

STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS - To Kill A Mockingbird

Short Answer Format Answer Key

(Chapters 22-25)

1. Why did Jem cry?

Jem cried because he was shocked at the injustice of the jury, people from his own town, which he had always considered above such prejudice.

2. What was " 'round the back steps" when Calpurnia came in on Monday morning?

The black community had left all kinds of food for Atticus and his family as a gesture of their thanks for his defending Tom Robinson.

3. What was the significance of Maudie's two little cakes and one large one?

Maudie had two little cakes for Scout and Dill, but Jem got a slice from the big cake.

This was Maudie's symbolic way of saying she accepted Jem as a young man instead of a boy.

4. Describe Bob Ewell's meeting with Atticus at the post office.

Bob Ewell wanted to fight with Atticus. Atticus just said he was too old to fight, and he walked away. Bob Ewell threatened to get even.

5. What is Atticus' reaction to Ewell's threats?

He rationally understands that Ewell is upset, and he allows Mr. Ewell the right to be upset. However, he does not believe that Bob Ewell would actually do any terrible physical harm to anyone.

6. Alexandra doesn't want Scout playing with Walter Cunningham. Why not?

Alexandra thinks the Cunninghams are trash because they don't have the "background" of the Finches.

7. Jem said, "I think I'm beginning to understand why Boo Radley's stayed shut up in the house all this time . . . it's because he wants to stay inside." Why does he say that?

The world is starting to look mighty complicated to Jem. The jury decision, all the talk about social class and the problem of what exactly "background" means, and Mr. Raymond's false drinking problem are all weighing on his mind, and he's trying to get things all sorted out with nice, neat definitions. He is learning that things in the real world just aren't easy to sort-out and understand.

8. Mrs. Merriweather of the missionary circle complains about her cooks and field hands. What does that tell us about her?

As a member of the missionary circle, she is very concerned about the personal welfare of many Africans, but in her own back yard, Mrs. Merriweather is as prejudiced as she can be.

9. What happened to Tom Robinson?

Tom was shot when he tried to escape from prison.

10. What more do we learn about Alexandra after Atticus and Calpurnia leave?

Alexandra is given a more rounded personality in this section. We see clearly for the first time that she loves and is concerned for her brother. We see her take the news of Tom's death with great difficulty, yet she gathers herself together and carries on with her guests.

She seems a bit more human and a bit more noble than she has been painted prior to this.

11. What did Mr. Underwood's editorial say?

He likened Tom's death to the senseless slaughter of songbirds by hunters and children.