

Atticus finch essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Parenting is one of the most challenging and rewarding tasks possible. In the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, Atticus Finch is a model parent who teaches his children important lessons about life. He teaches his children to respect themselves and others, to try their best to do what's right, and what real courage is. Atticus Finch is a very respected man in Maycomb. He shows respect to a lot of people including his children, the Negroes, his neighbours and Arthur Radley. When asked by his children why he is going to defend Tom Robinson Atticus says, ". . . if I didn't I couldn't hold up my head in town [Lee, Harper pg 75]." In the same conversation Atticus shows his respect for the black community when he tells Scout " Don't say nigger [Lee, pg 75]." When Scout says that people at school say it all the time Atticus replies " From now on it'll be everyone less one [Lee, pg 75]." Jem shows that he has learned respect when Scout finds a roly-poly bug. Scout wants to squish the bug but, Jem says not to, " Because they don't bother you . . . [Lee, pg 241]."

By respecting himself and others Atticus teaches his children to do the same. If Atticus didn't show respect to Tom Robinson, he wouldn't be able to have any respect for himself. He accepts the case not only to help Tom but to teach his own children and other people in the town about respect. Atticus doesn't want his children to be disrespectful because if they are than people will not respect them. The main lesson about respect Atticus teaches his kids is, do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Atticus also teaches his children to always try their best to do what is right. When Scout asks Atticus why he is going to defend Tom Robinson even though he knows he is going to lose Atticus says " Simply because we were licked a hundred years

before we started is no reason for us not to try to win [Lee, pg 76].” Miss Maudie says to Jem after the trial, “ did it ever strike you that Judge Taylor naming Atticus to defend that boy was no accident? That Judge Taylor might have had his reasons for naming him? [Lee, pg 215]”

Atticus says that if he didn't defend Tom Robinson, “ I couldn't go to church and worship God if I didn't try to help that man [Lee, pg 104].” Atticus tries to show his kids that trying your best to do what is right is very important. By trying his best to give Tom Robinson a good defence Atticus gives his children a good example of this. Miss Maudie helps to show Jem this when she clues him in that Atticus got the job of defending Tom Robinson because he always tries his best. Atticus teaches by example, he respects people and his children look up to him for that. Jem and Scout want to please their father and try to become more respectful. He also feels that if you don't try your best to help someone you won't be able to live with yourself, or ask anyone to help you without feeling guilty. Also Atticus teaches his children about real courage and how it is different from other courage. Atticus shows Jem what true courage is when he states that Mrs. Dubose was the bravest person he ever knew and explained it, “ Instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you see it through no matter what [Lee, pg 112].”

Scout shows that she has learned what real courage is when she is reminiscing she says “ it was times like these when I thought my father, who hated guns and had never been to any wars was the bravest man whoever lived [Lee, pg 105].” The children get to see an excellent example of true courage when they watch Atticus defending Tom Robinson from the balcony.

They see that he is risking his reputation among the townspeople in order to help Tom Robinson. Atticus has great moral or real courage. He wants his children to learn that there are many different ways to be courageous, that it isn't only " a man with a gun in his hand." Courage can be standing up for what you believe in or in Mrs. Dubose's case trying to free herself from her morphine addiction. Over the period of time in the novel Atticus teaches his children to be respectful, to try their best to do what's right and what true courage is. Atticus is a model parent who loves his children and has taught them these valuable lessons. To Kill a Mockingbird is not only a good story it is also a guide to being a good parent.