

Eart leaves the dead  
as sacrifice for



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

What is the theme of *Lord of the Flies*? By Sean Rioux The novel *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding presents and defends a theme that human nature is essentially evil, and that a person removed from society will be allowed to let their evil instincts to manifest themselves as the person becomes increasingly savage.

In this novel, Golding presents a character (Jack) who takes on and exemplifies this transition to savagery throughout the course of the book as the evil inside him is set free. We see Jack, who at first cannot even kill a pig caught in the creepers, fall deeper and deeper into his savage ways as his killing of one pig, and his focus on the hunt turns to bloodlust. Then as it progresses his bloodlust begins to drive more than just the hunt for food as he leaves the dead as sacrifice for the beast, and he begins to turn his violence out towards the other boys, not just his prey. As a final descent into the evil that has consumed him the prey becomes one of the boys as Ralph is hunted with the intent to kill, sacrifice and possibly even eat in an act of cannibalism.

Before the evil began to grow in strength within Jack, he was a boy much like the others and like the others he found the concept of killing another living thing was not something easy to digest, but Jack learned. However hard it was for Jack to first kill a pig, spilling its blood on his bare hands, once he had first killed another living thing his path towards evil and savagery was well on its way. Early on in the novel we find Ralph, Simon and Jack walking through the forest when they come across a small pig tangled and caught in the creepers. Although Jack does have a knife with him his hesitation combined with the overwhelming reality of the situation keeps Jack stunned in his place and the pig escapes untouched.

Jack swears to himself and the others that he will kill the next pig and this pressure to perform to prove himself a true and worthy hunter, leads him to obsession over the hunt. To Jack the hunt becomes more than just a game, or a source of food, it becomes his mission, duty and purpose on the island. When Jack makes his first kill he is spellbound by the power of life and death he exerts on the pig and is fascinated by the warm blood that pours from the wound he cuts to slit the pig's throat. Now the hunt has become something more for Jack as lust for blood begins to stir in him and the hunger for that feeling of power over another being's mortality grows. The others on the island begin to take interest and excitement in the hunt as Jack has provided meat, and the draw of the hunt and its bloody gore begin to stir in the other boys. This acts as a catalyst to the fall of the brittle society Ralph protects as the boys through Jack see the chaotic and savage game of the hunt and the prospect of more meat far more amusing and pleasing than even getting home. Jack denies the importance of the fire or shelters suggesting he is in complete obedience to the draw of the hunt, and the inherent evil that comes with.

Cruel as slitting a pig's throat may at first seem to Jack, as the lust for blood that stirs in him begins to escalate, so does the power of evil deep within him, and for Jack the hunt becomes that much more lustful and primal. As Jack's grasp on the forgotten reality he left behind fades away, the new more savage ways of his tribe of hunters begin to shape a culture around the evil of the island. Jack's kills, as time passes become more and more brutal and without mercy as he begins to lose any moral structure or compassion for other living beings. When hunting one day he manages to track a sow with

young still suckling at her teat and he leads the boys in a perverse, and lust full slaughter of the mother pig. He does not consider what damage he is doing or the morality that would come into to play had he not been so far from modern civilization. The head of the sow is mounted on a stick as a sacrifice to the beast who to the savages that where once boys, has become a sort of symbolic vengeful and evil god who the boys commit wrong doings in the name of. The beast in the novel represents the evil that exists within Jack and the boys themselves and thus the sacrifice to the beast represents them giving in even further to their own evil.

The boys are giving into their own savage, primal ways more and more as the innocence that they bore when they arrived on the islands begins to come crashing down even further. Jack focuses his violent energies for the most part into the hunt, but as the hunt and the primal forces of evil he exerts on the hunt become more and more a part of him it begins to seep into the interactions he has between him and the other boys. As Jack, through his action, denies membership to any civilized society on the island he beings to show egocentric behavior toward any group but the hunters and his separate tribe and begins to see his survival as more important than that of the others. Upon realizing that the other group had fire (which both groups needed) and his did not, he decides that his group as the strongest deserved the rite to the fire, and that they would take it by force weather necessary or not. This demonstrates the primal ways of nature in its laws of survival of the fittest, and Jack's belief that he was the strongest and thus deserved to live the most, and have the fire over any other. In modern civilization we have morals we instill in our selves to help the weaker, and share what we have to

shape a better future for those in need. Ralph's is very much willing to share the fire but Jack gives them no chance and simply sees them as the weaker link ready to be picked off, in his tribal island world.

With Jack's contempt for the weaker less primal, less savage boys of the island combined with Jack's weak attachment to society and its morals, the evil in him becomes ever so powerful and enables him to ignore whatever social structure that once guided him and take his primal hunt to a whole to savage level. Jack's final descent into the depth of his own darkness and savagery occurs when the target of the hunt, kill, and sacrifice, turns away from the pig and towards Ralph. As Ralph's small resistance to the evil and anarchy on the island takes its final blow with the destruction of Piggy and the conch, Jack chooses to end what little is left to remind him of the civilized behavior he once knew by killing Ralph. Not just murder him in cold blood, but hunt and slaughter him like an animal, and leave a meaningful and overwhelmingly real sacrifice for the beast, Ralph's head on a stick.

Ralph being sacrificed to the beast is meaningful in the context of the book as Ralph after the destruction of the conch represents all that is left on the island of society, and civilization and thus good. Jack is so bent on seeing Ralph dead because he can sense that Ralph opposes the savagery going on. For Jack and the boys they have given up on the idea of home and forgotten the innocence they once had. Now with Piggy dead and the conch ruined Ralph exists as a painful reminder that, some one is still thinking about home, and the society they left so distantly behind. Jack goes as far as burning the forests of the island down to flush out Ralph without even considering that the forest is their only source of food. He has lost his

internal balance of good and evil and thus he can no longer reason and his actions and decisions have become like primal reflexes, everything for the kill. William Golding presents this novel to us as a thesis statement on human nature, suggesting that we are all inherently evil but it is society that keeps us civil and good. This concept although it might not apply to the real world is portrayed quite nicely through the character of Jack who finds himself doing things his society would look down on without the slightest bit of consideration.

He hunts armed with nothing but his instinct and a spear, lusts after the sight of blood. He even pursues a human pray, and bows to a sacrificial evil god. What about this book that actually has a basis in reality and applies even to the fictional character Jack is that there is a delicate balance between good and evil and that it takes so little to offset the balance that we as a society must protect and serve these values we hold so dear. English Essays