



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

BY HARPER LEE



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Edited by Paul Moliken

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading

Identifying Allusions

Objective: Identifying allusions and recognizing the function they can serve

Activity I

While Harper Lee's allusion to Roosevelt's speech lets us set the time of the story, allusions also perform other functions. Frequently, they are used as metaphors simply to make a more dramatic or important statement, while at other times they can be used as a concise way to convey information. Some allusions you may recognize and quickly get the point. For example: "More than one friend referred to him as *Lincolnesque*." Immediately, you know the reference is to Abraham Lincoln and, in context, you get the image of a tall, gaunt man.

If you do not know the object/person/place alluded to, however, you missed the point the author was making. For example: "At the last moment, he changed his mind, and the captain would never know of the *auto-da-fé* that had been prepared for him." Additional context may or may not allow you to figure out the meaning of "*auto-da-fé*," but if it does not, you would need to check a dictionary, encyclopedia or the Internet, which would tell you something similar to the following:

auto-da-fé—During the Spanish Inquisition, this was the term that referred to the official ceremony of pronouncing judgment upon a heretic and executing him or her. Today, it is used to refer to metaphorical executions, as in personal or business relationships.

By knowing and understanding the allusion in the example about the captain, you would immediately realize that his career or life was in danger.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 1**Geographic Location**

Objective: Reading for detail and for an appreciation of the relationship of geographic locations to plot

Activity I

1. On the following maps, identify Alabama and shade in the other Southern states.
2. From the narrative in Chapter 1 and a map, locate the real city of Mobile and the actual Alabama River.
3. Mark the spot on the map where you think Finch's Landing might be. Harper Lee sets it on the banks of the Alabama River, some forty miles northeast of Saint Stephens, which is located on the Tombigbee River.
4. Locate where the fictional town of Maycomb would be. Lee places it some twenty miles east of Finch's Landing.
5. Speculate how this specific geographic location might affect the plot of *To Kill A Mockingbird*.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 3**Characterization**

Objective: Actively involving students in considering aspects of plot and characterization

Activity

Because Chapters 2 and 3 offer great dramatic opportunities, imagine sections of these two chapters combined in one short dramatic scene.

1. Write a description of the schoolroom set.
2. Select those incidents that took place in the schoolroom that you wish to dramatize.
3. Combine the multiple school incidents into one scene. Write the dialogue for this scene.
4. In addition to dialogue, be sure to include stage directions. (e.g., Miss Caroline walks down the aisle)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 4 – 6**Main Idea****Objective:** Reading to find the main idea**Activity**

If you were to give one title and combine Chapters 4, 5, and 6 based on what seems to be the most important incident in these chapters, what would you entitle it? Be prepared to defend your choice of title by citing points from the chapters.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 11**Poetry****Objective:** Writing a found poem**Activity**

1. In the poem below, *If We Must Die*, the tone of the piece is clearly one of a willingness to fight until the last breath against any odds or any enemy.

Identify those words and phrases that indicate the poem's tone by circling them.

IF WE MUST DIE

If we must die, let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an unglorious spot,
While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,
Making their mock at our accursed lot.
If we must die—oh, let us nobly die,
So that our precious blood may not be shed
In vain; then even the monsters we defy
Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!
Oh, Kinsmen! we must meet the common foe;
Though far outnumbered, let us show us brave,
And for their thousand blows deal one deathblow!
What though before us lies the murderous, cowardly pack,
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 12 – 15**Setting**

Objective: Understanding the importance of setting (place and time) and how it may affect characterization

Activity

To Kill A Mockingbird, although first published in 1960, is set in the early 1930s in Alabama. Because of the harsh conditions black people had to live in that time and place, some critics object to Harper Lee's portrayal of Calpurnia as a happy, well-loved, member of the Finch family. Speculate on how she truly feels. Write a letter from Calpurnia to her son discussing her life, hopes, and dreams for his future.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 16 – 18**Perspective I****Objective:** Relating literature to one's life**Activity**

While, thankfully, lynch mobs are a thing of the past, we still frequently see many demonstrations of mob mentality.

1. Describe some incident of a mob you witnessed, participated in, or something you saw in the media. These can be positive or negative examples.
2. Because getting caught up in a mob mentality act can have very serious and unfortunate consequences, write down some ways people can avoid becoming involved in something like this.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 19 – 22**Satire II****Objective:** Writing a satire using an innocent as the narrator**Activity**

Imagine you are having a conversation with a visitor from outer space, who knows nothing about Earth, its people, its customs, practices, or behaviors. The visitor comes from a more advanced society in which unemployment, poverty, prejudice, and crime have been eradicated, and people work happily at jobs they enjoy. What do you suppose the visitor may find odd about our society? Write a dialogue in which this innocent makes comments about some aspect of our society. The idea is to try to write a satire attacking something in our society that you think is in need of change. For example, the alien might be confused about road rage, television shows, ethnic or racial prejudice, teenage fads, adult behavior, or other elements of society.