To Kill a Mockingbird

Focus Question #5

What does Miss Maudie mean when she says, "And I thought to myself, well, we're making a step – it's a baby-step, but it's a step."

Answer Plan

1. Restate the question by telling what you think Maudie meant.
2. Support your point.
3. Considering the history of the Civil Rights movement, would this have been a baby-step?

Possible Answer

[1] I think when Miss Maudie said that they had taken a baby-step, she meant that they had taken a small step toward changing attitudes and a small step toward equality. [2] Atticus' eloquent and strategic defense of Tom Robinson must have made people think at least a little differently. His defense must have opened some peoples' eyes up to the foolishness of thinking that all blacks are bad and all whites are good. This was not true in this case; it was clear that Ewell had beaten his daughter and that Tom's only mistake was feeling sorry for a white woman. [3] Considering the history of the Civil Rights movement, if this had been a real case, it would have been even more than a baby-step. A similar case, the Scottsboro Boys case, did make a difference.