

# Harper Lee

## Quotes

*Tkam, Men, Writing, Thinking, Children, People, Book, Mockingbird, Powerful,  
Father, Want, Jem And Scout, Real, Trying, Way, Morning, Believe, Son,  
Hands, Heart*

You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view.

~Harper Lee

The book to read is not the one which thinks for you, but the one which makes you think. No book in the world equals the Bible for that.

~Harper Lee

The things that happen to people we never really know. What happens in houses behind closed doors, what secrets -

~Harper Lee

People generally see what they look for, and hear what they listen for.

~Harper Lee

Real courage is when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what.

~Harper Lee

He turned out the light and went into Jem's room. He would be there all night, and he would be there when Jem waked up in the morning.

~Harper Lee

It's not necessary to tell all you know.

~Harper Lee

Things are always better in the morning.

~Harper Lee

Writing is a process of self-discipline you must learn before you can call yourself a writer. There are people who write, but I think they're quite different from people who must write.

~Harper Lee

summer was our best season: it was sleeping on the back screened porch in cots, or trying to sleep in the treehouse; summer was everything good to eat; it was a thousand colors in a parched landscape.

~Harper Lee

...but before I can live with other folks I've got to live with myself.

~Harper Lee

The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience.

~Harper Lee

Way back about nineteen-twenty there was a Klan... The Ku Klux's gone... It'll never come back.

~Harper Lee

Prejudice, a dirty word, and faith, a clean one, have something in common: they both begin where reason ends.

~Harper Lee

Atticus told me to delete the adjectives and I'd have the facts.

~Harper Lee

Until I feared I would lose it, I never loved to read. One does not love breathing.

~Harper Lee

It's not necessary to tell all you know. It's not ladylike--in the second place, folks don't like to have somebody around knowin' more than they do.

~Harper Lee

Ladies bathed before noon, after their three o'clock naps, and by

nightfall were like soft teacakes with frostings of sweat and sweet talcum.

~Harper Lee

People in their right minds never take pride in their talents.

~Harper Lee

The one place where a man ought to get a square deal is in a courtroom, be he any color of the rainbow, but people have a way of carrying their resentments right into a jury box.

~Harper Lee

Some negroes lie, some are immoral, some negro men are not be trusted around women - black and white. But this is a truth that applies to the human race and to no particular race of men.

~Harper Lee

I think there's just one kind of folks. Folks.

~Harper Lee

Boo was our neighbor. He gave us two soap dolls, a broken watch and chain, a pair of good-luck pennies, and our lives.

~Harper Lee

You just hold your head high and keep those fists down. No matter what anybody says to you, don't you let 'em get your goat. Try fighting with your head for a change...

~Harper Lee

Sometimes the Bible in the hands of one man is worse than a whiskey bottle in the hands of another.

~Harper Lee

Now...in an abundant society where people have laptops, cell phones,

ipods and minds like empty rooms, I still plod along with books.

~Harper Lee

I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand.

~Harper Lee

You rarely win, but sometimes you do.

~Harper Lee

There's a lot of ugly things in this world, son. I wish I could keep 'em all away from you. That's never possible.

~Harper Lee

My objectives are very limited. I want to do the best I can with the talent God gave me. I hope to goodness that every novel I do gets better and better, not worse and worse.

~Harper Lee

Characters make their own plot. The dimensions of the characters determine the action of the novel.

~Harper Lee

Any writer worth his salt writes to please himself.

~Harper Lee

I think I'll be a clown when I get grown.... There ain't one thing in this world I can do about folks except laugh, so I'm gonna join the circus and laugh my head off.

~Harper Lee

I'm gonna be a new kind of clown. I'm gonna stand in the middle of the ring and laugh at the folks.

~Harper Lee

Are you proud of yourself tonight that you have insulted a total stranger whose circumstances you know nothing about?

~Harper Lee

There are some men in this world who are born to do our unpleasant jobs for us. Your father's one of them.

~Harper Lee

This time we aren't fighting the Yankees, we're fighting our friends. But remember this, no matter how bitter things get, they're still our friends and this is still our home.

~Harper Lee

Everybody's gotta learn, nobody's born knowing.

~Harper Lee

Ladies pick funny things to be proud of.

~Harper Lee

It was times like these when I thought my father, who hated guns and had never been to any wars, was the bravest man who ever lived.

~Harper Lee

She knew full well the enormity of her offense, but because her desires were stronger than the code she was breaking, she persisted in breaking it.

~Harper Lee

We're paying the highest tribute you can pay a man. We trust him to do right. It's that simple.

~Harper Lee

I try to give'em a reason, you see. It helps folks if they can latch onto a reason.

~Harper Lee

When a child asks you something, answer him, for goodness' sake.

~Harper Lee

She seemed glad to see me when I appeared in the kitchen, and by watching her I began to think there was some skill involved in being a girl.

~Harper Lee

It's never an insult to be called what somebody thinks is a bad name. It just shows you how poor that person is, it doesn't hurt you.

~Harper Lee

Things are never as bad as they seem.

~Harper Lee

I would advise anyone who aspires to a writing career that before developing his talent he would be wise to develop a thick hide.

~Harper Lee

Why reasonable people go stark raving mad when anything involving a Negro comes up, is something I don't pretend to understand.

~Harper Lee

You can choose your friends, but you sho' can't choose your family.

~Harper Lee

There are just some kind of menâ€"who're so busy worrying about the next world they've never learned to live in this one.

~Harper Lee

You've really got to start hitting the books because it's no joke out here.

~Harper Lee

Shoot all the blue jays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.

~Harper Lee

That proves something- that a gang of wild animals can be stopped, simply because they're still human.

~Harper Lee

hold your head high and keep those fists down - Atticus Finch

~Harper Lee

Let the dead bury the dead.

~Harper Lee

Bad language is a stage all children go through, and it dies with time when they learn they're not attracting attention with it.

~Harper Lee

When stalking one's prey, it is best to take one's time. Say nothing, and as sure as eggs he will become curious and emerge.

~Harper Lee

When you're at the top, there's only one way to go.

~Harper Lee

Folks don't like to have somebody around knowing more than they do.

~Harper Lee

Atticus, he was real nice." "Most people are, Scout, when you finally see them.

~Harper Lee



Any writer worth his salt writes to please himself...It's a self-exploratory operation that is endless. An exorcism of not necessarily his demon, but of his divine discontent.

~Harper Lee

I was born good but had grown progressively worse every year. Scout

~Harper Lee

It's not time to worry yet

~Harper Lee

Mutual defiance made them alike.

~Harper Lee

You can choose your friends but you sho' can't choose your family, an' they're still kin to you no matter whether you acknowledge 'em or not, and it makes you look right silly when you don't.

~Harper Lee

Miss Jean Louise, stand up. Your father's passin'.

~Harper Lee

It's better to be silent than to be a fool.

~Harper Lee

They're ugly, but those are the facts of life.

~Harper Lee

With him, life was routine; without him, life was unbearable.

~Harper Lee

Remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.

~Harper Lee

They've done it before and they'll do it again and when they do it -- seems that only the children weep. Good night.

~Harper Lee

Before Jem looks at anyone else he looks at me, and I've tried to live so I can look squarely back at him.

~Harper Lee

Simply because we were licked a hundred years before we started is no reason for us not to try to win.

~Harper Lee

Atticus had said it was the polite thing to talk to people about what they were interested in, not about what you were interested in.

~Harper Lee

Southern lawyers don't read novels much.

~Harper Lee

Best way to clear the air is to have it all out in the open.

~Harper Lee

Hey, Mr. Cunningham. How's your entailment gettin' along?

~Harper Lee

I do much of my creative thinking while golfing. If people know you're working at home they think nothing of walking in for a cup of coffee, but wouldn't dream of interrupting on the golf course.

~Harper Lee

As a reader I loathe introductions...Introductions inhibit pleasure, they kill the joy of anticipation, they frustrate curiosity.

~Harper Lee

Ladies in bunches always filled me with vague apprehension and a firm desire to be elsewhere.

~Harper Lee

Dill said striking a match under a turtle was hateful. "How do you know a match don't hurt him?" "Turtles can't feel, stupid," said Jem. "Where you ever a turtle, huh?"

~Harper Lee

That boy is your company. And if he wants to eat up that tablecloth, you let him, you hear?

~Harper Lee

But sometimes we have to make the best of things, and the way we conduct ourselves when the chips are down.

~Harper Lee

A man can condemn his enemies, but it's wiser to know them.

~Harper Lee

Sometimes it's better to bend the law a little in special cases.

~Harper Lee

Rest assured, as long as I am alive any book purporting to be with my cooperation is a falsehood.

~Harper Lee

I'm no idealist to believe firmly in the integrity of our courts and in the jury system - that is no ideal to me, it is a living, working reality.

~Harper Lee

I'm still old-fashioned. I love dusty old books and libraries.

~Harper Lee

I never expected any sort of success with 'Mockingbird'... I sort of hoped someone would like it enough to give me encouragement.

~Harper Lee

I know now what he was trying to do, but Atticus was only a man. It takes a woman to do that kind of work.

~Harper Lee

See there?" Jem was scowling triumphantly. "Nothin' to it. I swear, Scout, sometimes you act so much like a girl its mortifyin

~Harper Lee

Jen and I were accustomed to our father's last-will-and-testament diction, and were at times free to interrupt Atticus for a translation when it was beyond our understanding.

~Harper Lee

I say guilt, gentlemen, because it was guilt that motivated her. She has committed no crime, she has merely broken a rigid and time-honored code of our society.

~Harper Lee

Nothin's real scary except in books.

~Harper Lee

Try fighting with your head for a change... it's a good one, even if it does resist learning.

~Harper Lee

Writing is something you'll never learn in any university or at any school. It's something that is within you, and if it isn't there, nothing can put it there.

~Harper Lee

Writing is simply something you must do. It's rather like virtue in that it is its own reward.

~Harper Lee

Where are your pants, son?

~Harper Lee

You can pet him, Mr. Arthur. He's asleep.

~Harper Lee

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