

Analysis of the main character in "the breakfast club"

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



The Breakfast Club This paper is an analysis of five dissimilar teenagers representing a cross-section of middle class high school students in the suburbs. The students meet each other for the first time during a Saturday morning detention session. Each student arrived to the school by different means, which is a precursor to determining the type of individual each one is. The group is comprised of a "princess", an "athlete", a "brain", a "criminal", and a "basket case". These are the roles the students play during the week.

Because of typical stereotypes and status levels, at the onset, the students don't want anything to do with each other at the beginning of the detention session. However, once confronted by the controlling principal and realizing they have a whole day to spend together, the students begin to interact. Once the students start communicating with each other, they realize that they are more alike than unlike. Each one of them has their own issues they are dealing with, they each long for self-acceptance; they all fight against peer pressure; they all desire parental approval.

Eventually through the course of the day, they break through the barriers and begin to understand each other and accept each other as well as themselves. The students eventually develop a group identity and call themselves, "The Breakfast Club." Claire is the "princess"; an upper-class, popular prom queen who was punished with detention after she ditched classes to go shopping. She enjoys her wealth, but this causes others to envy her. She is a bit shy and doesn't easily reveal information about herself.

She is very insecure with herself because she is not very smart and isn't athletically inclined which is why she wants to be a part of the "in" crowd at school. She feels neglected by her parents and is yearning for attention from them. She was driven to school for the detention session in a BMW by her father. As he dropped her off he explained to her that this is a strict punishment and perhaps she shouldn't skip school to go shopping. Bender the "bad boy" on the other hand, is a lower-class young man who is perceived to be a sociopathic criminal; he is desperate for attention at school. This may be due to a lack of attention at home or perhaps abuse. Because of his rebellious nature, Bender finds himself in detention more often than not. Bender wanders up to the school by his own free will. His parents are not shown at all during the film. Andrew the "jock" is a regimented and determined wrestler who wants to break free from the athlete role in order to think for himself. His father demands that he succeeds athletically as he doesn't tolerate losing, he requires Andrew to be No. 1 in his athletic endeavors. His father doesn't care what Andrew wants in life, he just wants him to win all of his wrestling matches. Andrew was dropped off to the school by his father who was chastising him before dropping him off and explaining that he could potentially lose his athletic scholarship due to his behavior. Brian the "nerd" is a straight-A student who struggles with expectations of high grades. His parents seem to push him to do very well in school. However, he doesn't have any confidence in himself and relies upon his success in school to motivate him.

His self confidence was crushed when he received a failing grade in shop class. He was sent to detention because a teacher found a gun in his locker which he was going to use to kill himself; however, it wouldn't have worked because it was a flare gun. Brian was dropped off to the school by one of his parents and his younger sister. He was told to get his homework done while in detention. Lastly, Allison the "kook" is an introvert who is ignored by her peers. She is a very quiet girl hardly ever speaking, which makes it difficult for people to understand her.

When she does speak, she usually does so in self defense. She longs for attention, in order to receive it; she acts like a mentally unstable individual. She suffers from boredom and is very reserved. She shocked the group when she emptied her purse which held nothing but useless items in an attempt to gain attention from the others at the beginning of the detention session. Allison was dropped off to the school, but you can't tell by who as the person drives off before any words are exchanged. She states that she did nothing wrong to get sent to detention.

She displays very peculiar behavior during the detention session. At the onset of the detention session, each student's status is conveyed by their existing peer social status in school. They form bonds, with whom they feel most comfortable with, for example, Claire and Andrew immediately sit down next to each other and begin exchanging conversation about the friends they have in common within the "popular" crowd that they are a part of. Brian is next in line in the school social status scene because of his intelligence but he is still considered to be a geek by his peers.

In contrast, Allison and Bender are at the bottom of the school social scene. As the morning detention session progresses, each member of the group surrenders their previous roles as they assume new positions within the group. Bender, who usually has a low-status position, assumes a leadership role because of his expertise with detention. He is on a first name basis with the janitor and Mr. Vernon, the principal. Mr. Vernon displays a tough outer shell but seems to fear Bender. Bender is clearly the dominating force in the group.

His rebellious personality is displayed when he breaks the established rules and moves from his seat after being told not to. He also tore up a library book and removed a screw from one of the library doors so it couldn't stay open in order for Mr. Vernon to keep an eye on them. When Mr. Vernon questioned the group as to why the door is closed and wouldn't stay open the group covered up for him. This behavior clearly displays Bender's disregard for authority. Instead of being condemned by his peers, Bender's questions and actions are valued within the group.

He leaves the session with a new found respect for his new friends as well as an attraction to Claire whom he had constantly made fun of for being a snob throughout the detention session. He also dropped the tough guy persona and accepted himself as someone who was good in his own way. Claire and Andrew also go against their normal high school behaviors during the session. Andrew no longer appears to play the macho athlete role and actually cries in front of the others as he describes how his father has pressured him to be someone he doesn't want to be.

He expressed how at times he wished for his knee to give out so he wouldn't be able to wrestle anymore. He finally comes to realize that he doesn't need to be the man his father expects him to be and that his life is his own to determine and not what his father desires. It is clear that he that he has broken from the grips of his father when he leaves the detention session partnered with Allison. Allison seems to be the epitome of defiance towards his father's law to stay on course and choosing his own path from now on.

Claire appears to be very conceited and often asks the group " Do you know how popular I am? Everyone at this school loves me. " Looking at her from the others perspective, she appears to be very self-centered and more important than the others. Although Claire leads the group to believe she had been sexually active due to peer pressure, she ultimately admitted to the group that she is still a virgin. Allison actually tricked her by lying and being deviant, having Claire to admit she was a virgin.

Allison then expressed to the group that being sexually active is actually a double edged sword in their social setting because if a girl admits to being sexually active, she is considered to be a slut while if she denies being sexually active she is considered a prude. Her observation demonstrates she isn't exactly who the group perceives her to be. Eventually the group allows Claire to see that there is much more to life than being popular in school. On the surface, Brian appears to be submissive; however, the traditional geek ends up asking bold questions and seems to become more secure than his new-found friends.

Throughout the session, Brian seems to follow along with whatever his peers are doing while at the same time reminding them that there isn't supposed to be any " monkey business. " He actually goes against his normal behavior and along with Andrew and Claire partakes in smoking marijuana with Bender. The group views Brian as their most intelligent member and therefore, they encourage him to write their required 1000 word detention essays. This opportunity allows him to have a bit of power within the group.

Through the peer discussions, it becomes apparent that Brian and his parents have required him take on more than he can handle which drove him to his breaking point. Through the relationship with his newfound friends, Brian is able to release the load and the perception of himself being an academic over achiever. He leaves much more confident than when he came and is determined to let go of his past failure. Allison is very quiet during the detention session; her mode of communication was squealing for the first half of the session. The others see her as an outcast and her strange behavior while at detention confirms their perception.

During lunch, she takes a sandwich out of her bag, removes the meat, and puts cereal and sugar in its place. She appears to be satisfied with the lunch that the others find disturbing. Until this point, the other students had barely noticed her presence in the room. She continues performing random acts throughout the movie. It is clear that she craves attention both positive and negative and this is her way of obtaining it. While speaking to Andrew, she confides that the attention that she receives at school is much more than she will ever receive at home.

She finds her life at home unsatisfying and expresses that her parents don't give her any attention. Allison's parents consider her an outcast. She leaves the school well respected by Andrew who seems to have developed a liking to her. She realizes that she should be respected by all as long as she acts as though she wanted the respect she deserved. The janitor " Carl" is the eyes and ears of the school. He seems to know the students at the school very well and tells Mr. Vernon " Someday, these kids are gonna take care of me," Mr. Vernon told him " don't count on it. It appears as though Carl previously attended the school. He shows much respect to the students and seems to be able to relate to them and their issues. Mr. Vernon is the school principal who dislikes Bender because he doesn't have any respect for authority. He is very uptight and tries to get the students in trouble. It appears from his behavior that he thrives in his position of power; one may safely assume that when he was the age of the students, he probably wasn't popular or well liked by his peers. Carl caught Vernon reading the private school files; he then blackmails him to keep quiet.

He eventually bonded with Carl and declares that he has various fears about the current generation. The group went through the predictable developmental stages including forming, storming, norming and performing phases. The group was formed because each of the students broke a school rule. While in this stage, the students are becoming oriented with each other and learning more about the group. The rules and procedures are being established. During the storming stage, conflicts begin to arise and social tension is apparent. For example, Claire expressed that she doesn't " belong

here. Bender continuously antagonizes Claire. Bender and Andrew have shouting matches almost bringing them to blows. Also, Allison had a strange outburst during Claire's disclosure about her parents. The principle tries to set clear expectations and norms by telling the students that there is to be no moving, no talking, and no monkey business while in detention. However, in his attempt to establish the norms; the results prove to be unsuccessful because the group does not agree to Mr. Vernon's rules. Instead, the students become quite rebellious and show disrespect for authority.

Most of this behavior is exhibited by Bender who uses his status, power, and leadership within the group. In regards to performing, the group eventually accomplishes its task which was to write the 1000 word essay with Brian as the leader of this undertaking. The group also achieves other goals such as killing eight hours of detention while remaining free of boredom. They learned about each other and experienced and new found respect for through self-disclosures. They also rebelled against the established norms with each other.

By the end of the day, they had established their own cohesive group and learned to look past their stereotypes of each other. However, they question whether or not they will remain as friends come Monday morning. I believe that this movie is a true depiction of high school life in the suburbs, as each group of students has stereotypes about the other groups amongst their peers. It is up to us the individuals to break down the barriers that prevent us from appreciating each others qualities and learn not to criticize and/or condemn our peers.