

PUT YOURSELF IN MY SHOES

Ms. Jones had her class set up perfectly on the first day. The bulletin boards were lined with colorful boarders, her pencils sharpened, and she knew all her years of study would pay off.

The class entered the room like a three ring circus. She had heard middle schoolers could be rambunctious. They took their seats and she opened her perfectly prepared lesson plan and began by outlining the class rules and expectations.

Jonathan looked at Ms. Jones and knew she would be like all the other teachers he had ever had. They would label him a trouble-maker who hated school. When Mrs. Jones emphasized the importance of being respectful, Jonathan muttered under his breath “Yeah right”. The rest of the class laughed. Ms. Jones quickly tried to get the attention of the class once again, but while looking around the room she saw people passing notes, whispering to each other, and even saw a couple of people throwing spitballs.

Mrs. Jones screamed “BE QUIET AND PAY ATTENTION” at the top of her lungs! When that didn’t work, she gave the whole class detention.

In the hallway after class, Jonathan tells his friend Chloe that Ms. Jones’ class is terrible. He says that she doesn’t even like students and all she does is scream. He says she is totally ridiculous and even gave the class detention for absolutely nothing. Chloe agrees with Jonathan and says that Ms. Jones is a terrible teacher.

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Michael had admired Lisa for most of grade 9, and was determined, after a full year of admiration, to finally ask her out. He had mustered up the nerve to ask her to go with him to the year end party out at the lake. The party usually got pretty crazy, but he knew Lisa was already going, so he thought it would be the perfect ask.

He lingered in the hallway where Lisa’s locker was and waited until she arrived. After some awkward pauses, he finally mustered up the courage. Lisa agreed to his proposal with enthusiasm.

Michael arrived home after school that day, knowing all he needed was a drive to the party that night and his dream of winning over Lisa would finally become a reality. “Mom, I need a ride to the lake at around 9:00pm. Can you or dad take me?” he asked. After a detailed inquiry by his mother about what was happening at the lake, she did not feel comfortable letting Michael go to the party. His father agreed that it wouldn’t be safe.

Michael was furious. He screamed to his parents that they were being unreasonable, and went into his room, slammed his door, and refused to speak with either of them for days.

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This had been an overwhelming week for Cathy. She was swamped at work and was staying late most evenings to finish up inventory. Being back from maternity leave was not something she was prepared for. Cathy recalled the year off she had with her child. Spending all day with him and watching him grow and learn each day.

It was hard now to work so late and return home, only to find that the nanny had put Oliver to bed and she spent yet another day only seeing her boy for a few moments in the morning.

This day, Cathy had arrived early to work, hoping to get off a bit earlier to spend a short, but precious, amount of time with Oliver. While the day started off well, more work was being piled on, and before she knew it she was flying out the door much later than anticipated.

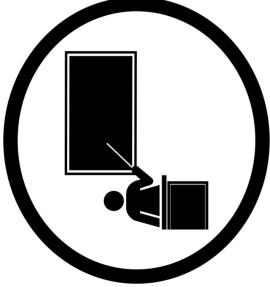


Cathy got in the car, and rushed towards home. Perhaps her foot was a bit too heavy on the gas, because when she looked in her rear view mirror, she saw flashing lights and heard the siren that no driver wants to hear. She pulled over to the side of the highway in total frustration.

When the officer came to her driver side window, she immediately blurted out “Can we make this quick? I really don’t have time for this”. The officer asked a variety of questions, but only received short and abrupt answers from Cathy, who could only think of her son’s bedtime quickly looming.

The officer issued the speeding ticket and Cathy drove away cursing him for his complete lack of empathy for her situation.

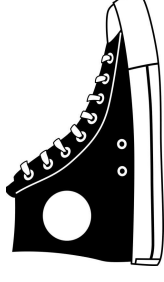
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Consider the three scenarios and put yourself in the position of the teacher, parent, or police officer. With your group/partner consider their perspective on the situation and in the space below, write how you think each of these people felt in each particular situation. Make predictions about why they reacted the way they did, what their lives might be like, or what they might have been thinking/feeling/dealing with that day.

			  
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PUT YOURSELF IN MY SHOES: EMPATHY IN TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

Read the novel quotations along the left side of this page. Each of these quotes connects with the theme of empathy that develops in the novel. Choose two quotes to examine further and answer the questions on the right side of the page.



<p>1. "Atticus said I had learned many things today, and Miss Caroline had learned several things herself. She had learned not to hand something to a Cunningham, for one thing, but if Walter and I had put ourselves in her shoes we'd have seen it was an honest mistake on her part. We could not expect her to learn all Maycomb's ways in one day, and we could not hold her responsible when she knew no better." (Ch 3)</p>	<p>1. Explain the context of this quotation (what is it referring to etc) Quote # _____</p> <p>2. How does this quotation develop the ongoing theme of empathy in the novel? Consider which characters are feeling (or not feeling) empathetic and how that relates to the novel both thematically and in connection with character development.</p>
<p>2. "In a flash, Atticus was up and standing over him. Jem buried his face in Atticus' shirt front, 'Sh-h,' he said. 'I think that was her way of telling you -- everything's all right now, Jem...You know, she was a great lady...I wanted you to see what real courage is...It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what'" (Ch 11).</p>	
<p>3. "Yes, suh, I felt right sorry for her, she seemed to try more'n the rest of 'em --" 'You felt sorry for <i>her</i>, you felt sorry for <i>her</i>?' Mr. Gilmer seemed ready to rise to the ceiling" (Ch 19).</p>	<p>1. Explain the context of this quotation (what is it referring to etc) Quote # _____</p> <p>2. How does this quotation develop the ongoing theme of empathy in the novel? Consider which characters are feeling (or not feeling) empathetic and how that relates to the novel both thematically and in connection with character development.</p>
<p>4. "Jem, see if you can stand in Bob Ewell's shoes a minute. I destroyed his last shred of credibility at that trial, if he had any to begin with. The man had to have some kind of comeback, his kind always does. So if spitting in my face and threatening me saved Mayella Ewell one extra beating, that's something I'll gladly take. He had to take it out on somebody and I'd rather it be me than that houseful of children out there. You understand?" (Ch 23).</p>	
<p>5. "If there's just one kind of folks, why can't they get along with each other? If they're all alike why do they go out of their way to despise each other? Scout, I think I'm beginning to understand something. I think I'm beginning to understand why Boo Radley's stayed shut up in his house all this time...it's because he <i>wants</i> to stay inside" (Ch 23)</p>	