

Lord of the Flies – Practice Essay

9/6/05

Lord of the Flies, by William Golding, is a symbolic novel exploring human nature by a fictional story of survival, in which children that are stranded on an island attempt to form a civilized society. Unfortunately, this large group of boys is unable to maintain order and a natural, barbaric instinct occupies the minds of a few of them. Over time, a savage, rebel tribe is born, leaving civilized ideologies behind.

The children of the island begin as innocent British boys who have an eager desire of returning home. The protagonist, Ralph, is elected the chief of the group. He forms rules and assigns jobs to the older boys, known as the Biguns. The younger boys, Littluns, represent the role of people in an organized body of government, while the Biguns behave as leaders. A few Biguns decide to be hunters, while also managing the responsibility of keeping a signal fire lit.

One day, a ship passes by the island, but the signal fire isn't lit and thus the hunters are held responsible for this tremendous failure. As an excuse, the leader of the hunters and antagonist of the story, Jack, argues a priority of meat over signal fire. After a moment of arguing, Jack makes a speech to restore order, yet tension rises between Jack and Ralph.

The young, scared Littluns fear the darkness and have dreams about a beast. The fear spreads of this devastating creature, the Beastie, and the boys discuss it. They try to understand where it comes from and how it kills. When a Littlun proposes that it comes from the sea, the entire group of boys becomes frightened.

Over night, an aerial dogfight destructively takes place and a dead pilot falls to the island with his parachute on. When a pair of twins, Sam and Eric, sees the silhouette of the parachute they tell the others that they'd see the Beastie. Jack proposes a hunt, but Ralph refuses. Ralph, Jack, and a few others set on a search for the monster. When they return to camp, they have a meeting to discuss what should be done about the Beastie. Jack proposes a hunt, but Ralph refuses. Jack can't tolerate Ralph's choice, so he calls him a coward and begins for a vote against Ralph's position as chief. Jack is alone with his opinion, but soon his hunters join him to another part of the island. The increasingly wild Jack decided to form a tribe.

Jack's tribe is a brutal, barbaric group of hungry children. They perform ceremonies where they kill pigs, chanting, "Kill the pig! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!" Jack invites boys who aren't in his tribe for a feast of pig's meat, which serves as a reason to join. Ralph and the others come and eat for hours. During the night, a young boy named Simon comes to the feat at night when the tribe is dancing, and he is mistaken for the Beastie. The boys brutally kill Simon and his body floats out to the sea.

The tribe attacks Ralph's poor, civilized society. They come to steal fire and the glasses of a boy named Piggy, which are used to create fire. Their raid ends and Ralph's group is left miserable. Pathetically, Piggy persuades his friends to march to the tribes home, which is a fortress. Once they reach the fort, Ralph blows his conch, a whistle-like shell, to signal a meeting. Jack returns from hunting and stabs Ralph on his ribs with a wooden spear. One of the tribesmen, Roger, strikes a boulder at Piggy, which pushes Piggy off a cliff to his death, rebounds, and destroys the conch, which was a symbol of order. Ralph hides, and Sam and Eric are captured.

Ralph wakes up after hiding for a night. He quietly greets the tied twins to discover Jack's plan of hunting him down. The hunters come and search for Ralph as he panics. They find him and a manhunt begins across the forest. The barbarians chase Ralph along the forest, which is on fire since Jack believed it might help kill Ralph.

As Ralph runs to the beach, the manhunt abruptly ends. A naval officer approaches Ralph and the boys begin to cry.

Blink – Outline

Blink, by Malcom Galdwell, is a psychological analysis of our first thoughts in new situations. The author thoroughly explains this unconscious thought process that lasts only a few seconds. The book seems to be a random collection of short stories with interesting psychology involved. In numerous examples, Galdwell describes the different thought processes involved in our “blinks”.

Pepsi challenge – no one drinks Pepsi blind. You buy the package.

The Aeron chair – not ugly, but different

Speed dating – little information can go a long way

Sculpture, Doctors, Food tasters – thin slicing, examine what matters

Kenna – Radio judging situation is wrong

Wargames – Quick decisions, no charts, follow first instinct – it may be better

Musicians – Visuals altered what conductors believed they heard

Baseball – Making up what probably happened, instead of saying I don't know