

## 1: The Bluest Eye Quotes by Toni Morrison

*Toni Morrison's "The Bluest Eye" is a unique novel that is not for the lighthearted. It describes in great detail, the life of an African American child raised in tough circumstances. During a time period of depression, the protagonist is often found in the worst situations.*

Carroll Taveras for the Guardian I first met Toni Morrison about 15 years ago, to talk about her seventh novel, *Paradise*, an encounter I remember largely for its number of terrifying pauses. Morrison, in her late 60s then, was at the height of her powers, a Nobel laureate with a famously low tolerance for journalists and critics, and a personal style as distinctive as her prose: She looks as grand as ever, but there have been changes. It is hard to believe Morrison is. She started late, her first novel, *The Bluest Eye*, written when she was 39 and a senior editor at Random House. As a result, she is not pegged particularly to any generation of writers and since her subject matter is largely historical, or rather, concerned with the handprint of history on the present day, it gives her a kind of timelessness. Her characters are heroic and flawed, mythic and real, "unavailable to pity" she has said – vehicles for remembering, even, as Morrison wrote in *Beloved*, when "remembering seemed unwise". Chance would be a fine thing, these days, she says. Her latest novel, *Home*, is set in the aftermath of the Korean war and coincides with that sentimentalised period of American history that Morrison remembers rather differently. It is a classic Morrison setting, a hardscrabble town with no redeeming features, redeemed nonetheless by the topography of love. All are variations on Lorain, Ohio, where Morrison grew up, one of four children of a steel-worker and a housewife. She always felt superior, she says, a superiority born of opposition, the gut push-back against low expectation, although she suspects it was also just in her from birth. She was a child of the 50s, when segregation laws were still in place, but Morrison was self-possessed and inclined to speak up. And I remember one teacher showed some little essay I wrote to subsequent classes, as an example of really flawless writing. But the grade he gave me was B. So I asked him: She felt this very strongly when she sat down to write *The Bluest Eye*. She would not, she decided, try to "explain" black life to a white audience. She would not write from the position of outsider to her own experience. It was the era of "black is beautiful"; everywhere she looked in New York, the black power movement was promoting that slogan. It struck her both as true – "of course" – and at the same time, ahistorical and reactive. Not the scholars but the pop books. And so when people said at that time black is beautiful – yeah? So I was trying to say, in *The Bluest Eye*, wait a minute. A fellow classmate confided to her the same dream of blue eyes, which, even as a year-old, struck Morrison as grotesquely self-loathing. She was Chloe Wofford then; Toni was a nickname that came out of her baptismal name, Anthony after St Anthony, which she took at 12 when she joined the Catholic church. She knew who she was and puts it down to a combination of class – in her town, they were all poor together, black, white, Polish, Spanish – living in the same streets and attending the same high schools. Her parents were also fiercely resistant to outside influence. And I remember my mother got some cornmeal or something and it had bugs in it. She wrote a letter to Franklin D Roosevelt. And his office answered! Looking back, she is inclined to think her white employer had a point when she yelled at her for being useless at the job. Her mother told her to quit, but she wanted the two dollars a week. Her father gave her a long, stern lecture that has stayed with Morrison all her life. Later, when Morrison was bullied at school, it had little effect on her, she says. He obviously thought it was a great insult. It makes you insensitive to certain things, that later in life you should be sensitive to. Because the big deal, as they described it, was that it made you feel so good. I did not want to feel something that was dependent on it. I want to feel what I feel. She rose at 4am every morning to write before work. If she felt discouraged, she thought about her grandmother, who had fled the south with seven children and no means of support. Any existential panic – about her income, her prospects as a writer, her availability as a mother – evaporated in the face of daily necessity. Morrison with her sons, Harold left and Slade, in the 80s. Getty Images At one level, says Morrison, it was terrifically simple. I started writing when I was 12. The real liberation was the kids, because their needs were simple. One, they needed me to be competent. Two, they wanted me to have a sense of humour. And three, they wanted me to be an adult. No one else asked that of me. At Random House, she was first an editor in the

textbook division and later, moved to offices in Manhattan, a fiction editor. She was supported at home by a network of women friends, who helped her with the kids, and some of whose fiction she published. As Morrison has said, "We read about how Ajax and Achilles will die for each other, but very little about the friendship of women. Somebody was" — she bursts into laughter — "making me the object of love. Look, five years I spent on some books. I suppose you could love somebody for five years. You can do that for ever. But I mean really love them, the way you say you love children. But that means I would have to remember all the times I was in love. I had to do something, be somewhere. There were certain things I could do with ease. And that area seems very natural to me. Things outside it, except with very, very, very close friends, are a little bit of an act. I mean, not in a bad way. And I have separated those people. Myself is kind of split. My name is Chloe. And the rest is — that other person. Who is able to feel, or pretends to feel, or maybe really feels, or at least reacts to celebrityhood. Morrison spent three years thinking about *Beloved* before writing a word. It is based on the true story of Margaret Garner, an escaped slave who killed her daughter rather than return her to slavery. As a novelist, it required her to pull off a seemingly impossible feat — to show how the condition of slavery exists outside of every human system, even language itself. And you have to have it. She had just started college in Washington DC, "where they still had those signs in the buses. And we all knew which one it was. And I tried very hard to. This is what I did: I said suppose — horses began to speak. And began to demand their rights. Suppose they just — want more. Suppose they want to go to school! Suppose they want to sit next to me in the theatre. And she was appalled. I was trying to say something about how you can enter into that field. I mean we, African-Americans, were second-class citizens, but anyway, hopeful people. And then after the war we became consumers. And now we are only taxpayers. A citizen has some connection to his neighbourhood, or his state or his country. A couple of decades of "sanity". When Obama was elected, Morrison says, it was the first time she felt truly American. I felt like a kid. The marines and the flag, which I never look at — all of a sudden it looked — nice. It only lasted a couple of hours. Morrison does not take this language to be racially neutral. Welfare, food stamps; gangs. They have a whole vocabulary of code. It made some sort of sense. They use coded words.

## 2: About The Bluest Eye

*The Bluest Eye is the first novel written by Toni Morrison in The novel is set in and centers on the life of an African girl named Pecola who grows up during the years following the Great Depression in Lorain, Ohio.*

Dick and Jane, the readers that were used They were used to teach children certain values and how to read the world. And what I do is actually read a few pages of the primers to my students. But then they actually begin to understand what it is that the pages actually reveal. And the dad is standing on the side with a suit on and a newspaper under his arm. And they pick up right away, dad is coming from the external world of business, of white men, of corporate kind of jobs. Mom is being mom. And what students pick up on is the fact that this is the so-called American Dream. This is the dream of kind of white America that students, children were being taught still today. She does a kind of pastiche of that but then it kind of becomes -- you know, the punctuation disappears, the words collapse together. And they say, wait a second. And this is what I feel makes her a great novelist. And if you now have someone to correct it, you absorb it. But what happened, she has a different perspective. And when I was reading and I said, you know, she sounds a little older. She seems definitely older than Frieda her sister. How does she affect Pecola, Claudia and her sister? When I teach this novel I teach it as a novel about whiteness. The primer, for example, becomes a pedagogy of whiteness. It teaches what it means to be in this world. And it means that you are a white person, right. And so Maureen Peal, she reifies that in many ways. So there is a particular type of whiteness that is being, you know, valorized, right, by society. And all of a sudden turns her wrath against her. Our family does it all the time. And what my students and I talk about is, this is the exact definition of privilege. It was the thing that allowed her to be so powerful in our society, the line of -- the thing of kind of racism in our culture. Institutional racism is what makes Maureen Peal with her light skin so powerful. The other thing I think that when we deal with Peal, we bring in another movie reference in here. You know, he crawls and, you know, I mean, that type of thing like being a dog, you know. And she begs him to give her blue eyes. And what does he do? He provides her poisoned meat to give to a dog that he wants to get rid of. And we actually have an old video of this that I show to my students. And in the video Toni Morrison talks about the fact that Pecola has no exits. And there are no exits for her. Every single person that she encounters, every single adult, everyone from Mr. Yacobowski to other kinds of adults in the novel, unintelligible. And this is a political and a social issue that has not changed enough since when "The Bluest Eye" was published. And I think that this novel really allows us to see why that issue of having characters that children can identify with and children can feel proud of seeing themselves, you know, matters so much. Tell us about that movement. Now I will say that I think there is a readiness, right, just like we talk about in sciences. For example, in mathematics before one can take calculus, one needs to take algebra. And it is heinous what happens to Pecola. So I think a lot of work needs to be done. And aside from the general idea of banning books, I mean, this novel is so important. And it is a tragedy that schools are not allowed to teach this particular text, because it is extremely relevant. And so there is a challenge for teachers to tackle, you know, difficult subject matter presented in such a way. I think if we encourage people to read, we want them to read difficult text, you know. My question or my quick comment and question is this. And they have been just enraptured with the text, which seems to be very over their heads in terms of the language. But their interest and their desire to continue to read it says something to me about what Toni Morrison -- or the power of what Toni Morrison is doing. And I think sometimes that can happen without the preparation to understand what her particular circumstance is. For example, in looking at Cholly, Cholly commits the most horrendous act to his daughter. But as Ethelbert mentioned earlier, we get to understand him in a way that does not make him a sympathetic character but an understandable character. When we come back, more of your calls, your email or you can send us a tweet. Something that I really wanted to mention. Morrison has shared -- the manuscript was rejected about a dozen times before she was able to have it published, because very few people were interested in the life of a young black girl. And I say this to say something about this banning, as well. That there are some people who are not interested in the life of a young black girl. And also, not interested in the marking of whiteness in the ways that she does in this

novel. But I think Michelle Obama already has had a significant impact on -- almost like a paradigm shift. Now here are two white girls saying whoa, I want to be like Michelle Obama. That means a dark skinned, young girl growing up is no longer second, okay? She can be the First Lady, too. And that changes the whole thing in terms of beauty. I mean, Shirley Temple was changing everything in terms of being happy. It was a different time. But this is now. Now, you want to talk about beauty? I want to have here like Beyonce, or whatever. But what happens, if you go back and look at young girls who look in all those, you know, why do you want to be like this and shake their little booty and stuff like that? Okay, it may not have been blue eyes, okay, because now, you can get the blue eyes with just a change in contacts. So part of what I do, as a teacher of color, is to share my own story in the classroom, and say, you know, as a child, I was made fun of for my hair. I was called Afro. I was called the N word. And that, actually, opens the door for students in the room to share their own stories, as well. And we share our hair horror stories. And I show that video to students as a kind of the part of the scaffolding for understanding race and colorism and light skin versus dark skin

### 3: The Bluest Eye - free PDF, DJVU, FB3, RTF

*The Bluest Eye by: Toni Morrison The Get ready to write your paper on The Bluest Eye with our suggested essay topics, sample essays, and more.*

Henry, and Pecola Breedlove, a temporary foster child whose house is burned down by her unstable, alcoholic, and sexually abusive father. Pecola is a quiet, passive young girl who grows up with little money and whose parents are constantly fighting, both verbally and physically. Pecola is continually reminded of what an "ugly" girl she is by members of her neighborhood and school community. In an attempt to beautify herself, Pecola wishes for blue eyes – a standard that was perpetuated through the gifting of white, blue-eyed dolls throughout her childhood. The chapter titles contain sudden repetition of words or phrases, many cut-off words, and no interword separations. Pauline now works as a servant for a wealthier white family. His motives are largely confusing, seemingly a combination of both love and hate. After raping her a second time, he flees, leaving her pregnant. In this internal conversation, Pecola speaks as though her wish for blue eyes has been granted, and believes that the changed behavior of those around her is due to her new eyes, rather than the news of her rape or her increasingly strange behavior. Claudia laments on her belief that the whole community, herself included, have used Pecola as a scapegoat to make themselves feel prettier and happier. One of the main characters of the novel, Pecola is a young black girl who comes from a financially unstable family. Between a combination of facing domestic violence, bullying, sexual assault, and living in a community that associates beauty with whiteness, she suffers from low self-esteem and views herself to be ugly. Her insanity at the end of the novel is her only way to escape the world where she cannot be beautiful and to get the blue eyes she desires from the beginning of the novel. Narrates majority of the novel and is also a young black girl. She is an independent, mature and passionate 9-year-old girl in a world where there are many social issues. However, even though she is unaware of all of these major social issues, she is one of few, if any, characters that feel sympathy for Pecola. Claudia is the polar opposite of Pecola. In the first chapter she destroys her white dolls out of internalized hatred of white people. Contrastingly, Pecola consistently acts on her desire to achieve white beauty standards. Claudia is raised in a stable home, always assured of her self-worth and surrounded by a strong network of family. Frieda is more enlightened to the world in comparison to her younger sister and Pecola. Frieda is courageous and unwavering. She is seen to defend both Claudia and Pecola within the novel. Frieda can be classified as determined, independent and stubborn at times. Traumatic events like these influence Cholly to become a violent husband and father who beats his wife and eventually rapes his daughter. These gestures of madness are said to be mingled with affection, as they are his way of showing love. Breedlove is married to Cholly and lives the self-righteous life of a martyr, enduring her drunk husband and raising her two awkward children as best as she can. Breedlove is a bit of an outcast herself with her shriveled foot and Southern background. Breedlove lives the life of a lonely and isolated character who escapes into a world of dreams, hopes and fantasy that turns into the movies she enjoys viewing. After a traumatic event with a foul tooth, however, she relinquishes those dreams and escapes into her life as a housekeeper for a rich white family who give her the beloved nickname "Polly. Sammy, as he is more often referred to in the novel, is Cholly and Mrs. Like his sister Pecola, he is affected by the disharmony in their home and deals with his anger by running away. After Aunt Jimmy dies, Cholly runs off in search of Samson in Macon, Georgia where he is left distraught and disappointed with his discovery. The rich, white couple who employ Pauline as their servant and as the caretaker of their young daughter. A social conscious upper class black woman in the community who exaggerates the fact that she is above traditional black stereotypes and is more "civilized" than other black families in Lorain, Ohio. Her lack of attention to anything but the cat causes unintended hatred for the cat from her son, whom she neglects often. A prostitute who lives with two other prostitutes named China and Poland in an apartment above the one that Pecola lives in. These ladies are ostracized by society, but teach Pecola a lot about being a social outcast, and offer her the support that few others do. The discriminatory white immigrant, owner of the grocery store where Pecola goes to buy Mary Janes. Maureen considers herself to be above dark skinned African-American people. Frieda and

Claudia mock Maureen, calling her "Meringue Pie". Born by the name Elihue Micah Whitcomb who received his nickname, "Soaphead Church" for his hair and profession has proclaimed himself to be "Reader, Adviser, and Interpreter of Dreams. He considers himself to be a "misanthrope". He refuses to confront his own homosexuality and therefore, the touch of little girls whom he views as innocent and "seductive" are the cleanest form of human touch that he pursues. He is also a religious hypocrite as a past preacher. Although as someone who hates humans, he as a "Reader, Adviser, and Interpreter of Dreams," takes on the trouble of others and works closely with them to help solve their problems. However, he secretly poisons the meat, and the dog dies, leading Pecola to be insane and immersing in her illusion that she has blue eyes. For example, Pecola, the main character of the book, wishes for blue eyes as a way to escape the oppression that results from her having dark skin. As she concluded in her interview, she "wanted people to understand what it was like to be treated that way. She said it was "fun with colleagues. When Morrison moved to Syracuse, New York, she would work on the novel in the evenings. African-American critic Ruby Dee wrote, "Toni Morrison has not written a story really, but a series of painfully accurate impressions. A common critique of her writing included her language in the novel, as it was often viewed as being made too simple for the reader. It was the second most challenged book of and the fourth most challenged book of According to the ALA, the reasons reported for challenges are "offensive language, sexually explicit, unsuited to age group, violence". She brought *The Bluest Eye* and four other books to the attention of the Montgomery County school board, describing *The Bluest Eye* and others as "lewd, adult books. Schwalm argued for the removal of the book from the syllabus due to the fact that she deemed them to be "at odds with the character education programme" promoted within the schools. Later, the book was banned for being "sexually explicit," "unsuited for age group," and containing "controversial issues. As a result, the school decided to remove the book from freshmen and sophomore reading lists, and deemed that the novel was only "suitable" for juniors and seniors. During a meeting to discuss the decision, some parents agreed that the book was not age-appropriate and would be better suited for college students. In response to the ban, Camille Okoren, a student attending the sit-in acknowledged that "students hear about rape and incest in the news media. I want you to respect that. Attorney confirmed that no laws, state or federal, had been broken by including the selected books in the curriculum. In a statement, Cox addressed LOVE to say that, in order for the curriculum to change, LOVE "must either take appropriate civil legal action or use the electoral process to change the members of the board. Expanding on this point, she argued that high school English teachers are not professional mental health counselors and would not be able to adequately " She expressed the importance of retaining the book, stating, "Banning and censoring this tells students that The book was challenged due to it being seen as "pornographic" [29] and thus unsuited for 11th graders to read. Terhar took particular issue when it came to the scene regarding Pecola being raped by her father. Although not seen commenting on previous challenges to her books, Morrison specifically commented on this particular incident: But to be a girl from Ohio, writing about Ohio having been born in Lorain, Ohio. And actually relating as an Ohio person, to have the Ohio, whatâ€”Board of Education? In particular, the school highlighted the fact that the book contains "a description of a father raping his daughter. *The Bluest Eye*, however, was still left available within their libraries for students to read if they wish at their own discretion as the school wished to make clear that they were not "denying students access to that level of literature. He also mentioned that the book was in the syllabus that was handed out at the beginning of the year. Jan Furman, professor of English at the University of Michigan, notes that the book allows the reader to analyze the "imprinting" [38] factors that shape the identity of the self during the process of maturing in young black girls. However, as Werrlein points out, the whiteness of these characters came to equate the idea of the perfect American. A Template for an Ethical Emotive Criticism" [41] , Jerome Bump explains how the novel suggests that physical beauty is a virtue embedded in society. Bump asserts that the novel reveals the belief that the outside of people ultimately reflects their character and personality. Alexander suggests that the image of a more human God represents a traditional African view of deities, better suiting the lives of the African American characters. Kochar argues that to comprehend the complex violence inflicted on Pecola, one must analyze the novel through the Marxist and Feminist lens in addition to the psychoanalytical lens. Brooks Bouson, English professor at Loyola University Chicago, claims

that *The Bluest Eye* is a "shame drama and trauma narrative," that uses Pecola and its other characters to examine how people respond to shame. Claudia does this by rejecting the racist system she lives in and destroying the white dolls she is given. However, most characters in the novel pass on their shame to someone below them on the social and racial ladder. Bouson suggests that all of the African American characters in *The Bluest Eye* exhibit shame, and eventually much of this shame is passed onto Pecola, who is at the bottom of the racial and social ladder. He claims that Morrison prevents an "inverted world," entirely opposite from the Dick and Jane story that is at the beginning of the novel. The epitome of this, Page argues, is seen in Pecola at the end of the novel. The events of her life, having broken parents in a broken family, have resulted in a totally fractured personality which drives Pecola into madness. Diamond was first performed in Chicago, Illinois in , before seeing further adaptations around the United States. Diamond to adapt the novel into a full-length stage production. Diamond, and directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz. The production was critically appraised, with the role of Pecola being particularly celebrated. Banned in the U. National Visionary Leadership Project, Nobel Media AB Reimagining Childhood and Nation in the *Bluest Eye*. Reading the Family Dance: Family Systems Therapy and Literature Study. Reading Through the Lens of Gender Wesport:

### 4: The Bluest Eye Summary - [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com)

*The Bluest Eye*, published in 1942, is the first novel written by Toni Morrison, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature. It is the story of eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove – a black girl in an America whose love for its blond, blue-eyed children can devastate all others – who prays for her eyes to turn blue: so that she will be.

Life for her is difficult because her parents are too busy to show loving compassion. Claudia often finds it necessary to fight for herself, because other children try to put her down while adults are too busy with their own affairs and only notice children when there is work to be done. Claudia finds a lot of her anger and aggression directed towards the little white dolls that she receives as presents. It seems to her that these white dolls are given more love and attention than a flesh-and-blood black child. The lives of Claudia and her sister Frieda take an interesting turn when Pecola Breedlove is temporarily placed in the MacTeer home by county officials. Claudia and Frieda like Pecola because she is quiet and shy and responds to their offers of graham crackers and milk. The milk is brought in a Shirley Temple mug. Pecola and Frieda both love Shirley Temple and soon become involved in a discussion about her. The Breedlove family soon comes together again and finds a different home in an ugly house on the corner of a forgotten street. We learn that the entire Breedlove family has serious problems with self-esteem. The Breedloves go through life believing in their ugliness. Breedlove, devotes her time to fighting with her husband, Cholly, and taking care of a white family. Cholly, when he is not fighting his wife, spends his days drinking. Their children are either abused or neglected, and each child has coped with this abuse or neglect in a special manner. Sammy has already run away from home many times, while Pecola spends her time trying to be invisible. Pecola prays for blue eyes because she believes that if she were a beautiful girl, everyone in town would treat her nicely. Pecola, however, is abused by almost everybody in the town. One day, she is brutally teased by a group of boys when she is unexpectedly saved by Frieda, Claudia, and a new girl named Maureen Peal. Maureen Peal is a beautiful, light-skinned girl that becomes friendly towards Pecola for a while. However, Maureen soon turns on the other girls, using her own beauty as a weapon against them. Pecola is also the victim of a cruel prank by a light-skinned boy named Louis Junior, who is resentful towards dark-skinned blacks. It is only when she meets Cholly Breedlove that she begins to feel the magic of life. However, when the newly married couple move to Lorain, they begin to drift apart from each other. Pauline takes solace in the movies, watching the pretty actresses and emulating their hairstyles, but she becomes uglier and uglier. Once she has two children, she begins to spend most of her days taking care of a white family so that she can at least keep the illusion of being beautiful. Cholly also had a difficult childhood, having been abandoned by both parents. The only person who takes care of him is his Aunt Jimmy, but she dies while Cholly is still a young boy. Their kissing is interrupted by two white hunters, who order Cholly to make love to the girl while they watch. Cholly, shamed and humiliated, transfers this anger to the girl rather than the hunters. Soon after this incident, Cholly travels to Macon, Georgia, in search of his natural father. Cholly finds his father but is too afraid to introduce himself and runs away. Without his parents, Cholly lives a life of total freedom but is confused once he has children with Pauline. He is unable to understand how to love his children and deals with this confusion by drinking. One drunken night, he comes home and finds Pecola washing the dishes. When Pecola scratches her leg with her foot, it causes Cholly to remember when he first met this wife. Pecola asks him for blue eyes, and the man is moved. He decides to help the girl and deceives her into poisoning a dog that he hates, telling her that it would be a sign that God has heard her prayers. Once Pecola leaves, Soaphead Church writes a letter to God, telling Him that he has granted this girl her wish because God has obviously not been listening to her prayers. The town condemns Cholly but feels that Pecola must share some of the blame for not fighting back. When Claudia and Frieda hear about their friend, they decide to pray for her and sacrifice some flower seeds that they were going to use to make money. Claudia and Frieda avoid Pecola afterwards, thinking that they had failed their friend. Pecola is left to wander the streets. She has been driven insane by the abuse and spends her time looking in a mirror and talking with her imaginary friend about her blue eyes. Claudia, now grown up, looks back at that time and understands that it was not her fault that Pecola had become insane, and it is now too late to help Pecola

recover. Her parents both moved to Lorain from the South in search of better living conditions. Young Chloe was influenced greatly by her parents and their never-ending quest to improve the lives of their children. The small community was also very supportive of others, and although she was a shy girl, she remembers fondly the support she received as a youngster. Toni was an excellent student, with a particular fondness for literature. At Howard, she changed her name to Toni and was an active participant in their drama club. It was at Howard University that she met Harold Morrison, an architect, whom she later married. The Morrisons had two sons together but divorced in 1945. Morrison then relocated to Syracuse, where she became an editor for Random House. By 1950, she was a senior editor but still desired some sort of release for her creative energy. The *Bluest Eye* was turned down by a few publishing companies before being printed by Holt, Rinehart, and Winston in 1953. The book was given favorable reviews and established her as a talented new writer with a gift for language. A second novel, *Sula*, was published in 1967 and received a nomination for the National Book Award. It was her third novel, *Song of Solomon*, that catapulted her to national prominence. In addition to writing, Morrison has produced a play, taught and lectured at Yale, Berkeley, and Princeton, and edited anthologies and critical studies of African-American literature. Estimated Reading Time The page novel is short but rather complex.

### 5: The Bluest Eye - Wikipedia

*The Bluest Eye is Toni Morrison's first novel, a book heralded for its richness of language and boldness of vision. Set in the author's girlhood hometown of Lorain, Ohio, it tells the story of black, eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove.*

Claudia MacTeer is now a grown woman, telling us about certain events that happened during the fall of We then segue into a lengthy flashback, to Autumn , a year before the fall when no marigolds bloomed. Claudia and her older sister, Frieda, have just started school. That autumn, the MacTeers accept Mr. Henry as a roomer because his rent money will help pay bills. Against a backdrop of grinding poverty, with her parents locked in an ugly cycle of hostility and violence, Pecola seeks hope in her prayers for beauty, which she feels will lead to her being loved. Each night Pecola fervently prays for blue eyes, sky-blue eyes, thinking that if she looked different " pretty " perhaps everything would be better. Maybe everything would be beautiful. She remembers the arrival of Maureen Peal, a new girl in school, whom Claudia calls "the disrupter. She is enchanting and popular with both the black and white children. Pecola is not popular. On the playground, Frieda rescues her from a vicious group of boys who are harassing her. Maureen moves quickly and stands beside Pecola, and the boys leave. Maureen then links arms with Pecola and buys her some ice cream. Claudia and Frieda quarrel with her, and during the squabble, Claudia swings at Maureen but hits Pecola instead. Maureen runs across the street and screams back at the three girls, "I am cute! The omniscient narrator now describes Geraldine, her son Junior, and her much-loved blue-eyed black cat. Neglected by his aloof and status-conscious mother, Junior wickedly lures an unsuspecting Pecola into his house under the pretense of showing her some kittens. Scratched and terrified, Pecola moves toward the door, but Junior blocks her way. She is momentarily distracted by the black cat rubbing against her. Junior grabs the cat and begins swinging it in circles. Trying to save the cat, Pecola grabs Junior, who falls and releases the cat, letting it fly full force against the window. The sisters go to visit Pecola, who now lives in a drab downstairs apartment; the top floor is home to three prostitutes " Marie "Miss Maginot Line" , China, and Poland. Abandoned by his mother and father, Cholly is raised by a beloved great aunt, Jimmy, who dies when Cholly is a teenager. Afterward, the pain of humiliation, coupled with the fear that Darlene might be pregnant, prompt Cholly to leave town and head toward Macon, where he hopes to locate his father, Samson Fuller. He finds a belligerent wreck of a man who wants nothing to do with his son. Cholly eventually shakes off the crushing encounter. One day while he is in Kentucky, he meets Pauline Williams, marries her, and fathers two children, Sammy and Pecola. Years later, on a Saturday afternoon in spring, Cholly staggers home. In a drunken, confused state of love and lust, he rapes eleven-year-old Pecola and leaves her dazed and motionless on the kitchen floor. The omniscient narrator continues, introducing the character of Elisha Micah Whitcomb, a self-proclaimed psychic and faith healer known as Soaphead Church. He is visited by what he calls a pitifully unattractive black girl of about twelve or so, with a protruding pot belly, who asks him for blue eyes. She remembers the mix of emotions she felt for Pecola " shame, embarrassment, and finally sorrow. Alone and pregnant, Pecola talks to her only companion " a hallucination. She can no longer go to school, so she wraps herself in a cloak of madness that comforts her into believing that everyone is jealous of her miraculous, new blue eyes. In this final section, Claudia says that she remembers seeing Pecola after the baby was born prematurely and died. Pauline is still doing housework for white folks, and she and Pecola live in a little brown house on the edge of town.

### 6: The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison | [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com)

*Toni Morrison The Bluest Eye Toni Morrison is the Robert F. Goheen Professor of Humanities, Emeritus at Princeton University. She has received the.*

For further information on her life and complete works, see CLC, Volumes 4, 10, 22, 87, and Inspired by a conversation Morrison once had with an elementary school classmate who wished for blue eyes, the novel poignantly shows the psychological devastation of a young black girl, Pecola Breedlove, who searches for love and acceptance in a world that denies and devalues people of her own race. As her mental state slowly unravels, Pecola hopelessly longs to possess the conventional American standards of feminine beauty—namely, white skin, blonde hair, and blue eyes—as presented to her by the popular icons and traditions of white culture. With its sensitive portrait of African American female identity and its astute critique of the internalized racism bred by American cultural definitions of beauty, *The Bluest Eye* has been widely seen as a literary watershed, inspiring a proliferation of literature written by African American women about their identity and experience as women of color.

**Plot and Major Characters** Ignoring strict narrative chronology, *The Bluest Eye* opens with three excerpts from the common s American elementary school primer that features the All-American, white family of Mother, Father, Dick, and Jane. The first excerpt is a faithful reproduction, the second lacks all capitalization and punctuation marks, and the third dissolves into linguistic chaos by abandoning its spacing and alignment. This section is interrupted by an italicized fragment representing the memories of Claudia MacTeer, the principal narrator of *The Bluest Eye*. As an adult, Claudia recalls incidents from late when she was nine years old living in Lorain, Ohio, with her poor but loving parents and her ten-year-old sister, Frieda. The rest of *The Bluest Eye* divides into four separate time sequences, each named for a season of the year and each narrated by Claudia. In the midst of the hostilities, Pecola constantly prays for blue eyes, believing that if she only had blue eyes, life would be better. Abandoned almost at birth, he is rescued by his beloved Aunt Jimmy, who later dies when he is sixteen. After her burial, Cholly is humiliated by two white hunters who interrupt his first sexual encounter with a girl named Darlene. He flees to Macon, Georgia, in search of his father who is miserably mean and wants nothing to do with his son. Crushed by this encounter, Cholly eventually meets and marries Pauline and fathers her children. Years later, in Lorain, a drunken Cholly staggers into his kitchen, and overcome with lust, brutally rapes and impregnates Pecola. American society tells Pecola happy, white, middle-class families are better than hopeless, black, working-class families. Victimized in different degrees by media messages—from movies and books to advertising and merchandise—that degrade their appearance, nearly every black character in the novel—both male and female—internalizes a desire for the white cultural standard of beauty. This desire is especially strong in Pecola, who believes that blue eyes will make her beautiful and lovable. At the same time, every African American character hates in various degrees anything associated with their own race, blindly accepting the media-sponsored belief that they are ugly and unlovable, particularly in the appalling absence of black cultural standards of beauty. Unlike Claudia, who possesses the love of her family, Pecola has learned from her appearance-conscious parents to devalue herself. Besides exposing the inherent racism of the American standard of beauty, *The Bluest Eye* also examines child abuse in terms of the violence that some African American parents subconsciously inflict on their children by forcing them to weigh their self-worth against white cultural standards. As his surname implies, Cholly can only breed, not love, and his brutal act against his daughter produces a child who cannot live. Pecola believes that if she had beautiful eyes, people would not be able to torment her mind or body.

**Critical Reception** Regarded by modern literary critics as perhaps one of the first contemporary female bildungsroman, or coming-of-age narratives, *The Bluest Eye* initially received modest reviews upon its publication in Commentators later claimed that they neglected the work because Morrison was unknown at the time. Since then, however, *The Bluest Eye* has become a classroom staple, and scholarship on the novel has flourished from a number of perspectives. Many critics have approached the novel in the context of the rise of African American writers, assigning significance to their revision of American history with their own cultural materials and folk traditions. Others have considered

## THE BLUEST EYES TONI MORRISON pdf

the ways *The Bluest Eye* alludes to earlier black writings in order to express the traditionally silenced female point of view and uses conventional grotesque imagery as a vehicle for social protest.

### 7: The Bluest Eye: Toni Morrison: [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com): Books

*The Bluest Eye is Toni Morrison's first novel, a book heralded for its richness of language and boldness of vision. Set in the author's girlhood hometown of Lorain Ohio, it tells the story of black, eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove. Pecola prays for her eyes to turn blue so that she will be as.*

If she were white, blonde, and very blue-eyed, she would be loved. It contains reproductions of the original Eleanor Campbell watercolor illustrations of squeaky-clean Dick and his blonde-haired, blue-eyed sister Jane, the little girl whom Pecola Breedlove so longs to become. After this section, Morrison offers us a fragment of memory, set in italics. She says that she remembers the autumn when no marigolds bloomed. Why the incest happened, Claudia says, is too difficult to fathom. Perhaps we should be concerned only with how it happened: Morrison divides the rest of the novel into four separate time sequences, each of them a season of the year and each narrated by Claudia MacTeer, now a grown woman. Within these season sequences are narratives by an omniscient, all-knowing voice; these sections are introduced by run-on, unpunctuated lines from the first-grade reading book. Finally, near the end of the novel, a single section records a conversation between Pecola and a fantasy friend that she creates. At last we witness the madness that has enveloped the main character of the novel. As the novel unfolds, listen to the voices of these two narrators. Morrison begins her novel with two fragments resembling a first-grade primer. Fragment 1 Here is the house. Claudia Autumn Nuns go by as quiet as lust. There is an abandoned store. The Breedloves did not live in a storefront because. They come from Mobile. The easiest thing to do would be to build. When Cholly was four days old. Once there was an old man who loved things. How many times a minute are you going to look inside. Pecola So it was.

### 8: Toni Morrison: 'I want to feel what I feel. Even if it's not happiness' | Books | The Guardian

*The title of Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye is significant because it relates directly to the themes of the novel. Literally speaking, "the bluest eye" is a reference to the wish that Pecola.*

### 9: The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison – review | Children's books | The Guardian

*Toni Morrison was born Chloe Anthony Wofford in Lorain, Ohio. Her mother's family had come to Ohio from Alabama via Kentucky, and her father had migrated from Georgia. Morrison grew up with a love of literature and received her undergraduate degree from Howard University.*

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