

Virtue Ethics

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In *Girl In Wave: Wave In Girl* Alia's story ties directly into virtue ethics. Instead of focusing on rules or consequences, virtue ethics is about developing character by learning from others who model strong moral values. Melody plays that role in the story. Thanks to Grok technology, Alia gets a firsthand experience of Melody's life—not just as an observer, but by actually living through her choices and struggles. It's this lived experience that really pushes Alia's growth, helping her figure out who she is and who she wants to be.

One of the biggest shifts we see in Alia is her growth in courage. At first, she's unsure of herself and hesitant when faced with tough choices. But the more she experiences Melody's memories—some of which are bold, risky, or even controversial—the more she starts building inner strength. Alia learns that courage isn't just about physical bravery. It's about standing up for what you believe in, being honest, and pushing through fear or discomfort to do the right thing. This reflects Aristotle's idea of courage being the sweet spot between being a coward and being reckless.

Alia also becomes more empathetic, which is a huge part of virtue ethics. Melody talks about this a lot, especially when she explains how reading builds empathy in kids. By seeing other people's lives through stories, kids start to understand the world outside their own. But

Alia goes beyond just reading—she literally steps into another person’s experience. That’s how she starts to care more deeply about others and begins making choices with a broader perspective. Her moral compass sharpens because she’s not just thinking about how things affect her.

Wisdom is another key trait Alia develops—what Aristotle calls “phronesis”, or practical judgment. She learns how to make the right call based on the situation, not just based on what’s socially acceptable or what she’s “supposed” to do. Her decisions become more grounded in what feels genuinely right for the moment she’s in. She’s no longer second-guessing or relying on someone else to tell her what to do. That kind of inner confidence is a sign of real growth.

Melody also inspires Alia to be more generous and gracious. Alia starts thinking about what she can do for others without expecting something in return. You see her shift from focusing only on herself to thinking about the bigger picture—how her actions connect to the world around her. This ties into Melody’s speech about building global empathy through shared stories. Alia begins to feel part of that vision, understanding how literature can build bridges between people.

As readers, we’re invited to reflect on how stories like Alia’s can shape us, too. Reading about her journey encourages us to act with moderation during conflict, stay committed to the truth, and live in a way that reflects our values—even when it’s hard. Virtue ethics reminds us that becoming a better person isn’t a one-time thing. It’s about building habits, learning from others, and constantly reflecting on what kind of person we want to be.