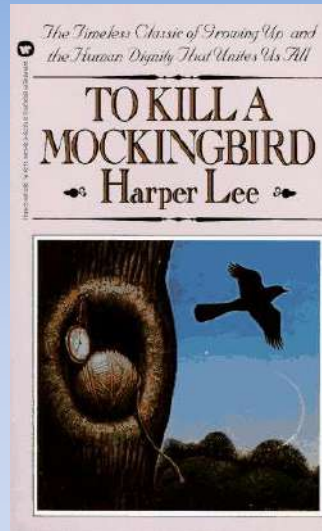


To Kill A Mockingbird

By Harper Lee



UNIT OVERVIEW & INTRODUCTION
TO THE NOVEL

Contents of Presentation

Goals of Unit

- Understanding plot, setting and character development
- Understanding the development of important themes
- Increasing the use of vocabulary and language
- Develop ability to think critically about what is in a novel or other text
- Learning history of segregation, southern U.S.A., great depression and legal battles

Introduction to Novel

- The Characters
- Plot Sequence
- Themes & Symbols
- Background Issues
- About Author

Things to Consider While Reading

- Important Quotes
- Using Resources

Goals of Unit



There are several topics that we will be focusing on during our study of *To Kill A Mockingbird*.

These topics will help you develop important skills that you will require in **all** subjects throughout high school, university and your career.

This unit will focus on...

Goals of Unit

Plot, Setting & Character Development

What is
PLOT?

The main events that make up the beginning, middle and end of a story. Understand WHAT HAPPENS in a story is crucial to figuring out WHY things happen.

What is
SETTING?

Essentially the setting is WHERE and WHEN the story takes place. *To Kill A Mockingbird* uses the setting of southern Alabama, the town of Maycomb and the courtroom to develop the story

What is
**CHARACTER
DEVELOPMENT?**

As the characters develop we see changes that are reflections of the plot. As things happen they learn things and move on, hopefully keeping the reader's interest in the process.

Goals of Unit

Theme, Vocabulary, Critical Thinking and History

What is
THEME?

Theme refers to the main idea and the purpose of the work. What is the novel trying to accomplish and/or teach the reader?

Improve
VOCABULARY!

To Kill A Mockingbird makes use of many words that you may not know. If you do not know the word you will not be able to understand the plot, setting, characters or theme. Therefore, this unit will focus on regular vocabulary improvement.

Think
CRITICALLY!

You will learn how to question *why* authors make decisions about the words they use, the decisions of the characters and the events of the plot and how these things tell the reader an important message.

Learn
HISTORY!

This novel makes mention of many historical aspects that require some knowledge in order for the novel to make complete sense. Therefore we will discuss some of the history within the novel before and during our study of *To Kill A Mockingbird*.

Introduction to the Novel



To help your understanding of the novel you will be first introduced to:

Characters

Plot Events

Background
Information

Background
Information

Themes &
Symbols

The
Author

Characters

Jean Louise Finch “Scout”

- ❑ The story’s narrator
- ❑ Although now an adult, Scout looks back at her childhood and tells of the momentous events and influential people of those years.
- ❑ Scout is six when the story begins.
- ❑ She is naturally curious about life.



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Characters

Atticus Finch

- ☐ Father of Scout and Jem
- ☐ A widower
- ☐ An attorney by profession
- ☐ Highly respected
- ☐ Good citizen
- ☐ Instills good values and morals in his children.



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Characters

Jem Finch

- ☐ Scout's older brother
- ☐ Looks up to his father Atticus
- ☐ Usually looks out for Scout
- ☐ Typical older brother at times
- ☐ Smart
- ☐ Compassionate
- ☐ Matures as the story progresses



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Characters

Calpurnia

- ❑ The Finch's black housekeeper
- ❑ Has watched the children since their mother's death
- ❑ Has been a positive influence on the children.



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Characters

Dill

- ❑ A close friend of Jem and Scout
- ❑ Usually lives in Maycomb only during the summer (stays with a relative)
- ❑ Tells “big stories”
- ❑ Has been deprived of love and affection

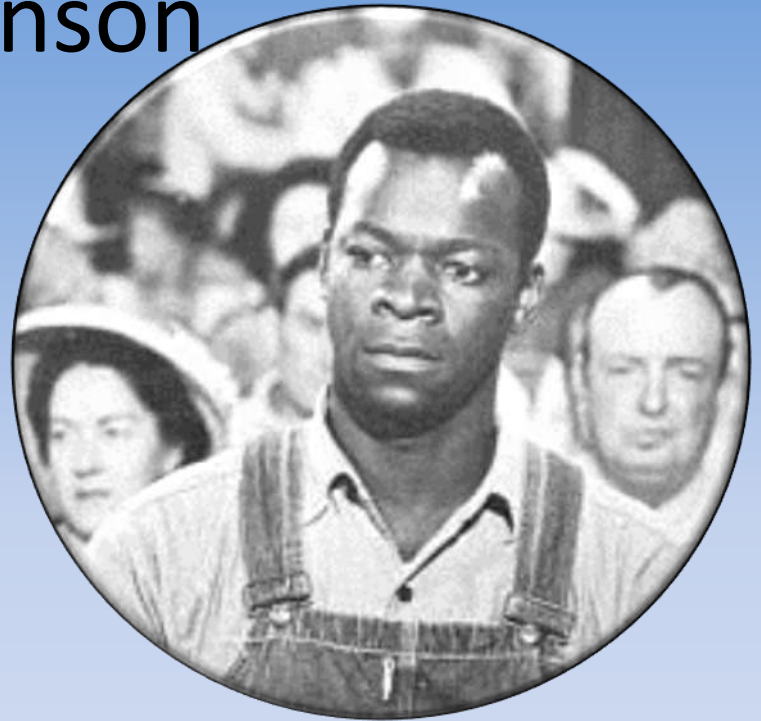


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Characters

Tom Robinson

- ❑ A young, harmless, innocent, hardworking black man
- ❑ Has a crippled left hand
- ❑ Married with three children. Works on a farm belonging to Mr. Link Deas, a white man



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Characters

Arthur “Boo” Radley

- ☐ An enigma
- ☐ An adult man, whose father has “sentenced” him to a lifetime confinement to their house because of some mischief he got into when he was a teenager.
- ☐ Has a reputation of being a lunatic
- ☐ Basically a harmless, well-meaning person
- ☐ Sometimes childlike in behavior
- ☐ Starving for love and affection



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Characters

Mayella Ewell

- ❑ The oldest child of Bob Ewell
- ❑ Shy
- ❑ Lonely



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Characters

Miss Maudie Atkinson

- ☐ Scout's Neighbor
- ☐ Loves gardens and bakes the best cake in Maycomb
- ☐ Knows how to treat children like adults



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Characters

Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose

- ❑ A mean old woman in the Finch neighborhood
- ❑ Teaches the children a lesson in bravery



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Characters

Aunt Alexandra

- ❑ Atticus's sister
- ❑ Wants Scout to be a lady
- ❑ Wants Jem to be a gentleman



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Characters

Bob Ewell

- ❑ Mayella's poor white trash father
- ❑ The town parasite who lives off the town's bounty



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Characters

Heck Tate

☐ The town sheriff



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Introduction to the Novel

Themes

*Everyone who is
different is a target*

Whites vs. Blacks

Rich vs. Poor

Girls vs. Boys



Introduction to the Novel

Themes

***Ignorance creates
racist beliefs***

Lack of education

Lack of exposure

Small town values



Introduction to the Novel

Themes

*A lack of understanding
leads to false assumptions*

Gossip

Prejudgment

Stereotypes



Introduction to the Novel

Themes

***Real courage does
not waver***

Fighting for what's
right

Sticking up for people
less fortunate

Being an individual



Introduction to the Novel

Themes

*The end of innocence is
the beginning of growth*

Learning

Experience

Hardship



Introduction to the Novel

Exploring Symbols



SYMBOL:

A word or object that
represents another word
or object

...Be on the lookout for:



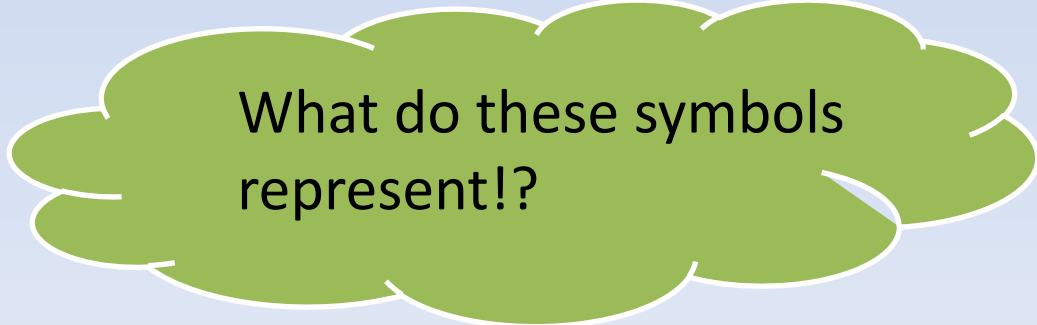
Small-Town Life



“Boo” Radley



Mockingbirds / Birds



What do these symbols
represent!?

Introduction to the Novel

Background Information



To Kill A Mockingbird includes several references to historical events. Knowing some information about this events is important for understanding the novel.

Introduction to the Novel

Background Information

25% of population
had no job

Even those with jobs
were affected
because nothing was
being produced

Average family
income dropped
to 50% by 1935

Hundreds of
thousands lost
homes, farms
and possessions

GREAT DEPRESSION

A period of extreme drought,
poverty and hardships during
the 1930s.

Stock Market Crash
caused people to lose
billions. Entire banks
were wiped out and
by 1933 over 60% of
population was
considered poor

The novel takes place during the mid-1930s at a time when the government was attempting to stop the Great Depression. The President at the time, Franklin Roosevelt, famously said, “the only thing to fear is fear itself” as his government created programs to create jobs, house the homeless and feed the starving.

Historical Background

- The setting
 - Maycomb, Alabama
 - 1933-1935
 - Great Depression
 - Hitler in power in Germany



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Historical Background

- Slavery was abolished in 1864, but Southerners still believe in white supremacy.
- Segregation exists. Blacks may not sit in the same sections as whites. They have separate facilities as well.



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Historical Background

- Gender Bias
 - Women were the weaker sex.
 - Education not important for women.
 - Wealthy women were expected to supervise staff
 - Men were not seen as nurturing



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Historical Background

Poor White Families

- Hard-working
- Honest
- Proud
- Survive on very little
- Always pay back their debts – even if it is with hickory nuts, turnips, or holly.
- The Cunninghams fit this category



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Historical Background

Poor white trash

- Dirty
- Lazy
- Good-for-nothing
- Never done a day's work
- Foul-mouthed
- Dishonest
- Immoral
- The Ewells fit this category



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Historical Background

The Black Community

- Simple
- Honest
- Clean
- Hard-working
- God fearing
- Proud
- Would never take anything with paying it back
- Respectful
- Had stronger character than most of the whites
- Oppressed
- Uneducated
- Discriminated against
- Talked about badly
- Deserve better than what is dished out to them by society

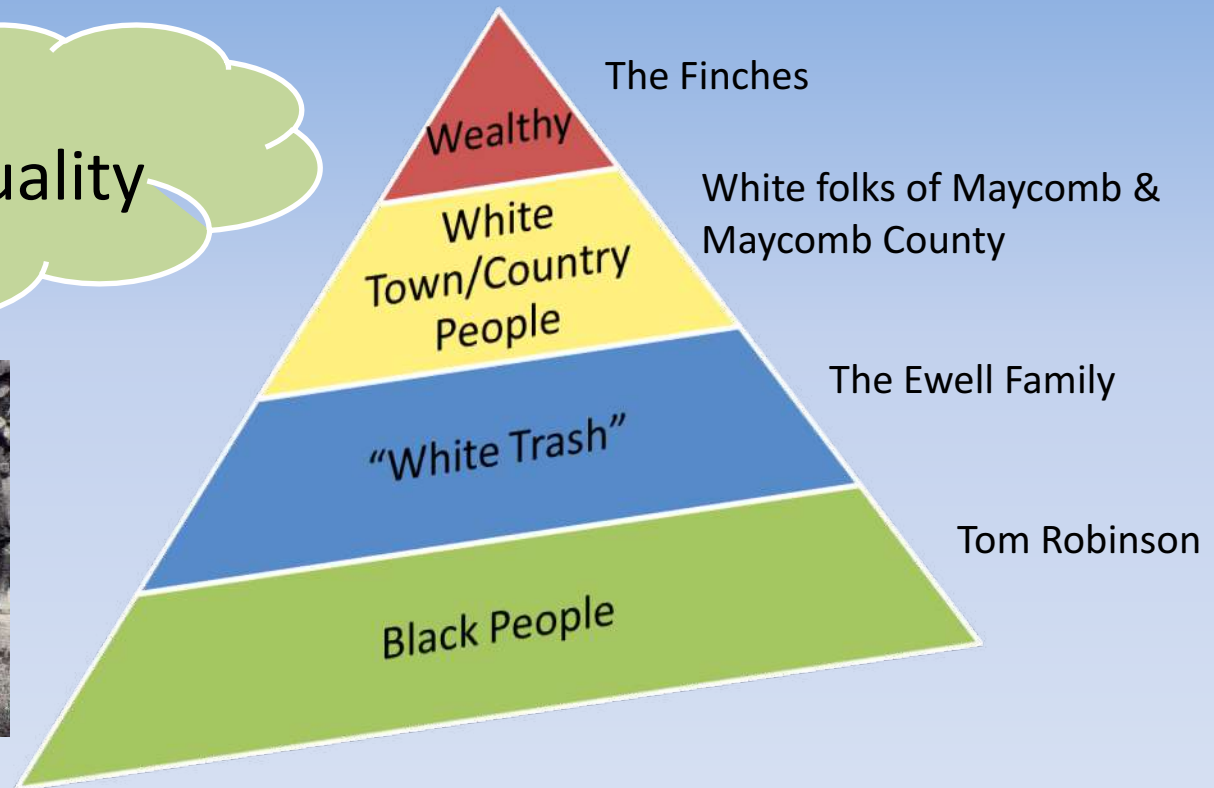


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Introduction to the Novel

Background Information

Social Inequality



Even the law was one-sided: Juries were always all-white and all-male. The word of a black man meant nothing against the word of a white man.


Introduction to the Novel

Background Information

Racism and Social Classes

Although slavery was abolished in the 1890s racism and discrimination were alive and well during the time of the novel.


The novel is based on many historical facts that help to drive the story, (and allow the readers to explore a sad time in American history) including:



Jim Crow Laws (1890s – 1960s)



Scottsboro Trials (1931)



Social Inequality (Forever)



Introduction to the Novel

About the Author



To Kill A Mockingbird is semi-autobiographical for a number of reasons:

- ➡ Lee grew up in Alabama
- ➡ Father was prominent lawyer
- ➡ Experienced Great Depression, Scottsboro Trials
- ➡ “Scout” based on her life; “Dill” based on life of childhood friend Truman Capote

Things to Consider While Reading



The first time you read the novel should be to get a general idea of the setting, characters, plot and themes. However, because this novel can be difficult you are provided with some things to think about while reading that will help you understand the novel.

Things to Consider While Reading

Important Quotes

As you read be on the lookout for these important quotes from the novel:

"You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view . . . until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."
-Atticus Finch

"Why reasonable people go stark raving mad when something involving a Negro comes up, is something I don't understand... I just hope that Jem and Scout will give me their answers instead of listening to the town. Trust me enough..." -Atticus Finch

"Neighbours bring food with death, and flowers with sickness, and little things in between. Boo was our neighbour. He gave us two soap dolls, a broken watch and chain, a knife, and our lives."
-"Scout" Finch

"Remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." That was the only time I ever heard Atticus say it was something, and I asked him to do about it.
"Your father's
"Mockingbird
make

Things to Consider While Reading

Using Resources

Having difficulty understanding the novel? Try these resources:



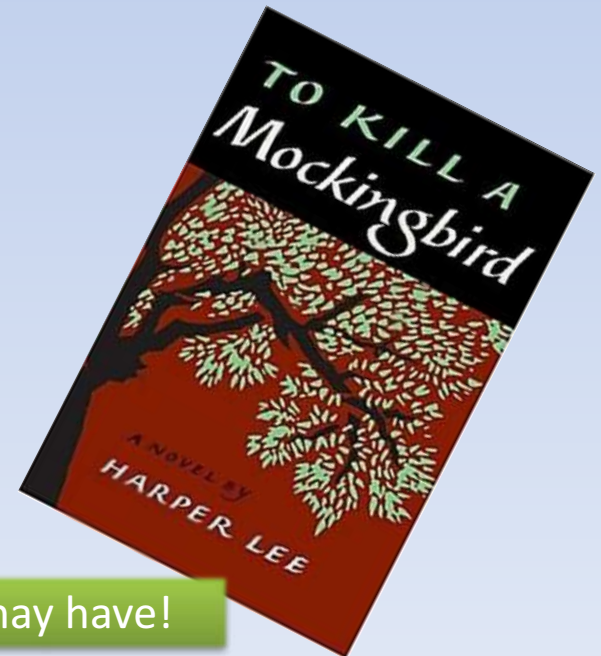
Sparknotes – Free Web Resource: <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/mockin/>



[TKM Student Survival Guide](#)



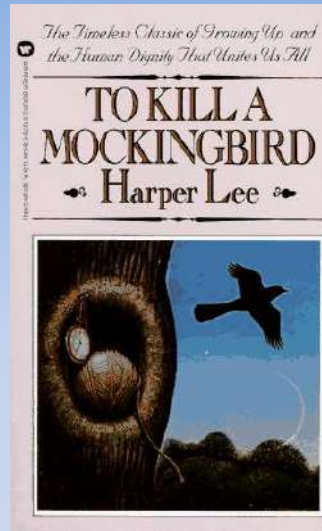
Wikipedia.org: To Kill A Mockingbird



Don't forget about me! Ask me questions you may have!

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