

# Jane eyre critical analysis

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



In the novel Jane Eyre, Charlotte Brontë displays the different stages of maturity an individual goes through from childhood to when they become an adult. Brontë shows this idea of maturity clearly in Jane Eyre character. Jane Eyre is a dynamic character as throughout the novel she changes her decisions and ideas according to the situations she faces. Jane's action and decision making in the novel demonstrates the growth in her maturity from a rude wilful child to an ambitious young lady and how she struggles to overcome the class and social conflicts at each stage of her life as moves from Gateshead to Lowood and finally to Thronfield. In the opening section of Gateshead, Jane is seen as rude, aggressive wilful child.

Jane feels insecure as she does not have a family of her own which means that she is isolated both in terms of class and social status. Jane was totally depended on her aunt who is not happy to have Jane with her. Jane's aunt not only made Jane feel bad by mentioning that her father had no class but also kept her children away from Jane which isolated Jane socially. Jane's aunt's regular insulting of Jane made Jane hate her more. Therefore Jane collected the courage to tell her aunt " I am glad you are no relation of mine. I will never call you aunt again as long as I live. / I will say that the very thought of you made me sick and that you treated me with miserable cruelty" (36).

This shows the very immaturity of Jane as later in the novel when her aunt is in her dead bed and Jane visits her Jane says " I had once vowed that I will never call her aunt again: I thought it no sin to forget and break the vow now"(230). Jane is willing to forget what her aunt did to her which shows that Jane did in fact mature as time passed. Jane's character in Gateshead is also

<https://assignbuster.com/jane-eyre-critical-analysis-critical-essay-samples/>

not static as she is rude, mean and fights her cousin. However when Jane is with Bessie she tends to be more calm which means that a positive influence of elders does have an effect on a child's character. Jane's change in character is first seen in this section of the novel as she comes to Lowood from Gateshead Jane becomes more quiet and in a way comfortable with the surroundings because she knows that all the girls with her are in the same situation as her in terms of class, social and personal isolation. The interaction between Jane and Helen burns has an effect on Jane's character. Maturity in Jane's character is seen when she meets Helen burns who herself is not very happy but still has a positive attitude towards the people and her surroundings in Lowood.

In Lowood Jane totally transforms from an aggressive child to a powerless girl. " there was I, then mounted aloft: I, who had said I could not bear the shame of standing on my natural feet in the middle of the room, was now exposed to general view on a pedestal of infamy"(67). Jane is helpless she knows that her aggressiveness wont work here she cannot choose to do anything but to stand there embarrassed. However if her aunt had done something like that to her then she would have probably fought back for her rights which means that Jane had learned to control her anger which was the indication of her maturity into a young lady. By the end of lowood many changes can be seen in Jane's character as she becomes more responsible and applies for a governess job at Thornfield which means that she would not be depended on anyone in terms of economy. In Thornfield Jane's character keep switching from one position to another as she faces the different situations. When she meets Rochester and falls in love with him

during this whole time Jane keeps debating with herself whether Rochester will fall in love with her or not as his class status cannot be compared to hers.

He is rich and well known by everyone but she just a governess who has no money, no family and has no where to go. Jane feels insecure in terms of economic status as the fact that Rochester is offering her gifts and telling her that he will keep her happy by providing her all the things that she needs or desires. Jane also changes her position when it comes to the society; she tries to stay away from being in social gatherings. She does not want to go to the party that is organised by Rochester and had invited many people. But Mrs. Fairfax tells her that Rochester insists on her going to the party and also later Mrs. Fairfax gives the idea that “ just let Mr.

Rochester see you are there and then slip away no body will notice you”(169). Mrs. Fairfax telling Jane to “ slip away” shows that Jane was not that important either for anyone to notice her presence and absence in the party. When Rochester proposes for marriage Jane totally forgets about the concerns of the class and social differences between her and Rochester but Mrs. Fairfax reminds her of her class “ try and keep Mr Rochester at a distance: distrust yourself as well as him. Gentlemen in his stations are not accustomed to marry their governesses” (265). This shows that even Mrs.

Fairfax did not want Jane to be with Rochester which brings out the whole ideas of first Jane being concerned about the class differences between her and Rochester now Mrs. Fairfax is. We see a major growth in Jane’s character when she finds out that Rochester is already married. Even after what

happens Rochester is still wants Jane to be with him but not as his wife but as his mistress. Jane realizes that listening to Rochester and living with him as his mistress would mean that she is not only giving in to passion but also causing the end of her independence. Therefore Jane decides to leave Rochester " I care for myself. The more solitary, the more friendless, the unsustained I am, the more I will respect myself .....

Preconceived opinions, forgone determination, are all I have at this hour to stand by: there I plant my foot" (317). Jane's rejection of Rochester's offer shows the maturity of Jane into a fine young lady with dignity and who is not willing to give in to passion and sacrifice her independence. Jane changes her position in terms of class, economic and social isolation. She keeps on changing her attitude towards everything and everyone when it comes to her economy and her social status in the society. " Jane Eyre repeatedly shifts positions with class discourse, not in order to move towards a final class but in response to economic independence, social exclusion, personal isolation and other circumstances"(Bossche, 47). From Gateshead section until Thornfield Jane is concerned about her class and social status in the society which brings out the mature character of Jane from a rude wilful child to a humble ambitious young lady who makes the right decisions at the right time in the right situation. WORK CITED Bronte, Charlotte.

Jane Eyre. 1847. Ed. Margarate Smith. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. Bossche, Chris R. Vanden.

What did Jane Eyre do? Ideology, Agency, Class, and the Novel. The Ohio state university, 2005. Maturity in Jane Eyre's character Wagma Rashid English 111A Dr. Alison Rukhavina