

# Analyze the lord of the flies essay

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



“ Lord of the Flies” by William Golding is a stimulating novel that tells the story of a group of young boys stranded on a deserted island. The young boys soon realise that some form of leadership must be established in order for them to develop their idea of civilisation. The group’s descent into savagery meets some of the characters inevitable ends, as the society created at the beginning of the novel- crumbles due to Jack and Ralph’s alpha male rivalry. During the novel, one of the characters encounters a surprising turning point that helps him transform into a blood-thirsty savage.

Jack Merridew is first introduced in the novel as the leader of a choir walking along the beach. The character already shows signs of leadership when he commands his choir to stop and they immediately obey. His arrogance is shown when he yells orders like “ choir! Stand still! ” He is also a very rude boy especially when he first meets a fat boy named Piggy- he insults him and says, “ You’re talking too much. Shut it Fatty. ” Picking on the only unattractive boy in the island, Jack’s relationship with Piggy ends with a bloody death when Ralph and Piggy confront him at Castle Rock towards the end of the novel.

When it came to voting for a chief, Jack nominated himself and his superiority over the choir group came into play. Out of loyalty, they voted for him. “ With dreary obedience the choir raised their hands. ” This shows that Jack intimidates the members of the choir and are very frightened of voting for Ralph. Jack’s relationship with the rest of the island is the same as the relationship he has with Piggy. His treatment towards others becomes more and more severe as the story develops. Jack’s characteristics already showed him to be leader but he was always thwarted by Ralph.

His cockiness made him sure that he was more than worthy of being leader- after all he was head boy of the school and could sing C sharp. When he loses the election, “ Jack’s face disappeared under a blush of mortification. ” The metaphor shows his anger and how he is embarrassed of the loss. His hunger for power drove him into desperation for control over the island. In his mind, the only way of proving himself is to feed the tribe. Jack’s choir was now known as the “ hunters. ” Returning from a trip discovering the island, Jack was given the opportunity to kill a pig and feed the tribe some meat. He fails to kill the animal.

This was because of the “ enormity of the knife descending and cutting into living flesh,” and another factor of it was the, “ unbearable blood. ” Jack’s failure to acquire meat was a surprise for the reader because his personality made him seem capable of the task. The pressure is now on him as the hunger for meat on the island increases. He understands this and is constantly using the phrase “ next time. ” The repetition emphasises his frustration in the situation. Not long after the incident, Jack was given another opportunity to prove himself to the others. He abandons his responsibilities and leaves to hunt with the hunters.

Ralph’s first declaration as leader was to build a signal fire- to him this was his main priority. The fire must be kept at all times and when it was Jack’s and his choir’s shift, they decide to neglect the fire and go hunting. He marks not only his face but also the others with war paint. “ for hunting, like in the war. You know- dazzle paint. ” The paint acts as a veneer to hide their previous selves and in doing so they have traded their sanity for a lifestyle of

savagery. Meanwhile a ship sails across the horizon. Hoping that the fire is a light, Ralph, runs up the mountain carelessly.

“ Oh God! Oh God! ” Panicking whilst running up the mountain, he comes to a wild realisation that the fire was out. The hunters return from their rendezvous chanting, “ Kill the pig! Cut her throat! Spill her blood! ” While Ralph tries to confront Jack and his big mistake, he seems to me unfazed of the situation and is rather proud of his accomplishment. Jack ignores Ralph’s rants and continues to interrupt him “ we hit the pig-“ “ we fell on top-“ His excitement and giddiness is a surprise to the reader because of how quickly he gets over his fear of driving a blade through flesh.

He cannot get over the fact that they have “ outwitted a living thing, imposed their will on it and took away its life. ” His detailed description of the killing also emphasises the development of his bloodlust. They suffer the consequence of decreasing their chances of being rescued by letting the fire out and in doing so, they turn back to a more primitive, more reasonable approach to survival. The killing of the pig has a major impact on Jack and the rest of the island. His success in the killing helps him realise his full potential of being leader causing his thirst for blood to go through the roof.

“ All you can talk about is pig, pig, pig,” Jack says angrily. ” Jack realises that his services for the tribe is not receiving the praise that he desires and this causes him to storm out of Ralph’s assembly saying, “ I’m going off by myself. He can catch his own pigs. Anyone who wants to hunt when I do can come too. ” Jack forms his own tribe based around hunting and keeps them by his side by using their fear. He acts as the fearless leader claiming that he

is not afraid of the beast. His vulnerability is shown when he meets the ‘beastie,’ on the mountain.

He croaks and shivers. This shows that he may not be the fearless leader he insists he is. Now being controlled by fear and frustration, the boys are trapped in a symbolic dance where Simon is accidentally mistaken as the beast and is then murdered. The schoolboys finally make the transition into savages, led by Jack. Ralph and Piggy approach Jack’s camp and argue for Piggy’s glasses back. The guilt ridden atmosphere triggered Roger’s instincts and this resulted to Piggy’s violent death. There are several themes that are significant within the development of the novel.

Hope being one them. The signal fire on the mountain symbolises the hope within the group. As the fire went out, the hope in being rescued began to fade away. The presence of hope, like the fire, began to disappear as the tribes divided into two. Throughout the book, democracy was also a very strong theme. This was represented by the conch. Its use was to maintain decorum during the assemblies. As the importance of the conch began to fade so did all sense of order. The smashing of the conch was symbolic and this defined the group of boys’ descent into chaos and savagery.

‘ Lord of the Flies’ is a terrifying story, that helps us understand that in fact the ‘beast’ is within each and every one of us. Golding effectively portrayed this through Jack’s transformation- from the innocent yet cocky choir boy to a bloodthirsty hunter. Jacks’ inner beast along with others isolated themselves from the main tribe, and this in turn decreased the group’s chances of being rescued. The fire was no longer important. The novel shows

the reader how quickly a situation, no matter how controlled or strict, can instantly change for the worse.