

# ["a lesson before dying" by ernest j. gaines](https://assignbuster.com/a-lesson-before-dying-by-ernest-j-gaines/)

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust; Imagine that you were to perish tomorrow. Surely, it is difficult because most of us are troubled by the thought. What would you do? Would you bungee jump off a 200ft cliff, skydiving, go to the bahamas, even spend all your money on your dream car, rot away in a jail cell? Well, this was a life of Jefferson, HOG, a prisoner in search of peace, pride, and justice.

In the novel A lesson before dying, by Ernest J Gaines, Jefferson, a man is convicted of murder of 3 victims. For his crimes, He is sentenced to death on April 8th. While awaiting his fate, Jefferson chooses to learn how to become a man before his death date with the help of Grant Wiggins.

Grant Wiggins is a self centered person, who is the only educated one to go to college in his neighborhood. Although, he wants to teach at his neighborhood school. Even though he hates he stays there only to see his lifetime crush Viviana who is married with 2 kids. She resents her husband, yet remains married in fear that he will take her kids from her if she decides to divorce. Viviana desperately wants to be with Grant, so secretly they meet at The Rainbow Club most nights. It is interesting to note that, Grant Wiggins changes throughout the story along with Jefferson. Evolving from a man scorn with anger and bitterness to one of strength and courage to of face challenges in his own life and community. As a favor to his love Viviana, Grant’s becomes teacher destined to help Jefferson become a man before executed.

The literacy devices that were used in the story are the following: Foreshadowing (page 3) I was not there yet I was there. No, I did not go to trial, I did not hear the ever dict.., Symbolism (page 140) The radio symbolic to the humanity or the outside world., Characterization (page 78-79) Maybe I’ll go half way, maybe I’ll dump it in the river Mr. Wiggins says selfish and disrespectful, Lastly, Figurative language (page 186) I caught grinning like a fool… I felt like someone just found religion.

To elaborate, I did enjoy this piece because of the imagery which makes the story appear before your eyes seeming less like a book but, as if I were there. I would recommend this book for people who wish to seek a deeper meaning of life. This book should be a high school reading level because of its details and symbolism in the book. It might be banned in some areas because of the violence and language.