

SAT Essay Example

Progress is not possible without sacrifice

In order to reach the top of a mountain, one must train for years, then when ready toil for hours or days before reaching the top. This is true of many of life's worthwhile challenges. In fact it is often impossible to make progress without sacrifice.

One novel that strongly supports this theme is *To Kill A Mockingbird*. In this story Atticus Finch, a small town lawyer, defends a black man accused of raping a white woman. He does this despite being threatened and disparaged by members of his community. Because of his willingness to sacrifice his social standing to do the right but unconventional thing, Atticus was able to launch a brilliant defense of his client.

Ray Bradbury conveys a similar theme in his novel *Fahrenheit 451*. In this book, Guy Montag, a "fireman" charged with burning down the houses of book-lovers, sacrifices his wife, his career and his lifestyle in order to have books. Without his great sacrifice, Montag would have continued to live a half-life of boredom and unhappiness. And he never would have known the freedom of thinking and of being challenged intellectually.

Over a century ago another man, Charles Goodyear, was willing to make similarly large sacrifices in order to support his dream of making rubber useful for all mankind. Charles spent seventeen years of his life experimenting with rubber, borrowing money to finance projects, going broke repeatedly and nearly losing his wife and family before discovering the secret that made rubber useful--a process called vulcanization. Had Mr. Goodyear not been willing to make these sacrifices he would never have reached his goal and it might have been many more years before rubber was made useful to the world.

And the world needs the contribution of men and women willing to make these sacrifices, if progress is to continue. Our current social problems, which still include racism, need to be faced by people with social courage like Atticus Finch and Guy Montag. Our world continues to need new inventions to improve life such as that created by Charles Goodyear. We will never stop needing such brave individuals who help to make progress in the world.



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