

From a novel or short story you have read describe a character that impressed you, and explain why this character did so. (30)

Plan:

1. Intro: S is outspoken etc. but becomes mature
2. Impulsive, means well. Walter C incident.
3. Intelligent and well-read.
4. Intelligence and sense of fairness = becoming less judgemental.
5. Changing attitude towards Boo Radley shows how much S has changed.
6. Learns that outspoken honesty is not always wisest policy. Mature.
7. Has developed into mature person who is well-equipped to face future challenges.

The novel I have studied is Harper Lee's 'To Kill A Mockingbird', set in the fictional town of Maycomb, Alabama, during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The character who impressed me the most was the young narrator, Scout Finch. Scout is a remarkable and unusual girl who develops over the course of the novel from a rebellious, outspoken child to a far more mature and wise youngster.

This is your thesis statement, and will be referred to again in the conclusion.

It is best to approach your points in chronological order.

From the beginning of the book, Scout captures our attention. Unlike the other prim and proper girls in Maycomb, Scout is a tomboy who is far from perfect and often resorts to fighting to solve her problems. Her temper gets the better of her at times, and she is very impulsive and outspoken. However, she always acts with the best of intentions. When her teacher, Miss Caroline, tries to lend lunch money to Walter Cunningham, Scout takes it upon herself to explain to the teacher that he will not accept it as the Cunninghams never borrow anything they cannot pay back. Scout's well-meaning effort to spare both Walter Cunningham and her teacher embarrassment backfire when she is punished for speaking out, but I admired her forthright manner in tackling the problem in the best way she could.

Link sentences
make your
answer flow well.

Another aspect of Scout's character that impressed me was her intelligence. She can read and write before she goes to school, even though she does not remember being taught to do so. For her age, Scout has an astonishing knowledge of the law and current affairs as a result of reading her father's books and papers every evening while she sat in his lap. She values this knowledge greatly, and is disturbed by her teacher's insistence that she stop reading and writing until she can be properly taught. That such a young child should set such store by learning is truly admirable.

Although she can be insensitive, for example when she asks Walter Cunningham why he is pouring syrup on his dinner or when she challenges Dill's lies about his 'father', Scout's desire to learn and her innate sense of fairness enable her to become, in time, less judgemental and more tolerant of others. She sees, for example, that Mayella Ewell is a lonely, poor, ignorant girl whose longing for affection sparks off a tragic sequence of events leading to the rape trial and Tom Robinson's death. She also sees for herself that there are many people in Maycomb who are unwilling to rise above their prejudices and will sentence a man like Tom Robinson to death for having the audacity to try to be kind to a white girl for whom he feels pity. I found it impressive that Scout did not allow such difficult lessons to make her cynical or hard, but instead she maintains her sense of justice and her conscience throughout.

Make sure you
keep referring
back to the
question.

Scout's progression from a quick-tempered little girl to a wiser young woman capable of making rational and thoughtful decisions is most clearly seen in her attitude towards her neighbour, Boo Radley. At the start of the novel, Scout believes all the rumours about Boo, and does not question that he is a 'malevolent phantom' who is responsible for any 'stealthy crimes committed in Maycomb'. It is when Boo comes to Scout and Jem's aid and saves them from Bob Ewell that Scout finally sees him for what he is: a shy, fragile and timid man unable to function in the world outside his home. What impressed me

most about Scout's meeting Boo for the first time was the way in which she is able to see things from his perspective and realises how nervous he is in company. She treats him with gentle respect and does her best to make him comfortable.

An honest girl, Scout nevertheless appreciates the need to shelter Boo from public attention, and therefore readily accepts the sheriff's suggestion that the official story will be that Bob Ewell fell on his knife. This is a huge step forward for Scout and shows how much she has grown up in a few short years. The little girl who couldn't stop herself from pointing out Walter Cunningham's poor table manners has now become capable of realising that sometimes it is better to say nothing or tell a lie to protect the innocent. As she says to Atticus, drawing attention to Boo would be 'sort of like shootin' a mockingbird'. I found Scout's maturity in dealing with this situation commendable.

By the end of the novel, Scout's perspective on life has changed from that of an innocent child to that of a girl more than ready to take her place in a world

Conclusion should refer back to points made in the introduction.

with a capacity for great goodness as well as great evil. She has developed into a person whose sympathy and understanding will, I believe, equip her to face future challenges ethically and kindly. All in all, Scout Finch is

certainly one of the most impressive characters I have come across in my reading.