

# Symbols in lord of the flies



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The Symbols Gilding Introduces in the Lord of the Flies Gilding presents a number of key symbols in the opening chapters of the Lord of the Flies, providing a number of hints as he does as to the characteristics of the boys on the island, of possible issues and conflicts which will occur as the narrative develops. Symbols are of great Importance to Gilding's book. An example being the conch, representing authority and leadership, as well as Piggy's glasses to symbolism his normalization and the piglet which demonstrates decreasing civilization as the novel unfolds, to name a few.

The symbolic element of the Lord of the Flies entices readers as they explore the text.

Perhaps the most intriguing of the symbols explored in the first chapters of the novel is the island itself. Introduced as a symbol of the unspoiled, uncivilized world 'scar[del]' by the crashed airplane, the arrival of the surviving young boys. Has definitely not gone unnoticed by the island. The merging of the two cultures on this seemingly uninhabited place Is Initially seen as paradise the imagined but never fully realized place leaping into real life', however this idea is rapidly suggested not to be as positive.

The island itself could be thought of as a character, often personified by Gilding as It 'minutely vibrated' signifying the island breathing. This personification reveals its power, the forest stirred, roared, flailed' has particular effect; presenting the evil spirit of the Island.

It Is also compared too monster, as the forest shook as with the passage of an enraged monster' further showing the islands malevolence. This also suggests a sense to animosity from the island, fighting back to the boys.

This could be compared the Bible story of the Fall of Adam and Eve, cast out of Paradise as a punishment for disobeying God. The island punishes the boys for destroying the peace found there before they arrived.

The most significant symbol in the Lord of the Flies is of course the conch. First found by Ralph and Piggy, we are immediately informed that it can be used to attract the attention of others. This is due to Piggy's anecdote, although he is not capable of doing so himself ' on account of [his] ass-mar. This proved that Piggy has the Inner- qualities of being a good leader, but is held back due to physical-qualities and a general lack of confidence. Instead he encourages Ralph to be the leader you call the there' even though It was him with the actual knowledge of the conch.

The conch is a sign of authority; Ralph is elected lead due to him being in possession of the trumpet-thing'. After this Ralph often ' held up the conch for silence' further showing that the boys acknowledged the conch and respected it.

With the exception of Ralph the boys were only allowed to speak if they were holding the conch, creating a civilized environment; which is what the conch symbolizes, as well as democracy. This is not something, which the existing animals on the island were used to, in fact they reacted negatively to the conch, when it sounded, ' something squealed and ran into the undergrowth. ' t Off because it is the first introduction of the idea that there is an ominous presence on the island.

Golding's idea of using a young child to be the first character to bring up the ' beast' is very effective as it immediately makes it seem less realistic

especially referring to it as the 'beastie' as it allows the build up of the beast to begin, without causing too much fear from the start. The lack of realism is enforced by Ralph, there isn't a beast' which he repeats five times, although this could be interpreted as self- assurance as well as reassuring the rest of the group as it is a possibility that another being is present but Ralph, the leader cannot control this.

Piggy's glasses are another symbol in the Lord of the Flies, which signify his normalization. Without his glasses Piggy cannot see, it is impossible for Piggy to not need his glasses, like it is impossible for him to escape being marginalia. Gilding demonstrates this on page five 'the frame made a big pink V on the bridge' presenting that even when Piggy removes his glasses, the barrier between him and the rest of the group is still apparent.

Although they are a symbol of his deprecation Piggy also finds comfort in his glasses proclaiming that he has been wearing specs since [he] was three' showing that he feels they make him special.

This is later demonstrated when the boys use his glasses to light the fire, 'he took off his glasses and held them to Ralph' if Piggy and his glasses weren't there, it would have been much harder to cook their food and to try and attract ships and planes. This presents that although Piggy stands out as an outcast, the boys need him, like he needs his glasses. Piggy takes excellent care of his glasses 'he took off his glasses and looked vainly for something to clean them' this demonstrates Piggy's understanding of the importance of seeing clearly.

The final symbol is the piglet, this symbolizes moving away from civilization towards savagery. Gilding narrates using extremely effective phrases reflecting on the violence that the boys set out to commit. The 'hunters' were preparing to kill the piglet for food. They were clearly distressing the animal 'as they pushed forward the pushing forward the squeaking increased till it became a frenzy although they pause[d] long enough for them to understand what enormity a downward stroke would be, displaying that they understood the seriousness of taking a life.

This pause eventually resulted in the piglet escaping, although Jack vows he will fulfill the deed 'next time-' proving that the line between civilization and savagery has not yet been crossed but the crucial moment of teetering on the brink. Overall symbolism is a key factor of the Lord of the Flies and the way in which Gilding uses it intrigues the reader and allows you to understand the novel much more easily.