

**MORAL MESSAGE IN THE NOVEL  
“THIRTEEN REASONS WHY” BY JAY ASHER**

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**Abstrak**

*Pesan moral juga dapat diartikan menjadi pesan dalam sebuah karya yang ingin disampaikan sang pengarang kepada pembaca. Adanya pesan moral didalam sebuah novel menunjukkan bahwa cerita tersebut tidak hanya ingin menghibur, namun juga memiliki manfaat bagi para pembacanya. Pesan moral dapat dijadikan contoh atau teladan bagi pembaca. Tujuan penelitian ini yaitu buat mendeskripsikan pesan moral pada novel “Thirteen Reasons Why” karya Jay Asher serta untuk mendeskripsikan pengaruh pesan moral dalam novel “Thirteen Reasons Why” karya Jay Asher terhadap remaja. Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini yaitu metode deskriptif kualitatif. Sumber data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini yaitu novel yang ditulis oleh Jay Asher yang berjudul “Thirteen Reasons Why”. Penelitian ini ditemukan terdapat 18 pesan moral yang ada pada novel Thirteen Reasons Why karya Jay Asher dan terdapat 7 pesan moral yg bisa berpengaruh pada remaja.*

**Kata kunci:** *Novel, pengaruh pesan moral, pesan moral.*

**Abstract**

A moral message can also be interpreted as a message in a work that the author wants to convey to the reader. The presence of a moral message in a novel indicates that the story is intended to benefit the reader as well as to entertain the reader. Moral messages serve as role models and examples for readers. The purpose of this study is to explain the moral message of Jay Asher's novel “Thirteen Reasons Why” and its impact on teens. The research method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative method. The data source used in this study is Jay Asher's novel “Thirteen Reasons Why”. The study found that Jay Asher's novel “Thirteen Reasons Why” contains 18 moral messages, and that there are 7 moral messages that can influence teens.

**Keyword:** Moral message, novels, the influence of moral messages.

## INTRODUCTION

Literature is a medium that can convey a person's personal expression such as experiences, thoughts, and feelings in a form of a live picture using language in written form. Literature is not just a record of facts, it is not a collection of real events, even if they could happen in real life. "Literature, as a product of infinite imagination, can create its own world". Marcus, G., & Sollors, (2012) says that literary means not only what's written but what's voiced, what's expressed, and what's invented, in something form. Literature then can be said as creative writing by means of a writer with aesthetic values which makes literature appeared as an artwork. The novel is literary work in the shape of prose, a novel that tells or explains human life in its interaction with the environment and other people. (Syahputra, 2018) The novel has fantasy characters and settings that the writer created to make the novel more interesting to examine with complicated conflicts for the characters to experience, in according to Taylor (1981) explains that a novel is normally a prose work of quite some length and complexity which attempts to reflect and express something, equality, the value of human experience, or conduct. Even for some literary lovers, novels are considered fiction, fiction can be defined as the art of inventing, through the written word, accounts of human life that are beneficial or distracting, or both, because they describe events and phenomena that exist in society, so clearly, novels are considered literary works that have a very close relationship with society. Novel writers usually get story ideas from their life stories or what happens in their environment, so novels are usually based on true stories. In this novel, what will be analyzed is a moral message which includes intrinsic elements.

Masan, A. L., Kelelufna, V. P., & Loupatty, (2020) An author can speak with the readers of a literary work if they can understand what the author desires to send, according to Pradopo (1994) the literary work is the picture of the world and human lifestyles, the principal criteria that are placed on the literary work are "truth", or the whole lot that desires to be pictured with the aid of the writer. through that procedure, the reader in their literary work may be capable of capturing the character of the writer related to the world around him/her. Folks that work in literature generally represent their work in such kinds of literary works. Like the term of literature itself, where literature is a term used to explain written or spoken fabric. Literary works can be said to be able to awaken humans if their existence is the person in charge of life. It can be said that understanding society is the means by which literary works are created as a means of preventing the moral decay that occurs in society. Therefore, literary works serve perfectly as tools for teaching moral values. (Fajar, 2017) Literature then may be said as innovative writing by means of a writer with aesthetic values which makes literature regarded as an art, and according to Klarer (2004) in most instances, literary work is called the entirety of written expression, with the limit that now not every written document may be categorized as literature inside the more exact sense of the phrase.

Moral is also related to behavior such as morals, character, and mental that can shape a person's character. Moral messages are messages that can be conveyed orally or in writing, about how a person should live and act in his life in order to be well received in society. Moral messages are usually conveyed directly or through media such as books, novels, movies and songs. (Susana, 2018) Morals are used to measure the values of happening, while ethics study value systems well. Barcalow (1994), says that morals may be evaluated with the action and potential action of others, and may be evaluated as properly or terrible; right or incorrect; desirable or unacceptable; required, prohibited, or accepted; praiseworthy or blameworthy. Moral pertains to the good and horrific of

someone. Morals are ethical norms and concepts of existence which are upheld by means of most members of a particular society. Moral messages and literary works are related because literary works themselves have an understanding, namely, etymologically, the word "literature" has the meaning of writing that teaches something well. From this etymological understanding, literary works have a function to teach morals to their readers, so that readers are expected to get a moral message after reading a literary work because the moral message contained in a literary work such as a novel is very good to be applied in everyday life.

The reason why the author took the novel entitled "Thirteen Reasons Why" by Jay Asher is that this novel has many moral message that can be taken and learned in life. When reading a novel, you don't just focus on the storyline, but you also have to understand what the message should be from the novel. And the novel entitled "Thirteen Reasons Why" tells the reason why a Liberty High school student, Hannah Baker, ended her life by committing suicide. These stories are told through her voice recordings on tapes that are sent to the people she tells on the tapes. The main characters of this book are Hannah Baker, a high school girl who is experiencing depression and stress due to the treatment of her friends, and Clay Jensen, Hannah's friend. Baker is the first person point of view in this book. Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher takes the social theme of high school life which is vulnerable to bullying or bullying at school. It is clear that this novel has a message for its readers (Asher, 2007).

## METHOD

The researcher will explain the methodology used. The researcher uses a qualitative descriptive research method. Moleong (2010), qualitative research is a study that intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by using studied subjects along with conduct, perception, motivation, and action. holistically and with the aid of manner of description inside the shape of words and language, in a unique, natural context, and through making use of natural methods (Fikri, H., Syofiani, S., & Lestari, 2017). The researcher uses this method to collect data and then describe the moral messages contained in the novel "Thirteen Reasons Why". Source data includes primary data and secondary data. Primary data, namely was obtained from the novel Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher as the object of research. And secondary data is an indirect source, the researcher gets other sources from articles, journals, and sources on the internet that discuss literature, novels, and moral messages, which are related to this research.

The following is a data collection technique: first, the researcher prepares the printed novel "Thirteen Reasons Why". Second, the researcher read the novel "Thirteen Reasons Why" carefully in order to understand the contents of the novel. Third, the researcher notes the important things found in the novel. Then, the researcher begins to analysis the contents of the novel that has been read. The following is the data analysis procedure: first, the researcher reads the novel Thirteen Reasons why over and over again. Second, identifying the moral messages contained in the novel Thirteen Reasons why and identifying the influence of the moral message toward the teenager. Third, describe the data that has been identified and lastly make conclusions based on the results of the data.

## FINDINGS

This section describes the findings of the moral message and the influence of the moral message on adolescents in the novel "Thirteen Reasons Why".

### 1. The Moral Message Found In The Novel

- a. Be careful in action. Point Of View Hannah Baker  
*"why my life ended. And if you're listening to these tapes, you're one of the reasons why"*(Jay Asher, 1: side A: 7: 2007).
- b. The impact of a betrayal. Point Of View Hannah Baker  
*"Betrayal. It's one of the worst feelings".*(Jay Asher, 1: side A: 13: 2007)
- c. Jokes can have such a big impact. Point Of View Clay Jensen  
*"Alex's list was a joke. A bad one, true. But he had no idea it would affect her like this"*(Jay Asher, 1: side B: 41: 2007)
- d. Never invade other people's privacy. Point Of View Hannah Baker  
*"Why didn't you leave me alone, Tyler? My house. My bedroom. They were supposed to be safe for me. Safe from everything outside. But you were the one who took that away"*(Jay Asher, 2: side B: 89: 2007)  
*"So how important is your security, Tyler? What about your privacy? Maybe it's not as important to you as it was for me, but that's not for you to decide"*(Jay Asher, 2: side B: 89: 2007)
- e. Regret is always in the end. Point Of View Clay Jensen  
*"I'm listening to someone give up. Someone I knew. Someone I liked. I'm listening. But still, I'm too late"* (Jay Asher, 3: side B: 146: 2007)  
 Point Of View Hannah Baker  
*"If I had known two cars were going to crash on that corner, I would've run back to the party and called the cops immediately"* (Jay Asher, 6: side A: 249-250: 2007)
- f. Don't commit suicide. Point Of View Hannah Baker  
*"Suicide. It's something I've been thinking about. Not too seriously, but I have been thinking about it"* (Jay Asher, 4: side A: 169: 2007)  
 Point Of View Clay Jensen  
*"This isn't fair. If Zach had any idea what Hannah was going through, I'm sure he wouldn't have stolen her notes"* (Jay Asher, 4: side A: 166: 2007)
- g. Can't go back in time. Point Of View Clay Jensen  
*"God. What I wouldn't give to relive that summer."* (Jay Asher, 4: side B: 179: 2007)  
 Point Of View Hannah Baker  
*"You can't go back to how things were. How you thought they were. All you really have is now"* (Jay Asher, 5: side A: 206: 2007)
- h. Always help others. Point Of View Hannah Baker  
*"We're in this one together. We both could have stopped it. Either one of us. We could have saved her. And I'm admitting this to you. To all of you. That girl had two chances. And both of us let her down. The breeze feels good on my face, cooling the sweat on forehead and neck."* (Jay Asher, 5: side B: 229: 2007)  
*"No, you're right, you didn't rape her. And I didn't rape her. He did. But you and I we let it happen. It's our fault."* (Jay Asher, 5: side B: 230: 2007)
- i. Responsible. Point Of View Hannah Baker

*"I could have reached in and stolen your phone to call the police." (Jay Asher, 6: side A: 246: 2007)*

*"You'd like to forget what we did what happened with your car and the Stop sign. The repercussions. But you never will." (Jay Asher, 6: side A: 249: 2007)*

- j. The importance of a motivation. Point Of View Hannah Baker

*"I'm giving life one more chance. And this time, I'm getting help. I'm asking for help because I cannot do this alone. I've tried that." (Jay Asher, 7: side A: 269: 2007)*

## 2. The Influence Of The Moral Message Toward The Teenager

- a. Fostering good manners towards teenagers. Point Of View Clay Jensen

*"You stayed for dinner once, right? Big on the 'please' and 'thankyous'." (Jay Asher, 1: side A: 31: 2007)*

*"After you left, Tony's mom was after us for a week to be more polite." (Jay Asher, 1: side A: 32: 2007)*

- b. Teenagers can see the consequences of making fun of others. Point Of View Hannah Baker

*"when you hold people up for ridicule, you have to take responsibility when other people act on it." (Jay Asher, 1: side B: 53: 2007)*

- c. Teenagers can know the impact of a fight. Point Of View Hannah Baker

*"That tiny scar you've all seen above my eyebrow, that's the shape of Jessica's fingernail which I plucked out myself." (Jay Asher, 2: side A: 67: 2007)*

- d. Teenagers can avoid the effects of promiscuity. Point Of View Hannah Baker

*"I simply wanted a kiss. I was a freshman girl who had never been kissed. Never. But I liked a boy, he liked me, and I was going to kiss him. That's the story the whole story right there." (Jay Asher, 1: side A: 23: 2007)*

- e. Teenagers must have thoughts not to give up easily. Point Of View Hannah Baker

*"Yes. As a matter of fact, I am. And that, more than anything else, is what this all comes down to. Me giving up on me." (Jay Asher, 6: side B: 253: 2007)*

*"I thought about suicide." (Jay Asher, 6: side B: 254: 2007)*

## DISCUSSIONS

This section will describe more clearly the moral message and the influence of the moral message toward the teenager based on the findings that have been analyzed in the novel "Thirteen Reasons Why" by Jay Asher.

### 1. The Moral Message Found In The Novel

- a. Be careful in action. It is important for us to always take care of our actions because taking actions that unintentionally hurt people can affect other people's thoughts. Being careful in acting is very important so as not to offend other people.

Point Of View Hannah Baker

*"why my life ended. And if you're listening to these tapes, you're one of the reasons why"(Jay Asher, 1: side A: 7: 2007)*

The data above shows that if someone can be the reason for other people to give up on their life and that happens can start from unintentional actions but it turns out to affect other people's lives. So be careful in acting so as not to hurt others.



- b. The impact of a betrayal. Betrayal can cause emotional pressure and trauma in trusting someone, so it is difficult for people who have been betrayed to trust others again.

Point Of View Hannah Baker

*“Betrayal. It’s one of the worst feelings”.*(Jay Asher, 1: side A: 13: 2007)

The data above shows that being betrayed by someone we trust is very painful, so it is difficult to trust other people who may not have thoughts of betraying. Betrayal is really traumatic, so don't ever betray someone because it can affect socializing with others.

- c. Jokes can have such a big impact. Jokes can make people smile or laugh but if the joke is too much and friends can no longer accept the joke it will have an impact on friendship.

Point Of View Clay Jensen

*“Alex’s list was a joke. A bad one, true. But he had no idea it would affect her like this”*(Jay Asher, 1: side B: 41: 2007)

Based on the data above, Alex's jokes lead to rumors, jokes that some people think are just normal jokes but others find the jokes hurtful and exaggerated so that they can destroy other people's lives. Be careful when making jokes, think about the impact of the joke.

- d. Never invade other people's privacy. Privacy, that is, someone does not want to be disturbed by other people. Circumstances in which a person maintains and protects his own affairs so that they are not known by the public. Want to have the freedom to manage your own life. Everyone has circumstances that no one else should know about or interfere with.

Point Of View Hannah Baker

*“Why didn’t you leave me alone, Tyler? My house. My bedroom. They were supposed to be safe for me. Safe from everything outside. But you were the one who took that away”*(Jay Asher, 2: side B: 89: 2007)

*“So how important is your security, Tyler? What about your privacy? Maybe it’s not as important to you as it was for me, but that’s not for you to decide”*(Jay Asher, 2: side B: 89: 2007)

The data above shows that privacy is very important, but if other people have disturbed a person's privacy, he will feel insecure, have no freedom, even in his own house, the place that should be the safest place. Never disturb other people's privacy because that's really not a good deed.

- e. Regret is always in the end. Regrets that come at the end occur because of mistakes during planning and regrets also occur because of prioritizing selfishness.

Point Of View Clay Jensen

*“I’m listening to someone give up. Someone I knew. Someone I liked. I’m listening. But still, I’m too late”* (Jay Asher, 3: side B: 146: 2007)

Point Of View Hannah Baker

*“If I had known two cars were going to crash on that corner, I would’ve run back to the party and called the cops immediately”* (Jay Asher, 6: side A: 249-250: 2007)

Based on the data above, teaches if you want to do something, just do it without thinking about anything else. And it could be that what you want to do can help that person and have a good impact on other people, but because of unnecessary thoughts, delays occur which become regrets.

- f. Don't commit suicide. Suicide is an intentional act that causes one's own death. Suicidal thoughts arise due to depression, having so many problems that it causes despair and wants to give up on life.  
Point Of View Hannah Baker  
*"Suicide. It's something I've been thinking about. Not too seriously, but I have been thinking about it"* (Jay Asher, 4: side A: 169: 2007)  
Point Of View Clay Jensen  
*"This isn't fair. If Zach had any idea what Hannah was going through, I'm sure he wouldn't have stolen her notes"* (Jay Asher, 4: side A: 166: 2007)  
Based on the data above, the school environment and friendships can trigger someone to commit suicide. Teachers need to create a healthy environment for positive interactions between students and teachers. In addition, students must have social skills to build self-confidence and seek advice and consideration in making choices. Friendship is also a factor that greatly influences someone who wants to commit suicide, so it is necessary to seek healthy and positive friendships.
- g. Can't go back in time. Time cannot be turned back, so live life well and don't waste the time you have now.  
Point Of View Clay Jensen  
*"God. What I wouldn't give to relive that summer."* (Jay Asher, 4: side B: 179: 2007)  
Point Of View Hannah Baker  
*"You can't go back to how things were. How you thought they were. All you really have is now"* (Jay Asher, 5: side A: 206: 2007)  
Based on the data above, it shows that time cannot be turned back, so just do what you want to do without thinking about other people's opinions, respect time and the people you have now because that's all you can have.
- h. Always help others. Fellow humans must help each other, helping each other can foster a sense of brotherhood, because we will feel we need each other. In addition, helping others can also create unity.  
Point Of View Hannah Baker  
*"We're in this one together. We both could have stopped it. Either one of us. We could have saved her. And I'm admitting this to you. To all of you. That girl had two chances. And both of us let her down. The breeze feels good on my face, cooling the sweat on forehead and neck."* (Jay Asher, 5: side B: 229: 2007)  
*"No, you're right, you didn't rape her. And I didn't rape her. He did. But you and I we let it happen. It's our fault."* (Jay Asher, 5: side B: 230: 2007)  
Based on the data above, helping others doesn't need to think much, if other people need help and we know it but we don't do it there will be regrets that arise. Helping others is also a good action and does no harm.
- i. Responsible. Humans must be responsible for something because responsibility is a person's attitude towards all his behavior and actions. People who have a sense of responsibility will be trusted, respected and valued and liked by others.  
Point Of View Hannah Baker  
*"I could have reached in and stolen your phone to call the police."* (Jay Asher, 6: side A: 246: 2007)

*“You'd like to forget what we did what happened with your car and the Stop sign. The repercussions. But you never will.” (Jay Asher, 6: side A: 249: 2007)*

Based on the data above, it provides a lesson that never run away from responsibility because if you are not responsible for what you do it will have an impact on other people. Do not hesitate or be afraid to take responsibility because that is also part of helping someone.

- j. The importance of a motivation. Everyone must experience something that makes him mentally down. Having thoughts that are always positive and having motivation for life's struggles will make someone enthusiastic about living a better life. Motivation is very important because it encourages someone to do business that will show good results.

Point Of View Hannah Baker

*“I'm giving life one more chance. And this time, I'm getting help. I'm asking for help because I cannot do this alone. I've tried that.” (Jay Asher, 7: side A: 269: 2007)*

Based on the data above, a person needs help as a motivation to have a reason to continue living because he can no longer do it alone. So motivation is very important for some people and it helps a lot in living a better life.

## 2. The Influence of The Moral Message toward the Teenager

- a. Fostering good manners towards teenagers. Manners are attitudes, behaviors and actions taken by individuals to respect and appreciate other people around them. So this moral message is very influential for teenagers, because manners must be instilled in a person since childhood, but teenagers now sometimes forget politeness so that the role of this moral message is to remind and grow back the polite attitudes of teenagers today.

Point Of View Clay Jensen

*“You stayed for dinner once, right? Big on the ‘please’ and ‘thankyou’.” (Jay Asher, 1: side A: 31: 2007)*

*“After you left, Tony’s mom was after us for a week to be more polite.” (Jay Asher, 1: side A: 32: 2007)*

Based on the data above, someone who has good manners will be a good example for others. And people who have good manners will be liked by the people around them.

- b. Teenagers can see the consequences of making fun of others. Teenagers should always be reminded not to make fun of friends or other people because making fun of others is tantamount to bullying them. And victims of bullying can become depressed, leading to suicidal thoughts.

Point Of View Hannah Baker

*“when you hold people up for ridicule, you have to take responsibility when other people act on it.” (Jay Asher, 1: side B: 53: 2007)*

Based on the data above, a teenager makes fun of his friend and if the person who is insulted does not accept it will cause hatred, revenge and end in a fight. So as a teenager, you have to respect your friends' circumstances, you have to accept your friends' strengths and weaknesses, never make fun of your friends' weaknesses.

- c. Teenagers can know the impact of a fight. A teenager must know the impact of fighting in order to avoid it. Fighting is really an act that is very detrimental to yourself and those around you. The impact that can occur from fighting is causing stress, frustration,



damaging the self-image of students who are involved in fights, and will disrupt the learning process.

Point Of View Hannah Baker

*“That tiny scar you’ve all seen above my eyebrow, that’s the shape of Jessica’s fingernail which I plucked out myself.” (Jay Asher, 2: side A: 67: 2007)*

Based on the data above, fights that occur between friends can cause hatred, revenge, and damage friendships. During our youth we have to make lots of friends, not make enemies, so teenagers should never get into fights so they don't break friendships, and don't make more enemies. If you have enemies at school, it will interfere with school activities because you will feel awkward if you meet people who get into fights with you.

- d. Teenagers can avoid the effects of promiscuity. Teenagers need to avoid promiscuity, so that in friendship they must be smart in choosing friends so that they have a good influence. Several factors such as lack of attention from parents, environmental conditions, to internet abuse can cause teenagers to join promiscuity, but friendship is very influential and has a big impact.

Point Of View Hannah Baker

*“I simply wanted a kiss. I was a freshman girl who had never been kissed. Never. But I liked a boy, he liked me, and I was going to kiss him. That’s the story the whole story right there”. (Jay Asher, 1: side A: 23: 2007)*

Based on the data above, the teenager has entered into promiscuity which one day will harm himself. In order for teenagers not to fall into promiscuity, they must be selective in choosing friends, and also carry out positive activities. So teenagers must know the bad effects of promiscuity which only harm themselves and even the future so that there will be no regrets in the future.

- e. Teenagers must have thoughts not to give up easily. Everyone must have the notion of not giving up easily so they can live their daily lives because life cannot be said to be easy, there will definitely be difficulties.

Point Of View Hannah Baker

*“Yes. As a matter of fact, I am. And that, more than anything else, is what this all comes down to. Me giving up on me.” (Jay Asher, 6: side B: 253: 2007)*

*“I thought about suicide.” (Jay Asher, 6: side B: 254: 2007)*

Based on the above data, the teenager has given up on his own life so he is thinking of committing suicide while his life is still very long. It is important for a teenager to have the thought of not giving up easily because life always has difficulties and that must be faced and struggled to resolve these difficulties. The result of the effort is always good.

## CONCLUSION

The novel "Thirteen Reasons Why" by Jay Asher is a novel that contains many moral messages. There are several novels that give the same moral message, the moral message in this novel is described by different events. In addition, the novel "Thirteen Reasons Why" by Jay Asher not only provides a moral message, but the story in this novel is not boring because it has various events that are difficult to predict.

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