

# Lord of the flies – piggy

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



The conch, glasses, and brains are all symbols in Lord of the Flies by William Golding. In this novel, a group of school kids crash into a deserted island and fight wilderness, fear, and themselves to survive. Piggy, being one of the most vital characters in their survival, is often disrespected and overlooked. This is persistent throughout the novel, and can be attributed to his weight and nerdy appearance. Generally, Piggy means well, and tries to help the boy's survival on the island. Piggy, an extremely complex and intelligent character, contributes to the boy's survival by using logic and brains.

Piggy, along with being the brains of the island, is also a very complex and misunderstood boy. "Piggy is a much more complex character, than the simplistic interpretations so regularly adduced will allow". (Reilly. online). This states that Piggy was an extremely complicated character, and is often overlooked by not only characters in the book, such as Jack and Ralph, but also by readers. He is also described as a brainiac by Golding himself, "Piggy, for all his ludicrous body, had brains". (Golding 71).

This emphasizes to the reader that Piggy's brain is being discounted due to his stature, and this causes readers to discount his intelligence, however, it brings the reader's attention to them being naive. This last quote also reinforces the concept that his body is causing his smarts to be overlooked "Piggy lacks the looks but has the know-how. The trouble is that he knows but cannot do and is relegated". (Reilly. Online). Lorenz 2 Broken down, this shows that Piggy is a resource that the boys need to utilize, but fail to, and instead they treat him like a set-back, only because he is weak.

He has a lot more to offer than just physical labor, and should be honed for using his brain to problem solve, or be inventive. It is quite obvious he was often bullied for his weight at school, due to the fact that kids called him Piggy there too. Piggy also has strong feelings for his Aunt, and often uses her advice to his advantage when speaking to Ralph about a variety of issues. This is shown many times throughout Golding's writing, and brings the voice of an adult onto the island. Piggy contributes to the group on various occasions. The first is when he discovers the shell. It is Piggy who is first excited by the shell, but only as a curio". (Kinead-Weekes, Mark. Gregor, Ian. 39). Piggy is the first to find the shell, and even states that it would be a great idea to use as a way of allowing everyone in the groups voice to be heard. This method with the shell is used throughout the entire novel, up until the falling action. Piggy is also the voice of reason during the debate about the beast. He argues on the side of logic, and is not swayed by the littlun's opinions. " So let's hear from that littlun who talked about a beast and perhaps we can show him how silly he is" (Golding 78).

This is the best example Golding gives of Piggy's logic throughout the novel. Amongst the mass panic that is brewing on the island, Piggy still has a clear mind and will not believe in simple hear-say, or rumor, he believes in fact, and until he sees that beast, it will not exist to him. He also seems a little cold, being the smallest bit rude to the littlun who is afraid. Piggy tries to take lead numerous times, and is not taken seriously. However, when Piggy helps out Ralph, and doesn't take the lead in speaking or assigning jobs to other survivors, he is taken seriously, and does a great job at what he is doing to help out.

Lorenz 3 “[Piggy’s] common sense is evident from the start as when he organizes the meeting and tries to make a list of everyone present”. (Reilly. Online). Patrick Reilly’s view on Piggy is spot on. His common sense is immediately shown during the scene of the first meeting, and makes the reader think he would be critical to the survival and rescue of the group. In addition to Piggy’s brain helping the boys survive, other aspects of Piggy were used, such as his glasses. Without Piggy’s horrible eye sight, and him needing to wear glasses, the boys would never have been able to start a fire, a fire that ultimately led to their rescue.

This is very ironic considering Piggy was killed before he would ever see rescue... a rescue that without him would never have happened. Golding did this to reinforce the importance of Piggy in the novel. It showed that no matter how useless he may have seemed, he still was the one that helped the most, in the long run. He was the most important boy to be on that island. He, in reality, saved Jack, an abusive boy who harassed him ever since they crashed, and Roger, the boy who threw stones, and the boy who murdered the innocent Piggy. Though Piggy reaches his greatest stature at the moment of his death, it is also the moment of his greatest blindness, rendered for us at a level far deeper than his lost spectacles”. (Kinead-Weekes. Mark. 43). Piggy was completely blindsided from Rogers’s boulder. This moment in the novel makes readers realize the tragedy of Piggy’s death. The shattering of the glasses represents his knowledge and insight turning to dust, all in front of the very people he saves, from the cage that is the island. The conch was also with him at the moment of his death. This is significant because it symbolizes the shattering of all that Piggy believed in.

He truly believed the conch would save him from anything on the island, and in the end it simply did not work. Lorenz 4 Perhaps Piggy's greatest example of insight, however, was his speech on the monsters that Jack and Roger have become. "'What are we? Humans? Or animals? Or savages?' Piggy rages as the assembly lurches toward darkness, and his questions are not restricted to the wicked Childs-play of beastly boys on a tropic island". (Reilly 7). Piggy shows that he realizes what is happening to the island, and that he sees the conflicts that are occurring between Jack, Roger, and Ralph.

Piggy almost predicts that the savagery will get worse. This is a very good example of Golding's foreshadowing throughout the novel. This character was, for me, the best part of the entire literary work of *The Lord of the Flies*. Piggy was an extremely complex and intelligent character, he contributed to the boys survival on many accounts, and was the adult that all of the boys wished they had in the end. Piggy was complex in his mind, and his actions, as well as intelligent when it came to problem solving, and advising Ralph.