

it—tell you one thing right now, Uncle Jack, I'll be—I swear before God if I'll sit there and let him say something about Atticus.” What does it say about the power of the “N” word that Scout is moved to anger by the insult, even though she does not know what it means?

4. What does “nigger-lover”* mean to the residents of Maycomb? Why is it such a powerful insult?
5. Discussing the Tom Robinson case with Uncle Jack, Atticus refers to “Maycomb’s usual disease.” What does he mean? Why doesn’t he suffer from it?
6. What does it mean to be a “Finch”? What does it mean to Aunt Alexandra? What does it mean to Atticus?
7. How would you describe the relationship between Atticus and Aunt Alexandra? How does Scout make sense of the differences between Atticus and Alexandra?
8. How does Atticus explain his reasons for defending Tom Robinson? What factors influenced his choice to take the case seriously? How does he expect the case will turn out?
9. Atticus explains to Scout: “This time we aren’t fighting the Yankees, we’re fighting our friends. But remember this, no matter how bitter things get, they’re still our friends and this is still our home.”

Are there some fights you can have with friends that make it impossible to remain friends? What types of fights are those? What does it say about Atticus that he doesn’t view the insults he receives for defending Tom Robinson as reason enough to end any friendships? How can you respond when friends or family members express views that you find abhorrent?

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CHAPTER 10: Connection Questions

1. What do we learn at the beginning of Chapter 10 about the way that Scout and Jem feel about Atticus? How does Atticus’s defense of Tom Robinson reinforce those feelings?
2. Atticus instructs Scout and Jem that “it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird.” What does this advice mean? Look for evidence in the text to help you explain

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it. How does this advice help explain why Scout and Jem did not know that their father was “the deadeast shot in Maycomb County”? How does Miss Maudie explain Atticus’s feelings about his sharpshooting skills?

3. Both the mockingbird and the mad dog are symbols. Based on what you have read so far, what or who in this story might the mockingbird symbolize? What or who might the mad dog symbolize? Look for evidence to support or refute your hypothesis as you read the rest of the novel.
4. How does Harper Lee describe Atticus’s movement after he takes the rifle from Heck Tate? How does she use simile and personification to describe how Scout perceives the passage of time? What does this indicate about the importance of the events that follow?
5. What does it mean to be a “man”? Based on your reading of this chapter, how might Scout answer this question? How might Atticus? Do you think Jem agrees more with Scout or with Atticus?
6. How do Scout and Jem continue to “part ways” in this chapter? How do they interpret the revelation of Atticus’s sharpshooting skills differently?
7. Describe the pacing of this chapter. What does the pacing suggest about how Harper Lee views the importance of the events in this chapter?

CHAPTER 11: Connection Questions

1. What does Mrs. Dubose mean when she says, “What’s this world coming to when a Finch goes against his raising?” In what ways does Atticus go against his raising? When is “going against your raising” a good thing? When is it bad?
2. After Jem vandalizes Mrs. Dubose’s flower bed, he and Scout wait in their living room for Atticus to come home. Scout narrates:

Two geological ages later, we heard the soles of Atticus’s shoes scrape the front steps. The screen door slammed, there was a pause—Atticus was at the hat rack in the hall—and we heard him call “Jem!” His voice was like the winter wind.

Atticus switched on the ceiling light in the livingroom and found us there, frozen still.

What literary devices does Harper Lee use to communicate how Scout and Jem feel upon Atticus's arrival?

3. Why does Atticus think Mrs. Dubose is a "great lady"? Do you agree with him?
4. Jem responds to Atticus's praise of Mrs. Dubose by saying: "A lady? After all those things she said about you, a lady?" Why does he question whether or not Atticus should refer to her as a "lady"? How does Maycomb society define a proper lady? Does Atticus agree? Do you agree?
5. What lesson do you think Atticus wants Jem to learn by having him read to Mrs. Dubose?
6. How did you define *courage* at the beginning of this section? How does Atticus define "real courage"? What metaphor does he use to describe what he believes is the wrong idea about courage? Which characters in the novel so far display courage?
7. Scout tells Atticus that he must be wrong to represent Tom Robinson because most people in Maycomb think it is wrong. How does Atticus respond?
8. How did you define *conscience* at the beginning of this section? How would you refine your definition based on what you have read in this chapter? What does it mean to be able to live with one's self?
9. How does Atticus explain the insult "nigger-lover"* to Scout? How does he answer the accusation?
10. Atticus advises Scout: "It's never an insult to be called what somebody thinks is a bad name. It just shows you how poor that person is, it doesn't hurt you." Do you agree? Are insults harmless? When might they cause real damage?

End Here →

AFTER READING SECTION 3: Connection Questions

1. How would you describe Atticus's universe of obligation? How can he respect both his racist neighbors, such as Mrs. Dubose, and the black man he will defend in court, Tom Robinson?

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