

# Lord of the flies – character analysis – ralph



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Leader of the Pack Ralph: Character Analysis (Lord of the Flies by William Golding) There are many interesting characters in Lord of the Flies by William Golding, but the character that stood out the most to me while reading the book, was Ralph. He is the protagonist in the story. Ralph is an outstandingly smart, young boy. He resembles various traits of a leader, and a person of power, including the unfortunate bossiness of many leaders. Although he is barely a decade old, Ralph undergoes an important lesson when he finally comes to learn the ugly truth about people.

He starts to see the evil sides of the other boys, and even of himself, and finally he comes to the realization that there is evil in everybody. Ralph is portrayed with intelligence straightaway. You can easily see he is observant when he is first introduced and he states, “ This is an island. At least I think it’s an island. That’s a reef out in the sea. ” (pg. 2) Later on Ralph suggests touring around to make sure that they are on an island. After figuring out that they were, in fact, on an island, Ralph is quick to figure out that rescue is not going to be particularly easy to come by.

On multiple occasions, it seems as though he is the only one who really understands the importance of making an effort of getting rescued. He puts a great deal of effort into trying to make sure the fire is kept alive, although the others tend to fail him. Ralph also makes an effort to teach the other boys why it is so important to have a signal fire, which he also does not have much luck with. His high intelligence is part of what leads him to learn such an important lesson about life, while on the island. Ralph’s intelligence and wisdom is also what makes him an excellent leader for the boys.

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Ralph becomes leader quickly after all the boys come together, and he wins the “ election” between Jack and himself. At first, it seems as though many of the boys are more concerned with playing and adventuring than worrying about survival or rescue, but Ralph doesn’t hesitate to get some important tasks done, such as building a signal fire and building huts for shelter. Ralph tries to maintain order and sanity within the boys as much as he possibly can, but it’s not hard to see their savage ways taking over.

During all the chaotic happenings on the island, Ralph is still able to remain logical and keep his sanity. Jack rebels against many things Ralph believes in and the way he is trying to lead the boys. Jack is more concerned about hunting and killing a pig than anything else, whereas Ralph is more concerned about keeping the fire going and getting rescued. The way Ralph stands above savagery and violence is highlighted by Jack’s bloodlust and love for violence. Although Ralph may have fallen into the insane frenzy with the rest of the boys once or twice, he is overall, above it.

Even though Ralph resembles many traits fit for a leader, he can also be notably bossy, controlling and even arrogant sometimes. Ralph likes being in control, and a lot of his points are quite valid, but at times it seems like the power goes to his head. He becomes greatly obsessed with the conch, which acts as a symbol of power and leadership. Ralph’s power hungry attitude can sometimes affect Piggy, as Ralph tends to bully him when he’s looking to feel powerful. There are a few occasions where Ralph betrays Piggy, in a sense, for the other boys.

Such as at the beginning of the novel, right after the election and first meeting, Ralph, Jack and Simon decide they need to decipher whether they are on an island or not, when Piggy tries to join them, and Ralph tells him “ You’re no good on a job like this,” (pg. 21) hurting Piggy’s feelings.

Throughout the story though, Ralph tends to become a better person, especially after he witnesses the evil inside them all. Ralph, being the protagonist in the story, was definitely an exceptionally important character.

He is one of the first characters introduced to us, and we continuously hear about him throughout the book. I would describe Ralph as a round, dynamic character, as he undergoes big changes and learning experiences. He learns about the evil side of humankind, and it seems to change the way he sees things. Although Ralph is used as a big part of the realization of the savagery and evil in the story, he is also used to represent hope. At some points, Ralph seems to be the only one who is making an effort to get rescued and still has hope that they will be.

Ralph’s leadership skills were easy to see throughout the novel, and even though he did have some negative traits like being controlling or mean at times, doesn’t every leader? He is a very smart and logical boy, especially considering his age. Ralph wasn’t a perfect leader for the boys, but in the end, no one really is perfect. I believe that Ralph made the best leader for the boys, especially because of his realization of the savagery and evil that was overcoming the group.