

Chapters 22–26

Vocabulary:

Define each of the following words, then use that word in a sentence.

1. feral

Definition:

Sentence:

2. furtive

Definition:

Sentence:

3. squalid

Definition:

Sentence:

4. impertinence

Definition:

Sentence:

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5. duress

Definition:

Sentence:

6. undelectable

Definition:

Sentence:

Questions:

1. What did Atticus discover in the kitchen on the morning after the trial? What was the reason for these gifts?

2. Thinking about the outcome of the trial, Jem says:

It's like bein' a caterpillar in a cocoon, that's what it is, . . . Like somethin' asleep wrapped up in a warm place. I always thought Maycomb folks were the best folks in the world, least that's what they seemed like.

What is Jem painfully realizing?

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3. What was Atticus's reaction when Bob Ewell spit on him and threatened him? Why did Atticus say he would gladly take Bob Ewell spitting on him and threatening him?

4. Atticus says "Serving on a jury forces a man to make up his mind and declare himself about something. Men don't like to do that. Sometimes it's uncomfortable." Why would this be uncomfortable?

5. Atticus and Miss Maudie both point out something about the trial that leads them to believe that, however slowly, things may be changing for the better in regard to racial injustice. What is it that they both point out? Do you agree that it's an indication of change? Explain.

6. When Aunt Alexandra refuses to allow Scout to invite Walter Cunningham over, Scout becomes extremely upset:

I don't know what I would have done, but Jem stopped me. He caught me by the shoulders, put his arm around me, and led me sobbing in fury to his bedroom. Atticus heard us and poked his head around the door. "'s all right, sir," Jem said gruffly, "'s not anything."

Why do you think Jem didn't tell Atticus what the problem was?

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7. Jem tells Scout that he thinks there's "four kinds of folks" in Maycomb county. Scout maintains that there's just one kind of folks.

"That's what I thought, too," he said at last, "when I was your age. If there's just one kind of folks, why can't they get along with each other? If they're all alike, why do they go out of their way to despise each other?"

How would you answer Jem's question?

8. List two ways hypocrisy is shown in the meeting of Aunt Alexandra's missionary circle (Chapter 24).
9. Senseless killing is mentioned three times in Chapter 25. First Jem refuses to let Scout smash an insect. Later, Dill described Helen Robinson collapsing "like you'd step on an ant." Finally, in Braxton Underwood's editorial, he mentions the "senseless slaughter of songbirds by hunters and children." Why do you think the author repeatedly uses these images?
10. How is Scout, and therefore the reader, shown a different side of Aunt Alexandra in this section of reading?

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11. What does Scout find confusing about Miss Gates after her discussion of democracy?

Dig Deeper:

12. About the outcome of the trial Atticus says, "They've done it before and they did it tonight and they'll do it again and when they do it—seems that only children weep." What Atticus says is similar to the point Mr. Dolphus Raymond was making when he said that Dill might not mind so much about racial injustice when he gets older. Is it true that we become hardened to rights and wrongs with age? How can one avoid becoming hardened to knowing the difference between right and wrong?

13. When Jem complains about the unfairness of juries, Atticus says:

If you had been on the jury, son, and eleven other boys like you, Tom would be a free man, . . . So far nothing in your life has interfered with your reasoning process. Those are twelve reasonable men in everyday life, Tom's jury, but you saw something come between them and reason. You saw the same thing that night in front of the jail. . . . There's something in our world that makes men lose their heads—they couldn't be fair if they tried.

What sorts of things would interfere with a person's reasoning process regarding a matter like this?

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14. Atticus welcomed Walter's presence when Jem and Scout brought him home for lunch earlier in the story, but Aunt Alexandra refuses to allow Scout to invite Walter Cunningham over. She says, "I didn't say not to be nice to him. You should be friendly and polite to him, you should be gracious to everybody, dear. But you don't have to invite him home." Read Luke 14:12-14 and 1 John 3:18. Is there anything contradictory in what Aunt Alexandra is saying?
15. Scout sums up Mr. Underwood's editorial: "Atticus had used every tool available to free men to save Tom Robinson, but in the secret courts of men's hearts Atticus had no case." What does Scout mean that Tom's case was decided in "the secret courts of men's hearts"?