

Character analysis of harper lee's to kill a mockingbird

Literature



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TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

Harper Lee's novel 'To Kill a Mockingbird', first published in 1960, depicts the characters' personalities in the small town Maycomb County, Alabama, and how they developed due to the major events. The moment Atticus Finch was assigned the Tom Robinson's case, his life and the life of his children began to change. Scout begins to learn the danger in the world and so changes from being naïve to an understanding person. Jem begins to understand the way of life and the struggles that many people encounter due to the nature of the small town. He develops from the carefree person he was, to a young gentleman who understands how society really works. The dramatic character development was the result of the major events throughout the course of the book.

In 'To Kill a Mockingbird', the story is centred around the main character, Scout and how she changed dramatically due to the major key events. Scout began to experience the cruelty of the world in her early ages, and although the story takes place over the course of three years, Scout learns a lifetime's worth of lessons in that period. Throughout the course of the book, Scout matures from being innocent, and naïve to a compassionate and an understanding child. During the novel, Scout's innocence was underlined with her interaction with Mr. Cunningham, that was exemplified when she said, "Hey Mr. Cunningham. How's your entailment gettin' along?...I go to school with Walter...and he does right well. He's a good boy." She could not comprehend the danger around her, and how such a situation could have resulted in violence. In the book there are many events which unfolds and

dramatically impact her development as a child. During the trial, Scout then begins to understand that people are not as society makes them to be, this is demonstrated when she said, " Atticus was right. One time he said you never really know a man until you stand in his shoes and walk around in them." In beginning of the book Scout was clueless of the threats and the cruel behaviours of the society. Although, due to the lawsuit, she changed dramatically into a sympathetic character.

The writer depicts the maturation of Jeremy Finch, due to the key events, by his attitude and his views on life. Jeremy represents the idea of bravery, he believed that bravery is show in actions such as enlisting in the war, or never turning down a dare. This was conveyed when Scout said, " in all his life, he had never declined a dare", however, his definition of bravery was challenged throughout the book. Jeremy begins to learn that bravery doesn't have to be a person holding a gun, but from the heroic actions of the people in his life. Like many other adolescents, Jem was an idealist. Even after Atticus' long explanation about the intricacies of the Tom Robinson case, Jem was still shocked about the jury's conviction. That was evident throughout Scout's point of view, " his face was streaked with angry tears", proceeding that he told Atticus ' it aint right'. Consequently, he broke down into tears during the trial, knowing that the trial was unjust. Those actions easily identify the fact that, just like Scout, Jeremy began to understand that life was more than just accepting a dare. Due to the lawsuit, and being thrust into confronting situations, Jem begins to change and develop an understanding that the society isn't as it is portrayed, and his morals were challenged.

Although the theme of change is conveyed throughout the book a multiple of times due to the key events, Atticus Finch is a character that does not have much of character development. Atticus remains truthful to his children and the town. Atticus represents morality and reason in 'To Kill a Mockingbird'. As a character, Atticus is even-handed throughout the course of the book. Atticus treats his children as adults, honestly answering any question that his children ask. Despite the fact that he treats his children like adults, he is aware that they are still young and patiently recognizes that they are children and that they will make childish mistakes and assumptions. Miss Maudie clarifies that by saying "Atticus Finch is the same in his house as he is on the public streets." This quote demonstrates that Atticus is not a man to easily change. Both Jem and Scout were affected by the lawsuit, yet, Atticus remained unaffected. All throughout the course of the book, Atticus remains the calm, collected, honest person he always was. He was one of the only characters that did not develop a change due to the major events that occurred in the book.

Due to the onset of the lawsuit, and many other events, many of the character's personality developed and changed. The protagonists Scout and Jem both begin to understand society and grasp knowledge of how cruel and unjust society is, and that labels are very common in the small town of Maycomb County. The major key events were the trigger for each of the character's development. Therefore, if Atticus Finch was not assigned the Tom Robinson's case, the characters, Scout and Jem, would have never changed. They would have remained oblivious to the harsh cruelty of the world. However, even with the Tom Robinson's case, Atticus' personality

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always stayed the same. Lee demonstrates that as a result of the trial, the personality and the understanding of the characters, Jem and Scout, changed. Yet, Atticus Finch continued to have the same character.