*A Time to Kill* by John Grisham (Class Set)

Jake Brigance defense attorney

Carl Lee Hailey defendant

Rufus Buckley prosecutor

Billy Ray Cobb killed by Carl Lee Hailey

Willard Billy Ray Cobb’s accomplice, also killed

The film takes place in Canton, Mississippi. Tonya Hailey, the 10 year-old daughter of Carl Lee Hailey, is brutally raped and beaten by two young men named Billy Ray Cobb and Willard. Fearing that the two will not be punished, Carl Lee Hailey shoots and kills both of them as they are being led to their arraignment. The killing occurs in front of many witnesses, so there is no question of Carl Lee’s guilt. Jake Brigance, Carl Lee’s lawyer, must try to keep Carl Lee from being sentenced for the murders.

Guided Questions for Discussion

1-Who was called for the prosecution? What testimony did each

present?

2-Who was called for the defense? What testimony did each give?

3-What did you notice about the prosecuting attorney?

4-What did you notice about the defending attorney?

5-What evidence was presented that would allude to the defendant’s guilt?

6-What evidence was presented that would allude to the defendant’s innocence?

7-Analyze the prosecutor’s closing arguments to the jury. (Consider the vocabulary, tone, and physical gestures.) What stands out? Effective?

8-Analyze the defense attorney’s closing arguments. (Consider the vocabulary, tone, and physical gestures.) Was it effective? What stands out?

9-What was the verdict in the trial? What do you think were the major factors that influenced the jury’s verdict?

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*10-List 3 insightful similarities between TKAM* and *A Time to Kill.*

*11-List 3 insightful differences between TKAM and ATK.*

Possible Post-Viewing Activity: Choose one of the following:

1. Assume the role of a reporter covering one of the trials. Write

about your personal experiences while watching the events of

the trial unfold.

1. Assume the role of Atticus Finch or Jake Brigance. Write your

journal entry dated the night before you give your closing arguments. What are your concerns? fears? hopes?

Paper should be double-spaced and have properly formatted quotes.

Times New Roman / Size 12

Length: 1 page-1.25 pages

Be sure to clearly identify which character you are writing as.