

# Character analysis of atticus in harper lee's, to kill a mockingbird

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



Atticus Finch, a nearly fifty defense lawyer for small Maycomb County, is the honorable father of main character Jean Louise (Scout) and Jem (Jem). He is the lawyer for accused black rapist, Tom Robinson, and he tries to change injustices and racism in his small hometown. Atticus' inner conflicts and moral dilemmas are expertly written in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee. Atticus's physical appearance doesn't play a big part in the novel. Atticus is nearly fifty and wears glasses because his left eye is nearly blind. We can assume Atticus normally does not look his age, because Jem and Scout say he looks as old as he was for once. Atticus is also a very neat person, (as seen on page 202), and "He never loosened a scrap of clothing until he undressed at bedtime, and to Jem and me, this was the equivalent of him standing before us stark naked." Jem and Scout are Atticus' own children and even they haven't seen him casually dressed. Atticus' character isn't focused on his appearance, but on his personality and inner strength. Atticus is a very fair and just person. In a time when black people were still considered a lower class by almost all, Atticus believed in equality and equal rights for all. His beliefs were summarized in his powerful closing at Tom Robinson's trial. He said, on page 204, "Confident that you gentlemen, would go along with them on one assumption, the evil assumption, that all Negroes lie, that all Negroes are immoral beings, that all Negroes are not to be trusted around our women, an assumption that of one mind of their caliber. Which gentlemen, we know is in itself a lie as black as Tom Robinson's skin, a lie that I don't have to point out to you. You know the truth. The truth is this: some Negroes lie, some Negroes are immoral, some Negro men can't be trusted around women, black or white. But this is a truth

that applies to the human race and to no particular race of men. "Atticus fights for Tom Robinson with all of himself, he does not care about his skin color, only his innocence. Atticus represents all of the honorable people in Maycomb County. Atticus Finch is a very honest man. When his children ask his difficult questions he doesn't try and sugarcoat his answers, he is blunt and forthcoming. Scout asks, on page 21, if they are poor." Atticus nodded. 'We are indeed.' " he answers. He even explains his idealogy on answering children's question to his brother, Jack. On page 87 he says, " 'Jack! When a child asks you something, answer him, for goodness' sake. But don't make a big production of it. Children are children, but they can spot an evasion quicker than adults, and an evasion simply muddles them.' " Atticus is a very compassionate and perceptive man. In the very beginning of the novel, directly after Scout returns from her hard day at school, Atticus realizes something is wrong and inquires about it. Atticus is also very compassionate to Mrs. Dubose. He feels pity for her condition and pride for her ability to go through withdrawal. He understands why Mrs. Dubose is so grouchy and tells Jem and Scout that " ' She's an old lady and she's ill. You just hold your head up high and be a gentleman. Whatever she says to you, it's your job not to let her make you mad.' " When Tom Robinson is in the county jail Atticus realizes people will try and go after him to harm him, so Atticus guards him to ensure his safety. After Tom Robinson dies Atticus realizes how Tom's wife, Helen, must feel. Atticus goes over to her house to offer his condolences. Atticus is a very sympathetic and insightful person. Atticus is a very deep character. His wisdom and honor make the readers look up to him. Atticus Finch is the epitome of a good man.