How does Scout's role as the narrator affect the reader's sense of the attack on the children?
6. How does Scout realize that Aunt Alexandra really does love her and accept her for who she is?
7. How does Atticus show his own innocence when talking to Heck Tate?
8. What clues does Lee give the reader about Ewell's death? What conclusions can the reader draw from these clues?
9. Why does Aunt Alexandra feel responsible for what happened?
10. How does Lee help Scout see Boo Radley as a human being rather than the monster that she and Jem had always considered him?
11. Why does Heck Tate want to cover up the real cause of Ewell's death? How does Atticus misinterpret this?
12. What does Atticus' refusal to avoid a trial for Jem show about his character?
13. Why is Tate so adamant about protecting Arthur Radley? How does Lee show the reader Tate's intent?

Vocabulary: Please learn the definitions of these words by the beginning of the school year. Be prepared for a vocabulary quiz during the first week of school.

Aesthetic
Determinate
Doleful
Exuberant
Fervent
Genial
Imperious
Retribution
Dire
Rapturous
Emanate
Procure
Moiety
Reverie
Valor