

Gene's innocence early in the novel



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Gene's innocence early in the novel *A Separate Peace* is shown by his carefree attitude towards school and life. Gene goes about his daily routine not worrying about the war going on or its impact on the others around him. Gene and his friends are playing tag and going about the normal things students with nothing to worry about do.

The other students that are old enough for the draft are hurrying through their studies and meeting the necessary requirements in order to complete their studies in time before they leave to leave to fight the war. The Seniors carried a full school load and are facing the harsh realities of life and Gene does not have to worry about that yet. Gene is young enough that he doesn't have to leave and fight the war and be exposed to the war and all of the bad things that would be experienced by seniors who would soon be leaving. Gene deals with the types of things that innocent students deal with, like who is popular and who gets the better grades.

By the end of the novel *A Separate Peace*, however, Gene loses his innocence because he becomes jealous and his paranoia causes many problems with his friendship with Finny. Gene let paranoia and feelings of mistrust lead him down a path of jealousy and he hurt a friend destroying a part of his innocence. Gene realized that he has feelings of jealousy and mistrust but Finny never has had those feelings. Finny lived life as it came. Finny thought Gene could do everything. Finny thought that Gene just got good grades because it came naturally to Gene like sports came naturally to Finny.

Finny realized that Gene needed to study and he he was fine with that. Finny knew that when you are good at something you needed to work at it and keep being good at it. Once Finny tells Gene to keep studying and don't worry about jumping off the tree into the river it made Gene want to do it more. He and Finny went to the tree and Gene made Finny lose his balance and fall because he was so determined to do it to. His jealousy of Finny and Finny's ability to jump with no fear made Gene determined to jump which caused the chain reaction where Finny ended up hurt and unable to play the sports that he is so good at.

Gene's actions hurt his friend Finny. Gene lost his innocence that day because he hurt a friend out of jealousy. In the days following Finny's accident, Gene had a lot of guilt and as the days went on, it got worse. Gene had to deal with feelings that an innocent person would not have to deal with. In the end Gene went to Finny's house to tell him what really happened. While Gene is there he tells Finny that he made the limb bounce and made him lose balance. Finny would not accept that Gene was the cause of his accident. Finny couldn't believe Gene would do that because he wouldn't do something like that to his best friend. He ignored what Gene had to say and ignored Gene's confession. In the end Finny does realize that Gene hurt him on purpose.

Gene lost his innocence because he had to deal with the fact that he hurt someone who truly thought of him as his best friend. Someone who would never have done the things or thought the things like Gene did of Finny. Finny was truly innocent and believed the best of Gene all the while Gene was paranoid and thought the worst of Finny. This is something Gene will

have to live with the rest of his life and he lost his innocence through those actions.