

"to kill a mockingbird"
by harper lee and
"the colour purple"



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The dictionary states that " Courage" is bravery/boldness or to nerve oneself to a venture. This idea is shown in both *The Colour Purple* and *To Kill A Mockingbird* in similar and in different ways. *The Colour Purple* involves courage to stand up against certain people, rather than morals and ideas, which is the main issue in *To Kill A Mockingbird*. Celie is the central character who has the most examples of courage although there are other people. In *To Kill A Mockingbird*, every character has his/her own views on courage which are expressed widely throughout the book.

In *To Kill A Mockingbird*, Scout, who may be seen as the narrator, has her first chance to show her courage when she has to stand up to the new teacher and try to explain to her about the different pupils and what happens in the school. All the other children urge her to say something, as they are too afraid themselves. In contrast, in *The Colour Purple*, there is no courage when Celie knows that her father has taken her child and killed it in the woods, yet she does nothing about it, as she is scared of him. " He took it while I was sleeping. Kilt it out there in the woods. "

Scout, always tries to understand other's views - which is why she goes to read to Mrs. Dubose with Jem and finally understands her. On the other hand, in *The Colour Purple*, Harpo (the oldest son), never tries to understand how much work Celie has and takes her for granted. It is only when Mr. ___'s (his name is never mentioned) sister comes to visit, that Celie gains support, but even then, she loses. It took courage for Kate (the sister) to stand up to Mr. ___ even though she came back shaking " She stay out on the porch talking a little while, then she come back in, shaking.

Got to go, Celie, she say. " In To Kill A Mockingbird, it took Scout, a total tomboy, a lot of courage to turn down a fight because of her father's morals. Even though Scout came across as a coward, Atticus (her father) was very proud of her as this showed her courage. In The Colour Purple, also in defence of a family member, Celie tells Nettie, "... I'll take care of you- with God's help". Nettie is scared of her father and Celie is putting on a brave face to make her feel better. Mrs. Dubose is one character, in To Kill A Mockingbird, who shows a lot of courage- subtle courage.

Mrs. Dubose was a morphine addict and even though she had many outrageous mood swings, she was admired greatly by Atticus, before and after she died. " Mrs. Dubose was a morphine addict. I wanted you to see something about her-I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. She was the bravest person I ever knew. " Throughout the Colour Purple, Celie is shunned by members of her community, degraded and not always happy with her life, yet she still cares about others.

Although Celie was faced with the problem of her husband beating and degrading her, she still cared for him in a weird way. This eventually lead him to become kinder, not treat women so badly and overall a better person. After a bad wedding day when her head was cracked open, she still stayed to cook dinner and clear up, when she could have easily ran away. This shows her courageous attitude, even towards people she may not care about that much for example, Mr. ___'s children. Celie has to cope without Mr. ___ for days, and has to have his horrible sister over, Carrie, yet she still doesn't complain.

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Another example of Celie caring for others is when she has to leave school because she is "too big" by being pregnant. Even though she is very upset, she keeps on a brave face, because she knows that if she cries, it will upset her younger sister, Nettie, more than she already is. In *To Kill A Mockingbird*; Atticus, Jem and Scout's father, has many morals and tries to teach his children all the important things in life. No matter what anyone else thinks, he sticks to his morals, one of which is never lying to his children. He ignores Bob Ewell when challenged to threats, including being spat at.

He also saves what he knows is important to others, i. e. , when Miss Maudie's house burnt down, he saved her most prized possession - her armchair. Atticus also killed a mad dog, but not once did he boast about it. This shows his courage throughout the book - the way he handles problems and the way he brings up his children. Nettie, in *The Colour Purple*, has courage from running away from her home, because she is fed-up and scared of her father raping all the girls.

This took courage as her father and Mr. ___ knew each other, and Nettie is staying at Mr. ___'s house - so he could tell her father, who could then come after her and even hurt her. Celie's love for others also shows when she meets her second child that was taken away from her and sold. Even though she knows this, she doesn't say anything for the sake of others' happiness. She also loves Shug Avery, and so even when Shug publicly humiliates her, she does nothing but hang her head. " She look at me and snort. Everything I do is fine and dandy for you, Miss Celie, she say. But that's cause you ain't got good sense. She laugh. I duck my head. "

Celie is even courageous in owning up to how she admires Sofia (Harpo's wife). This is hard for anyone to do and it takes courage. " I say it cause I'm a fool, I say. I say it cause I'm jealous of you. I say it cause you do what I can't. " In *To Kill A Mockingbird*, Calpurnia, Jem and Scout's cook and substitute mother shows very strong courage at different points in the book. One main example, is when she takes Jem and Scout to her Black church. She had to listen to one woman degrade her for bringing in Whites. However, she ignored the lady and defended her own morals and principles.

Calpurnia also put up with Aunt Alexandra even though she wanted her to leave. Calpurnia stayed calm, which in itself is a subtle form of courageousness. Calpurnia also walked in to the courthouse to give a message to Atticus. The biggest trial in Maycomb was being held and she had to interrupt it. She could have easily given the message to someone else but knew it was her duty and therefore faced up to it. Sofia in *The Colour Purple* is similar to Calpurnia in the way that she will stand up to her own beliefs. She is not scared of anyone and will let no man hit or hurt her.

Instead, she would physically defend herself like in the example where she beat up her husband in defense. However, her husband Harpo is the opposite. He has no courage to stand up to Mr. ___ and tell him that he does not want to work. " He is strong in body but weak in will. He scared. " In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Jem is Scout's older brother and also shows courage. He goes to read to Mrs. Dubose and even has to take away any proudness and apologise to her for chopping off her plants. But he helps Scout fight Bob Ewell and even when they have to escape from Boo's house, he lets Dill and Scout go first.

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This shows the extent of his maturity and courage. Similarly, Mr. ___ shows courage, but only once. He admits to Celie that he's been scared and that she has taught him to be a better person. This is hard for him as he had beaten her and treated her badly, yet he fell to courageous defeat as he told Celie the truth. In conclusion, I feel that courage, although not always easy to see, played an important role in both *The Colour Purple* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It linked in well with both books and shows how courage is portrayed in different and similar ways.