

To Kill a Mockingbird Themes: Family

Family: A social group in society consisting of one or two parents and their children.

In "To Kill A Mockingbird" family is a very important aspect of the novel.

Maycomb county is almost like a huge family throughout the entire town. The people are very close and everyone in the town is supportive of each other. When someone is hurt or something bad happens in their family, people give them flowers and food in order to help them through their struggles. At times it is dysfunctional whereas some people aren't as welcome in the town with the segregation etc. Maycomb has an extreme racial division throughout the town and this is how many of the problems in the novel are caused. One of the problems caused by racial division was when Tom Robinson was accused of abusing Mayella Ewell. Although Atticus had proved in court that Tom wasn't guilty, the jury still found him guilty because of the fact that he was an African American man accused of doing something to a white woman.

An example of family in the novel is the sense that Calpurnia plays the motherly role in the lives of Jem and Scout since they don't have a mother. She is the family's 'help' and she has grown close to the family. It would have been very difficult for Scout to grow up without a mother and I think that is partially why she is a 'tom-boy' from being raised with a brother and a father.

Another example of family that is portrayed in the novel is at the end of the novel when Boo Radley saved the children from the attack of Bob Ewell. Boo Radley was thought of as a monster throughout the town and he proved everyone wrong by saving the lives of Jem and Scout.

A fourth example of family that is shown throughout the novel is how Atticus is almost like a father figure to the entire town. People look up to him and he represents them in court. He protects others in the town like he would protect a family member. An example of this would be when he went into town late at night to protect Tom Robinson from the mob. Atticus also helps others in the town and makes sure they are alright, like when Miss Maudie's house was on fire he ran over to help. Atticus also acts as a father figure to Dill. After Scout found Dill under her bed Atticus treated him as a father would treat his son and allowed him to stay in their home.

A fifth example of family that is represented in this novel is when the Finches allow Walter Cunningham to join them for dinner. This represents family in some form because they are allowing Walter to sit with the family and interact as if he's a Finch. Also, he ate dinner with the Finch's because his family is less fortunate and doesn't have the opportunities to eat dinners like that. The Finch's sort of accept Walter into the family for the evening.

Throughout the novel we were able to infer that Boo Radley didn't have a very good upbringing as a child. He didn't have any friends because he stayed in his house most of his life because people thought he was a monster. The children were really his

only way of interacting with anybody except his own family. He leaves presents for the children at first because he was interested in them because for once somebody showed an interest in him. Even though the children thought he was a monster they realized that he was actually the opposite, he was a hero and saved the children's lives. So even if the children didn't realize it, all he wanted the whole time was just to belong to a family and at the end of the novel when he was at the finches house I think he felt that sense of belonging.

In this novel we also found that another act of family was portrayed when Scout stood up for her father by getting in fights with people at school. Although this is not a good way to find a solution for her problems, it portrays a family because it shows how much Scout cares about her father and what she is willing to do to help him out.