

# To kill a mockingbird by harper lee

[Literature](#)



To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee took place in the segregated southern United States of the 1930's during the time of the Civil Rights. Throughout her novel, Lee displayed racism through the standpoint of Scout Finch. I want to pick apart her novel and explain to you what makes a book "great" according to Mortimer Adler. Does the book stand the test of time, does it have universality, does it show the power of the written word, is it enlightening, is it honest, does it deal with unsolved problems of human life, is it inexhaustible, and last but not least, does it leave you the same as when it found you?

To Kill a Mockingbird was officially published in 1960. The book became a sensation in 1961, winning the Pulitzer Prize and selling over fifteen million copies. Though the book is only 52 years old, I believe that it will stand the test of time even though it is said that the novel has to be a hundred years old to do so. I was asked to read To Kill a Mockingbird in high school and now again in college. Lee has written a book that is treasured by millions of readers worldwide and will be in the hearts of millions in the next 48 years to come.

I truly believe that my children and their children will be reading this book and enjoying it just like I have done so. Many great books have the ability to transcend time and place. What was true today was true yesterday, and will be true tomorrow. One of the main themes Lee's novel possesses is the affirmation that human goodness can withstand the assault of evil. The book explores whether a human being is essentially good or essentially bad. When kids are young, they believe that everyone is in essence all good.

All of their stories growing up have those ‘ happy endings’ and everything quintessentially is good. But once Scout and Jem started to grow up and realize that there is evil in the world, they took that along side of the fact that no one is perfect and they had to start making their own opinions on life in general. Being good outweighs being bad in any situation that they are faced and that is true in today’s society. ‘ Liars never prosper’ and ‘ cheaters never win’. Lee wrote an amazing book that has been read all over the world by millions of people of all ages.

To Kill a Mockingbird is a great book and it shows the power of the written word. The author says in writing what people would say out loud if they could. I feel that the meaning of the novel is very clear and easy to understand. When I read this book in Middle School, I got a different concept than I did in High School and even when I read it in College. This book has the ability to do much more than tell a simple story to those who are reading it but it gives the readers a grasp of history and what it was like in the 1930’s.

I feel that it is easier to write down how I feel on paper than I do speaking it to someone who might be listening. This book does a very good job of expressing what it was like during the Civil Rights and the vibe it gave off to those who lived during this time period. It shows that the power of the written word is very powerful. The book is very enlightening. It deals with racism and how those that lived through the time period had to deal with it and the troubles that came with it.

The novel contains ideas and concepts that have made basic contributions to human learning and thought. It expresses a philosophy to help the reader

<https://assignbuster.com/to-kill-a-mockingbird-by-harper-lee-essay-samples/>

understand himself/herself better. This story has definitely made an impact on me not only because of its themes but because of the allegations that occurred in the novel weren't something that Lee just made up. They were real life situations that someone in that time period was effected by it. It gives the reader a sense of the past and makes that little light bulb turn on in your mind. Honesty is a big part of any novel.

Although I may not accept the " truth" as my own, I see that the author has arrived at it through her own experiences. When Lee was five years old, nine young black men were accused of raping two white women. Because of the time period, racial prejudice was a key factor to almost every event that occurred with multicultural people. This novel seems to be very honest to me and I believe most people feel the same way. The author went through many experiences that affected her and made her who she is today. Though racial prejudice does occur now, I feel that it affected those in the 1930's more so.

The characters that Lee composed got the point across and made each individual who read this story feel and understand the heartache that she dealt on a different level. Many books have conflicts and unsolved problems that linger on. Many great books deal constantly with unanswered problems of human life. No one knows or understands why there was ever conflict with whites and colored people and no one is certain to why it was the whites that had most of the power. The book deals with the fact that a black male is faced with charges of murder even though he was a bystander to a murder himself.

But because of his color, he was unable to provide enough evidence to help his case. It was not till the Civil Rights when freedom started to make an  
<https://assignbuster.com/to-kill-a-mockingbird-by-harper-lee-essay-samples/>

impact on so many people and change their viewpoints, Even in today's world there are racial conflicts that occur but because of the Amendments, people have rights. Just because you are a different color doesn't mean that society can look down on you. Unsolved problems are everywhere but those that try to fix them are the ones that prosper from the events that come from each situation.

Lee has written a book that seems to be inexhaustible. As a person grows and gains more knowledge, he/she can look back at a book and find more meaningful information that helps him/her understand the book more clearer. As I read this story in Middle School, I took the fact that there were racial prejudice conflicts but never evaluated it and compared it to today's society until my High School and College time reading it. I believe every time you read a story, you get a new and deeper meaning that you didn't realize the last time you read it.

It is very interesting to me what you do come across when reading a novel more than one time, Even your fourth time reading the same story, you grasp something different and it just shows you that you can understand more the more you grow older and live through more experiences that open one's eyes in seeing a new and deeper meaning. I feel that I have learned some new things from reading this book that has affected me not only how I look at people but how I act toward them too. The most searching test of a great book is that it never leaves you the same as when it found you.

I know for a fact when I read this story in Middle School, I didn't take in consideration that people of different color could be like everyone else. I am not saying that I was racist but if you were to ask me seven years ago if I

<https://assignbuster.com/to-kill-a-mockingbird-by-harper-lee-essay-samples/>

believed that America would have a Black President run our country, I would surely have said no because of what I grew up with. White Men have run this country and that is who I thought was supposed to run it. I feel that this book has made me open my eyes to realize that anything is possible and you can't judge your opinion solely on what you have grown up to know to be the truth.

After reading this book, I have come to realize that you don't judge someone because of their color of skin or because of the clothes they have on their back. You never know someone's story until you hear it from them first hand. Based on Mortimer Adlere's eight things that make a book great, I believe that To Kill a Mocking Bird is a " great book, standing the test of time, universality, power of the written word, enlightening, honest, unsolved problems of human life, inexhaustible, and never leaving the reader the same as when he/she started are all characteristics of Lee's book.