To Kill A Mockingbird Written Analysis

**Choose a writing prompt. Defend your claims with textual evidence. Project is due Sept. 12.**

1. The Radley place undergoes a change in the course of the novel. At the beginning, we are told, “Inside the house lived a malevolent phantom” (Chapter 1). By the end, Scout fearlessly walks Boo up to his front porch. What change has taken place in Scout that allows her to walk with Boo?
2. Maudie Atkinson says, “Atticus Finch was the deadest shot in Maycomb County in his time” near the end of Chapter 10. What lessons do the Finch children learn from the incident with the mad dog? Explain in detail, indicating how they change their understanding of their father. Is the mad dog a symbol of some Maycomb citizens?
3. At the novel’s end, Scout says of Boo Radley, “…neighbors give in return. We never put back into the tree what we took out of it: we had given him nothing, and it made me sad” (Chapter 31). Is Scout right, that they gave nothing in return? Does this comment come from the adult-Scout narrator or the child-Scout narrator?
4. Examine the use of the mockingbird as a symbol in the novel. What does the mockingbird symbolize? Which three characters can be considered “mockingbirds?”
5. At the end of the novel, Scout thinks that “Jem and I would get grown but there wasn’t much else left for us to learn” (Lee. 1982, p.282). What important lessons have either Scout or Jem learned from Atticus’ defense of Tom Robinson and the events surrounding the trial?
6. What does the novel have to say about “courage?” Who are the courageous characters in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and how do they demonstrate their courage? What is Harper Lee’s message about real courage?
7. Several times Atticus emphasizes the need to consider things from another’s point of view. How does following his advice change the children’s opinions of other people in Maycomb? What is the author’s underlying message about seeing things from another’s viewpoint?
8. As the novel progresses, Scout and Jem come to understand and value Atticus. What events cause this development of the children’s admiration for their father? How does each event contribute to their understanding of Atticus?
9. Examine the theme of prejudice in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. How is prejudice demonstrated in the story and by whom? What is the author’s underlying message about prejudice?
10. Examine the theme of hypocrisy in the novel. How is hypocrisy demonstrated in the story and by whom? What is the author’s underlying message about hypocrisy?

**Written Response Grading Rubric**

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| Trait | 3 proficient | 2 basic | 1 below basic |
| Ideas/Content | Clear and focused with relevant anecdotes and details to enrich the writer’s point. **Use the quotes we’ve been collecting in class.** | The writer is beginning to define the topic, even though development is still basic or general. | No clear purpose with sketchy or missing details. |
| Organization | Uses thoughtful transitions and connects ideas succinctly. **Use the transitional words “for example” and “additionally” like we have been practicing in class.** | The connection between the claim and its support is unclear. | Sequence and pacing are confusing and ideas are random. |
| Word choice | Words are specific and accurate. The read is natural and refreshing. | Language is functional, but lacks energy. | The vocabulary is limited and speaks generally about the content. |
| Sentence fluency | The writing has an easy flow, rhythm, and cadence. Sentences are well built, with strong and varied structure that invites expressive oral reading. | More mechanical than fluid. | Sentences are choppy or incomplete sometimes using unnatural phrasing. |
| Conventions | Correctly uses punctuation, capitalization and spelling.  **Cite your quotes accurately like we have been practicing in class.** | Reasonable control over punctuation, capitalization and spelling. | Little control over punctuation, capitalization and spelling. |