



AMERICAN  
LITERATURE

# The mockingbird sings for freedom

from the Esri GeoInquiries™ collection for American Literature

Target audience – American literature learners

Time required – 15 minutes

## Activity

Explore the demographic and social context of *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee.

## Standards

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1.** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5.** Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (for example, parallel plots), and manipulate time (for example, pacing and flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

## Learning Outcomes

- Students will describe the changes in the distribution of the black population within the USA since 1930.
- Students will describe the landscape of segregation and social inequities that were spotlighted in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Map URL: <http://esriurl.com/litGeoInquiry9>

## ? Ask

### How has the distribution of the black population changed over time?

- Click the link above to launch the map.
- ? Where are black population concentrations in the USA in 1930? [*South eastern USA*]
- With the Details button depressed, click the button, Contents.
- Turn on the layer Black Population, 2010 - by State. Turn this layer off and on to see patterns.
- ? What changes in the distribution of the black population are visible between 1930-2010? [*Shift from south to north*]
- Turn off layers, Black Population, 1930 - by State and Black Population, 2010 - by State.

## ! Acquire

### What changes in the black population distribution are seen in Alabama?

- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select Alabama.
- Read aloud, "The next data are county-level, showing differences across Alabama."
- Turn on and off layers, Black Population, 1930 - by County and Black Population, 2010 - by County.
- ? What patterns or changes are visible? [*Some change over time within Alabama*]
- Harper Lee based *To Kill a Mockingbird* on her childhood home of Monroeville.
- Click in the find address window, and type, Monroeville, Alabama.
- Zoom out to better see Monroeville and adjacent counties.

## 🔍 Explore

### What changes are visible in Monroeville, Alabama?

- Turn on layers, Black Population, 1930 - by County and Black Population, 2010 - by County.
- Click on Monroeville county. Use the small arrow in upper, right on pop-up to scroll information.
- ? In Monroeville county, what are the percents of the black population in 1930 and 2010? [*52.5% and 41.7%*]
- Zoom the map out to see the continental USA.
- After the Civil War, large numbers of black families migrated from the Deep South to work in northern cities. This was known as the Great Migration; it changed the distribution of the black population.

more ►

## Analyze

### How did the Great Migration change the population landscape?

- Turn on the layers, Great Migration Flow and Black Population 2010 - by State.
- Describe the black population 2010 distribution in the northern states. [*There are islands of black populations in northern states.*]
- Turn off the layer, Great Migration Flow.
- Turn on the layer, Green Book.
- Read aloud, “*The Negro Travelers’ Green Book* was published as a travel guide from 1936 to 1966, listing restaurants and lodging that welcomed black travelers.”
- Describe the distribution of the Green Book services across the USA. [*Distributed with a greater concentration in the Eastern US*]

## Act

### What was the importance of the Green Book?

- ? How did the Great Migration contribute to the distribution of *Green Book* services? [*The Great Migration created opportunities for new businesses that offered lodging and meals for blacks traveling from the north to the south for economic opportunities or to visit family.*]
- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select Alabama.
- Click on the *Green Book* stars to read about services.
- Use the small arrow in upper, right on pop-up to read about multiple services
- ? How many *Green Book* services were listed in Alabama? [21]
- ? Why so few? [*Travelers in the South would stay with family.*]
- Turn on the layer, AG Gaston Motel. Click the Motel symbol to read more about this *Green Book* listing.
- ? How many *Green Book* services were listed in your state in 1956?

### IDENTIFY MAP FEATURES

- Click a feature on the map and a pop-up window will open with information.
- Links and images in the pop-up are often clickable.
- An arrow icon in the upper right of the window indicates that multiple features have been clicked.
- Click the arrow button to scroll through information for each feature.

### MAP LAYERS

- Make sure that the Details pane is selected, and click Show Contents Of Map.
- To show individual map layers, select the check boxes next to the layer names.
- Hint: If a map layer name is light gray, zoom in or out on the map until the layer name is black. The layer can now be turned on.

## Next Steps

DID YOU KNOW? ArcGIS Online is a mapping platform freely available to public, private, and home schools. A school subscription provides additional security, privacy, and content features. Learn more about ArcGIS Online and how to get a school subscription at <http://www.esri.com/schools>.

THEN TRY THIS...

- Explore the Segregation by the Sea story map, and see how coastal access for minorities was increasingly restricted: <http://esriurl.com/Geo4206>.
- Explore the *Negro Travelers’ Green Book, Spring 1956*: <http://esriurl.com/Geo04207>.

## TEXT REFERENCES

This GIS map has been cross-referenced to material in the following novel.

- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee