To Kill a Mockingbird
Chapters 1-7 Study Guide

Who is the narrator of the story?
- Jean Louise “Scout” Finch

What is the setting of Harper Lee’s To Kill a Mockingbird?
- Maycomb, Alabama, in the mid 1930s

Who is Scout’s father? What does he do for a living?
- Atticus Finch
  - He is a lawyer and a state legislator

Where is Scout and Jem’s mother?
- She died of a heart attack when Scout was 2 years old, and Jem was 6

After Arthur “Boo” Radley gets in trouble with the law, what does his father do?
- Rather than allow him to go to an industrial school, he convinces the judge to place him in his custody. He then keeps him inside the house for some 15 years

How does Boo retaliate against his father? What happens to him following the incident?
- He stabs his father in the leg with a pair of scissors
- He is locked in the courthouse basement until his father finally takes him back home

Who comes to stay next door at Rachel Haverford’s home? Where did he come from?
- A little boy named Charles “Dill” Harris
  - Meridian, Mississippi

What do the children plan to achieve before the end of the summer? Whose idea was this?
- They want to get Boo Radley out of the house
- It’s Dill’s idea
Describe some of the fears and superstitions the townspeople have about Boo Radley?
- People claim he peeped in windows at night
- He allegedly froze azaleas by breathing on them
- He supposedly killed and mutilated animals

Why does Miss Caroline become angry with Scout?
- Scout knows how to read and write, and Miss Caroline believed that she should be the one to teach her how to do this
- Scout tells Miss Caroline that she has shamed Walter Cunningham by offering him money to buy lunch

Why won't Walter Cunningham take the quarter from Miss Caroline?
- Because, even though he is poor, he, like the rest of his family, is proud and won't take anything he can't pay back

Why does Scout attack Walter Cunningham? What does this lead Jem to do?
- She believes it was Walter's fault that she got in trouble with Miss Caroline on the first day of school
- Feeling sorry for what his sister did, Jem invites Walter to dinner at their house

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When Walter gets near the Finch house, Scout says he “had forgotten he was a Cunningham.” What does she mean?
- He was going to accept a meal from the Finches, which was unlike the Cunninghams, who wouldn't accept anything they couldn't somehow pay back

Why does Calpurnia scold Scout?
- Because Scout embarrasses Walter Cunningham when she questions why he pours molasses all over his food. Calpurnia tells Scout Walter is their company and should be treated with respect

What leads to Burris Ewell's leaving school before the day is over? And what does Little Chuck Little do that prompts Burris to leave?
- He is told by Miss Caroline to go home and wash after she spots a louse in his hair
- He tells Burris he would just as soon kill him as look at him

What does it mean to climb into someone’s skin and walk around in it?
- That you cannot truly judge a person until you know their background and see how they live

Who’s the “meanest old woman who ever lived”?
- Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose
What does Atticus catch the children doing that upsets him?
- They are playing “Boo Radley,” and Atticus sees this as being disrespectful to the Radley family.

What did Scout hear after crashing into the Radley Place in a tire?
- She heard laughter coming from inside the house.

Who is Miss Maudie Atkinson and what’s her relationship with Scout?
- She is the Finches’ outspoken neighbor who befriends and serves as a mother figure for Scout, who often comes to her with questions.

What does Maudie say about Boo?
- She tells Scout that, as a child, he always spoke nicely to her and that, if he’s not crazy, he should be by now.

How do the children try to send a message to Boo? What does the message say?
- By attaching a note to a fishing line on a bamboo pole and trying to stick the note in a loose shutter on the Radley Place.
- It asks Boo nicely to come out and tell them what he does in there. Also that they wouldn’t hurt him and they would like to buy him ice cream.

What is the children’s new plan in Chapter 6?
- To look into the Radley Place to see if they can get a glimpse of Boo Radley.

What does Jem lose when he and the others go to the Radley Place?
- He loses his pants, which he catches on the fence while trying to crawl under it, after he, Scout and Dill flee upon seeing a shadowy figure on the Radley’s porch.

What brave act does Jem perform by himself? Why does he do it?
- He returns to the Radley Place in order to retrieve his pants.
- He says Atticus never whipped him and he meant to keep it that way. He doesn’t want to disappoint Atticus.

What was unusual about Jem’s pants when he retrieved them from the fence?
- The appeared to have been mended by someone who wasn’t a woman.
- And they were placed there as if someone knew Jem would return for them.
What is symbolic about the broken pocket watch?

- It symbolizes that, for Boo Radley, time, in effect, stopped when his father decided to lock him away as a teenager. As a result, he hasn't grown into normal adulthood; he remains childlike.

What does Nathan Radley do to the tree where the gifts are placed, and why do you think he did this?

- He fills the knothole with cement
- He wants to stop Boo from communicating with the children

Atticus says the tree is healthy. Nathan Radley says it is sick. How then can the tree serve as a symbol for Boo Radley?

- Like the tree, Boo was treated by his family as if he were sick when, in fact, he was a normal, healthy teenager prior to being locked away.

How does Jem respond to the tree being plugged with cement, and why do you think he responds this way?

- He cries
- Because he feels sorry for Boo, knowing he's been cut off from the world by his family.