

KEY STAGE 3 ASSESSMENT SHEET



Name: Chris Raper

Unit Title:	NOVEL		
Date:			
Core Targets :			
1. To structure each paragraph using PEA (Point, Evidence, Analysis), using QUOTATION as Evidence.	✓		
2. To explain how the author develops the themes within the novel.	✓		

Student's Comment:

1. I liked how I had a choice of topic

2. I feel I did well with the task

I have checked my spelling, punctuation and expression. Signed.....

Teacher's Comment: A good understanding of the issues and a well written essay.

TARGET : You need to... Develop analysis further, work on topic sentences.

To Kill A Mockingbird

Mockingbird
question?

To Kill A Mockingbird is an interesting novel that explores racism and social inequality from an unusual angle. The narrator, a young girl called Scout, allows us to experience what it must have been like to grow up during the depression in America's rural South. However, we also see how she learns far more from her lawyer Father, Atticus, than from her teachers at school. He has a strong belief in justice and equality and helps his children to develop their own sense of what is right and wrong. The story's main theme is illustrated by Negro, Tom Robinson, and white recluse, Boo Radley. They are used as examples of "innocents" who are at risk from the actions of ordinary people.

Try to engage directly with topic in intro.

Topic sentence

The concept that "it is a sin to kill a mockingbird" is introduced on page 96. At that time in America's rural south, many children would play with air-rifles and Atticus understands that Jem will inevitably shoot at birds. So though he'd prefer Jem to just shoot at tin cans, he tells him "Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember, it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." Jem doesn't really understand why it is a sin to kill a mockingbird but not a bluejay. Miss Maudie later explains that "they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us." Whereas bluejays can be considered to be a pest or vermin, mockingbirds don't do any damage, so it is a sin to kill them. The saying "it is a sin to kill a mockingbird" is used to highlight the message that society should ideally do nothing to destroy innocence.

Within the book, the main "innocent" to be destroyed is Tom Robinson. As the story unfolds we learn that Tom, being a coloured man, is careful to avoid starting any interaction with white people. He is obviously aware that he lives in a very racially prejudiced society, but he does not appear to take offence. When, on page 200 he tells the court that Mayella Ewell "...grabbed me round the legs", we believe his reaction that "She scared me so bad I hopped down an' turned the chair over." On page 201 Scout explains that "I did not understand the subtlety of Tom's predicament" until her Father helps her to understand that "he (Tom) would not have dared strike a white woman under any circumstances and expect to live long". So he chose to run away, which made him appear to be guilty, even though he was clearly innocent.

Topic sentence

Despite his innocence, we learn from Atticus on page 81 that he is "simply defending a Negro", which is all that Tom Robinson is "guilty" of. The fact that the "innocent" is accused is enough for this "mockingbird" to be "killed". However, on page 217 we learn the jury's verdict "Guilty...guilty...guilty...guilty...". This makes the sin even greater. Sadly, it gets worse. On page 241 Atticus reveals that "Tom's dead". He'd been shot in a futile attempt to climb over the prison fence. The "mockingbird" was actually, as well as literally, killed. This is a very dramatic event in the novel that makes the readers very sad for Tom's family.

The second innocent or mockingbird is Boo Radley. As he is first introduced into the novel he does not appear to be an "innocent" at all. He is somebody who initially scares Scout and Jem. On page 45 their make-believe drama blames him for the absence of Mrs. Radley's right forefinger "Boo bit it off one night when he couldn't find any cats and squirrels to eat". However, as they grow older they learn that he is actually a good man. He keeps to himself even more than Tom Robinson. On page 198 we learn that he is recluse who "hasn't been out of the house in twenty-five years". So he clearly does no harm to anyone. And as the children discover, he has a generous streak. He leaves chewing gum and Indian pennies for them to find in a secret place. For a recluse to show such generosity during the depression is a sign of his good nature.

Boo Radley isn't killed or "destroyed". However, he does provide another example of the message that "it is a sin to kill a mockingbird". He is only saved from this fate by the intervention of one very good man, Atticus, and the Sheriff, who, by his own admission on page 282 "is not a very good man." The interesting point is that Boo was saved by not being given credit for actions that would have made him a hero in the community. As Atticus says on page 282 "...taking the one man who's done you and this town a great service an' draggin' him with his shy ways into the limelight - to me, that's a sin." The idea that somebody could be damaged by having their good deeds openly acknowledged seems strange at first. That is why it works so well as a way to get across the book's central message. Society doesn't just "kill mockingbirds" by bad traits like racism. It can "kill mockingbirds" by doing deeds that are well-intentioned.

"To Kill A Mockingbird" was a very popular novel that has been studied by many children because in addition to being a very good read it also teaches some important lessons. Good people may deserve to prosper in any society. However, society often harms these people. Moreover, that harm can be inflicted unintentionally by well-meaning people, as well as intentionally by people with bad intentions.

by chris Rapen