

WJEC GCSE English Literature
Activities and Exam Practice
To Kill a Mockingbird

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(sample pages)



Part 1

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 identifies the main characters of the novel. They are all seen through the eyes of a narrator who is also a major character: Scout. Bear in mind that she is an 8-year-old girl – although at the same time her viewpoint is presented with the understanding of the adult that she has become, looking back on her childhood. You will get to grips with the novel more quickly if you learn to identify and evaluate the characters.

Activity 1

- 1 Write a list of all the characters introduced to us in the first chapter. Check it against column 1 below.
- 2 From the information given in the chapter, who do you think will be the important characters and why do you think this? Complete the table.

| Character | Will he/she be important? | What makes you think this? |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| The narrator (Scout – Jean Louise Finch) | | The narrator has to be important as a narrator is involved throughout the book. |
| Jem Finch, Scout's brother (Jeremy Atticus Finch) | Yes | |
| The Ewells | | |
| Dill | | |
| Andrew Jackson – the general who cleared the way for Simon Finch | No | Lee used him as an example from history to make a point. He has no connection with Maycomb. |
| Simon Finch | | |
| Atticus Finch (Scout and Jem's father) | Perhaps | |
| Atticus' brother – John Hale Finch | | |

| Character | Important? | What makes you think this? |
|--|------------|---|
| Atticus' sister – Alexandra | | |
| The Haverfords | | |
| Calpurnia – The Finches' cook | | |
| Mrs Henry Lafayette Dubose | | |
| The Radleys: Boo (son) Mr Radley Mrs Radley Nathan (son) | Yes | They are discussed in quite a lot of detail, compared with the other townsfolk mentioned. |
| Dill (Charles Baker Harris) | | |
| Miss Rachel Haverford | | |
| The Cunninghams | | |
| Mr Conner, the beadle (policeman) | No | He was only mentioned in passing. |
| Miss Stephanie Crawford | | |
| Dr Reynolds | | |

Activity 2

What sort of town was Maycomb? Would you like to live there? Give reasons for your answers and a quotation to support your opinion.

Chapter 2

Activity 1

Write down your opinions on why Miss Caroline Fisher's classes go so wrong on her first day in the job. Compare them with a partner's opinions.

Activity 2

There are two narrators mixed into one in this book – Scout as a child and as an adult. There are many sophisticated ideas and phrases used in the narration but the language of the little girl is found in the dialogue.

Find an example of each. One example of each has been done for you.

EXAMPLE:

Adult narrator: the first grade was 'immune to imaginative literature'.

Child: 'Yeah Jem, but I don't wanta study cows.'

YOUR ANSWER:

Adult narrator:

Child:

Chapter 3

Activity 1

Read the whole chapter. Then consider the following quotation:

'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.' (page 33) This quotation holds the key to understanding the whole novel.

Find examples from what you have just read that demonstrate that people will understand each other better if they are able to see other people's point of view.

Activity 2

Discuss Atticus's parenting skills in this chapter. Is he a 'good' parent? In pairs or small groups, come up with ideas and report back to the whole group.

Chapter 4

Activity 1

After reading Chapter 4, reread the parts of Chapter 1 describing the Radleys. Then write two paragraphs comparing the two 'Radley' games played by the children.

Activity 2

Think about the sequence of events that make up Chapter 4. Look at the suggestions below and put them in order (There are eight events and two false trails.)

- A flashback to the tyre game when someone inside the Radley house was laughing
- Miss Maudie talks about her garden
- Discussing the find with Jem
- Finding chewing gum in the Radleys' oak tree
- Summer holiday games
- Dill coming back for the summer
- Polishing and perfecting the 'Radley game'
- Calpurnia bakes cookies
- End of the school year
- Getting caught playing the 'Radley game'

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