

To Kill a Mockingbird: A Historical Context

Although Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird is a work of fiction, the story is based on and set in a historically accurate context. In order to appreciate the novel's setting and recognize its relevance today, you must understand this time period.

A. Use the websites below to answer questions (on the back) regarding the novel's controversy, the Great Depression, Jim Crow Laws, the Scottsboro Trials, and the Civil Rights Movement. We will refer to all of these topics when we discuss To Kill a Mockingbird.

B. Type or neatly write your answers as a separate word document from the study guide questions.

Controversy

ALA -- <http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbookweek/bbwlinks/100mostfrequently.htm>

"Books Under Fire" -- <http://www.tolerance.org/teach/magazine/features.jsp?p=0&is=36&ar=566>

1. Where does the novel appear on the 100 Most Frequently Challenged book list?
2. Name two other titles that you were surprised to find on this list.
3. A challenge occurs when someone attempts to remove a book from school curriculums and libraries; if the material is removed, it is considered banned. Why has To Kill a Mockingbird been challenged?
4. Why do others disagree with this challenge?

The Great Depression

Overview -- <http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/depression/depression.htm>

Photographs -- <http://rs6.loc.gov/ammem/fsowcap.html>

5. Look at some photographs from the Great Depression. Describe one and explain why it has an impact on you.
6. When did the Great Depression occur?
7. Why did the Great Depression occur?
8. Who was president when the depression started, and who was president during the New Deal?
9. What was the New Deal?