***Chapters 17-18***

**Main points from Heck Tate’s testimony:**

* **Bob Ewell arrived at his office.**
* **They drove out, found Mayella on the floor**
* **Mayella echoed her father’s accusation: Tom Robinson did it.**
* **Tom is arrested**
* **No doctor called**
* **Mayella’s injuries: arm / neck bruises, head /facial injuries on the *right* side.**

**The Ewell family home life = See pages 170-171**

**Initial Bob Ewell Characteristics:**

* **Rude and obscene**
* **Enjoys attention**
* **Left handed**

**Mayella:**

* **She *seems* to make an attempt to look after herself and her home (her flowers, her relative cleanliness…)**
* **She is a mixture of anger and fear.**
* **Mistakes common courtesy for insults**
* **Alludes to her father’s abusive ways: *“he does tollable* (tolerable), *‘cept when-“ (183).***
* ***Note how her testimony contradicts her father’s:* Bob says he looked through the window and saw Tom in the act. Mayella claims her father roused her with shouts of “who done it?”**

**Tom’s disability is revealed.**

***Chapters 19-20***

**Tom’s testimony:**

* **He occasionally did odd jobs for Mayella**
* **She had lured him into the house under false pretenses, and then made advances on him**
* **Bob stumbled onto the scene; was heard threatening Mayella.**

***Tom’s character contrasts with Bob Ewell in a number of ways:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **He is physically (arm) and socially (black) disabled** | **Bob is apparently healthy – and white** |
| **Has pity for Mayella; is kind and helpful to her; makes no sexual advances** | **Neglects and abuses his daughter. Leaves for days, drinks all the money, beats children, possibly molests them** |
| **Concerned about saying something unsuitable in court** | **Purposely says things that are crude**  |
| **Contributes to his family** | **Neglects his family** |
| **Resourceful – no trouble** | **Lazy – gets by on (and abuses)“relief”**  |

**Judge Taylor – Link Deas:**

**The Judge is angry at Link Deas for making a well-intentioned interjection. Why?**

***The Judge is one of Maycomb’s more enlightened citizens. We can infer that he realizes this case was important for at least two reasons:***

1. ***Tom was innocent***
2. ***It could be a great opportunity to show the community the ugliness of racism, and the inequalities in their system – inequalities that go against their own ethics and morals, and also go against the democratic rule of law on which the entire country is built.***

***Dolphus Raymond:***

***He identifies with Dill – he too is disgusted by how badly people can treat one another. He points out a couple of important things:***

1. ***Children are most affected by it. Adults oftentimes believe that certain things just can’t change – even if they are upset by them.***
2. ***People who have beliefs that go against the established norms are often shunned.***

**Pages 203-206: Atticus gives a powerful closing argument to the jury.**

***Chapters 21-23***

**Jem is confident of victory. He believes that his father’s arguments – and the facts of the case – were clear and logical. He doesn’t yet understand that life can be unfair, and that some decisions are not based on sense and logic, but on prejudice and willful ignorance.**

**Jem is crushed by the loss, but Miss Maudie points out that the lengthy deliberation of the jury represents an important step towards eventual equality. She explains that there are a number of people**

**“This is their home, sister” (212). Atticus defends his decision to allow the children to hear the verdict.**

**Selflessness of Atticus – despite being moved by the gifts given to him by members of the black community showing their appreciation, he says they mustn’t do it again – “Times are too hard.”**

**Jem gets a slice of Maudie’s “grown-up” cake, symbolizing his maturation.**

**Maudie explains that there are a number of people in the community who share the same views regarding the current system: it is unjust and backward. However, the trial signifies progress.**

**The fact that Atticus’s arguments had the jury deliberating for a long time is significant. It represents progress, because it means there was debate and discussion. It also shows how important Atticus is. Only he could have made this happen (think back to the rabid dog!)**

**Bob Ewell threatens Atticus. The children fear for their father’s safety, but he tries to reassure them. Bob Ewell’s actions were to be expected, but Atticus feels he shouldn’t be taken seriously.**

**His response – calm and controlled – and his rationale – saving the Ewell children more abuse – further emphasizes the goodness of his character.**

**Jem and Atticus debate the legal system, and Atticus echoes Maudie’s point: progress was slow, but was made at the trial.**

**(227)Jem and Scout debate about the types of people in the world. Scout’s conclusion is wise and perceptive, demonstrating that innocence isn’t blinded by hate and racism: “I think there’s just one kind of folks – Folks.”**

Chapters 24-31

* **Note the *irony* present in adult comments regarding oppressed and disadvantages peoples in other areas of the world. Aunt Alexandra’s Missionary Circle meeting (chapter 24) and Scout’s experiences in class with Miss Gates and her “current events” activity related to Hitler and the Jews (chapter 26) are good examples of this.**
* **Chapter 25 is significant in at least a couple of ways. Jem’s insistence on Scout leaving the defenseless insect alone is a subtle indication that he is becoming more sensitive to the plight of the disadvantaged. Also, Mr. Underwood’s editorial in the newspaper is very critical of the Tom Robinson case, likening his death to “the senseless slaughter of songbirds by hunters and children.” This is significant. Despite Mr. Underwood’s claim that he had Atticus “covered” while the latter confronted the lynch mob, Atticus says in chapter 16 that Mr. Underwood “despised” black people. This shows how, even in defeat, Atticus’s efforts will have some long term benefit.**
* **Chapters 25 and 27 foreshadow what is to come with Bob Ewell.**
* **Chapter 28 outlines Ewell’s attempt to harm the Finch children. His despicable characteristics have been revealed. He is more than a lazy, irresponsible, racist alcoholic: he is a child molester (see what Tom says about Mayella’s admission to him) and a man capable of killing children. In other words, he represents the absolute worst our society has to offer.**
* **Boo Radley finally appears - not as the creepy phantom of childhood imagination, but as a timid, shy, sickly individual who has emerged as an unlikely hero. Heck Tate’s discussion with Atticus on how to deal with the issue of Bob Ewell’s death provides the reader with some of the most important and poignant dialogue in the novel. Tate’s actions - namely, his unwillingness to reveal that Boo saved the children by killing Ewell - echo a central theme in the novel.**

***Mockingbird:* This is an extremely important metaphor / symbol. It represents innocence, vulnerability, goodness, and peace. In short, it symbolizes many of humanity’s positive traits. Tom, Boo, Scout, Jem, Dill...all these characters can be considered “mockingbirds”: innocent, essentially good characters that are subjected to injustice. “It is a sin to kill a mockingbird,” just like it is wrong to harm the innocent.**