

Chapter 16

After reading the chapter carefully, answer the following questions. You will need to go back through the text to find the answers.

1. Whilst the family is eating breakfast, 'Aunt Alexandra sipped coffee and raised waves of disapproval.' Why is this?
2. Atticus says that Braxton Underwood 'despises negroes,' so why do you think he was prepared to defend Atticus and Tom Robinson the previous night?
3. Aunt Alexandra tells Atticus not to discuss certain matters in front of Calpurnia. What are they and why does she think they shouldn't be mentioned? What is Atticus's response? How does Harper Lee convey her own opinion to us through her characters?
4. Jem tells Dill all about the people who pass by them on their way to the court. Make a note of the details of these people and explain what they tell us about Maycomb and its inhabitants.
5. What does it tell us about Miss Maudie and Miss Stephanie that one is staying away from court and one is going but initially pretends she isn't?
6. Describe the scene that Scout, Jem and Dill find inside the courthouse. What do we learn about the lifestyles and lives of the black and white residents of the area from the description Scout provides?
7. Scout overhears the Idlers' Club talking about her father and learns that he is Tom Robinson's court appointed lawyer. She says 'This was news, news that put a different light on things: Atticus had to, whether he wanted to or not. I thought it odd that he hadn't said anything to us about it – we could have used it many times in defending him and ourselves ... But did that explain the town's attitude? The court appointed Atticus to defend him. Atticus aimed to defend him. That's what they didn't like about it. It was confusing.' What does this show us about people in Maycomb, Atticus and Scout?

Chapter 17

1. Using Scout's information describe Mr Heck Tate on the witness stand. Why do you think Scout comments, 'from that moment he ceased to terrify me,?'
2. Describe Bob Ewell and his home. What sort of impression do we get of him, his family, and his lifestyle?
3. When Bob Ewell gives his evidence he says something that makes the people in the courtroom complain loudly. Scout remembers, 'Mr Ewell was sitting smugly in the witness chair showing his handiwork.' What does she mean?
4. What reason does Bob Ewell give for not calling a doctor? Why do you think Atticus is so keen to press this point?
5. Why does Atticus ask Bob Ewell to write his name?
6. Bob Ewell becomes increasingly angry with Atticus; why do you think this is? Do you think Scout understands the reason? Give reasons for your decision.