

Reading Guide

Part 1

Chapters 1-8

- Chapter 1 introduces readers to the town of Maycomb, its appearance, its inhabitants, and the particular attitudes of many of its people. Find a sentence or a paragraph which illustrates each of the following attitudes/ideas. Quote at least a portion of the sentence or paragraph and give the page number.
 - pride in ancestry and "tradition"
 - pride in conformity and distrust of those who are different
 - awareness of difference in social classes
 - narrow span of interest and almost no interest in the world outside of Maycomb
- Approximately when does the story begin? Show evidence to support your answer.
- What do we know for certain about Boo Radley?
- Why is Boo fascinating to the children?

Chapter 2

- Scout makes three mistakes during her first day at school. What are her mistakes, and why do they make Miss Caroline so angry?
- Why are the professional people in Maycomb poor at this time?
- What is the WPA, and why won't Mr. Cunningham work for it?

Chapter 3

- Calpurnia lectures Scout on manners when Scout criticizes Walter's manners and Atticus supports her. What does this tell you about how both Calpurnia and Atticus feel about others?
- Burrus Ewell, Walter Cunningham, and Chuck Little are all from extremely poor families. However, there are great differences both in appearance and in attitudes, particularly between the Cunninghams and the Ewells. What are those differences and why do you suppose they exist?
- Atticus tells Scout, "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb in his skin and walk around in it." What are some of the things that Scout begins to realize at this point? (p. 34)
- Why does Atticus say that the law is rigid for "common folk," but it is bent in certain ways for the Ewells?
- What is the "compromise" which Atticus suggests?

Chapter 4

- In what specific ways does Scout criticize the school she is attending?
- Where do you suppose the gum and the pennies are coming from? What makes you think so?
- Scout has two reasons for wanting to quit the "Radley Game." What are they?

Chapter 5

- Based on the description of Miss Maudie and her conversations with Scout, write a brief character analysis of Miss Maudie. Give your evidence.
- When Miss Maudie shows her disgust with "foot-washing Baptists," is she actually putting down all Baptists, or a particular point of view? Explain.
- Explain Miss Maudie's statement on p. 49--"...sometimes the Bible in the hands of one man is worse than a whiskey bottle in the hand of--oh, of your father."
- Paraphrase Atticus' speech about the Radleys' right to privacy. Do you agree with his point of view? Why or why not?

Chapter 6

1. What reasons do Jem and Dill give for trying to peek into the Radley window on this particular night?
2. What final statement by Jem makes Scout finally go along with the plan?
3. After the incident, Jem's real desire is not just to recover his pants but to keep on good terms with Atticus. What does this tell you about Jem's relationship with his father?

Chapter 7

1. What was the condition of Jem's pants when he found them? Why did their condition frighten him further?
2. What is the significance of the gifts in the tree?
3. Explain why Mr. Nathan Radley fills the hole in the tree with cement. Why does Jem cry about this?

Chapter 8

1. Why do Jem and Scout make the snowman such an obvious replica of Mr. Avery?
2. Why does Atticus decide to keep the blanket incident a secret?
3. After the fire is over, how does Miss Maudie feel about the destruction of her house? What does this tell you about her character, her values?