

**Fishbowl Discussion: *To Kill A Mockingbird* (novel by Harper Lee)**

Name:

Period:

**Directions:** In preparation for the fishbowl discussion, answer these guiding questions with your thoughts, opinions, and **evidence** from *To Kill A Mockingbird*. Aim to have **at least three bullet point answers per question**. **Most responses should include at least 3 quotes /events from the text to support your answer.**

1. *To Kill A Mockingbird* is a *bildungsroman* or a “coming of age” story, in which the protagonists move from childhood to adulthood, learning several important lessons and acquiring more mature viewpoints. Trace either Scout or Jem’s development throughout the novel and explain how he or she has evolved. (Things to consider: How have Jem and Scout been changed by their father’s battle with social injustice? In the future, how will the two of them remember the actions of Boo Radley?)

2. Why is a child's point of view/child protagonist so well-suited for this novel? What is the benefit in narrating this novel through a child’s eyes?

3. In your opinion, which do you think is the major plot line of the novel, and which are sub-plots?

A. the mystery of Boo Radley

B. “Scout and Jem grow up”

C. “The trial”

4. Since their mother is dead, several women-Calpurnia, Miss Maudie, and Aunt Alexandra- function as mother figures to Scout and Jem. Discuss the ways these three women influence Scout's growing understanding of what it means to be a Southern "lady."

5. How are age, gender, and social class depicted in the novel? Why are these such focal points of the narrative?

6. Out of the following themes, which do you think the novel explores the most? Why is it important? Is Harper Lee providing a commentary?

- A. loss of innocence
- B. coming of age
- C. the nature of evil
- D. the brotherhood of man
- E. man's inhumanity to man
- F. intolerance breeds injustice

7. Why does Atticus Finch risk his reputation, his friendships, and his career to take Tom Robinson's case? Do you think he risks too much by putting his children in harm's way?

8. Are there any heroes in the novel? If so, who, and why/why not?

9. How is the virtue of "courage" depicted in the novel? Why is this so important to the novel, and why does it matter in general?

10. What elements of this novel did you find funny, memorable, or inspiring? Are there any characters whose beliefs or actions impressed or surprised you? Did any events lead you to revisit childhood memories or see them in a new light?

11. In your opinion, does To Kill A Mockingbird still resonate in today's world? How so? What rules/lessons does it offer in our progressive, diverse world?