To Kill a Mockingbird Reading Guide Part 2

**Chapter 12 Questions**

1. What is the crime that’s been charged against Tom Robinson?

**He’s been accused of raping one of the Ewell daughters. A charge that a black man raped a white woman in this community is, of course, going to grab the public’s attention.**

1. Why can’t Helen Robinson work and support her three children?  **She wants to work, but no one will hire her because of the charges against her husband. The white community doesn’t want to get involved with her family.**
2. Briefly explain Jem's and Scout's visit to First Purchase church (Calpurnia's church). What do people think/feel about them? How do they feel about this experience?

This is a different experience for the kids. They see that racism goes both ways when they are accosted by Lula, who hates them because they are white.

1. Explain why Calpurnia speaks differently in the Finch household, and among her neighbors at church. How is language different in a workplace and in a social setting and/or around family?

She is well-educated but doesn’t want to seem like she is bragging to her people about it. Language in a workplace is much more formal and “proper” than in a social setting or around family where slang and colloquialisms are common.

**Chapter 13 Questions**

1. What’s the reason the children are given as to why Aunt Alexandra has come to stay with them? What do you think is the real reason?

**The children are told that they’re getting older and Aunt Alexandra will be able to help Scout become more of a lady. The real reason likely has to do with the upcoming trial. Atticus will be busy with the legal case and won’t be around as much to parent and protect his children. Aunt Alexandra will play more of the parent role this summer.**

1. Comment on Aunt Alexandra's ideas about breeding and family. Why does Atticus tell them to forget it? Who is right, do you think?

Aunt Alexandra bases her opinions of family on one person in the family. For example, if one person drinks, the whole family is full of drunks. The only family this doesn’t apply to is her own. She believes that her family is perfect. Atticus sees how upset Scout is at trying to obtain this perfection, so he tells her to forget about it.

**Chapter 14 Questions**

1. Why is Jem considered a "traitor"? Why is he is also considered a maturing, more responsible young man?

Jem is considered a traitor because he told Atticus about Dill running away from home. This was against the code of secrecy Jem, Dill, and Scout had when they played together in the summer. He is considered mature and more responsible because he spends more time in his room than he did before.

**Chapter 15 Questions**

1. Describe Jem's behavior when he confronts Atticus at the jailhouse and also meets a mob of hostile men.

**Jem is very quiet, but refuses to leave Atticus with the group of men.**

1. Describe Scout's behavior in the setting mentioned above.

**Scout is very talkative and tries to talk the most to Walter Cunningham.**

**Chapter 16 Questions**

1. Where do Jem, Scout and Dill sit in the courthouse? Why is this significant?

**They sit in the balcony. This is significant because even though white people were not allowed to sit in the balcony, they were welcomed because Atticus is their father and he is considered their ally.**

1. What does Scout learn about mob mentality?

**Answers will vary, but she certainly learned that a mob is made up of individuals who can still be reasoned with. If you can convince one person, like Mr. Cunningham, to see things from a different perspective, you might be able to alter the intentions of the entire mob.**

1. Why didn’t Atticus tell his children that he had to defend Tom Robinson, that he was appointed by the court and didn’t really have a choice about taking the case?

**It’s true that Atticus was assigned the case, but he also wants to be the one to defend Tom and he wants to do the best job he can. If he said that he was only representing Tom because he was required to do so, that would be an excuse. By omitting this part of the situation in his conversations with his children, he is showing them that he’s choosing to do the right thing in a difficult situation, and that’s the lesson he wants to teach. To do otherwise would lessen the effectiveness of the message.**

1. other examples of onomatopoeia: **answers will vary**