

# Jefferson character in "a lesson before dying"



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The book I am going to be talking about is called A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest J. Gaines. We had to choose a character in this story, I chose Jefferson.

Jefferson is one of the main characters in this story. This book is about Jefferson being accused of a robbery, but he was only in the wrong place at the wrong time. He had to go to execution, but before he did Grant had to become him as a man. Jefferson has many traits, but the ones I am going to talk about being that he is uneducated, open-minded and rude.

This character (Jefferson) was released at the beginning of the novel in the first paragraph. It explains how he got into the hole electric chair situation. He was in a store with some people in an alcohol store. There was a robbery and everybody got shot by some white men. Jefferson was the only one that survived, so they blamed it on him.

The first trait I am going to be talking about is that Jefferson is uneducated. He went to school, but his spelling is horrible, he also didn't know a lot of complicated words, and he also didn't go to the school that much time. It wasn't because he dropped out, it was because that was all the education they got. I know this because of chapter 29. It was his diary. His spelling was very bad, you could barely understand what he was saying. The other example is how he doesn't know a lot of things. But it's not his fault because that is all the knowledge they get. The quote that shows this is on page 226 mr wigin you sayrite somethin but i dont kno what to rite an you say i must be thinkin. There is no punctuation, so it never ends. This explains why he is uneducated because he doesn't know how to spell. This trait doesn't really

affect the story, but it shows how African American people don't get so much education. That is how much they get. This is because African American people don't get so much respect. They don't even get enough education.

The way that Jefferson changes throughout the story are by his attitude. In the beginning, he wouldn't talk at all. He was only being rude and not talking but at the end, he started opening up. Jefferson was open-minded at the end of the story he started telling Grant his feelings. For example, he let Grant read his notebook. He also started to listen and talk to Grant, because before he would only look at the wall. The quote I found was on page 220 I see you have been writing, personal or can I look at it? It ain't nothin Do you mind? If you want. The bold is Jefferson talking. He let Grant look at his personal journal. But he didn't do that at the beginning, he wouldn't even look at Grant at his eyes. This definitely helps Jefferson because Grant can understand what he wants now. Because, he is actually telling him.

The next and last trait that I am going to talk about is that Jefferson was a little rude. Even though it was only at the beginning of the book when Grant and Ms. Emma went to visit him, he would stare at the wall and not do anything not talking or even eating. I also saw it when he was being rude to Ms. Emma when she made all the food for him and he wouldn't say thank you or EVEN EAT IT. On page 71 How do you feel Jefferson? Ms. Emma said He didn't answer...As you can see he wouldn't talk to anyone. This trait hurts him because since he was being so rude and not talking to anyone Grant didn't really want to help Jefferson. Vivian was the one making Grant go back. This affected the relationship with Grant because since he didn't want to go back with Grant, but when he started opening up, Grant liked going

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with Jefferson again. If there was no change with Jefferson then the story would be so boring because he wouldn't have started to talk and he would have become a man. That would have been bad.

I have learned a lot about how they treat American people. It is so not fair that he didn't do anything, yet he gets the blame. I don't think that 1 part of what happened to Jefferson is fair. I can't even imagine what he went through having to know that he is going to die badly. I don't know what I would have done if that were me. The thing that gets me so mad is that HE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING. If he did kill it well, I get it because he did do something, but he did nothing. He was just at the wrong place at the wrong time.