

# Character analysis of atticus finch

[Sociology](#), [Racism](#)



Atticus Finch is one of the most steadfastly honest and moral characters in "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee and his character remains, for the most part, unchanged throughout "To Kill a Mockingbird". Atticus Finch begins as an upstanding citizen who is respected and admired by his peers and even though he loses some ground during the trial, by the end of "To Kill a Mockingbird" he is still looked up to, both by his children and the community as a whole—with all class levels included. As a lawyer in "To Kill a Mockingbird", Atticus Finch represents everything that someone working in the justice system should be. He is fair, does not hold grudges, and looks at every situation from a multitude of angles. Atticus Finch is the same in his house as he is on the public streets" (87) and this could also be said of how he behaves in the courtroom. He is a skilled lawyer and without making outright accusations in a harsh tone he effectively points out that Bob Ewell is lying. Atticus Finch, is able to gracefully point out to the jury that there although there probably are a few black men who are capable of crimes, "this is a truth that applies to the human race and to no particular race of men". His understanding of equality and his colorblindness allow him to see clearly that the case has been motivated by racial hatred and he is strong enough, both as a person and a lawyer, to see that this is a wrong that needs to be discussed and pointed out to the community. In general in "To Kill a Mockingbird", as a lawyer, he is much as he is as a father—focused on justice, equality, and imbued with the special talent of seeing a number of angles to every situation. As a parent in "To Kill a Mockingbird" Atticus, although older than most of the other children's parents, is very careful to offer his children careful moral guidance. Instead of trying to force principles of politeness or

societal norms on them, however, he is careful to provide his instruction in a way that makes the children think about their actions. For example, he offers them complex lessons in life and tells them, “ shoot all the blue jays that you want, but remember it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird”. This lesson is not to tell them that shooting things is good, but rather that there are some things that are living peacefully and have a purpose on the earth. In addition to this, as a lawyer and a man of words, he recognizes the importance of having good verbal and reading skills and he teaches Scout to read from a very young age. As another example, when Mrs. Dubose dies he teaches his children an important lesson about courage and strength by telling them, . “ I wanted you to see what real courage is...it’s when you know you’re licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through, no matter what”. The most important aspect of this in terms of the major themes in " To Kill a Mockingbird" presented via this character, it is that he does not just tell his children things he wants them to consider important, he actually follows through and lives according to such lessons. For example, as seen in To Kill a Mockingbird even though he knows he will not win the case and is “ licked" he goes ahead and pursues it anyway. As a father his most important role seems to be as a teacher above all else and his children, much like the rest of the community respect him greatly for this. Atticus has a deceptively simple set of beliefs and values. For the most part, what he believes can be boiled down to his simple phrase, “ I do my best to love everybody". Unlike those in the community who are quite racist and obsessed with class and social position, Atticus tries to look at everyone as an individual—even those who are outcast by their society (including Boo and the blacks and poor of

the community). He sees the good in everyone and is committed to making his children feel the same way he does. In every sense of the word he is a kind and just man, one who does not cause the reader of *To Kill a Mockingbird* to question his intentions or motivations.