



**ORLANDO
SHAKESPEARE
THEATER**
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH UCF

Curriculum Guide 2014-2015

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD



*Adapted by Christopher Sergel
based on the book
by Harper Lee*

Standards

| Theatre | English Language Arts | Social Studies | SS.912.S.2.7 | SS.912.S.4.9 |
|---------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| TH.68,912.C.2 | | SS.912.H.1.5 | SS.912.S.2.9 | SS.912.S.6.3 |
| TH.68,912.C.3 | LAFS.612.L.3.4 | SS.8,912.C.1.5 | SS.912.S.8.2 | SS.912.S.6.5 |
| TH.68,912.H.1 | LAFS.612.L.3.5 | SS.8,912.C.1.6 | SS.912.S.3.1 | SS.912.S.6.7 |
| TH.68,912.O.1 | LAFS.612.SL.1.1 | SS.912.H.1.2 | SS.912.S.3.2 | SS.912.S.7.1 |
| TH.68,912.O.3 | LAFS.612.W.1.1 | SS.912.H.1.5 | SS.912.S.3.3 | SS.912.S.7.2 |
| TH.68,912.S.1 | LAFS.612.RL.2.5 | SS.912.S.2.10 | SS.912.S.4.1 | SS.912.S.7.4 |
| | | SS.912.S.2.11 | SS.912.S.4.10 | SS.912.S.7.5 |
| | | SS.912.S.2.12 | SS.912.S.4.3 | SS.912.S.7.6 |
| | | SS.912.S.2.6 | SS.912.S.4.5 | SS.912.S.7.8 |

Content Advisory: *To Kill a Mockingbird* is set in the Depression-era South. The play includes racist language, mild violence, and discussions of rape. The play is best suited for ages 12 and up.

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An Introduction

Educators:

First, let me thank you for taking the time out of your very busy schedule to bring the joy of theatre arts to your classroom. We at Orlando Shakes are well aware of the demands on your time and it is our goal to offer you supplemental information to compliment your curriculum with ease and expediency.

With that in mind, we've redesigned our curriculum guides to be more "user friendly." We've offered you activities that you may do in one class period with minimal additional materials. These exercises will aid you in preparing your students to see a production, as well as applying what you've experienced when you return to school. We've included Sunshine and Common Core Standards to assure you that those curriculum needs are being met.

It is our hope that by streamlining our guides they will invite you to dip in to grab historical background on an author or playwright, a concise plot summary and colorful character descriptions, discussion questions to explore in class or as writing assignments and interactive activities to bring the magic of live performance back to your classroom. And, of course, how to prepare your students to enjoy live theater.

We look forward to hosting you at the Lowndes Shakespeare Theater. Additionally, should you wish to bring our Actor/Educators into your classroom, we will work around your schedule. Feel free to contact us at Orlando Shakes should you have any questions or suggestions on how we can better serve you. We are always learning from you.

Thank you for your tremendous work in nurturing our audiences of tomorrow.

Bravo!

Anne Hering
Director of Education



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Enjoying Live Theater

Theater Is A Team Sport

The **Playwright** writes the script. Sometimes it is from an original idea and sometimes it is adapted from a book or story. The Playwright decides what the characters say, and gives the Designers guidelines on how the play should look.



Sound Designer Bruce Bowes
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Director** creates the vision for the production and works closely with the actors, costume, set and lighting designers to make sure everyone tells the same story.



Costume Designer-
Denise Warner
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Actors** use their bodies and voices to bring the author's words and the director's ideas to life on the stage.

The **Designers** imagine and create the lights, scenery, props, costumes and sound that will compliment and complete the director's vision.

The **Stage Manager** assists the director during rehearsals by recording their instructions and making sure the actors and designers understand these ideas. The Stage Manager then runs the show during each performance by calling cues for lights and sound, as well as entrances and exits.



Costume Apprentice-
Sheldon Desmond
Lamar Roberson
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Shop and Stage Crew** builds the set, props and costumes according to the designer's plans. The Stage Crew sets the stage with props and furniture, assists the actors with costume changes and operates sound, lighting and stage machinery during each performance.



Stage Manager-Stacey
Renee Norwood
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Front of House Staff** welcomes you to the theater, takes your tickets, helps you find your seat and answers any question you may have on the day of performance.

The Theater is where it all takes place. Orlando Shakespeare Theater In Partnership with UCF is the only professional, classical theater company in Central Florida, reaching students and audiences in the surrounding eight counties.

Mission/Vision:

With Shakespeare as our standard and inspiration, the Orlando Shakespeare Theater In Partnership with UCF produces bold professional theater, develops new plays, and provides innovative educational experiences that enrich our community. Our vision is to create theater of extraordinary quality that encourages the actor/audience relationship, embraces the passionate use of language, and ignites the imagination.

The Actor/Audience Relationship

The Audience is the reason Live Theater exists. At Orlando Shakes, we cherish the Actor/Audience relationship, the unique give and take that exists during a performance which makes the audience an **ACTIVE** participant in the event. The actors see the audience just as the audience sees the actors, and every, laugh, snuffle, chuckle and gasp the audience makes effects the way the actor plays his next moment. We want you to be engaged, and to live the story with us!



There are certain Conventions of the Theatrical Event, like, when the lights go down you know that the show is about to start, and that the audience isn't encouraged to come and go during a performance. Here are some other tips to help you and your classmates be top notch audience members:

- Please make sure to turn off your cell phones. And **NO TEXTING!**
- Please stay in your seat. Try to use the restroom before you take your seat and stay in your seat unless there is an emergency.
- Please do not eat or drink in the theater.

Talkback

After the performance, the actors will stay on stage for about 10 minutes to hear your comments and answer any questions you have about the play, the production and what it means to be a professional actor. We'd love to hear what you felt about the play, what things were clear or unclear to you, and hear your opinions about what the play means. This last portion of the Actor/ Audience Relationship is so important to help us better serve you!

Here are some things to think about while watching the show. You might be asked these questions in the talkback!

1. What is the effect of actors playing multiple characters in the play? Is it confusing? Why or why not? How does it change the impact of the scenes?
2. How did the director and designers let you know the location had changed on stage?
3. How did you know time had passed?
4. Note when the actors directly address the audience. Why do you think they do this at some times and not others? How does it make you feel?

To Kill A Mockingbird

About the Play

Summary



www.litcharts.com

In the town of Maycomb, Alabama, in the middle of the Great Depression, six-year-old Scout Finch lives with her older brother Jem, and her widowed father, Atticus. Atticus is a lawyer, and makes enough to keep the family comfortably out of poverty, but he works long days. He relies on the family's black cook, Calpurnia, to help raise the kids.

Scout and Jem spend much of their time creating and acting out fantasies. One year a boy named Dill comes to spend the summer with his aunt, who is the Finches' neighbor. The three children become friends, and, pushed by Dill's wild imagination, soon become obsessed with a nearby house. A man named Nathan Radley owns the house, but it is his reclusive brother, Arthur (Boo) Radley, who interests and terrifies the children. On a dare, Jem actually runs up and touches the Radley house, and Scout is sure she sees someone watching them from inside behind a curtain.

The summer ends, and Dill returns to his hometown. Scout starts school, and hates it. On the first day, her teacher actually criticizes her for already knowing how to read. The highlights of the school year come when Scout and Jem occasionally find presents stuffed into a knothole of a tree next to the Radley's fence. Summer arrives, and Dill returns. The children grow more daring and sneak onto the Radley property. But Nathan Radley sees them and thinks they're thieves. They run, and Jem's pants get caught in the

Radley fence. He leaves them behind. When he goes back to get them later that night, the pants are mended and folded. Meanwhile, Scout and Jem continue to find gifts in the knothole until Nathan Radley cements it shut. A few months later, in the dead of winter, the Finch's neighbor Miss Maudie Atkinson's house catches fire, and as Scout and Finch watch it burn someone Scout doesn't see puts a blanket around her shoulders. Jem realizes that Boo Radley must have done it.



That year, Atticus is appointed by the court to defend a black man, Tom Robinson, who is accused of raping Mayella Ewell, the daughter of a poor, notoriously vicious white man named Bob Ewell. Racial tensions in Maycomb flare. Scout and Jem become targets of abuse from schoolmates, neighbors, townspeople, and even some family members. In contrast, when Calpurnia takes the children to attend her black church, they are for the most part warmly received.

Before the trial starts, Atticus' sister Alexandra comes to live with the Finch's. Dill also arrives, after sneaking away from his mother and her new husband. Alexandra's social views are more conservative than Atticus's. She treats Calpurnia more like a servant than a family member and tries to make Scout act more like a girl. The day before the trial, a mob surrounds the jail where Tom Robinson is being held. Scout, Jem, and Dill, who have snuck out of their house, join Atticus, who anticipated the mob attack. Scout doesn't realize what's going on, but

recognizes a man in the crowd and asks him about his son, who is Scout's classmate. The man, shamed, disperses the mob.

At the trial, Atticus presents a powerful defense of Tom and makes it clear that Ewell is lying. The children sneak into the trial and watch the proceedings from the balcony, where the black people are forced to sit. Jem is sure Atticus will win the case, but the all-white jury still convicts Tom. Jem is particularly hard hit by the verdict, and his faith in justice is even further shaken when Tom tries to escape from prison and is shot and killed.



Even though Robinson was convicted, Ewell is furious that Atticus made him look like a fool. One night, as Jem and Scout walk home alone from a Halloween pageant, Ewell attacks them. Jem's arm is broken, but someone rushes in to help. In the scuffle, Ewell is killed. The man who saved Jem and Scout carries Jem home, and Scout realizes that the man is Boo Radley. Heck Tate decides to keep Radley's involvement in Ewell's death quiet, and Scout walks Radley home. As Scout stands on the Radley porch, she sees the world as Boo must see it. When she gets home, Scout falls asleep as Atticus reads to her at Jem's bedside.



To Kill A Mockingbird

About the Play

Meet the Characters

Atticus Finch

A highly respected and responsible citizen of Maycomb County. He is the father of Scout and Jem. An attorney by profession.

Jean Louis Finch (Scout)

Atticus' daughter. An impulsive girl by nature, she keeps rushing into fights and is more emotional than her brother.

Jeremy Finch (Jem)

He is the son who is deeply motivated to follow his father's footsteps.

Arthur Radley (Boo)

Their neighbor, who never steps out of his house, nor maintains any relation with the townsfolk.

Bob Ewell

An uncultured, uncouth character.

Calpurnia

The family's black housekeeper who has looked after the family since the children had lost their mother.

Dill

The closest friend of both Jem and Scout.

Miss Stephanie Crawford

A neighbor

Miss Maudie

A neighbor

Mrs. Dubose

A neighbor

Mayella Ewell

Bob's young daughter, who in her search for company and affection, puts the innocent Tom Robinson into deep trouble.

Tom Robinson

A young Negro laborer.

Walter Cunningham

Father of a decent self-respecting, hardworking family who always try to pay off their debts in whatever manner possible.

Mr. Heck Tate

The sheriff of Maycomb county.

Judge Taylor

The judge for the Tom Robinson - Mayella case .

thebestnotes.com



"Why reasonable people go stark raving mad when anything involving a Negro comes up, is something I don't pretend to understand."

-Atticus Finch

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About the Play

Meet the Playwright

Meeting with Harper Lee to discuss the stage adaptation of her extraordinary book To Kill a Mockingbird was an event about which I felt some trepidation.

My father, Roger Sergel, who had been Professor of English at the University of Pittsburgh and who had been close to many leading writers of his day...particularly admired Harper Lee's book. He died before I met with Harper Lee, but I can still remember his unqualified enthusiasm for her work. When To Kill a Mockingbird won the Pulitzer Prize, my father said, "This is the first time I entirely agree with the Pulitzer Prize."

The meeting with Harper Lee, as I recall it from twenty years ago, took place at the Hotel Pierre in New York City. It began as an early lunch and lasted several hours. As we discussed the adaptation and the reasons for the choices being made, I had a sense that she felt the work was on the right track.... The good discussion continued with Harper Lee as we walked down the hotel corridor. Passing a row of public phones I had an irrational wish that I could call my father and tell him that I'd met with Harper Lee herself and the meeting had gone very well.

A taxi stopped in front and I opened the door for Harper Lee. She embraced me and was gone. I've never seen her again.

Perhaps the essence of what I believe she does better than any writer I know is captured in a brief response Atticus makes to a question from his daughter Scout. In the book as in the play, Tom Robinson, a black man, is wrongly convicted of a crime he did not commit and is later shot down by prison guards as he tries to escape. In anguish Scout asks her father how such a thing could be done to Tom. Atticus replies, "Because he wasn't 'Tom' to them." The special beauty of Harper Lee's work is that she takes us inside the people of her book, and in their various individual ways, each becomes "Tom" to us.

— Christopher Sergel www.fcgov.com



Christopher Sergel's interests and talents led him on many adventures throughout the world. As captain of the schooner Chance, he spent two years in the South Pacific; as a

writer for Sports Afield magazine, he lived in the African bush for a year; as a lieutenant commander during WWII, he taught celestial navigation; as a playwright, his adaptation of Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* was seen on Broadway.

But throughout his life, his greatest adventure and deepest love was his work with Dramatic Publishing, where he served as president from 1970-1993. During this time, he wrote adaptations of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Cheaper By the Dozen*, *The Mouse That Roared*, *Up the Down Staircase*, *Fame*, *Black Elk Speaks* and many more.

His love of theatre and his caring for writers made him a generous and spirited mentor to many playwrights here and around the world. His inspiration and integrity attracted to the company fine writers including C. P. Taylor, Timberlake Wertenbaker, Arthur Miller, Roald Dahl and E. B. White, to name just a few. He once said he hoped to be remembered as E. B. White described Charlotte: "a true friend and a good writer."

BIOGRAPHY FROM DRAMATIC PUBLISHING



To Kill A Mockingbird

About the Play

Meet the Author of the Book



"You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view—until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."

—Harper Lee

Harper Lee is best known for writing the Pulitzer Prize-winning best-seller *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960)—her one and only published novel.

Writer Harper Lee was born on April 28, 1926, in Monroeville, Alabama. In 1959, she finished the manuscript for her Pulitzer Prize-winning best-seller *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Soon after, she helped fellow-writer and friend Truman Capote write an article for *The New Yorker* which would later evolve into his nonfiction masterpiece, *In Cold Blood*. Lee's second novel was never published.

Early Life

Famed author Nelle Harper Lee was born on April 28, 1926, in Monroeville, Alabama. Lee is best known for writing the Pulitzer Prize-winning best-seller *To Kill a*

Mockingbird (1960)—her one and only novel. The youngest of four children, she grew up as a tomboy in a small town. Her father was a lawyer, a member of the Alabama state legislature and also owned part of the local newspaper. For most of Lee's life, her mother suffered from mental illness, rarely leaving the house. It is believed that she may have had bipolar disorder.

One of her closest childhood friends was another writer-to-be, Truman Capote (then known as Truman Persons). Tougher than many of the boys, Lee often stepped up to serve as Truman's protector. Truman, who shared few interests with boys his age, was picked on for being a sissy and for the fancy clothes he wore. While the two friends were very different, they both shared in having difficult home lives. Truman was living with his mother's relatives in town after largely being abandoned by his own parents.

In high school, Lee developed an interest in English literature. After graduating in 1944, she went to the all-female Huntingdon College in Montgomery. Lee stood apart from the other students—she couldn't have cared less about fashion, makeup or dating. Instead, she focused on her studies and on her writing. Lee was a member of the literary honor society and the glee club.

Transferring to the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa, Lee was known for being a loner and an individualist. She did make a

greater attempt at a social life there, joining a sorority for a while. Pursuing her interest in writing, Lee contributed to the school's newspaper and its humor magazine, the *Rammer Jammer*. She eventually became the editor of the *Rammer Jammer*.

In her junior year, Lee was accepted into the university's law school, which allowed students to work on law degrees while still undergraduates. The demands of her law studies forced her to leave her post as editor of the *Rammer Jammer*. After her first year in the law program, Lee began expressing to her family that writing—not the law—was her true calling. She went to Oxford University in England that summer as an exchange student. Returning to her law studies that fall, Lee dropped out after the first semester. She soon moved to New York City to follow her dreams to become a writer.

In 1949, a 23-year-old Lee arrived in New York City. She struggled for several years, working as a ticket agent for Eastern Airlines and for the British Overseas Air Corp (BOAC). While in the city, Lee was reunited with old friend Truman Capote, one of the literary rising stars of the time. She also befriended Broadway composer and lyricist Michael Martin Brown and his wife Joy.

In 1956, the Browns gave Lee an impressive Christmas present—to support her for a year so that she could write full time. She quit her job and devoted herself to her craft. The Browns also helped her find an agent, Maurice Crain. He,

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Meet the Author of the Book

in turn, was able to get the publishing firm interested in her first novel, which was first titled *Go Set a Watchman*, then *Atticus*, and later *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Working with editor Tay Hohoff, Lee finished the manuscript in 1959.

Work with Truman Capote

Later that year, Lee joined forces with old friend Truman Capote to assist him with an article he was writing for *The New Yorker*. Capote was writing about the impact of the murder of four members of the Clutter family on their small Kansas farming community. The two traveled to Kansas to interview townspeople, friends and family of the deceased, and the investigators working to solve the crime. Serving as his research assistant, Lee helped with the interviews, eventually winning over some of the locals with her easy-going, unpretentious manner. Truman, with his flamboyant personality and style, also had a hard time initially getting himself into his subjects' good graces. During their time in Kansas, the Clutters' suspected killers, Richard Hickock and Perry Smith, were caught in Las Vegas and brought back for questioning. Lee and Capote got a chance to interview the suspects not long after their arraignment in January 1960. Soon after, Lee and Capote returned to New York. She worked on the galleys for her forthcoming first novel while he started working on his article, which would evolve into the nonfiction masterpiece, *In Cold Blood*. The pair returned to Kansas in March for the murder

trial. Later that spring, Lee gave Capote all of her notes on the crime, the victims, the killers, the local communities and much more.

'To Kill A Mockingbird'

Soon Lee was engrossed in her literary success story. In July 1960, *To Kill a Mockingbird* was published and picked up by the Book-of-the-Month Club and the Literary Guild. A condensed version of the story appeared in *Reader's Digest* magazine. The work's central character, a young girl nicknamed Scout, was not unlike Lee in her youth. In one of the book's major plotlines, Scout and her brother Jem and their friend Dill explore their fascination with a mysterious and somewhat infamous neighborhood character named Boo Radley. But the work was more than a coming-of-age story, however. Another part of the novel reflected racial prejudices in the South. Their attorney father, Atticus Finch, tries to help a black man who has been charged with raping a white woman to get a fair trial and to prevent him from being lynched by angry whites in a small town.

The following year, *To Kill a Mockingbird* won the prestigious Pulitzer Prize and several other literary awards. Horton Foote wrote a screenplay based on the book and used the same title for the 1962 film adaptation. Lee visited the set during filming and did a lot of interviews to support the film. Earning eight Academy Award nominations, the movie

version of *To Kill a Mockingbird* won four awards, including Best Actor for Gregory Peck's portrayal of Atticus Finch. The character of Atticus is said to have been based on Lee's father.

Later Years

By the mid-1960s, Lee was reportedly working on a second novel, but it was never published. Continuing to help Capote, Lee worked with him on and off on *In Cold Blood*. She had been invited by Smith and Hickock to witness their execution in 1965, but she declined. When Capote's book was finally published in 1966, a rift developed between the two friends and collaborators. Capote dedicated the book to Lee and to his longtime lover, Jack Dunphy, but failed to acknowledge her contributions to the work. While Lee was very angry and hurt by this betrayal, she remained friends with Capote for the rest of his life. That same year, Lee had an operation on her hand to repair damage done by a bad burn. She also accepted a post on the National Council of the Arts at the request of President Lyndon B. Johnson. During the 1970s and 1980s, Lee largely retreated from public life.



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About the Play

Meet the Author of the Book

Lee spent some of her time on a non-fiction book project about an Alabama serial killer, which had the working title *The Reverend*. This work, however, was never published. Lee continues to live a quiet, private life in New York City and Monroeville. Active in her church and community, she usually avoids anything to do with her still popular novel. *Lawsuits and New Deals*
On May 3, 2013, Lee filed a lawsuit in federal court against the son-in-law of her former agent, Samuel Pinkus. The

writer charges that, in 2007, Pinkus "engaged in a scheme to dupe" her out of the copyright to her most famous work and only published novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, later diverting royalties from the work. Later that year, Lee launched another legal effort. She filed suit against the Old Courthouse Museum located her hometown of Monroeville, Alabama. The famous author is upset over *To Kill a Mockingbird* related merchandise sold in the museum's gift shop, which she believes infringes on her

trademarks. She is seeking damages in the case and for the offending items to be destroyed. Lee finally allowed for her famous work to be released as an e-book in 2014. She signed a deal with HarperCollins for the company to put out *To Kill a Mockingbird* in a e-book and a digital audio editions. In a statement from the publisher, Lee explained that "I'm still old fashioned. I love dusty old books and libraries." These new versions will be bringing her masterwork to "a new generation."

web.archive.org Jane Kansas

Harper Lee has so far published one novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It's unfair to say she has never written another book; we don't know what may be in the bottom drawer of her desk.

While at the University of Alabama, Lee wrote for several student publications and for one year was editor of the *Rammer-Jammer*.

In the 1960s at least three essays by Lee were published in American magazines, and a fourth essay was published in the 1980s.

Two of the essays are included in several bibliographies, including Claudia Durst Johnson's *TKM Threatening Boundaries: "Love - In Other Words"*, published in *Vogue*, April 15, 1961, furthers Lee's discussions of non-romantic love. "*Christmas To Me*" was published in *McCalls* in the December 1961 issue. It relates a story referred to in several sources - that of Lee receiving the gift of a year to write.

The third essay I have not seen included in any other bibliography. An unclear photocopy of a part of an article, "*When Children Discover America*", marked as being published in 1964 but apparently published in *McCalls* in August 1965, was found in the Harper Lee vertical file at the Monroeville Library in Monroeville, Alabama.

In 1983 Harper Lee took part in the Alabama History and Heritage Festival. "*High Romance and Adventure*" was later printed in an anthology of the festival papers.

Lippincott, the original publisher of *Mockingbird*, was bought by HarperCollins in 1978; in September 1995, HarperCollins published a "handsome thirty-fifth anniversary cloth-bound edition of *Mockingbird*" and promotional materials trumpeted that it included a new forward by Miss Lee, an "all-too-brief introduction to the recent British edition". The 'new forward' is there, but Mary B.W. Tabor reported in the New York Times on August 23 1995 that the new foreward was actually an excerpt of a letter Miss Lee had written to her agent, June Fallowfield, in 1993, saying that she would NOT write a new introduction.

To Kill A Mockingbird

Historical Context

Harper Lee and Civil Rights Timeline

The 1930s

Over 25% of labor force unemployed during worst years of the Great Depression.

Franklin D. Roosevelt wins presidency with promise of his "New Deal," 1932.

The Scottsboro Boys trials last from 1931 to 1937. Nelle Harper Lee is four years old when they begin.

The 1940s

Jackie Robinson signs baseball contract with the Brooklyn Dodgers, 1947.

President Truman ends segregation in the military and discrimination in federal hiring.

Harper Lee moves to New York City to become a writer.

The 1950s

Brown vs. Board of Education rules school segregation unconstitutional.

Rosa Parks refuses to surrender her bus seat to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama, 1955.

Lee accompanies Truman Capote to Kansas as "researchist" for his book *In Cold Blood*.

The early 1960s

To Kill a Mockingbird published on July 11, 1960.

The film follows in 1962 and wins Oscars for best actor, screenwriter, and set design.

Martin Luther King, Jr., delivers I Have a Dream speech on August 28, 1963. King wins the Nobel Prize in 1964.

The mid-1960s

Congress passes the Civil Rights Act of 1964, enforcing the constitutional right to vote.

Malcolm X is assassinated, 1965.

Despite rumors of a second Southern novel, Lee never finishes another book.

Historical Context: The Jim Crow South

Former slaves and their children had little assurance that their post-Civil War freedoms would stick. By the 1890s, a system of laws and regulations commonly referred to as Jim Crow had emerged; by 1910, every state of the former Confederacy had upheld this legalized segregation and disenfranchisement. Most scholars believe the term originated around 1830, when a white minstrel performer blackened his face, danced a jig, and sang the lyrics to the song "Jump Jim Crow." At first the word was synonymous with such terms as black, colored, or Negro, but it later became attached to this specific arsenal of repressive laws.

During the Jim Crow era, state and local officials instituted curfews for blacks and posted "Whites Only" and "Colored" signs on parks, schools, hotels, water fountains, restrooms, and all modes of transportation. Laws against miscegenation or "race-mixing" deemed all marriages between white and black people not only void but illegal. Almost as bad as the injustice of Jim Crow was the inconsistency with which law enforcement applied it. Backtalk would rate a laugh in one town, and a lynching just over the county line.

Though violence used to subjugate blacks was nothing new, its character changed under Jim Crow. Southern white supremacist groups like the Klu Klux Klan reached a membership of six million. Mob violence was encouraged. Torture became a public spectacle. White

families brought their children as witnesses to lynchings, and vendors hawked the body parts of victims as souvenirs. Between 1889 and 1930, over 3,700 men and women were reported lynched in the United States, many for challenging Jim Crow.

All this anger and fear led to the notorious trials of the "Scottsboro Boys," an ordeal of sensational convictions, reversals, and retrials for nine young African American men accused of raping two white women on a train from Tennessee to Alabama. The primary testimony came from the older woman, a prostitute trying to avoid prosecution herself.

Juries composed exclusively of white men ignored clear evidence that the women had suffered no injury. As in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, a black man charged with raping a white woman was not accorded the usual presumption of innocence. In January of 1932, the Alabama Supreme Court affirmed seven out of eight death sentences against the adult defendants. A central figure in the case was an Atticus-like judge, James E. Horton, a member of the Alabama Bar who eventually defied public sentiment to overturn a guilty verdict.

Despite these and many more injustices, black Americans found ingenious ways to endure and resist. Education, religion, and music became their solace and salvation until, in the organized political action of the Civil Rights Movement, Jim Crow's harsh music finally began to fade.

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Historical Context

Jim Crow Laws



From the 1880s into the 1960s, a majority of American states enforced segregation through "Jim Crow" laws (so called after a black character in minstrel shows). From Delaware to California, and from North Dakota to Texas, many states (and cities, too) could impose legal punishments on people for consorting with members of another race. The most common types of laws forbade intermarriage and ordered business owners and public institutions to keep their black and white clientele separated. Here is a sampling of laws from various states.

Nurses: No person or corporation shall require any white female nurse to nurse in wards or rooms in hospitals, either public or private, in which negro men are placed. - Alabama

Buses: All passenger stations in this state operated by any motor transportation company shall have separate waiting rooms or space and separate ticket windows for the white and colored races.
- Alabama

Toilet Facilities, Male: Every employer of white or negro males shall provide for such white or negro males reasonably accessible and separate toilet facilities. - Alabama

Intermarriage: All marriages between a white person and a negro, or between a white person and a person of negro descent to the fourth generation inclusive, are hereby forever prohibited. - Florida

Cohabitation: Any negro man and white woman, or any white man and negro woman, who are not married to each other, who shall habitually live in and occupy in the nighttime the same room shall each be punished by imprisonment not exceeding twelve (12) months, or by fine not exceeding five hundred (\$500.00) dollars. - Florida

Education: The schools for white children and the schools for negro children shall be conducted separately. - Florida

Restaurants: All persons licensed to conduct a restaurant, shall serve either white people exclusively or colored people exclusively and shall not sell to the two races within the same room or serve the two races anywhere under the same license. - Georgia

Parks: It shall be unlawful for colored people to frequent any park owned or maintained by the city for the benefit, use and enjoyment of white persons...and unlawful for any white person to frequent any park owned or maintained by the city for the use and benefit of colored persons.
- Georgia

Housing: Any person...who shall rent any part of any such building to a negro person or a negro family when such building is already in whole or in part in occupancy by a white person or white family, or vice versa when the building is in occupancy by a negro person or negro family, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not less than twenty-five (\$25.00) nor more than one hundred

To Kill A Mockingbird Historical Context



(\$100.00) dollars or be imprisoned not less than 10, or more than 60 days, or both such fine and imprisonment in the discretion of the court.

- Louisiana

Education: Separate schools shall be maintained for the children of the white and colored races.

- Mississippi

Promotion of Equality: Any person...who shall be guilty of printing, publishing or circulating printed, typewritten or written matter urging or presenting for public acceptance or general information, arguments or suggestions in favor of social equality or of intermarriage between whites and negroes, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to fine or not exceeding five hundred (500.00) dollars or imprisonment not exceeding six (6) months or both.

- Mississippi

Intermarriage: The marriage of a white person with a negro or mulatto or person who shall have one-eighth or more of negro blood, shall be unlawful and void. - Mississippi

Hospital Entrances: There shall be maintained by the governing authorities of every hospital maintained by the state for treatment of white and colored patients separate entrances for white and colored patients and visitors, and such entrances shall be used by the race only for which they are prepared. - Mississippi

Textbooks: Books shall not be interchangeable between the white and colored schools, but shall continue to be used by the race first using them.

- North Carolina

Libraries: The state librarian is directed to fit up and maintain a separate place for the use of the colored people who may come to the library for the purpose of reading books or periodicals.

- North Carolina

Theaters: Every person...operating...any public hall, theatre, opera house, motion picture show or any place of public entertainment or public assemblage which is attended by both white and colored persons, shall separate the white race and the colored race and shall set apart and designate...certain seats therein to be occupied by white persons and a portion thereof, or certain seats therein, to be occupied by colored persons.

- Virginia



To Kill A Mockingbird

Historical Context



To Kill a Mockingbird is set in Maycomb County, an imaginary district in southern Alabama. The time is the early 1930s, the years of the Great Depression when poverty and unemployment were widespread in the United States. For parts of the deep South like Maycomb County, the Depression meant only that the bad times that had been going on for decades got a little bit worse. These rural areas had long been poor and undeveloped. Black people worked for low wages in the fields. White farmers were more likely to own land, but they were cash poor. It was common for children to go to school barefoot, and to suffer from ringworm and other diseases. Although automobiles had been around for some years, most farm families still depended on horses for transportation and to plow their fields.



Scout's family, the Finches, belong to the elite of local society. Atticus Finch is an educated man who goes to work in a clean shirt. The family owns a nice house and can afford to hire a black housekeeper. Still, the Finches are well-off only in comparison with

the farm families who live in the same county. They, too, have little money.

Instead of bringing people together, the shared experience of poverty seemed to contribute to making the South more class-conscious than other parts of the country. One reason why people like Scout's Aunt Alexandra place so much importance on family background and "gentle breeding" is that these concepts were just about all that could be counted on to separate a family like the Finches from the truly poor. The advantages of education, a professional career, and owning one's own home did not last long if a family happened to have a run of bad luck. The fear that the family's position could only get worse, never better, helped to turn some people into social snobs.



You will notice that none of the characters in this story takes much interest in the world beyond Maycomb County. When Scout's class studies current events in school, most of the children are not even sure what a "current event" is. Even the adults seem to take little interest in such developments as the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt or the rise of Adolf Hitler in Germany. People seldom travel far from their homes. And they almost never eat a meal in a

restaurant, even a cheap restaurant. When Dill eats in a diner, this is enough to make him a minor celebrity in Scout's eyes.



Of course, the most important difference between the South of the 1930s and the South today is that in the 1930s a system of segregation was in force. Any African-American (and, for that matter, any white) who challenged the system of segregation publicly would have been in serious danger of being killed by pro-segregation fanatics. In fact, segregation was taken so much for granted that it is not even described in the novel in so many words. Not even Atticus Finch, the character who represents idealism and a devotion to justice, ever attacks the basic system of segregation. Nevertheless, just because Atticus believes a "black man's word" over a white man and woman's, many people in Maycomb feel that he is undermining the system that keeps whites on top of the social order.



To Kill A Mockingbird

Activities

Page to Stage

Bringing a book to life on stage is difficult. It sometimes means cutting out events, storylines and even whole characters. Our playwright turn Harper Lee's prose into dialogue for the actors, relying on stage directions to convey any narrative he had to cut.

Read the following excerpt from the book.

"H-ey, Atticus!"

I thought he would have a fine surprise, but his face killed my joy. A flash of plain fear was going out of his eyes, but returned when Dill and Jem wriggled into the light.

There was a smell of stale whiskey and pigpen about, and when I glanced around I discovered that these men were strangers. They were not the people I saw last night. Hot embarrassment shot through me: I had leaped triumphantly into a ring of people I had never seen before.

Atticus got up from his chair, but he was moving slowly, like an old man. He put the newspaper down very carefully, adjusting its creases with lingering fingers. They were trembling a little.

"Go home, Jem," he said. "Take Scout and Dill home."

We were accustomed to prompt, if not always cheerful acquiescence to Atticus's instructions, but from the way he stood Jem was not thinking of budging.

"Go home, I said."

Jem shook his head. As Atticus's fists went to his hips, so did Jem's, and as they faced each other I could see little resemblance between them: Jem's soft brown hair and eyes, his oval face and snug-fitting ears were our mother's, contrasting oddly with Atticus's graying black hair and square-cut features, but they were somehow alike. Mutual defiance made them alike.

"Son, I said go home."

Jem shook his head.

"I'll send him home," a burly man said, and grabbed Jem roughly by the collar. He yanked Jem nearly off his feet.

"Don't you touch him!" I kicked the man swiftly. Barefooted, I was surprised to see him fall back in real pain. I intended to kick his shin, but aimed too high.

"That'll do, Scout." Atticus put his hand on my shoulder. "Don't kick folks. No—" he said, as I was pleading justification.

"Ain't nobody gonna do Jem that way," I said.

"All right, Mr. Finch, get 'em outa here," someone growled. "You got fifteen seconds to get 'em outa here."

In the midst of this strange assembly, Atticus stood trying to make Jem mind him. "I ain't going," was his steady answer to Atticus's threats, requests, and finally, "Please Jem, take them home."

I was getting a bit tired of that, but felt Jem had his own reasons for doing as he did, in view of his prospects once Atticus did get him home. I looked around the crowd. It was a summer's night, but the men were dressed, most of them, in overalls and denim shirts buttoned up to the collars. I thought they must be cold-natured, as their sleeves were unrolled and buttoned at the cuffs.

Some wore hats pulled firmly down over their ears. They were sullen-looking, sleepy-eyed men who seemed unused to late hours. I sought once more for a familiar face, and at the center of the semi-circle I found one.

"Hey, Mr. Cunningham."

The man did not hear me, it seemed.

"Hey, Mr. Cunningham. How's your entailment gettin' along?"

Mr. Walter Cunningham's legal affairs were well known to me; Atticus had once described them at length. The big man blinked and hooked his thumbs in his overall straps. He seemed uncomfortable; he cleared his throat and looked away. My friendly overture had fallen flat.

Mr. Cunningham wore no hat, and the top half of his forehead was white in contrast to his sunscorched face, which led me to believe that he wore one most days. He shifted his feet, clad in heavy work shoes.

"Don't you remember me, Mr. Cunningham? I'm Jean Louise Finch. You brought us some hickory nuts one time, remember?" I began to sense the futility one feels when unacknowledged by a chance acquaintance.

"I go to school with Walter," I began again. "He's your boy, ain't he? Ain't he, sir?" Mr. Cunningham was moved to a faint nod. He did know me, after all.

To Kill A Mockingbird

Activities

Page to Stage - continued

Now read the following scene from the play. Then, take a highlighter and highlight all the stage directions (*italics, in parenthesis*). Then, go back to the previous page from the novel and highlight all the text that you think is represented in the stage directions.

SCOUT (*as SHE comes*). H--ey, Atticus!

ATTICUS (*startled, afraid for her*). Scout! (*JEM and DILL are following into the circle of light.*)

JEM (*apologetic*). Couldn't hang onto her.

ATTICUS (*urgently*). Go home, Jem. Take Scout and Dill and go home. (*JEM is looking at the GROUP.*) Jem — I said, go home.

JEM (*back to ATTICUS*). Will you be coming with us?

ATTICUS. Son, I told you — (*A FOURTH MAN grabs JEM.*)

FOURTH MAN. I'll send him home.

SCOUT. Don't you touch him!

FOURTH MAN. I'm telling you to — (*SCOUT kicks the FOURTH MAN in the shins, and HE cries out, letting go of JEM and hopping back into the GROUP.*)

ATTICUS. That'll do, Scout. Don't kick folks.

SCOUT (*indignant*). But he —

ATTICUS. No, Scout.

SCOUT. Nobody gonna do Jem that way.

THIRD MAN. All right, Mr. Finch, you get 'em outa here.

BOB EWELL. Give ya fifteen seconds.

JEM. I ain't goin'

ATTICUS. Please, Jem, take them and go.

JEM (*grimly determined*). No, sir. (*The CROWD is stirring with impatience.*)

CROWD (*muttering angry*). Had about enough — the kids are his worry — Can't stand around all night -- come on -- get 'em outa the way -- let's get that nigger! (*The LAST SPEAKER is interrupted as SCOUT thinks SHE recognizes a MAN in front.*)

SCOUT. Mr. Cunningham — that you? (*Coming closer*). Hey, Mr. Cunningham. (*MR. CUNNINGHAM does not reply. The OTHERS are watching. SCOUT is more confused.*) Don't you remember me? I'm Scout. You brought us a big bag of turnip greens, remember?

ATTICUS (*perplexed*). Scout —

SCOUT (*struggling for recognition*). I go to school with your boy Walter. Well, he's your boy, ain't he? Ain't he? (*MR. CUNNINGHAM is moved to a small nod. SCOUT is relieved.*) Knew he was your boy.

To Kill A Mockingbird

Activities

Write a Review

Explain to students that the director's job is to take the words on the script from the printed page to the stage and bring them to life. Explain that theater critics review shows and publish their opinions. For AmericanTheatreCritics.org, critic Sherry Eaker wrote, "My point of view was that it wasn't the theatre critic's place to tell the playwright what he or she should be doing; instead, the critic should focus on what is already there and explain either why it works or why it doesn't work."

After seeing the production, have each student write a review of Orlando Shakes' production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The review should include one paragraph each for:

Introduction – What did you watch, where and when, and maybe, why?

The script – Did you like the writing, the story, the characters? Why or why not?

The score – Did you like the music? Why or why not?

The acting – Did you believe and care about the characters as portrayed? Why or why not?

The design – Did you like the set, costume and light designs? Why or why not?

The staging – How did the director stage the violence? Was it effective?

The audience – What ways did the audience respond to particular moments?

Conclusion – What will you remember about this performance?

If you wish, send your reviews to us at: anneh@orlandoshakes.org

We'd love to hear your opinions of our show!

Read more: How to Become a Theater Critic | eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/how_2079002_become-theater-critic.html#ixzz1v9tEyMnc



To Kill A Mockingbird

Discussion & Themes

DISCUSSION

1. Atticus teaches Scout that compromise is not bending the law, but "an agreement reached by mutual consent." Does Scout apply or reject this definition of compromise? What are examples of her obedience to and defiance of this principle?
2. Atticus believes that to understand life from someone else's perspective, we must "walk in his or her shoes." From what other perspectives does Scout see her fellow townspeople?
3. How does Atticus quietly protest Jim Crow laws even before Tom Robinson's trial?
4. Why does Atticus Finch risk his reputation, his friendships, and his career to take Tom Robinson's case? Do you think he risks too much by putting his children in harm's way?

THEMES

Perspective - "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view... Until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it."

A Code Of Ethics - "The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience."

Truth - "Atticus told me to delete the adjectives and I'd have the facts."

Race - "As you grow older, you'll see white men cheat black men every day of your life, but let me tell you something and don't you forget it - whenever a white man does that to a black man, no matter who he is, how rich he is, or how fine a family he comes from, he is trash."

Innocence - "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."

Courage - "Real courage is when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what."

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