Setting:
1. The first part of the first chapter establishes the setting of the story. Write a short paragraph describing Maycomb, Alabama. (at least 5 sentences)

2. What year would you say the story takes place? What clues are given to help place the story in its historical context?

3. Besides the location and the time, what other information is given to set the background of the story?

Questions:
1. *To Kill a Mockingbird* begins with the narrator, Scout Finch, remembering something that happened in the past. This novel is the remembrance of that incident and the events leading up to it. What is that incident?

2. The legends surrounding Boo Radley are a mix of fact and rumor. List three verifiable facts and three rumors.

3. Atticus seems to know more about the Radleys than he lets on. How does Atticus respond to the persistent questions about Boo Radley. What is Atticus's apparent attitude toward Boo Radley?

4. What reason does Dill give for trying to make Boo Radley come out of the house? Is there anything wrong with Dill's behavior regarding Boo? Explain?

5. Why does Miss Caroline disapprove of Scout's reading ability? Do you think her reasons are justified? Explain.

6. When Scout and Jem invite Walter Cunningham to lunch, Scout says, “Walter had forgotten he was a Cunningham.” What does she mean?
7. At lunch, how does Atticus make Walter feel welcome?

8. Although Atticus is an adult and Walter is a child, there's nothing condescending or patronizing about how Atticus talks to Walter Cunningham. What does this tell you about Atticus?

9. Both the Cunninghams and the Ewells are poor. What makes these families different? Atticus tells Scout that they (the Finches) are also poor. How is their family different from the Cunninghams and the Ewells?

Dig Deeper
10. Atticus says that you never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view. What does it mean to see something from another person's point of view?

11. What would be good about trying to see something from another person's point of view?

12. Atticus says it's sometimes better to bend the law a little in special cases. What two examples does he give Scout to illustrate his point? Do you agree that it is all right to bend the law in the examples Atticus mentions? Do you agree with Atticus's general statement?

EXPOSITION:
Often in To Kill a Mockingbird, Harper Lee has Scout provide background information pertinent to what is currently happening in the story. These sections are called exposition. Narrative accounts for most of a story. It is the action in a work of fiction or what is currently happening in the story. Exposition is usually occurs at the beginning of a story to help establish the setting, introduce characters, or set the tone of the story. Exposition can also occur during a story as the author reveals more background information. Expository sections are often necessary for understanding the narrative.
Do not confuse exposition with *flashback*. In expository sections, background information is simply told to the reader. In a flashback, background information is presented in a dramatic way as narrative.

In the blank after each of the sentences below, write an **E** if that sentence is expository or an **N** if it is simply part of the narrative. You may wish to check the context of each sentence. One is done as an example.

Example: It was customary for the men in the family to remain on Simon’s homestead; Finch’s Landing, and make their living from cotton. **E**

1. Early one morning as we were beginning our day’s play in the backyard, Jem and I heard something in Miss Rachel Haverford’s collard patch. **E**
2. Miss Caroline stood stock still, then grabbed me by the collar and hauled back to her desk. **N**
3. While Walter piled food on his plate, he and Atticus talked together like two men, to the wonderment of Jem and me. **N**
4. Miss Maudie had known Uncle Jack Finch, Atticus’s brother, since they were children. Nearly the same age, they had grown up together at Finch’s Landing. **E**
5. Besides making change in the collection plate every Sunday, Mr. Avery sat on the porch every night until nine o’clock and sneezed. **N**
6. There are no clearly defined seasons in South Alabama; summer drifts into autumn, and autumn is sometimes never followed by winter, but turns into a days-old spring that melts into summer again. **E**
7. When we passed our tree he gave it a meditative pat on its cement, and remained deep in thought. **N**

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the first thing Scout finds in the knot-hole of the oak?

2. Scout said, “Plucking an occasional camellia, getting a squirt of hot milk from Miss Maudie Atkinson’s cow on a summer day, helping ourselves to someone’s scuppernongs was part of our ethical culture, but money was different.” What does she mean that something is part of the “ethical culture”? Why does Scout say that it’s different with money?
3. One of the reasons Scout didn’t want to play the Boo Radley game was because Atticus clearly disapproved. What was the other reason? Why would this make her want to stop playing the game?

4. Miss Maudie tries to explain to Scout why Boo Radley doesn’t come out of the house. What reason does Miss Maudie give for Boo Radley’s reclusiveness?

5. Miss Maudie says, “There are just some kind of men who [are] so busy worrying about the next world they’ve never learned to live in this one,. . .”. Do you agree with Maudie’s statement about such men? Explain your answer.

6. How did Atticus find out with certainty that the children were playing a game about Boo Radley?

7. Against Scout’s protest, Jem decides to retrieve his pants from the fence in back of the Radley property. Scout says, “It was then, I suppose, that Jem and I first began to part company.” What do you think she means?

8. Miss Maudie says, “Atticus Finch is the same in his house as he is on the public streets.” Explain what she means. Is this a good standard for behavior? Why or why not?

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
QUESTIONS
CHAPTERS 8-11

1. After the fire, Scout finds herself wrapped in a blanket. Where did the blanket come from?

2. While discussing what to do with the blanket, Jem suddenly leaps to the defense of Boo Radley. How has Jem’s attitude toward Boo Radley changed? What has caused the change? Why doesn’t Jem want Atticus to return the blanket?
3. Describe Miss Maudie’s attitude the day following the fire. What does this tell you about Miss Maudie?

4. What advice does Atticus give Scout about handling insults? What begins the fight between Scout and Francis? Why do you think Scout had difficulty handling the insults from Francis?

5. Uncle Jack is shocked at Scout’s use of words like damn and hell. Atticus chooses to ignore it. He tells Jack, “Bad language is a stage all children go through, and it dies with time when they learn they’re not attracting attention with it.” Do you agree with Atticus? Do you think it’s all right for children to use bad language on the theory that they’ll grow out of it? Would you allow your own children to use bad language?

6. Foreshadowing is a hint or clue an author give the reader about something that is to come later in the story. What is being foreshadowed at the end of Chapter 9?

7. The title of a book usually is a clue to understanding its main theme. At the beginning of Chapter 10 there is a reference to the title. What is this reference? How do you think this relates to some of the ideas found in the book so far?

8. When Scout says that most of the people in the neighborhood are old, Miss Maudie say Scout and Jem have the benefit of their father’s age. Why would she call his age a benefit?

9. What do Jem and Scout discover about their father when the mad dog wanders into the neighborhood?

10. Like Francis, Mrs. Dubose doesn’t hold back when it comes to slandering Atticus. It’s the first insult Scout hears coming from an adult. How does Atticus treat Mrs. Dubose?

11. Why does Jem read to Mrs. Dubose every day after school?

DIG DEEPER:

12. Miss Maudie makes the statement that people in their right minds never take pride in their talents. What do you thing about this statement? Is this true? Why? If not, refute it.

13. Think of the last time you felt insulted by something someone did or said to you. How did you respond? How should you respond the next time you are insulted?

14. Why does Atticus call Mrs. Dubose a great lady?

15. Atticus says that courage is “when you know you’re licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what.”
How had Atticus demonstrated courage to his children? Would you agree with his definition of courage? If not, why not?

16. Have you ever been in a situation where “you know you’re licked before you begin”? Did you choose to see it through? What happened?

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
QUESTIONS – CHAPTERS 12-14

1. What was the editorial cartoon saying about Atticus? Jem said it was a compliment. Was it? Why or why not?

2. With the exception of Lula, how are Jem and Scout treated by the people at Calpurnia’s church? Why?

3. Scout notices that Calpurnia’s speech at church was different from her speech at home. What reason does Calpurnia give? How is this similar to the way Atticus spoke with Walter Cunningham?

4. In chapter 13, Harper Lee almost brings the story to a complete halt by including a long expository section on the history of Maycomb. Why do you think this section was placed at this point in the story opposed to the beginning?

5. Upon her arrival, what values does Aunt Alexandra try to instill in Scout and Jem? What are Atticus’s apparent feelings on the matter?

6. How does Jem break what Scout calls “the remaining code of our childhood”? Was Jem right to do what he did?

7. Dill claims to have run away simply because his parents weren’t interested in him. Why do you think Scout has a hard time understanding this reason?

Dig Deeper:
8. During the sermon Reverend Sykes pointed out “individual lapses from grace.” He also wouldn’t let anyone leave the church until a large
enough collection had been taken for Helen Robinson. What is your opinion of these techniques?

9. Scout faces the difficulty of having to obey Aunt Alexandra in matters where Atticus always gave her freedom. What do you do when two authority figures set different standards for behavior?

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
CHAPTERS 15 & 16

Similes and Metaphors:

*Similes* and *metaphors* are figures of speech that state or imply a comparison between two unlike things that have something in common. A simile uses words such as *like* or *as* to compare. For example: “Ladies bathed before noon, after their three o’clock naps, and by nightfall *were like soft teacakes* with frosting of sweat and sweet talcum.” A *metaphor* is a comparison of two different things where one thing is said to *be* the other thing. For example: “The *canvas of the evening sky* was painted in bright colors.”

Each of the following passages from *To Kill a Mockingbird* contains a metaphor or a simile. Put an M in the space after the sentence if the comparison is a metaphor. Put an S if the comparison is a simile. See the example below.

Example: [Calpurnia’s] hand was wide as a bed slat and twice as hard. ___ S ___

1. The Radley Place fascinated Dill. In spite of our warnings and explanations it drew him as the moon draws water. ______

2. The remains of a picket drunkenly guarded the front yard. . .
   ______

3. Miss Maudie’s hat was suspended in a thin layer of ice, like a fly in amber . . . ______

4. We could see him shiver like a horse shedding flies. ______

5. Her face was the color of a dirty pillowcase. ______
6. “Did she die free?” asked Jem. “As the mountain air,” said Atticus.

7. Constance Jackson had better watch her ways – she was in grave danger for quarreling with her neighbors; she had erected the only spite fence in the history of the Quarters.

8. As a result [Maycomb] remained the same size for a hundred years, as island in the patchwork sea of cotton fields and timberlands.

9. I felt the starched walls of a pink cotton penitentiary closing in on me.

10. . . . “that changes things, doesn’t it?” “It do,” another deep voice said. Its owner was a shadow.

Questions:
1. Why did the sheriff and the other men come to talk to Atticus on the Saturday night before the trial?

2. Who made up the mob that went to the Maycomb Jail? What were they intending to do there?

3. How are Atticus’s responses to both the crowd outside his home and the mob at the jail similar?

4. Why did Scout’s words to Mr. Cunningham make him change his mind and leave the jail?

5. During the scene at the jail, Braxton Underwood was leaning out of his office window with a shotgun pointed at the mob. What does Atticus find ironic about this? What do you think were Braxton Underwood’s motives?

6. Scout says “. . .the memory of Atticus calmly folding his newspaper and pushing back his hat became Atticus standing in the middle of an empty waiting street, pushing up his glasses.” What comparison is
being made? By noting a connection between these two incidents, what character quality of Atticus's is being revealed to Scout?

7. Atticus says "A mob's always made up of people, no matter what. Mr. Cunningham was part of a mob last night, but he was still a man." What does Atticus mean by this statement?

**TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD**
**QUESTIONS CHAPTERS 17-21**

**QUESTIONS:**

1. An *extended metaphor* is a metaphorical comparison that is continued at length, and the comparison is shown in several ways. Read the following description of Bob Ewell:

   In answer to the clerk's booming voice, a little bantam cock of a man rose and strutted to the stand, the back of his neck reddening at the sound of his name. When he turned around to take the oath, we saw his face was as red as his neck. . . . A shock of wispy new-washed hair stood up from his forehead; his nose was thing, pointed, and shiny; he had no chin to speak of—it seemed to be part of his crepey neck.

   "—so help me God," he crowed.

   What is the general comparison that Harper Lee is drawing in this passage? List five ways this comparison is drawn.

2. A *foil* is someone or something that, by a striking contrast, reveals the characteristics of someone or something else. In Chapter 17 Scout provides a description of the Ewell's house and yard. What might the presence of these objects reveal about the character of Mayella Ewell?

3. When Bob Ewell refers to Mayella he uses language like "screamin' like a stuck hog," "ruttin' on my Mayella," and "lyin' on the floor squallin'". What does the use of language like this reveal about Bob Ewell's character? About his feelings about Mayella?

4. There is a terrible *irony* in the fact that Bob Ewell considers himself better than his black neighbors. List two ways the author shows this irony.
5. Mayella Ewell takes offense to Atticus's politeness toward her. What might this indicate about Mayella?

6. Tom Robinson tells Mr. Gilmer that he helped Mayella Ewell because he felt sorry for her. Mr. Gilmer repeats this with apparent incredulity: "You felt sorry for her, you felt sorry for her?" Scout says.

The witness realized his mistake and shifted uncomfortably in the chair. But the damage was done. Below us, nobody liked Tom Robinson's answer.

What was the “mistake” that Tom Robinson made?

7. Dill becomes increasingly upset at the way the prosecutor treats Tom Robinson until Jem makes Scout take Dill outside. When Dill tells Scout how he feels, Scout says, “Well, Dill, after all he’s just a Negro.” In spite of all the wisdom given her by Atticus, what has Scout failed to understand regarding racial differences?

8. Mr. Dolphus Raymond says,

"Things haven't caught up with [Dill’s] instinct yet. Let him get a little older and he won't get sick and cry. Maybe things'll strike him as being—not quite right, say, but he won't cry, not when he gets a few years on him."

What does he mean by making this statement?

9. The children discover that Mr. Dolphus Raymond only pretends to be half drunk all the time. Mr. Raymond admits his deception isn’t honest, but it is “mighty helpful to folks.” How is it helpful? What is your opinion of Mr. Raymond’s deception?

10. In Atticus's final appeal to the court he suggests that Mayella Ewell has "broken a rigid time-honored code of our society." What was that code? What was Mayella’s reaction to breaking that code?
11. In his own way, Mr. Raymond also broke the code. What was his reaction?

12. What "generally accepted truths" does Atticus challenge in his final appeal?

13. When the jury returns the verdict, Scout says, "it was like watching Atticus walk into the street, raise the rifle to his shoulder and pull the trigger, but watching all the time knowing that the gun was empty." Why does Scout refer to this event once again? What is the significance of the empty gun? By bringing this image to mind, what is the author saying about Atticus and his actions in general?

14. Is the verdict surprising? Why or why not? What clues were given earlier in the story that the case would probably turn out as it did?

15. Why do all the black people in the balconies stand as Atticus leaves the courtroom?

16. What evidence did Atticus show that proved Tom Robinson's innocence? The jury's verdict was obviously not based on hard evidence. On what was the jury's verdict based?

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
QUESTIONS CHAPTERS 22-26

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?
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 him 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?

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 Scout, and therefore the reader is, show a different side of Aunt Alexandra in this section of reading?

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

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 get older. It is true that we become hardened to right and wrongs with age? How can one avoid becoming hardened to knowing the difference between right and wrong?

13. When Jem complain 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 from 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?

14. Scout sums up Mr. Underwood's editorial: "Atticus has used every tool available to free men to save Tom Robinson, but in the secret courts of men's hearts Atticus has no case." What does Scout mean that Tom's case was decided in "the secret courts of men's hearts"?
Questions:

1. What were the three out-of-the-ordinary things that happened in Maycomb that Scout says - in a way - concerned the Finches?

2. How did Mr. Link Deas help Helen Robinson support her family after Tom's imprisonment and death? How did he defend her from Bob Ewell? What do these two things tell you about Link Deas?

3. According to Atticus, why does Bob Ewell apparently hold a grudge against everyone involved in the case?

4. As Jem and Scout leave for the school pageant, Scout says "Thus began our longest journey together." What does she mean?

5. What happened to the children's superstitions as they have grown older? Why?

6. List three things that foreshadow the attack by Bob Ewell?

7. The attack in the dark is told from Scout's limited point of view. Working from Scout’s description and knowledge of the outcome, give specifics about what happens. Make sure to identify the characters involved.

8. Who does Atticus think killed Bob Ewell? Why does Sheriff Tate insist that Bob Ewell fell on his own knife?

9. What does Sheriff Tate mean when he tells Atticus "Let the dead bury the dead?"

10. Read the following passage from the book:

Atticus sat looking at the floor for a long time. Finally he raised his head. "Scout," he said, "Mr. Ewell fell on his knife. Can you possibly understand?"

Atticus looked like he needed cheering up. I ran up to him and hugged him and kissed him with all my might. "Yes sir, I understand," I reassured him. "Mr. Tate was right."
Atticus disengaged himself and looked at me. “What do you mean?”

“Well, it’d be sort of like shootin’ a mockingbird, wouldn’t it?”

Explain what Scout means.

11. Why does the author have Scout reflect on the past while standing on the Radley’s porch?

12. At the end of the story, Atticus reads *The Grey Ghost* to Scout. Scout, who has fallen asleep during the reading, tells Atticus how the story ends:

“An’ they chased him ‘n’ never could catch him ’cause they didn’t know what he looked like, an’ Atticus, when they finally saw him, why he hadn’t done any of the those things . . . Atticus, he was real nice. . . . ”

How is Boo Radley like the “Gray Ghost” in the story? Who are the other “Gray Ghosts” in this story?

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**TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD**

**SUMMARY QUESTIONS**

1. Characters in literature can be classified as either *dynamic* or *static* characters. A *dynamic* character is a character who we see change during the course of the novel. A *static* character is a character who remains essentially the same throughout the novel. For each of the characters listed below, indicate whether that character is static or dynamic. If the character is dynamic, in how that character has changed.

Scout
Jem
Dill
Atticus
Calpurnia
Aunt Alexandra
Boo (Arthur) Radley

2. Many characters in literature will serve specific functions. An author will often use a minor character to move the plot in a specific direction, to provide a foil to a main character, to reveal information necessary to the plot, etc. For example, Calpurnia’s function in *To Kill a Mockingbird* is to model and pass along wisdom to Scout and Jem. Explain the function of each of the following characters in the novel.
Dill Harris
Maudie Atkinson
Aunt Alexandra

3. The *theme* of a novel is the main idea the author hopes to communicate to her readers through the story. The most obvious theme in *To Kill a Mockingbird* regards racial and class prejudices. What do you think Harper Lee was trying to communicate to her readers about prejudice? (Consider when this novel was written.)

4. Another theme in this novel is the theme of courage. Considering the discussions of courage in the novel, which characters are shown to be courageous? What actions in this novel does the author mean for us to see as courageous?

5. A *motif* is a recurring image, object, or idea in a novel. Motifs act as unifying devices in literature and are often related to a novel’s theme. There are two obvious motifs in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. One is the proverbial mockingbird of the title. How does the author use the mockingbird to communicate one of the novel’s major themes? Which characters are the “mockingbirds” in this novel? Explain why you think so.

6. Another motif would be the recurring idea of considering things from another person’s point of view. Early in the novel Atticus tells Scout she will never really understand a person until she learns to “climb into his skin and walk around in it.” From this point on, Scout uses this method to try to understand the people around her. How does this motif relate to the one of the novel’s main themes?
7. At the beginning of the novel Scout has difficulties adapting to public school. . . . as I inched sluggishly along the treadmill of the Maycomb County school system, I could not help receiving the impression that I was being cheated out of something.

At the end of the novel Scout says, “. . . I thought Jem and I would get grown but there wasn’t much else left for us to learn, except possibly algebra.” From where has most of Scout’s learning come?

8. List three things that Scout has learned through experiences rather than through formal education.

9. At the beginning of the story, Scout says that their summertime boundaries were the Radley place and Mrs. Dubose’s house. How were these boundaries more than just physical boundaries? How did Scout and Jem get past these “boundaries”? 