

To Kill A Mockingbird - Literary Analysis

Assignment: Write a 2-3 page literary analysis on the novel *To Kill A Mockingbird*. This should be a persuasive essay with a strong argument supported by details from the text. Follow MLA essay guidelines, including the use of parenthetical citations.

Prompts: You may choose from the prompts below or you may come up with one of your own. If you would like to create your own prompt, you must email it to me for approval!

Symbols . Choose one symbol you noted while reading, and suggest how it leads to the overall theme of the book.

Themes. What are the big ideas or themes of *To Kill a Mockingbird*? Consider what the novel teaches about justice, prejudice, courage, attitudes towards those who are different from us, race relations, etc. Choose one theme.

Coming of Age. Both Jem and Scout Finch come of age in this novel. Describe how either Jem or Scout changes from the beginning to the end of the novel by analyzing at least three significant “growing up” moments. Be sure to explain why these moments are significant.

Race in the South. Not only does race divide the town of Maycomb, it also dictates the ways in which characters conduct themselves in relationships. For example, Calpurnia speaks “n-talk” at her church but speaks “white folk” talk when she is with the Finch’s. What are the hidden rules of conduct the people of Maycomb follow because of race? How does race structure relationships in terms of power, language, and social status? Lastly, is Harper Lee challenging the status quo about race relations through *To Kill a Mockingbird* (is her novel political?) or is she merely describing life as it is in Maycomb?

Courage. Harper Lee suggests that real courage is the ability to stand up for what you believe in. In an organized and supported essay, explain how the children’s (Scout’s and Jem’s) ideas about courage change throughout the novel, beginning with what they consider to be courage and showing how that evolves to the point where they finally come to understand that real courage is standing up for what is right despite the risks or sacrifices of doing so.

Education. Analyze Harper Lee’s portrayal of education in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.