

Prestwick PowerPacks™

Practical Activities for Comprehension and Key Skills



To Kill a Mockingbird

by Harper Lee

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Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity I: Research Project/Civil Rights Pre-Reading

In order to familiarize yourselves with the historical background of the novel, you will create an informative project concerning the historical background of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. You may choose to design and create a pamphlet, a museum exhibit, a PowerPoint presentation, a video, a website, or any other product that would be useful to educate your community and classmates about civil rights, prejudice, or Alabama in the 1930s. Be sure that your product is educational, detailed, neat, and carefully edited. Some topics you may choose are the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Scottsboro Boys Trial, Martin Luther King, Jr., or other influential people or events in the Civil Rights movement.

Once you have chosen your topic, use books, the Internet, interviews, or whatever resources you have available to research facts to include in your project. Keep track of your sources, as you must include a **BIBLIOGRAPHY** with your final report. Use the **BIBLIOGRAPHY FORMAT** to help you include the correct information and arrange it correctly.

RESEARCH/BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE DATE: _____

FINAL PROJECT DUE DATE: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity I: Foreshadowing/Making Predictions**Chapters 1–4**

Many writers use a literary technique called foreshadowing, in which the author briefly hints about events that are to occur in the following chapters. These “hints” may take the form of characters’ actions or words, narration, or events in the plot.

For example, a character may repeatedly mention his fear of heights. Because the character discusses his fear more than once, it is very likely that this foreshadows (or directs the reader’s attention to) a significant event later in the plot in which the character must deal with his fear of heights. The situation would definitely be important; otherwise, the author would not have taken the time to include the foreshadowing that draws the reader’s attention to the event.

Part 1

With a partner, discuss your opinion of the literary technique of foreshadowing. Read the following questions, and write your answers down in your reading journal, keeping them ready to share with the class.

1. Why do you think authors might want to use this technique?

2. Can you think of any other stories, novels, or films in which foreshadowing is used?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity II: Plot/Characterization**Chapters 1–4**

Using reading strategies, such as summarizing and responding, helps to keep the reader interested and aware of what is happening in the novel. Reading strategies also help the reader recognize events and character traits that are important to the story.

To practice these strategies and identify significant information from the novel, answer the following questions using complete sentences.

1. What is your opinion of the narrator, Scout, so far? Explain. Would you like to have her as a friend? Explain. Make sure you support your opinion with details from the text.

2. What are some of the surprising events that occur on Scout's first days of school?

3. Having read the first four chapters, discuss what you think of Scout's school experience. Does Miss Caroline seem to be a good teacher? Why, or why not? Would you like to be in Scout's class? What makes a good class or a perfect teacher? Briefly (in a paragraph or two) describe your perfect school and teachers and then compare them to Scout's experiences.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity I: Setting **Chapters 5–8**

Authors choose and establish settings very carefully. The setting (time and place) must provide the appropriate backdrop to make the characters and the events of the plot believable. At this point in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, you have read enough to identify the setting and to discuss how the setting affects the characters and their actions.

With a partner, discuss what you think of Maycomb so far. Consider the following question:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of living in a small town?

Fill in your answers in the following **SETTING CHART**. Think of as many advantages and disadvantages as you can. The first answer has been done for you as an example.

SETTING CHART

Benefits	Disadvantages
You feel comfort and security when your neighbors know your name.	Sometimes you might want to walk down the street without talking to people.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity II: Setting/Map of Town**Chapters 5–8**

Scanning is a valuable reading strategy. This involves skimming a page of print in order to find specific information without reading every word, which saves time when reading in order to find certain facts and details, rather than to understand a story as it progresses.

The following activity asks you to scan the listed page numbers in order to find clues that describe the town of Maycomb. The page numbers and type of information for which you should look are provided. Complete the following **SETTING CHART** with quotes that tell readers what Maycomb looks like. You need not list every word of a sentence or paragraph. Include only the information that tells what the town looks like. You can use an ellipsis (three periods...) to indicate that words are omitted from the quote. The first one has been done for you as an example.

Student's Page

Name: _____

Date: _____

SETTING CHART

Page #	Person Speaking	Descriptive Quote
6	Scout: about Mrs. Dubose's house	"...Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose's house two doors to the north of us, and the Radley Place three doors to the south..."
6	Scout: about Miss Rachel's house	
8	Scout: about the Radley Place	
9	Scout: about the Radley Place	
33	Scout: about the Gift Tree	
35	Scout: about Cecil Jacobs	
50	Scout: about Mr. Avery's house	
53-54	Jem and Scout	
69	Scout: about Mr. Avery and about Miss Maudie's house	
70	Scout	
70	Scout	
71	Scout	
94	Scout	
95	Scout and Atticus	
97	Miss Maudie	
99	Scout	

Now, use the novel and the information you included in the **SETTING CHART** to create a map of the town of Maycomb. Make sure your map is accurate, neat, and colorful.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity III: Figurative Language **Chapters 5–8**

Figurative language is an effective tool for creating vibrant, clear, and detailed descriptions. Authors use figurative language to create a vivid picture in your mind without explaining every detail. Figurative language appeals to your imagination, which helps keep you interested in the novel. Three common forms of figurative language are similes, metaphors, and personification.

Part I

Look at the following **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE CHART**. Read and identify the type of figurative language used in each quotation. Then, describe the picture it creates in your mind. The first one has been done for you as an example.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE CHART

Quotation	Type of Figurative Language (simile or metaphor)	Image/Idea/Picture It Creates
“Ladies bathed before noon, after their three-o-clock naps, and by nightfall were like soft teacakes with frostings of sweat and sweet talcum.” (Pg. 5)	simile	The ladies are being compared to teacakes, soft and delicate.
“In spite of our warnings and explanations, it drew him as the moon draws water...” (Pg. 8)		
“Atticus said no...that there were other ways of making people into ghosts.” (Pg. 11)		
Walter looked as if he had been raised on fish food...” (Pg. 23)		
“Jem’s head at times was transparent.” (Pg. 38)		
“The sun said twelve noon.” (Pg. 40).		
“She” (Miss Maudie) “was a chameleon lady.” (Pg. 40)		
“Jem waved my words away as if fanning gnats.” (Pg. 58)		

Student's Page

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part 2

Now, you will write some figurative language of your own. In the following **WRITE YOUR OWN FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE CHART**, you will find ordinary sentences that contain very little description and no figurative language. Rewrite them so that they include similes, metaphors, or personification. Create at least three examples of similes and three examples of metaphors. You may also write examples of personification. Then, name the type of figurative language that you have used for each. The first three have been done for you as examples.

WRITE YOUR OWN FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE CHART

Ordinary Sentence	Figurative Language	Type of Figurative Language
Jem suddenly grinned at him.	His grin shone as brightly as the sunshine outside.	simile
Walter stood where he was.	Walter's feet were rocks.	metaphor
The alarm clock went off.	The alarm clock frantically screamed, "Wake-up!"	personification
Jem scowled at me.		
I looked at the bed.		
Jem was silent.		
That spring was a good one.		
Calpurnia put her hand on my shoulder.		
He stood beside the table.		
The swing was empty.		
I led him down the hall.		