

# Paired Texts: “The Birthday Party”

## *To Kill a Mockingbird* Chapter 9

**Instructions: COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS AND MARGIN NOTES using the CLOSE reading strategies practiced in class. This requires reading of the article three times.**

**Step 1: Skim** the article using these symbols as you read:

(+) agree, (-) disagree, (\*) important, (!) surprising, (?) wondering

**Step 2: Number** the paragraphs. **Read** the article **carefully** and **make notes in the margin**.

Notes should include:

- Comments that show that you **understand** the article. (A summary or statement of the main idea of important sections may serve this purpose.)
- Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read.
- Notes that differentiate between **fact** and **opinion**.
- Observations about how the **writer’s strategies** (organization, word choice, perspective, support) and choices affect the article.

**Step 3: A final quick read** noting anything you may have missed during the first two reads.

Your **margin notes** are part of your score for this assessment. Answer the questions carefully in **complete sentences**.

**Student 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Notes on my thoughts,  
reactions and questions as I  
read.*

**Passage begins: Beginning  
of Chapter 9 (p. 99)**

**Passage ends: “Simply  
because we were licked a  
hundred years before we  
started is no reason for us  
not to try to win.”**

## Paired Texts: “Being Well Born”

### *To Kill a Mockingbird* Chapter 9

1. Telling her side of the fight with Francis to Uncle Jack, Scout says, “A nigger-lover. I ain’t very sure what it means, but the way Francis said it—tell you one thing right now, Uncle Jack...I swear to before God if I’ll sit there and let him say something about Atticus.” What does it say about the power of the N word that Scout is moved to anger, even though she does not know what it means?
2. Discussing the Tom Robinson case with Uncle Jack, Atticus refers to “Maycomb’s usual disease”. What does he mean? Why does he not suffer from it?
3. Atticus explains to Scout: This time we aren’t fighting the Yankees; we’re fighting our friends. But remember this, no matter how bitter things get, they’re still our friends, and this is still our home.” Are there some fights among friends that would make it impossible to remain friends? What does it say about Atticus that he doesn’t view the insults he receives for defending Tom Robinson as reason enough to end any friendships?

- 1. What event does Virginia describe as “the great trauma of [her] early life”? How does this event highlight racial tensions, and what does her reaction indicate about her understanding of her family’s decision?**
- 2. In these excerpts, both Scout and Virginia are provoked by other children’s racially charged words. How do Scout and Virginia’s reactions differ?**
- 3. How do the reactions of the adults in each text (Atticus and Aunt May) differ in response to the racial tensions that surface? What explanation can you give for their different reactions?**