

Anne's identity in anne of green gables by lucy maud montgomery

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Everyone faces challenges in their lives. People learn and grow through their experiences and develop certain qualities because of them. Experiences can shape people in a positive or negative way, depending on what kind of person they are. In *Anne of Green Gables*, the protagonist, Anne, constantly struggles to establish her identity. She had a difficult childhood and indulges in imagining alternate realities but her acceptance into the Avonlea community shapes her new life and helps her develop etiquettes and mannerisms. Through the course of the book, she learns to grow into a socially acceptable person while maintaining her passion and interests. Anne's past as a foster child causes her to struggle with her identity but teaches her to be independent and imaginative. Her unfortunate experiences encourage her to strive towards success and establish herself as a teacher.

Anne has grown up in an environment where she has never felt completely accepted. She goes from home to home in search of a family but ends up fulfilling the role of temporary nanny. When Anne first moves into Green Gables, she begs and pleads Marilla to let her stay. When Marilla asks Anne if her past families were good to her, Anne looks embarrassed and responds, "' Oh, they MEANT to be—I know they meant to be just as good and kind as possible. And when people mean to be good to you, you don't mind very much when they're not quite—always. They had a good deal to worry them,'" (Chapter V). Anne has never felt like a real member of a family. This experience causes her to crave stability and empowers her to become a teacher. After lacking a permanent home, she is extra-focused on attaining stability. This passion is exemplified in the way she is completely consumed by her studies. Throughout her middle and high school career, she always

comes out at the top of her class. Anne pushes herself to compete with other intellectually-inclined pupils and maintains an optimistic outlook throughout the book. Her ambition is shaped by her past experiences and her lack of guidance pushes her grow up and become a teacher. She wants to provide children with guidance that she did not have access to when she was in dire need.

Society places expectations on women that shapes them from when they are children. Anne grew up in orphanages. She was never expected to be prim and proper, the most expected from her was to fix her bed and stay quiet. Unfortunately, rules changed once she was adopted by Matthew and Marilla. In Avonlea, people expect Anne to be a lady. Ladies must respond to all situations positively and deal with tragedies in a calm manner. When Anne is first visited by one of Marilla's friends, the friend claims that Anne is rather 'homely'. This angers Anne beyond belief and she lashes out at the women, calling her things like 'fat' and 'ugly'. At first, Marilla is shocked by Anne's behaviour but soon realizes that Anne never had anyone to teach her right from wrong. Societal expectations were not previously implemented on Anne. Additionally, beauty expectations were also present during this time period. People loved little blonde girls and Anne's fiery red hair was considered unappealing. Over the course of the book, Anne learns to adapt to certain rules of society, such as being a well-mannered lady while maintaining certain attributes (eg. hair color). She grows to love herself and accept her flaws despite what society expects of her. She values her personal opinions more than anyone else's. Another reason Anne fails to

completely adapt to society's rules is her obsession with daydreams and fantasies. She is so obsessed with what her reality should look like often forgets what it actually is. She's caught up in a permanent daydream and tends to forget to complete assigned tasks. Her imagination causes her to disregard reality and results in several messes. She burns cakes, and almost drowns herself while acting out these ridiculous fantasies. As time goes on, Anne paints herself a more achievable dream: becoming a teacher. Her goal has now become attainable and she strives to fulfill it.

Anne's dreams were contorted due to events in her lifetime. When Marilla fell ill, she had no one to take care of her and Anne had to make a decision between attending a prestigious university or taking care of Marilla. Anne expected a lot from herself and she thought the only barrier between her and university would be herself. She ultimately decides to stay with Marilla and pursue a teaching career in Avonlea. Despite all of her efforts, Anne's main focus was not her education but rather, the well-being of her family. Her lack of love from when she was orphaned causes her to place extra value in caring for other people. This moment defines her personality because it establishes exactly what kind of person Anne is. She cares for other people more than she cares for herself and even when she declines the university offer, she remains optimistic. Anne says " When I left Queen's my future seemed to stretch out before me like a straight road. . . . Now there is a bend in it. . . . It has a fascination of its own, that bend" (Chapter 38). Her ability to find comfort in even the most difficult situations is her main defining quality and Marilla's sickness leads to her self-discovery.

Anne Shirley is a complex character who, while growing up, learns to maintain a balance between fantasy and reality. She learns to put the needs of other people before her own and continues to see positivity in everything. Her lack of guidance as a child urges her to become a teacher and her past experiences give her hope for the future. Anne follows certain rules of Avonlea while staying true to her character: her imagination and personality experience small changes but stay intact. She learns that she cares more about her family rather than her education and grows up to be a teacher. Anne's childhood and her conflicts shaped her into an imaginative young woman, who values people and refuses to conform.