**MODEL INTRO**

“What was I thinking? That we would run into each other’s arms and all would be well with the world? Possibly. I don’t really know. I just wanted answers. Why? Why had she left us to suffer like that? Why did she leave us? Did she love us? Did she love me?” In this quote from Mez McConnell’s autobiography *Is There Anybody Out There?*, the author is seeking answers about his life, his mother who abandoned him, and his future with her. The questioning quality in Mez is a trait that holds true for him throughout the text. In this manner, and in many others, Mez McConnell is similar to the character Jem from *To Kill a Mockingbird*. They both seek answers to their confusing life, are mischievous at times, and take action in risky situations.

**MODEL BODY PARAGRAPH**

 One trial for Jem in *To Kill a Mockingbird* is making sense of the world after he discovers the racism and hypocrisy of Maycomb. In his search for truth, Jem spends a great deal of time both by himself and with others questioning the world and the people in it. Mez is similar to Jem in this way. One aspect of life Mez attempts to figure out is the abuse he encounters in his childhood. Why does his step-mother constantly beat and starve him? Why doesn’t his father do anything about it? How can he escape poverty, rampant drug use, and hunger? Why did his mother leave him? Later, upon leaving prison, Mez begins to seek answers about Christianity and how it fits in his life. The other confusing aspect of his life that he questions is what to do with his life? At every stage of his adulthood, he questions what’s next. When he leaves prison, his questioning leads him to a Bible college. Upon graduating, his questioning leads him to helping the street children in a Brazilian city. Once that chapter of his life is complete, a period of questioning motivates him to lead a church in Scotland. Like Jem, Mez struggles with the hard questions in life and works hard to resolve them.