

by Wilson

In Paul Fleischman's novel, *Whirligig*, the main character (Brent Bishop) drives while intoxicated and in the attempt to take his life, he takes the life of a teenage girl by accident. The victim's parents send him off over the states of the U.S. on a mission to build four whirligigs on the four corners of the U.S. Over the course of Brent's big journey, he has many impactful actions, with good and bad consequences. In this essay, I will write about the many actions and consequences in the story.

In the beginning of the novel, Brent is just a regular kid that doesn't fit in at school. He attends a party with hopes of taking a girl that he likes out. His first mistake was drinking a lot. This action, little did he know, would cost another girl's life! So he sees this girl and goes to talk with her. He is drunk and makes her mad. She tells him off and then he gets in to a fight. These actions leave him with bad consequences. He has been embarrassed and decides to leave. While driving under the influence, he tries to commit suicide and hits another car. Brent survives. The girl in the other car doesn't.

While away from his house building whirligigs, Brent seems like a different person. He makes better decisions, and those lead to better consequences. He makes friends along the way by being kind and outgoing, but still being himself. He makes responsible actions while traveling and makes good decisions, unlike the beginning. This ends up working well, and there are no big negative actions after he leaves for the trip. I would say that he has changed.

At the end of the book, Brent makes a very unexpected decision. He decides that since he still has a couple weeks on the bus pass, he would stay and explore the country. I wouldn't say that

that was a bad decision; it's use not what I would predict at all! This was one of the biggest decisions in the book and it could have good consequences, or it could have bad consequences. There is no way to tell (unless they made a *Whirligig 2*). From seeing his actions from the start of his trip, I would only predict that there wouldn't be any really bad, negative actions/decisions, but we will never know!

After finishing this book, I realized how you can change after such a horrible action, because of the consequences! That is what happened with Brent, and I believe that it is realistic. On Brent's trip, he realized many things about controlling actions, making friends, fitting in, and how he could pour his emotions into art. Overall, this story's actions as a whole have impacted Brent's life more than anything probably will again (unless the same thing happens again next year).