

To Kill a Mockingbird Quote Notes

Directions: Analyze and interpret each of the following quotes. Your response should be at least as long as the quote itself.

For your responses you may:

- Explain why what is happening, or what is said is significant
- Ask a question about the quote, and then attempt to answer your question
- Connect the quote to one of the "Look-For"s
- Connect the quote to your own life, another text, the world we live in.

Chapter 1	
Quote	Explanation
"Inside the hose lived a malevolent phantom. People said he existed, but Jem and I had never seen him. People said he went out at night when the moon was down, and peeped in windows. When people's azaleas froze in a cold snap, it was because he had breathed on them. Any stealthy crimes committed in Maycomb we his work" (Lee 10)	
"The more we told Dill about the Radleys, the more he wanted to know, the longer he would stand hugging the light-pole on the corner, the more he would wonder" (Lee 15)	
"Jem gave a reasonable description of Boo: Boo was about six-and-a-half feet tall, judging from his tracks; he dined on raw squirrels and any cats that he could catch, that's why his hands were bloodstained—if you ate an animal raw, you could never wash the blood off. There was a long jagged scar that ran across his face; what teeth he had were yellow and rotten; his eyes popped, and he drooled most of the time" (Lee 16)	

Chapter 2	
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Quote	Explanation
<p>"Now that I was compelled to think about it, reading was something that just came to me, as learning to fasten the seat of my union suit without looking around, or achieving two bows from a snarl of shoelaces. I could not remember when the lines above Atticus's finger separated into words, but I had stared at them all the evenings in my memory, listening to the news of the day, Bills to Be Enacted into Laws, the diaries of Lorenzo Dow—anything Atticus happened to be reading when I crawled into his lap at night. Until I feared I would lose it, I never loved to read. One does not love breathing" (Lee, 23)</p>	
<p>"We watched. One morning Jem and I found a load of stovewood in the back yard. Later, a sack of hickory nuts appeared on the back steps. With Christmas came a crate of smilax and holly. That spring when we found a crockersack full of turnip greens, Atticus said Mr. Cunningham had more than paid him" (Lee 27)</p>	
<p>"If I could have explained these things to Miss Caroline, I would have saved myself some inconvenience and Miss Caroline subsequent mortification, but it was beyond my ability to explain things as well as Atticus, so I said, 'You're shamin' him, Miss Caroline. Walter hasn't got a quarter at home to bring you, and you can't use any stovewood'" (Lee 28)</p>	

Chapter 3	
Quote	Explanation
<p>""He ain't company, Cal, he's just a Cunningham-' 'Hush your mouth! Don't matter who they are, anybody sets foot in this house's yo' comp'ny, and don't you let me catch you remarkin' on their ways like you was so high and mighty! Yo' folks might be better than the Cunninghams but it don't count for nothin' the way you're disgracin' 'em—if you can't act fit to eat at the table, you can just set here and eat in the kitchen'" (Lee 33).</p>	

<p>“‘First of all’, he said, ‘if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you’ll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view—’</p> <p>‘Sir?’</p> <p>‘—until you climb into his skin and walk around in it’” (Lee, 39)</p>	
Chapter 4	
Quote	Explanation
<p>“Jem stamped his foot. ‘Don’t you know you’re not supposed to even touch the trees over there? You’ll get killed if you do!’” (45)</p>	
<p>“‘See there?’ Jem was scowling triumphantly. ‘Nothin’ to it. I swear, Scout, sometimes you act so much like a girl it’s mortifyin’.” (50)</p>	

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Chapter 5	
Quote	Explanation
<p>“What I meant was, if Atticus Finch drank until he was drunk he wouldn’t be as hard as some men at their best.” (61).</p> <p>“What Mr. Radley did was his own business. If he wanted to come out, he would. If he wanted to stay inside his own house he had the right to, free of inquisitive children, which was a mild term for the likes of us...What Mr. Radley did might seem peculiar to us, but it did not seem peculiar to him.” (65)</p>	
Chapter 6	
Quote	Explanation
<p>“Scout. I’m tellin’ you for the last time, shut your trap or go home—I declare to the lord you’re getting’ more like a girl every day!” (69)</p>	
<p>“It was then, I suppose, that Jem and I first began to part company. Sometimes I did not understand him, but my periods of bewilderment were short lived.” (75)</p>	
Chapter 7	
Quote	Explanation

<p>"As Atticus had advised me once to do, I tried to climb into Jem's skin and walk around in it; if I had gone to the Radley Place at two in the morning, my funeral would have been held the next afternoon. So I left Jem alone and tried not to bother him." (77)</p>	
<p>" 'Is that tree dyin'?' 'Why no, son, I don't think so. Look a the leaves, they're all green and full, no brown patches anywhere —' 'It ain't even sick?' 'That tree's as healthy as you are, Jem. Why?' 'Mr. Nathan Radley said it was dyin'.' 'Well maybe it is. I'm sure Mr. Radley knows more about his trees than we do.'" (84)</p>	

Chapter 8	
Quote	Explanation
<p>"Atticus strolled over to Miss Maudie's sidewalk, where they engaged in an arm-waving conversation, the only phrase of which I caught was '...created an absolute morphodite in that yard! Atticus, you'll never raise 'em!'" (90-91)</p>	
<p>"'...Mr. Nathan put cement in that tree, Atticus, an' he did it to stop us findin' things — he's crazy, I reckon , like they say, but Atticus, I swear to God he ain't ever harmed us, he ain't ever hurt us, he coulda cut my throat from ear to ear that night but he tried to mend my pants instead...he ain't ever hurt us Atticus—'" (96)</p>	

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Chapter 9	
Quote	Explanation
" '...Scout, simply by the nature of the work, every lawyer gets at least one case in his lifetime that affects him personally. This one's mine I guess. You might hear some ugly talk about it at school, but do one thing for me if you will; you just hold your head up high and keep those fists down. No matter what anybody says to you, don't let 'em get your goat. Try fighting with your hear for a change...it's a good one, even if it does resist learning.'" (100-101)	
"Right. But do you think I could face my children otherwise? You know what's going to happen as well as I do, Jack, and I hope and pray I can get Jem and Scout through it without bitterness, and most of all, without catching Maycomb's usual disease. Why reasonable people go stark raving mad when anything involving a Negro comes up, is just something I don't pretend to understand...I just hope that Jem and Scout come to me for their answers instead of listening to the town. I hope they trust me enough...Jean Louise?" (117)	
Chapter 10	
Quote	Explanation
" That was the only time I ever heard Atticus say it was a sin to do something, and I asked Miss Maudie about it. 'Your father's right,' she said. 'Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens, don't nest in corncribs, they don't do one thing	

but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.'" (119)	
"If your father's anything, he's civilized in his heart. Marksmanship a gift of God, a talent – oh, you have to practice to make it perfect, but shootin's different from playing the piano or the like. I think maybe he put his gun down when he realized that God had given him an unfair advantage over most living things. I guess he decided he wouldn't shoot till he had to, and he had to today.'" (130)	
Chapter 11	
Quote	Explanation
<p>"Scout," said Atticus, "when summer comes you'll have to keep your head about far worse things...it's not fair to you and Jem, I know that, but sometimes we have to make the best of things, and the way we conduct ourselves when the chips are down—well, all I can say is, when you and Jem are grown, may you'll look back on this with some compassion and some feeling that I didn't let you down. This case, Tom Robinson's case, is about something that goes to the essence of a man's conscience—Scout, I couldn't go to church and worship God if I didn't try to help that man"</p> <p>"Atticus, you must be wrong..."</p> <p>"How's that?"</p> <p>"Well, most folks seem to think they're right and you're wrong..."</p> <p>"They're certainly entitled to think that, and they're entitled to full respect for their opinions," said Atticus, "but before I can live with other folks I've got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience." (139-140)</p>	
<p>"A lady?" Jem raised his head. His face was scarlet. "After all those things she said about you, a lady?"</p> <p>"She was. She has her own views about things, a lot different from mine, maybe...son, I told you that if you hadn't lost your head I'd have made you go read to her—I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through</p>	

no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do. Mrs. Dubose won, all ninety-eight pounds of her. According to her views, she died beholden to nothing and nobody. She was the bravest person I ever knew.'" (149)	
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