

# Scout Meets Leonard Haskins: Experiencing Life Beyond Scout's Maycomb, A Culminating Assignment

By Paul Horton and Rick Vanderwall

## Overview

Harper Lee's Scout sees the world through her experience. As a young white woman growing up in a southern town, Scout's world is carefully circumscribed. While she sees glimpses of an African-American world through Cal, she is nevertheless sheltered from the harsher everyday realities of Jim Crow. In part, she sees the world through her father's explanations. And, of course, the racial assumptions that form the core of Jim Crow thinking are brought to the fore by the trial. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to imagine a fuller range of experience between Scout and a young African-American man. Students are asked to imagine a meeting between Scout and Leonard Haskins, who is, for our purposes, Cal's nephew. Students will describe the day from Scout's point of view and from Leonard's point of view in separate narratives. Before writing, students will be asked to consider what they have learned thus far about the racial divide in Maycomb. They will then view Works Progress Administration images of African-American life in the South during the 1930s before writing their narratives.

## Student Objectives

Students will:

- Analyze and evaluate what they have learned about Jim Crow in Maycomb
- Analyze photo images of African-American life in the South in the 1930s
- Write two creative narratives of an imagined meeting between Scout and Leonard Haskins

Skills attained:

- Review and organization of social concepts
- Analysis of characterization
- Analysis of photographs
- Creative writing

## Materials Needed

- Computers or overheads of WPA images of African-American life in the South in the 1930s. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/fsahtml/fahome.html>
- [Jimcrowhistory.org](http://jimcrowhistory.org) Image Gallery

## The Lesson

### Anticipatory Set

1. Students will take five minutes to make a list of items in a T-bar chart. Under one column students should list key characteristics of "Cal's World." Under the other column students should list the key characteristics of "Scout's World."
2. Discuss the lists. How many of the characteristics overlap? Then ask this question: Do you think that Scout knows more about Cal's world than Cal knows about Scout's world? Follow up with: Why does Scout know less about Cal's world?

## Procedures

1. Bridge to assignment. Go over assignment and answer questions. Ask students to view WPA photos on the Leonard Haskins' Photo Album handout and lead brief open-ended discussions about what the photographs reveal about Cal's world.
2. Ask students to consider how Scout and Leonard would be introduced and what they might do together. Have them list what Scout might see and what she would think about what she saw and did. What would Leonard think about Scout? Would he be anxious? What would he want to say and do?
3. Students should spend the rest of the period getting their narratives started with guidance from the teacher.
4. Conclude by informing students that they will be asked to read their narratives tomorrow.

## Assessment

A suggested criteria list offered below:

- Analysis and application of WPA images as a part of creative narratives (10pts.)
- Application of Jim Crow concepts in narratives (10pts.)
- Application of characterization of Scout in a new situation (10pts.)
- Creation of Leonard Haskins as a believable young man (10pts.)
- Total (40pts.)

## Other Literary and Historical Connections

For insights into relationships between white and African American young people under Jim Crow, students should see Richard Wright, *Black Boy* and *Uncle Tom's Children*. For a different perspective, students can consult Zora Neale Hurston's Pike County, Alabama, in the first four chapters of *Dust Tracks on the Road*. For additional autobiographical perspectives students can consult Theodore Rosengarten's *All God's Dangers* and Haywood Patterson and Earl Conrad's *Scottsboro Boy*.