**Term 6 Week 4 Lesson 1: The Ewells**

**Do now:**

1. **What is Tom Robinson accused of?**
2. **Why did Atticus sit outside Maycomb jail?**
3. **Who is the man Scout and Jem are intrigued by outside the courthouse?**

**The full text of *To Kill a Mockingbird* can be found on the following link.** <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=YW5udXJpc2xhbWljc2Nob29sLm9yZ3xzaXN0ZXIta2F0ZWx5bnxneDo2NjVmZmE1NzNjNjc4NWM>

**The audio book is also available on:**

<https://tokybook.com/to-kill-a-mockingbird/>**.**

**You can read to the end of chapter 17 and 18 if you want to, however, the content of the lesson will be based on the following extract.**

**Chapter 17 sees Tom Robinson’s trial begin. We find out what allegedly happens on the day Mayella accuses Tom Robinson of rape. Atticus questions Mr. Ewell on the stand and makes him sign his name. Mr. Ewell signs his name with his left hand. This is important to the trail as Mayella has bruising on the right side of her face. Atticus tries to make Mr. Ewell look guilty.**

**Extract**

“Jem,” I said, “are those the Ewells sittin‘ down yonder?”

“Hush,” said Jem, “Mr. Heck Tate’s testifyin‘.”

Mr. Tate had dressed for the occasion. He wore an ordinary business suit, which

made him look somehow like every other man: gone were his high boots, lumber

jacket, and bullet-studded belt. From that moment he ceased to terrify me. He was sitting forward in the witness chair, his hands clasped between his knees, listening attentively to the circuit solicitor.

The solicitor, a Mr. Gilmer, was not well known to us. He was from Abbottsville;

we saw him only when court convened, and that rarely, for court was of no

special interest to Jem and me. A balding, smooth-faced man, he could have been anywhere between forty and sixty. Although his back was to us, we knew he had a slight cast in one of his eyes which he used to his advantage: he seemed to be looking at a person when he was actually doing nothing of the kind, thus he was hell on juries and witnesses. The jury, thinking themselves under close scrutiny, paid attention; so did the witnesses, thinking likewise.

“...in your own words, Mr. Tate,” Mr. Gilmer was saying.

“Well,” said Mr. Tate, touching his glasses and speaking to his knees, “I was

called—”

“Could you say it to the jury, Mr. Tate? Thank you. Who called you?”

Mr. Tate said, “I was fetched by Bob—by Mr. Bob Ewell yonder, one night—”

“What night, sir?”

Mr. Tate said, “It was the night of November twenty-first. I was just leaving my

office to go home when B—Mr. Ewell came in, very excited he was, and said get

out to his house quick, some nigger’d raped his girl.”

“Did you go?”

“Certainly. Got in the car and went out as fast as I could.”

“And what did you find?”

“Found her lying on the floor in the middle of the front room, one on the right as

you go in. She was pretty well beat up, but I heaved her to her feet and she

washed her face in a bucket in the corner and said she was all right. I asked her

who hurt her and she said it was Tom Robinson—”

Judge Taylor, who had been concentrating on his fingernails, looked up as if he

were expecting an objection, but Atticus was quiet.

“—asked her if he beat her like that, she said yes he had. Asked her if he took

advantage of her and she said yes he did. So I went down to Robinson’s house

and brought him back. She identified him as the one, so I took him in. That’s all

there was to it.”

“Thank you,” said Mr. Gilmer.

Judge Taylor said, “Any questions, Atticus?”

“Yes,” said my father. He was sitting behind his table; his chair was skewed to

one side, his legs were crossed and one arm was resting on the back of his chair.

“Did you call a doctor, Sheriff? Did anybody call a doctor?” asked Atticus.

“No sir,” said Mr. Tate.

“Didn’t call a doctor?”

“No sir,” repeated Mr. Tate.

“Why not?” There was an edge to Atticus’s voice.

“Well I can tell you why I didn’t. It wasn’t necessary, Mr. Finch. She was mighty

banged up. Something sho‘ happened, it was obvious.”

1. Who does Mr. Ewell go to get after Mayella is ‘raped’?

2. What is strange about the way Mr. Gilmer questions Mr. Ewell after Mayella is attacked?  
3. Why does Mr. Gilmer ‘speak to his knees’ when testifying?

4. Why do most people just accept Mayella’s story?

5. Why does no-one call the doctor for Mayella?

**Read the extract from the trial: Tom Robinson’s trial has begun. Atticus has questioned Mr. Ewell and tried to discredit his story. The court discover that no-one calls the doctor after Mayella is attacked and people take Mayella’s story as the truth. No one seems to care, except Atticus, about Tom Robinson’s story.**

In answer to the clerk’s booming voice, a little bantam cock of a man rose and

strutted to the stand, the back of his neck reddening at the sound of his name.

When he turned around to take the oath, we saw that his face was as red as his

Alliteration shows how Mr. Ewell is very confident in his testimony.

neck. We also saw no resemblance to his namesake. A shock of wispy new-

washed hair stood up from his forehead; his nose was thin, pointed, and shiny; he had no chin to speak of—it seemed to be part of his crepey neck.

“—so help me God,” he crowed. Every town the size of Maycomb had families like the Ewells. No economic fluctuations changed their status—people like the Ewells lived as guests of the county in prosperity as well as in the depths of a depression. No truant officers could keep their numerous offspring in school; no public health officer could free them from congenital defects, various worms, and the diseases indigenous to filthy surroundings. Maycomb’s Ewells lived behind the town garbage dump in what was once a Negro cabin. The cabin’s plank walls were supplemented with sheets of corrugated iron, its roof shingled with tin cans hammered flat, so only its general shape suggested its original design: square, with four tiny rooms opening onto a shotgun hall, the cabin rested uneasily upon four irregular lumps of limestone. Its windows were merely open spaces in the walls, which in the summertime were covered with greasy strips of cheesecloth to keep out the varmints that feasted on

Metaphor of ‘shotgun hall’ implies this is not a pleasant or homely place.

Metaphor shows how the Ewells do not contribute anything to society and do not work hard either. Does this make them untrustworthy?

Maycomb’s refuse.

The varmints had a lean time of it, for the Ewells gave the dump a thorough

gleaning every day, and the fruits of their industry (those that were not eaten)

made the plot of ground around the cabin look like the playhouse of an insane

child: what passed for a fence was bits of tree-limbs, broomsticks and tool shafts, all tipped with rusty hammer-heads, snaggle-toothed rake heads, shovels, axes and grubbing hoes, held on with pieces of barbed wire. Enclosed by this barricade was a dirty yard containing the remains of a Model-T Ford (on blocks), a discarded dentist’s chair, an ancient icebox, plus lesser items: old shoes, worn-out table radios, picture frames, and fruit jars, under which scrawny orange chickens pecked hopefully. One corner of the yard, though, bewildered Maycomb. Against the fence, in a line, were six chipped-enamel slop jars holding brilliant red geraniums, cared for as tenderly as if they belonged to Miss Maudie Atkinson, had Miss Maudie deigned to permit a geranium on her premises. People said they were Mayella Ewell’s.

The long complex sentence listing the items in the junkyard show how chaotic the house and junkyard are.

Nobody was quite sure how many children were on the place. Some people said six, others said nine; there were always several dirty-faced ones at the windows when anyone passed by. Nobody had occasion to pass by except at Christmas, when the churches delivered baskets, and when the mayor of Maycomb asked us to please help the garbage collector by dumping our own trees and trash.

Atticus took us with him last Christmas when he complied with the mayor’s

request. A dirt road ran from the highway past the dump, down to a small Negro settlement some five hundred yards beyond the Ewells‘. It was necessary either to back out to the highway or go the full length of the road and turn around; most people turned around in the Negroes’ front yards. In the frosty December dusk, their cabins looked neat and snug with pale blue smoke rising from the chimneys and doorways glowing amber from the fires inside. There were delicious smells about: chicken, bacon frying crisp as the twilight air. Jem and I detected squirrel cooking, but it took an old countryman like Atticus to identify possum and rabbit, aromas that vanished when we rode back past the Ewell residence.

Positive imagery and adjectives used to describe the negro cabins compared to the filth the Ewells lived in.

**Writing to argue:**

**Look at the following quotation:**

**‘**people like the Ewells lived as guests of the county in prosperity as well as in the depths of a depression’

*a student said: People like the Ewells should not be allowed to live off of the government, they should work for what they need like everyone else.*

**How far do you agree with this statement?**

**Model paragraph**

**Firstly, this quote depicts the Ewells using a simile ‘like the Ewells’. This generalisation suggests that the Ewell family are not worthy of living like the rest of Maycomb. It also suggests that there are other families who are not seen as part of society because they do not adhere to the same social rules as most people do.**

**Furthermore,**

**Additionally,**

**Finally,**

**Your turn (at least two paragraphs)…**