

# A review on the book- to sir, with love essay sample

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1. About the book - To Sir, With Love is a 1959 autobiographical novel by E. R. Braithwaite set in the East End of London. The novel is based on true events concerned with Braithwaite taking up a teaching post in a school there. The novel was made into a British film by James Clavell in 1967. In the novel, "To Sir with Love", various human characteristics are portrayed. Throughout the story, the idea that humans are able to adapt and change their way of thinking seems to be demonstrated. In the novel both, the teacher Braithwaite as well as his students, goes through many changes. These changes lead to a change in their way of thinking about each other. The novel shows the ability to adapt to the world around one's self as a very important trait. In the story, Braithwaite begins with a set of preconceived notions about his students. But later, he finds that they are the total opposites of his initial ideas. Braithwaite helps them to break out of the pattern of intolerance and roughness into which society had placed them. They began to respect themselves as well as the others. In short, both the teacher and his students change their way of thinking and do not get stuck in their original set of preconceived notions about each other.

2. Summary - To Sir, with Love is an incredibly inspirational story. E. R. Braithwaite, the author of this memoir, encapsulates the shame and hatred of prejudices and racism. The journey begins in the East End of London, during the 1940's. Mr. Braithwaite teaches at Greenslade Secondary School, which is surrounded by poor neighbourhoods crammed with social vermin. Rick Braithwaite is a young black man, born in South America, who just got out of the Air Force. Now in Britain, Braithwaite is looking for a career, mainly to pay for food, but things do not work out as planned. He comes to know the

malady of prejudice very well, as he is turned down from job after job.

Braithwaite describes feeling “ caught like an insect in the tweezers grip of prejudice.” Teaching becomes the therapy to set him free. When Mr.

Braithwaite took the job as a teacher, he did not expect his students to be barbaric savages. It is uphill all the way for Braithwaite as he counters the cynicism of his impressionable students and, now and then, that of his colleagues also. The difficulties in he faces in getting students to focus on aspirations in the future than the upcoming weekend are painfully true.

The need for inventive and genuine approaches to these educational challenges is abundantly clear. Gradually, he wins over the minds of his students as he tries to wipe clean their minds of prejudices (racial or otherwise). With hard work and dedication, he turned this class of delinquents into a class of young men and women with class. In the beginning, he described that he wanted this job, “ but it would be a job, not a labour of love.” Then, after spending time with the students, Mr. Braithwaite began “ learning from them as well as teaching them.” The class may have problems in their home lives, but when they enter the classroom, Mr. Braithwaite joins them on a journey to adulthood. The students ask many questions, which allow them to acquire the knowledge they deserve.

From time to time, the question touch upon people of different races, and Mr. Braithwaite gives mature answers, and speaks to them as adults.

Braithwaite’s theory is to treat his students older than they are so they will behave more responsible. With a teacher who respects his students, they, in return, accept him and honour him with the courtesy of “ Sir”. The whole time, Mr. Braithwaite realizes that it is not his skin colour that is holding him

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back, but his attitude. He reflects that, “ At first it was terrible, but gradually I’m learning what it means to live with dignity inside my black skin.”

3. Why this book should be read - The novel *To Sir, with love* should be read at least once by all of us. Anyone who reads this story will walk away with a broader view on life and how to live it. The quotes Braithwaite uses will really makes one think, and his words stay engraved in mind. The most memorable and thought-provoking concept E. R. Braithwaite wrote was “ I realized at that moment that I was British, but evidently not a Briton, that fine differentiation was now very important”. It is a must-read book for any teacher worth her/his classroom.

4. E. R. Braithwaite - E. R. Braithwaite is a British man who tells the story of his first year of teaching at Greenslade Secondary School.

Previously to becoming a teacher, he served six years in the military and after the military he applied for many engineering jobs. He had trouble finding a job because of prejudices. An encounter with a stranger on a park bench led Braithwaite toward a teaching career. The man believed that skin color would not matter in a teaching position, and postwar London had a teaching shortage. Braithwaite has some insecurity when he starts teaching but he grows confident in his teaching abilities. He genuinely cares about the students and earns their respect. By the end of the school year, Braithwaite is a beloved, warmly accepted teacher who is well known in the community. Braithwaite is an intelligent, sensitive man who is able to motivate his students.