

To Kill a Mockingbird

Student's Name or Students' Names

Department Affiliation, University Affiliation

Course Number: Course Name

Instructor's Name

Assignment Due Date

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To Kill a Mockingbird is perhaps one of the most widely read stories about race and injustice. The novel was written by Harper Lee and was published in 1960. In the face of instant success, the story went on to win many awards, including the Pulitzer Prize. It is a thought-evoking account that touches on racial inequality, injustice, and rape. The book's title serves to paint a picture of what the story is about. It portrays innocence and beauty in the events that unfold in the story. Evil corrupts innocence, just as killing a mockingbird is sinful. The book has been studied in many schools at various levels of educations. However, there has been some resistance to its use in education, given the language and themes portrayed in the story.

The story is told through the eyes of Scout, a six-year-old girl who lives in the town of Maycomb. Her father, Atticus, is a middle-aged lawyer who decides to represent a black man, Tom Robinson, accused of raping a white woman. Scout and her brother Jem make friends with Dill, a visitor to their neighborhood. They spend a lot of time together and are curious about their neighbor Arthur 'Boo' Radley. He is a reclusive person who never left his house. Many of the residents of Maycomb did not approve of Atticus' decision to represent Tom in court. However, he decides to represent him to the best of his ability (Lee, 2004).

Other kids in the neighborhood taunt Scout and Jem because their father chose to represent Tom. They brand him as a “nigger lover” who was representing someone who had raped a white woman (Lee, 2004, p. 45). At one point in the story, a mob tries to lynch Tom before a ruling had been made. It takes the intervention of Scout, who breaks the mob mentality by talking to a classmate's father who was part of the mob. As the story unfolds in court, it is revealed that the woman who Tom had supposedly raped, Mayella Ewell, had fabricated her accusations. She had made sexual advances at Tom and had been beaten by her father for that.

The town's residents describe the Ewells as *white trash*. These words are used in reference to the whites' feeling of entitlement; they felt they were entitled to fair treatment regardless of their wrongs. According to the town's residents, the Ewells' words should not be taken seriously. Despite these revelations, the court still sentences Tom. He is subsequently shot 17 times and killed in a botched attempt at prison escape (Lee, 2004).

The book's main themes are racial inequality, injustice, and innocence. Racial inequality is evident in Tom's conviction despite his innocence. This is an injustice that affects many of the characters, including the little Scout. The children lose their innocence when they become privy to the injustices in the events. Atticus tells the children, "Shoot all the blue jays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird" (Lee, 2004, p. 117). This helps to show how innocence can be lost, and people can suffer injustice. This is evident in the characters of Boo and Tom. Boo is reclusive, having suffered an abusive father, yet everyone fears him. Tom is also convicted and killed despite his innocence.

The plot of the story is carefully woven to portray the themes effectively. The dialogue between the characters also helps to build the plotline. Atticus tells the children, "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb into his skin and walk around in it" (Lee, 2004, p. 36). This means that we should not judge others before we know what the truth is and their story.

The story also features interesting characters. Their experiences help convey the main point of the story. Atticus is one character who acts as a moral compass, whose actions are relevant today. His attempt to stop the mob from lynching Tom is heroic. He says, "Atticus tried to stifle a smile but didn't make it. "No, we don't have mobs and that nonsense in Maycomb. I've never heard of a gang in Maycomb" (Lee, 2004, p. 53). His character is an example to

lawyers even in modern times. They should seek to do their work to the best of their ability, regardless of who they represent.

In conclusion, the book is an American classic. Its message is relevant even in modern times. The themes of injustice and racial inequality are overarching. These have made the book useful in the education sector to teach learners of this part of history. The style of narration used in delivering the plot is also quite effective. By telling the story through a child's eyes, the theme of innocence is properly delivered. In my opinion, *To Kill a Mockingbird* is a timeless classic that should be treasured perpetually. I give it a rating of five stars and would recommend it as a must-read book for every adult.

Reference

Lee, H. (2004). *To kill a mockingbird*. Random House.

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