***To Kill a Mockingbird* Reflection Journal**

For each chapter in *To Kill a Mockingbird* you will be expected to submit a reflection to the assigned reading. These will constitute your reading/writing journal and will be part of your final grade for this unit. Each response should be at least a page and a half in length (@ 500 words minimum) and typed with a clear heading (including the journal number) on the first page and a header on all subsequent pages. A good way to start your journal entry is to restate the question.

Please use the following prompts to direct your reflection:

**Chapters 1-3 (Choose three):**

- How can we relate to the quote from chapter one “…unwilling to discard their initial suspicions” (11) to racism and other forms of discrimination?

- Respond to the quote, “Until I feared I would lose it, I never loved to read. One does not love breathing (23).

-Relate the above quote to what you know about the laws regarding the education of slaves and of black people living in the post-slavery era, and into the mid-50s.

- What does it mean to contradict the ways of another person? (“’There’s some folks who don’t eat like us,’ she whispered fiercely, ‘but you ain’t called on to contradict ‘em at the table when they don’t’” (32).) Discuss the irony of Calpurnia scolding Scout in this quote. How does this lend itself to a insight into human nature.

- What does it mean when Atticus says, “You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view – until you climb into his skin and walk around in it” (39)? Have you ever wished someone could or would walk that proverbial mile in your shoes? If you could have someone do that, who would it be, why, and what would you want them to know?

**Chapter 4 (Choose one):**

- What is the significance of the “gifts” left in the knothole in the tree? Connect the gifts to the following quote: “Before Jem went to his room, he looked for a long time at the Radley Place. He seemed to be thinking again” (47).

- Read through the following conversation about Hot Steams.  
“’Yawl hush,’ growled Jem, ‘you act like you believe in Hot steams’” (48).  
 “‘You act like you don’t,’ I said…’Haven’t you ever walked along a lonesome road at night and passed by a hot place?’ Jem asked Dill. ‘A Hot steam’s somebody who can’t get to heaven, just wallows around on lonesome roads an’ if you walk through him, when you die you’ll be one too, an’ you’ll go around at night sickin’ people’s breath –‘” (49)  
 “…I was fairly sure Boo Radley was inside that house, but I couldn’t prove it, and felt it best to keep my mouth shut or I would be accused of believing in Hot Steams, phenomena I was immune to in the daytime” (51).  
Think of some things that our society considers superstitious. List them and discuss where they came from. What prompts superstitious beliefs? Do you believe there is any basis for reality in a superstition? What are some superstitions you have and why? Or do you believe superstition are ignorant and foolish? If this is the case, discuss your position.

**Chapter 5: (Choose one):**

* What is the difference between a belief and superstition? How does this relate to Miss Maudie’s discussion of the “foot-washers”?
* What is the symbolism associated with Miss Maudie’s discussion of the “foot-washing” Baptists and the dangers of taking certain teachings literally? Where is a scenario in our society might this relate?

**Chapter 6:**

* How do the events and the reactions of the neighbors, occurring on the night the children went to the Radley house relate to the quote, “…the people were unwilling to discard their initial suspicions”? What recent events reported by the news media relate to this quote?

**Chapter 7:**

* At the end of chapter seven, Jem “…stood there until nightfall, and I waited for him. When we went in the house I saw he had been crying; his face was dirty in the right places, but I thought it odd that I had not heard him” (84). Discuss the significance of Jem’s tears. Explore how Jem’s reaction to the knot hole being filled shows coming of age.

**Chapter 8:**

* In chapter 8, at the beginning, Jem and Scout build a snowman – mostly out of mud and then cover it in snow. There is not enough snow to build an actual snowman, so Jem improvises. When he is done, Atticus says, “’I didn’t know how you were going to do it,’ he said to Jem, ‘but from now on I’ll never worry about what’ll become of you, son, you’ll always have an idea” (89-90).   
    
  A little while later, the following takes place: “Atticus strolled over to Miss Maudie’s sidewalk, where they engaged in an arm-waving conversation, the only phrase of which I caught was ‘…erected and absolute morphodite in that yard! Atticus, you’ll never raise ‘em!’” (90-91).  
    
  Discuss the concept of parenting in both instances – reflect on and analyze the differing views of both Atticus and Miss Maudie, and the importance of the motif parenting plays in the novel, and why that motif is consistent throughout the novel.

**Chapter 9: (Choose one)**

* On page 101, Atticus says, “Just because we were licked a hundred years before we started is no reason for us not to try to win.” Analyze and apply the quote both to the novel and to society – both past and present. Discuss and explore the overall message Atticus presents in just a few words.
* Parents often believe it is important to shield children from unpleasant, inappropriate things in life. In a conversation with Uncle Jack on page 116, Atticus says, “Jack! When a child asks you something, answer him, for goodness’ sake. But don’t make a production of it. Children are children, but they can spot an evasion quicker than adults, and evasions simply muddles ‘em. Bad language is a stage all children go through, and it dies in time when they learn they’re not attracting attention with it. Hotheadedness isn’t.”

Do you agree or disagree with Atticus in his assessment of children and his advice to Jack? As you reflect on the quote, and show your analysis in your response, be thinking not only of Atticus and his parenting style, but of other parenting examples you’ve seen. How does the way Atticus parent Jem and Scout tie the novel together up to this point? Because so much emphasis is being put on parenting, what are some issues you predict may take place as you continue to read?

**Chapter 10: (Choose one)**

* On page 119, we finally get to the mockingbird reference that we see in the title. Miss Maudie tells the kids, “Mockingbirds don’t do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don’t eat up people’s gardens, don’t nest in corncribs, they don’t’ do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That’s why it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird.”   
    
  The mockingbird in the title of the novel is obviously a metaphor. Predict who you think the mockingbird is in the novel and discuss why you believe that person is a mockingbird. Then, connect the metaphor to your world. Who in history, or in present day, is a mockingbird, and why?
* Later in the chapter, Atticus kills a rabid dog, to the surprise of Jem, who did not know his father could even shoot. Confused, Jem wonders why Atticus doesn’t hunt. Miss Maudie says, “If your father’s anything, he’s civilized in his heart…I think maybe he put his gun down when he realized that God had given him an unfair advantage over most living things. I guess he decided he wouldn’t shoot till he had to and he had to today.”  
    
  Scout replies, “Looks like he’d be proud of it.”  
    
  Miss Maudie says, “People in their right minds never take pride in their talents.”

There are two different ideas at play in these quotes. Discuss and analyze both the two different concepts, their application within the text, and the meaning beyond the text.

**Chapter 11:**

* On pages 134-136 Jem and Scout receive a verbal assault from Mrs. Dubose. Scout says, in response to this, “I had become almost accustomed to hearing insults aimed at Atticus. But this was the first one coming from an adult. Except for her remark about Atticus, Mrs. Dubose’s attack was routine.” Discuss and analyze the importance of Scout’s commentary here.

**Chapter 12:**

* When Calpurnia takes the kids to church, Scout says, “Again, I thought her voice strange: she was talking like the rest of them” (158). What does Scout mean? What does this tell us about Calpurnia? What is the importance of the way Cal talks when she is working for Atticus, and when she is around the people at her church?
* On page 167, Scout reflects, “That Calpurnia led a modest double life never dawned on me. The idea that she had a separate existence outside our household was a novel one ,to say nothing of her having command of two languages.” Remember, Scout is an adult, looking back at her childhood – she is the narrator of the story. Retelling it as an adult from a child’s prospective. What does this type of narration tell us about the underlying wisdom Scout has gained, as Scout retells events as a child with the ignorance of a child. How does this type of narration affect the novel as a whole?

**Chapter 13:**

* In this chapter, the concept of prejudice outside of race is explored. Pick one form of prejudice discussed in this chapter, and reflect on whether this prejudice is still a predominate part of our society today or not, and if it is, why, and if it is not, why not. **This entry need only be 1 page, typed, double spaced.**