

# To Kill a Mockingbird Pre-Reading Notes

## CENSORSHIP

Considered one of the best novels of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but is also one of the most \_\_\_\_\_.

According to the American Library Association's Office of Intellectual Freedom, Harper Lee's novel is one of the most \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ books.

Many of the objections are due to books racially and sexually-charged topics.

Vice president of Dramatic Publishing, Chris Sergel, gets many request for specific words to be changed or removed, but they're always denied.

"Being comfortable with history is not means to change it," says Sergel. "People need to figure out how to confront issues.

Do you agree with this statement? Explain why or why not, back your answer up with specific examples.

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Monroeville, Alabama  
January, 1966

Editor, The News Leader:

Recently I have received echoes down this way of the Hanover County School Board's activities, and what I've heard makes me wonder if any of its members can read.

Surely it is plain to the simplest intelligence that "To Kill a Mockingbird" spells out in words of seldom more than two syllables a code of honor and conduct, Christian in its ethic, that is the heritage of all Southerners. To hear that the novel is "immoral" has made me count the years between now and 1984, for I have yet to come across a better example of doublethink.

I feel, however, that the problem is one of illiteracy, not Marxism. Therefore I enclose a small contribution to the Beadle Bumble Fund that I hope will be used to enroll the Hanover County School Board in any first grade of its choice.

Harper Lee

What do you think about Harper Lee's response?  
Do you think books should be censored or banned?  
Explain.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in April 28<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

Youngest of \_\_\_\_\_ children.

'To Kill a Mockingbird' was slowly and painstakingly written. She spent \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ hours a day writing.

'To Kill a Mockingbird' changed considerably during editing. \_\_\_\_\_ publishers turned it down, finally publisher Lippincott accepted the manuscript, even though it needed a lot of work.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Hour \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Harper thought it would \_\_\_\_\_ but it was an immediate \_\_\_\_\_. It was followed by an Oscar winning movie and won the Pulitzer Prize in 1961.

Today the book sells almost a \_\_\_\_\_ copies a year, more than fellow 20<sup>th</sup> century classics The Great Gatsby or The Catcher in the Rye

### Art Imitates Life

\_\_\_\_\_ Alabama, is the basis for \_\_\_\_\_.

Harper Lee was a \_\_\_\_\_ just like \_\_\_\_\_.

The book drew on Lee's childhood in Alabama. The character of \_\_\_\_\_ Finch was inspired by Lee's father, Amasa Coleman Lee, a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

In 1919 Lee's father defended two black men who had been charged with \_\_\_\_\_. He lost the case murder. The men were convicted, hanged, and mutilated. Her father was so delusional that he abandoned criminal law.

'To Kill a Mockingbird' is the \_\_\_\_\_ novel Lee ever wrote.

Won the Pulitzer Prize in \_\_\_\_\_

Votes "Best Novel of the \_\_\_\_\_" by the Library Journal

Remains a bestseller with \_\_\_\_\_ copies in print.

### In The End

'To Kill a Mockingbird' made Harper Lee fabulously wealthy but she lived a \_\_\_\_\_ life.

She would make regular trips to the laundromat because she and her older sister Alice—the two shared a home—did not own a \_\_\_\_\_.

Also lived without air conditioning, computers, and cell phones. For all her writing and correspondence, she used a manual \_\_\_\_\_.

Harper Lee said of Mockingbird, "I wish I'd never written the damn thing." Harper once expressed her regrets to writer Mills in those words. A few years later, Mills reminded her of that remark and asked if she still felt that way. Harper replied, "Sometimes. But then it passes."

She died February 19th 2016 in Monroeville, Al

Why do you think Harper Lee might have wanted to *never* have written 'To Kill a Mockingbird'?

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**To Kill a Mockingbird**

Published in July \_\_\_\_\_

A \_\_\_\_\_-of-\_\_\_\_\_ story about growing up in the South in the \_\_\_\_\_.

Harper Lee wrote during the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.

Introduced the reader to the \_\_\_\_\_ (set apart from the rest of from each other) world of the \_\_\_\_\_.

Published just \_\_\_\_\_ after the \_\_\_\_\_ and the brutal murder of \_\_\_\_\_, it's clearly a novel inspired by the civil rights movement \_\_\_\_\_ being set \_\_\_\_\_.

*To Kill a Mockingbird's*' book made an impact on the nation and its movie in 1962 only perpetuated that impact.It forced people to confront the injustice of **Jim Crow laws** and recognize their own prejudices.

It's been a staple of middle-high-school classes for generations.

**Stereotyping vs. Prejudice vs. Racism**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Definition of stereotype:</b> A generalized _____ of a person, created _____ taking the _____ person into account, to make such a _____. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>In context:</b> When we stereotype a group of people we _____ all of the _____ within that _____ as having the same _____. <input type="checkbox"/> Patterns assigned to _____. <input type="checkbox"/> Not necessarily _____ or _____. <input type="checkbox"/> Problem is when the pattern becomes _____ behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Definition of bias:</b> Prejudiced in _____ or _____ one _____, _____, or _____ compared with _____. <input type="checkbox"/> Usually in a way considered to be _____. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>In context:</b> When we _____ different groups in history lessons, we display a _____ that suggests that their contributions are not important.
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What are some different stereotypes?

Stereotypes	Based on:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Hour \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

According to the PEW Research Center 40% of Americans believe that the U.S. has made the equal rights with whites. Yet, just 8% of black Americans believe that is the case.

**Understanding Prejudice:**

Prejudice means to “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” “ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

Oxford English dictionary defines \_\_\_\_\_ as a “ \_\_\_\_\_ opinion that is not based on \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ experience.

Simply: It's a \_\_\_\_\_ one makes of another \_\_\_\_\_ you have facts and evidence.

Often grows from \_\_\_\_\_.

Some prejudices are \_\_\_\_\_ while others are \_\_\_\_\_.

*A thought or feeling does not always lead to action.*

**Discrimination**

An \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ behavior

Treating people differently based on your prejudices.

Can be \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

Can be based on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, sexual orientation, \_\_\_\_\_, age, or other factors.

**Racism**

At its core, \_\_\_\_\_ is a system in which a \_\_\_\_\_ benefits from the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ --whether they want to or not.

\_\_\_\_\_ vs. \_\_\_\_\_.

This operates as both an \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ level.

**We don't live in a society where racial groups have equal power, status, and opportunities.**

While some people might \_\_\_\_\_ stereotyping or \_\_\_\_\_, they don't have to face housing or job discrimination, police brutality, systematic poverty, or incarceration at the same levels as others.

**What can we do as a society to help combat racism? Think locally, state-wide, country-wide, and/or globally:**

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