

## HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE PREP ENGLISH IIIB

### *To Kill a Mockingbird* Comprehension Questions

#### Chapters 1-8

1. Why would the expression “poor but proud” fit Walter Cunningham?
2. What does this incident reveal about the economy in Maycomb?
3. What are the school attendance habits of the Ewells?
4. In what ways do we know already that the Ewells are “poor white trash”?
5. What do Scout and Jem find in the hole in the tree?
6. Who filled the hole in the tree and why?
7. What is Miss Naudie’s version of the reason for the Radley’s seclusion?
8. When Jem goes back to retrieve his pants, he finds them folded across the fence and “sewed up...all crooked.” Who folded his pants?
9. What hint about the future does the event in question number 8 suggest?
10. After the fire at Miss Maudie’s, Jem suspects that Boo put the blanket around Scout. In what way does this mark a turning point in Boo’s actions and relationship with Jem and Scout?
11. When Scout asks Atticus if he defends “niggers,” Atticus replies, “Don’t say nigger, Scout. That’s common.” What does this tell about...
  - a. the use of the word “nigger” even in the South?
  - b. Atticus’ views of Black people?

#### Chapters 9-15

12. Why does Atticus view the Tom Robinson case with mixed feelings?
13. Why does Miss Maudie say it is a sin to kill a mockingbird?
14. How old is Atticus at the time of the novel?
15. What does the incident of the mad dog reveal about Atticus?

16. Why is this revelation important to Jem and Scout?
17. In what way does Mrs. Dubose show real courage? Why did Atticus insist that Jem read to her?
18. List three differences that the children observe or you observe between Calpurnia's church and a "white" church?
19. How did Zeebo learn to read?
20. Why does Cal speak differently to colored folks than to the Finches?
21. Describe Aunt Alexandra's idea of family background
22. How are Dill and Boo Radley similar?
23. How are they different?
24. Why can't Dill come to visit them this summer?
25. What does Link Deas mean when he says to Atticus, "You've got everything to lose from this, Atticus. I mean everything." (pg. 146) Why is Jem afraid for Atticus' safety after this meeting in the front yard?

### **Chapters 16-23**

26. In this passage - - "I was very tired, and was drifting into sleep when the memory of Atticus calmly folding his newspaper and pushing back his hat became Atticus standing in the middle of an empty street, pushing back his glasses. The full meaning of the night's events hit me, and I began crying." (pg. 156) What is the full meaning that hits her?
27. Atticus says that Mr. Underwood "Despises Negroes, won't have one near him." (pg. 156) Why, then, does he help Atticus guard Tom?
28. What explanation does Jem give for Dolphus Raymond's drinking from a paper bag? What is the real reason?
29. Where do the children sit to watch the trial?
30. What habit does Judge Taylor have that fascinates Scout? What unusual physical characteristics does Mr. Gilmer have?
31. List two things we already know about Bob Ewell before the trial begins?
32. What evidence is there for believing Ewell's story?

33. Why does Mayella object to being called “Miss Mayella?”
34. In what way or ways is Mayella an object of pity?
35. Does the prosecutor prove Tom’s guilt? If so, how? - - or what evidence is missing?
36. Does Atticus prove Tom’s innocence? If so, how? - - or what evidence is missing?
37. In what way, according to Atticus, are all people truly created equal?
38. While the crowd waits for the jury to return with its verdict, Scout is reminded for the second time of a “deserted, waiting street.” (pg. 210) Why does she associate these two events? Why does the author refer to mockingbirds in both of these scenes?
39. Why does Reverend Sykes ask Scout to stand up as her father leaves the courtroom? Why does the Black community send food to Atticus the morning after the trial?
40. Even though Atticus lost the case, Ewell spits in his face and tells him he’ll get him. (pg. 218) Why is Ewell still unsatisfied?
41. What four categories of humanity in Maycomb County has Jem created?
42. Why does Jem say Boo Radley doesn’t come out?

### **Chapters 24-31**

43. Compare Underwood’s editorial with the notion of killing a mockingbird. What is the similarity?
44. What new feelings does Scout have when she passes the Radley place?
45. What is contradictory about Miss Gates’ lessons on democracy versus Hitler?
46. As Scout and Jem leave for the Halloween pageant, they hear a mockingbird at the Radley place. Jem says, “Boo must not be home.” What does he mean? (pg. 254)
47. In what way does the attack on the children from the point of view of Scout inside the ham costume add suspense to the incident?
48. Why doesn’t Sheriff Hack Tate arrest Ewell’s killer? Why does Atticus change his mind and let the sheriff lie about the killing.
49. Why was “just standing on the Radley porch” enough of an experience for Scout to understand Boo?

50. IDENTIFICATION – Identify the importance of each person or object in the novel. Write in complete sentences.

- Boo Radley:
- Mrs. Dubose:
- Walter Cunningham:
- Mad Dog:
- Dill:
- The Ham Costume:
- Calpurnia:
- Aunt Alexandra:
- Mayella:
- The hiding place in the tree:

TRUE OR FALSE: Put a T in front of the true statements and an F in front of the false statements.

51. \_\_\_ The entire novel is told from the point of view of a child.
52. \_\_\_ Mrs. Dubose is a drug addict.
53. \_\_\_ Atticus kills a mad dog with one shot.
54. \_\_\_ Mr. Ewell believed that his daughter, Mayella, was telling the truth in court.
55. \_\_\_ Tom Robinson committed suicide.
56. \_\_\_ Mr. Ewell attacked Jem and Scout.
57. \_\_\_ Dill was treated cruelly by his parents.
58. \_\_\_ Bob Ewell attacked Jem and Scott
59. \_\_\_ Jem suffered a broken arm from the attack.
60. \_\_\_ Boo Radley saved Jem's life.