

Breakdown of society – "lord of the flies" essay sample



Breakdown Of Society – “ Lord Of The Flies” Essay Sample

“ When a nation goes down, or a society perishes, one condition may always be found; they forgot where they came from. They lost sight of what had brought them along.” This preceding quote, said by Carl Sandburg, helps people to understand why deterioration of a society occurs. When a civilian, or a country forgets their background or morals, they are unable to demonstrate constraint towards what they would refrain from immediately under normal conditions. These unusual conditions can be the cause of all deterioration in society. In The Lord Of The Flies when a group of boys are deserted on a remote island, they originally try to follow the societal values in which they learned in their homeland of Britain. Eventually, the boys lost all control over each other and even themselves because they forgot where they came from and what they stand for. The three main stages of societal deterioration seen in The Lord Of The Flies are the failure to duplicate British society, the breakdown of society into two factions, and finally the act of murder.

The initial stage of societal deterioration seen in The Lord Of The Flies is the boys’ inability to effectively duplicate British society. The first time this can be seen in during one of the boys’ meetings. They are discussing the current situation on the island, and more particularly, the need for rules. Ralph said:

“ We’ll have rules!” he cried excitedly.

“ Lots of rules! Then when anyone breaks’ em”

“ Whee-oh!”

“ Wacco!”

“ Boing!”

“ Doink!” (Golding, 32).

Ralph’s obviously ineffective statement caused an eruption of laughter within the boys, which allows the boys to believe that the need for rules is not a serious issue. As leader, Ralph is not placing any consequences on the breaking of rules, therefore, the boys essentially have nothing to fear, and thus, feel free to do whatever they would like. The boys’ inability to duplicate British society is seen next when the boys show no concentration towards their assigned tasks. Their lack of follow through is seen when they are split into two groups. One was to make shelters, while the other was to go hunting. Ralph becomes angry because only Simon and himself were working on the shelters, while the rest of the boys either hunted or went swimming.

Ralph’s anger is shown in the following quote: “ You remember the meeting? How everyone was going to work hard until all the shelters were finished?” (Golding, 51). The final factor contributing to the boys’ inability to duplicate British society can be seen when the boy with the mulberry birthmark disappears. This disappearance shows that the boys have no way of accounting for people to know whether they are missing. This sense of order is an essential factor in having a functioning society because without it, there is no way to account for anything else, which could be detrimental to any society. To summarize, the first stage of societal deterioration seen in “ The Lord Of The Flies” is the boys’ failure to effectively duplicate British society. <https://assignbuster.com/breakdown-of-society-lord-of-the-flies-essay-sample/>

The Second state in the deterioration of society seen in “ The Lord Of The Flies” is the separation of the boys into two factions. This separation is first seen when Jack and Ralph are arguing over the tasks, which need to be done. Ralph is upset with Jack and the other boys because they only are concerned about hunting, while he feels that there is a greater need for shelter. The other boys see both Jack and Ralph as leaders; therefore, tension is building on the Island between the boys who follow Jack and those who follow Ralph. There two very different opinions can be seen in the following:

“ You wouldn’t care to help with the shelters I suppose?”

“ We want meat.”

“ And we don’t get it.”

Now the antagonism was audible. (Golding, 52).

In this argument, the boys’ disagreement becomes very visible. The reader can see the two of the splitting their society. The next situation where the separation of society in “ The Lord Of The Flies” is apparent is when Ralph confronts Jack about their relationship. Ralph asks: “ Why do you hate me?” (Golding, 129). These questions allows all of the boys to see the antagonism between Jack and Ralph and therefore, some of the boys are easily able to follow Jack as they no longer feel pressured to stay with Ralph. The final circumstance where the separation of society can be seen in “ The Lord Of The Flies” is when the hunters paint their faces. The hunters are masking

themselves so they don't feel required to follow the morals they learned in British society.

When they are behind the paint, they are not constrained to acting as they would around adults. They essentially have no sense of compassion towards any living thing when they are behind the paint. The hunters also feel no need to follow through on any orders given to them or to do what they know is truly necessary because they simply are not themselves. This creates greater tension between Jack and Ralph, giving them the final push to completely separate into two factions. In summary, the second phase of societal deterioration seen in "The Lord Of The Flies" is the separation of society into two factions.

The Final stage of the deterioration of society seen "The Lord Of The Flies" is the act of murder. The first boy to be murdered during the deterioration of society is Simon. His death is not the main issue however; the issue is that Piggy and Ralph are able to justify it very easily, without feeling regretful. Piggy justifies his and Ralph's contribution to the killing by saying: "It was dark, there was that - that bloody dance. There was lightning and thunder and rain. We was scared!" (Golding, 173). This statement shows that Piggy and Ralph know that they were wrong, but because they have been slowly losing their sense of morality. They did not stop. Ralph and Piggy were also trying to blame their actions on the other boys, and the weather. The next step in the final stage of societal deterioration is when Piggy is killed while trying to grasp the last bit of order remaining. Piggy questioned: "Which is better - to have rules and agree, or to hunt and kill?" (Golding, 200). This statement was followed by Roger releasing a boulder over Castle Rock, which

<https://assignbuster.com/breakdown-of-society-lord-of-the-flies-essay-sample/>

then struck Piggy, thrusting him over the cliff and smashing into the rocks in the ocean.

This cruel and graphic murder shows the boys no longer have any sense of morals. Roger did not have any interest in being part of an orderly society, and thus, killed one of the final boys who have concern for their actions. The final step in the complete deterioration of society seen in "The Lord Of The Flies" is the attempted murder of Ralph, who is the final link to morals and a civilized society. Without any care of the outcome, the savage boys set the island on fire in order to kill Ralph. This is showing that the boys have no sense of morals at all as they want to kill Ralph, even if they kill themselves in the process. They obviously have lost all their remaining sense of clear sightedness, as they cannot see that burning the island would essentially have negative effects on all of them. To sum up, the final stage of the deterioration of society seen in "The Lord Of The Flies" is the act of murder.

In conclusion, the three main stages of societal deterioration seen in "The Lord Of The Flies" are the failure to effectively duplicate British society, the separation of society into two factions, and finally the act of murder. "The Lord Of The Flies" is key in proving that nearly anyone can commit pure evil. All that is needed is for a person to be placed in completely unusual situations to revert to savage ways. Just consider that upon arriving on the island, the boys thought they would have a lot of fun without and parental guidance, and look at what the outcome was.