

## Completing an Education on Morality

What is the purpose of education? This is a question that philosophers, students, and teachers have all pondered, yet the answer varies greatly based on the type of person that is asked. Some would say that education exists to create world leaders to solve global issues such as hunger and genocide. While I do agree that education is important in order to develop future leaders, I do not, however, believe that this should be the sole purpose of education. Others would argue that education exists to empower minds to discover and create in order to continually advance society and one's quality of life. Without a doubt scientific discovery is an essential part of education and should be encouraged, yet I still believe that this does not capture what I believe to be the purpose of education. Rather, I feel that the purpose of education is to improve the mind through all educational mediums in order to develop moral, upright citizens. As is obvious by the vast amount of evil in the world, not all people who are deemed "educated" by other standards have completed their educations according to the standard of morality. Literature plays a large part in the development of the mind and morality. Three books that I believe must be carefully studied in order for one to successfully complete one's education are the Bible, Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and *Night* by Elie Wiesel.

On the basis of literary significance alone, the Bible stands as an amazing piece of literature. However, I believe that education is more than learning to appreciate well written books or learning historical facts. Rather, I think it should develop one's moral character. In my opinion, there is no other piece of literature that could better complete education from the perspective of moral development than the Bible. Careful study of the book of Proverbs alone teaches the reader the consequences of ignoring wisdom and the promises that await those who

pursue righteousness. The Bible is a foundation to all morality and therefore, I believe is an essential component to complete an education.

In sharp contrast to the Bible, the lessons in morality found within William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* are learned more from the lack of morality within the characters. By studying the misdeeds, corruption, and blood shed found in this classic Shakespeare play, one learns from the negative experiences of the characters. This gives an important lesson in consequences and thus the need for morality to shape all decisions that are made in one's life. Without a captivating story to reinforce the necessity of morals in one's decisions, education would be sorely lacking and would result in students who do not recognize the need to conduct their lives in an upright way.

The final piece of literature that I believe is essential to complete one's education is *Night* by Elie Wiesel. Differing from fictional *Macbeth*, the lessons found with *Night* are very real. This book tells the story of a fourteen-year old boy's experience in concentration camps during the Holocaust. One of the most important aspects of a moral person is one who is concerned with humanity. Through the horrible atrocities inflicted upon the Jews, the reader gains an important perspective on the necessity of valuing human life and the horrifying effects of a lack of moral restraint. *Night* provides an eye-opening view of the terrible events of the Holocaust which help to develop compassion necessary to complete an education.

Education can be defined many different ways. However, I believe that the most important facet of education is the development of moral character. Without morality as a foundation, all success and knowledge are useless. Literature plays an important role in the development of character. Specifically, three books, the Bible, which is the foundation for all morality; *Macbeth*, which using violent drama shows the necessity of morals guiding one's

actions; and Night, which through its chilling account provides a real picture of the need for personal morality, complete an education that enforces the necessity for integrity in one's life.

As literature, these books stir the mind and captivate the soul, but as lessons for life they prepare one to face the world as people of integrity.