

Comparative essay: to kill a mockingbird and martin luther kin

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



Choose 2 of the texts we have studied and explain how each author has actually effectively communicated their message to the responder.

In the text *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee and the 'I have a dream' speech by Martin Luther King Jnr, both authors have communicated strong messages that are communicated through story and oral techniques. These messages of guts and prejudice and discrimination are what the composer idea is necessary to write in order to change social attitudes towards these problems.

Both texts were written at a time when those who were oppressed were fighting for freedom and tolerance by those who discriminated.

Atticus Finch shows a remarkable quantity of moral guts by defending Tom Robinson in Court when accused of raping a white woman. This act takes courage, as Atticus already knows the little town of Maycomb has found Tom guilty. The intolerance and racism that has been widespread amongst southern society for centuries might not be gotten rid of by this case, but Atticus will combat anyhow.

"... if I didn't I couldn't hold my head up in this town ... I could not even inform you or Jem not to do something once again" This quote stated by Atticus to Hunt in an effort to teach Scout about social rules and morals. Atticus feels that he should have honesty in all sides of his life which if he were to be false as a legal representative he would not be true to his friend or family. Having the kids at the court case exposes them to the bias and hypocrisy dealt with to those who are different to the majority. In the novel,

coloured people are seen as hazardous and violent to those who are prejudiced.

“ I seen that black nigger ... ruttin on my Mayella! ... lived down yonder in that nigger-nest ...” Bob Ewell states this when he gets carried away while accusing Tom Robinson. The quote shows that Bob feels ‘ Negroes’ are inferior savages that have no rights or sensation and is shown when he utilizes language scheduled for animals.

By using Scout to narrate the story allows Harper Lee to expose the responder to views and attitudes formed by minor with innocence. The audience learns about prejudice and discrimination as Scout learns. Through her eyes we see her father, Atticus, show moral courage as he defends a coloured man in court. The ending of the novel is cautiously optimistic as Atticus does not win the court case but still manages to have taught his children valuable life lessons.

Martin Luther King Jnr stood up in front of a crowd, about 250, 000 followers who had gathered in Washington from around the world, and delivered a truly inspiring speech. The speech he gave that day on August 28th, 1963 became an anthem to those who were and still are being discriminated against. King knew of the risks he faced by standing up for himself and others in his position and what he did that day took courage and bravery.

“...the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty...an exile in his own land...”

This quote conveys that King felt that discrimination occurred in every

aspect of a coloured persons life: personal, economic, political, religion and opportunity.

“...lift our nation from the quick sands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood”. This phrase talks about everyone making an effort with the nation to stop racial prejudice and together form a peaceful and loving nation. The tone of the speech makes it almost ironic that America is the ‘land of opportunity’ and ‘liberty’, and that the ‘American Dream’ is equality and yet has colour restrictions and those who are racially different are discriminated against.

King used many techniques to make his message as clear and precise as possible. These resources included call and response interaction with the audience; a ‘calm to storm’ delivery which begins in a slow professional manner before gradually reaching its dramatic climax; repetition; imagery used when, for example, he is contrasting between light and darkness (hope and imprisonment); and finally allusions such as religious or political.

Both composers wrote their texts for the same purpose, to help change social attitudes and to challenge the responder to employ tolerance and understanding. They achieved this by using various techniques to convey messages that help the audience ‘walk in someone else’s shoes’ for a brief moment of time. King leaves his audience with a feeling of hope and optimism for the future; Lee’s ending provides cautious optimism but it is still apparent. Both texts leave the audience with valuable knowledge and insight into a era of great prejudice and discrimination.