

**'to kill a mockingbird'
and the nature of
courage essay
sample**



**ASSIGN
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What do you think this novel has to say about the nature of courage?

Courage is the state or quality of mind or spirit that enables one to face danger, fear, or vicissitudes with self-possession, confidence, and resolution.

According to Atticus Finch, " Courage is when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what."

This idea of courage plays a major role in this novel and is shown in many of the characters, in many different ways. Atticus Finch defines " real courage" and demonstrates it several times throughout the novel, in addition to the lessons that he teaches his children. He shows this sense of courage during the Tom Robinson case. Atticus understands that defending Tom would make him an object of ridicule and the price he would have to pay for believing in a black man's word rather than a white man's.

However he goes against the community of Maycomb, and takes a moral stand by fighting for what he believes- " They're certainly entitled to think that...The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience" Atticus knows he's going against not only one person's moral scruples, but a whole communities, however he himself knows his moral scruples are more important than anybody else's and what he believes is what he has to fight for. Even with the great consequences he knows his children will face, and the problems that will be caused with the neighbours, Atticus displays courage by still choosing to defend Tom, even if it means risking something precious. The choices Atticus makes and the paths he follows, display a state of mind that enables him to not only face danger but also stand up for his morals and ethics, also known as courage.

Another example where Atticus displays courage is during the episode where he shoots Tim Robinson, the mad dog. Atticus not only shows courage by facing danger and fear through shooting Tim Johnson, but this time he goes against his own moral beliefs in order to ensure the safety of the community- "...maybe he put his gun down when he realized that God had given him an unfair advantage over most living things" In Atticus's mind, true bravery has nothing to do with weapons and he tries to teach his children that shooting an animal or human does not show bravery. Despite this, Atticus has the courage to shoot the mad dog, not only putting his own safety, but also the moral education of his children, in jeopardy.