

by Patten

The book *Whirligig* starts off with Brent, the main character, drinking illegally at a party. He then drives drunk, and in a failed effort to kill himself, he kills Lea, another teenager. Most people would consider something like this unforgivable, but Lea's mom believes everything happens for a reason. Instead of staying full of hatred, she decides to send Brent to the four corners of the country and build a whirligig at each spot with Lea's face on it. Accepting her request was the best thing Brent had ever done, because it helped him turn his life around.

At the beginning of the book, Brent goes to a party with his friend that he wasn't invited to, and realized he didn't wear the right thing once he gets there. In an effort to calm his nerves, he begins to drink alcohol. This may be the worst decision Brent makes in his life, as it is the main cause of Lea's death. After being rejected by Brianna, he goes to his car and drives away, drunk. This was another bad decision, because you're impaired and can't think straight when you're drunk. This may have been the reason he tried to kill himself by crashing his car. This is what ends Lea's life, but begins a new one for Brent.

Brent's trip around the country was great for him, mainly because it made him realize his life had a meaning. While traveling, Brent met many people from many different walks of life, and he saw that, even though he had done a terrible thing, he could still turn his life around. Building the whirligigs gave Brent confidence and a new sense of life. They also affected the lives of other people that saw them, which means that while Brent was turning his life around, he was also helping others.

At the end of the book, Brent decides to use the remaining

days on his bus pass to keep traveling, even though he had already built the whirligigs. This shows that he knows the traveling was good for him. I think that continuing to travel was a good decision, because going back home may bring back all the memories and make him depressed. He will have to return eventually, but I think the longer he is away, the more benefit he will get.

After reading *Whirligig*, I realize that no matter what you've done previously in your life, you can still do something good with it. Brent is the perfect example of this. He did what many consider unforgivable, and still turned his life around and did good with it. This showed me that actions have consequences, but no matter what it is, you can still do good with your life.