

Gene continuously
harms finny



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

It's not how we make mistakes, but how we correct them that defines us (Wolchin). This insightful quote shows that it is necessary for a person to identify and correct his or her mistakes to genuinely discover who they are. In the book *A Separate Peace*, Gene struggles with becoming an adult, because he is so absorbed in jealousy and unable to correct his past mistakes. It is not until the end of the book that Gene truly grows up, as he finally realizes his actions were wrong.

A person must learn from his or her own mistakes in order to grow up. At the beginning of the book, Gene makes many mistakes due to his obsession with the competition between himself and Finny, and allows himself to justify his mistakes. For example, after Gene jounces the limb and Finny breaks his leg, Finny recalls falling and wishing he could reach out to Gene. After hearing this, Gene says 'I flinched violently away from him. To drag me down too!' (Knowles 65). This quote shows Gene feels no remorse for pushing Finny, and that he believes Finny is trying to sabotage him. Instead of realizing he was wrong in jouncing the limb, Gene creates an excuse for his action. Gene does this often in the beginning of the book, as he attempts to condone all of his feelings of jealousy and assumptions about Finny. Furthermore, this shows Gene is unwilling to learn from his mistakes, which is why he is remarkably immature. This proves that a person must learn and realize his or her own mistakes to grow up.

Throughout the book, Gene continuously harms Finny, and repeatedly validates his reasons for doing so, showing he still has not developed into an adult. Even when Gene is bluntly accused of jouncing the limb, he persistently refuses to realize he was at fault for Finny's fall. As Leper is

recounting the events at the tree, Gene thinks Everyone could hear, couldn't they? The derangement in his voice. Everyone must be able to see how false his confidence was. Any fool could see that (Knowles 174). This shows that Gene is more concerned about other people learning the truth of what happened in the tree than he is with admitting his mistake that he made. At this point in the book, Gene is aware of what happened in the tree, and is deciding that he is right for doing what he did. Gene denying his mistakes makes him childish, and shows a person must admit to his or her mistakes and to understand how to avoid them in the future and to grow up.

At the end of the book, after Finny dies, Gene finally realizes he has wronged Finny, and therefore is able to mature. Gene comes to the conclusion that Finny was his best friend, and that he was blinded by jealousy and competition to the point where he could not even experience this friendship to its full extent. Gene mourns Finny's death, and says All of them, except Phineas, constructed at infinite cost to themselves these Maginot Lines against this enemy they thought they saw across the frontier, this enemy who never attacked that way- of even at all; if he was indeed the enemy (Knowles 204).

This passage reveals that Gene is finally able to understand that Finny was never his enemy, and that he made a mistake by jouncing the limb and allowing his jealousy and insecurity to ruin this friendship. Gene feels so much remorse and grief after Finny's death that he may grow up once and for all. In conclusion, a person has to admit to his or her own wrongful actions to mature. In the beginning of the book, Gene is childish and attempts to justify every mistake he makes. Throughout the book, Gene

begins to realize his behavior is unacceptable, but he still creates excuses for himself, which keeps him immature. At the end of the book, Gene finally recognizes his actions have been awful, and feels remorse for how he behaved towards Finny. Gene is finally able to mature after this, as he has learned from his mistakes. Overall, a person must reflect and understand that his or her past mistakes are incorrect and be willing to learn from them to truly grow up.