

To Kill a Mockingbird **Socratic Seminar**

As part of your work with *To Kill a Mockingbird* you will prepare for and participate in a Socratic Seminar. The goal of a Socratic Seminar is to discuss a topic with other students without teacher involvement. I will split the class into two groups, and you will each have the opportunity to discuss your assigned topic. Be sure to prepare carefully for the discussion. Your participation and demonstration of skills during the seminar will be an assessment grade ***(Absences on the day of the seminar will require completion of an alternative assignment to earn the missed credit)*** You will be able to use your preparation chart, DBQ documents, annotated database article, and *TKAM* post-it notes to aid in your Socratic Seminar participation.

Your Requirements:

1. Answer minimally **four** of the provided questions on your preparation chart. Be sure that your answers are at least 4-6 complete sentences in length and feature appropriate textual evidence from *TKAM*, DBQ documents, or a database article.
2. Find **three** quotations from *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which shed light on your topic. For each of the three quotations, 1) give a brief context, 2) Explain the larger significance of the quotation. (i.e. What is the quotation saying about your assigned topic?)
3. Annotate *minimally* **two** articles from the provided text set.
4. Create **three** open-ended discussion questions related to your topic and tied to the text. Write thoughtful answers to them. If you're stuck, look at the quotations you chose for inspiration.
5. Participate actively and thoughtfully in the Socratic Seminar.

Group A: Equality, Justice & Judgment (Seminar Monday December)

1. In *To Kill a Mockingbird* a mob gathers at the jail and confronts Atticus. What is meant by a "mob mentality"? How does that "mob mentality" affect the actions of an individual?
2. According to the novel, is it ever justified to act outside the law in order to ensure justice? If so, when is it justified? If not, what do you do when the law allows injustice?
3. Explore the novel's depiction of the legal system. Is it accurate? What do you believe Lee was trying to achieve by depicting it in the manner that she did?
4. What interferes with justice? How does one know that justice has been achieved?
5. Harper Lee showcases how justice can be flawed. How is justice flawed when it comes to the life of Mayella Ewell?
6. Discuss some of the "losing battles" in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and explain how this may be a theme in the novel.

Group B: Courage, Principles & Fear (Seminar Tuesday December)

1. Define courage and explain how that definition is a theme that develops and changes in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
2. How does good and evil coexist in the novel? Are humans essentially good or essentially evil?
3. Moral education is explored through the perspective of the children. Atticus devotes himself to instill a social conscience in Jem and Scout. How does this moral education relate to the racism that is prevalent throughout the book.
4. Who are the “mockingbirds” in the novel?
5. Analyze how fear in individuals plays a major role in propagating repressive societies.
6. What values does Atticus want to teach his children? How does he go about it and is he successful?

****Any student who misses the socratic seminar will be required to complete an alternative assessment. It is highly recommended that students work to avoid absences on their assigned date.***