

The Mockingbird Museum: Teaching students the historical context of *To Kill a Mockingbird*



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BACKGROUND: This activity was modified from a lesson shown by David Leech at USMSS Summer Spark conference in Milwaukee. This lesson is meant to serve as a beginning of the unit activity to familiarize students with the culture and time period of the novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Even though this activity focuses on *To Kill a Mockingbird*, **teachers can modify the activity to fit any text**. This can also become a student project that requires research. This interactive presentation is meant to not only teach students about the background of the novel, but also engage them in historical discussions and as an introduction to themes.

PURPOSE: Many times students need to understand the history, culture, or background of a text before they read in order to fully understand the piece. This activity works well to engage students in these lessons while valuing their own pacing. The museum is interactive and can be used on the flipped classroom model.

DIRECTIONS: Students are given the presentation and the (optional) student packet. I typically have students complete this activity in their writer's notebook. I also typically give students a timeline of when to be done, but do not give them specific topics to have done. You can modify this for students that need more structure.

Show students how to move through the interactive presentation by clicking on all of the hyperlinks in the presentation. There are buttons to navigate through the different museum exhibits, as well as a home button to move back to the lobby of the museum.

OPTIONAL: Have a discussion at the end of the presentation on what the students found interesting. I have also had discussions after each section, or have assigned museum exhibits to supplement their reading of the novel.

RESOURCES: [The Mockingbird Museum Interactive Presentation](#)
[The Mockingbird Museum Question Packet](#)
[Blank Museum Template](#)

