

# Character

Atticus Finch

# Unconventional

- Single father
- Devoted to his children
- Unusual parenting style
- Encourages children to be individuals rather than fitting in with expectations
- Scout can dress how she likes
- Children call him 'Atticus'
- Focuses on the important things in life



# High expectations: can be strict

- ✦ Although he is laid-back in many ways, he is strict when he needs to be.
- ✦ Has high expectations of his children
- ✦ Deals firmly with the strong-willed Scout
- ✦ Tells his children and Dill to leave Boo Radley alone

# Honest with his children: teaches them valuable lessons

- ✦ Does his best to teach his children about the world in a way they will understand
- ✦ Tells them the truth, even when it is unpleasant
- ✦ Explains about the Ewell's social standing: 'the disgrace of Macomb for three generations'.

- ✦ Shows the feisty Scout that there is no need to confront everything and everyone head-on
- ✦ Shows her how compromise is best when she is upset with the treatment she receives from her teacher
- ✦ Understands the teacher's point of view but also allows Scout to keep reading
- ✦ Explains situation to Scout when Cecil Jacobs says he is 'defending niggers'
- ✦ Blend of strictness and kindness helps Scout to mature so much that she can actually walk away from Cecil Jacobs' taunts

# Treats everyone equally

- ✦ Is polite to Bob Ewell despite the other's provocation and bad manners
- ✦ Treats Mayella Ewell with kindness and impeccable manners
- ✦ Miss Maudie says Atticus 'is the same in his house as he is on the public streets'
- ✦ Treats Miss Dubose with compassion and dignity
- ✦ Even refuses to hunt because he has an advantage over the animals
- ✦ The only people he looks down on are those who treat others unfairly

# Not prejudiced

- ✦ Respects Calpurnia and stands by her decisions about raising his children
- ✦ Forbids racist language in his house
- ✦ Willing to spend time with black people: goes to Helen Robinson's house to break the news about Tom's death

# A just man

- ✦ Believes in justice
- ✦ Thinks the system should be colour blind
- ✦ Accepts that he will lose the case before he even starts, but insists on giving Tom Robinson the best possible defence



# Important Quotes

- ✦ 1. “You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view ... until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.”
- ✦ 2. “The one thing that doesn’t abide by majority rule is a person’s conscience.”

- ✦ 3. “Simply because we were licked a hundred years before we started is no reason for us not to try to win.”
- ✦ 4. “Before I can live with other folks I’ve got to live with myself.”
- ✦ 5. “You just hold your head high and keep those fists down. No matter what anybody says to you, don’t you let ‘em get your goat. Try fighting with your head for a change.”

- ✦ 7. “This time we aren’t fighting the Yankees, we’re fighting our friends. But remember this, no matter how bitter things get, they’re still our friends and this is still our home.”
- ✦ 8. “I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It’s when you know you’re licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do.”