

Today I'd like to talk again about the book „Lord of the Flies“ written by William Golding. While last time I mainly gave a summary, I'd like to focus today on the following three aspects:

- A brief description of the main characters,
- the discussion of a selected passage from the book and
- my personal opinion.

But first I'd like to freshen up your memories by giving you a general summary:

Summary

The book is an adventure story about a group of boys abandoned on tropical island during a war, that is still raging elsewhere. The book describes how the kids first erect a democratic system of government by electing a boy called Ralph over an other boy called Jack. Under the leadership of Ralph they decide to adapt as much as possible the daily pattern of their lives in England to the tropical island. But most of the boys, especially the littluns, soon loose interests in doing evident things, like building shelters, and start playing the whole day long. So they also neglect the fire they decided to put up to be seen by probably passing ships on behalf of going hunting a pig. So the boys are breaking into two groups: one led by Ralph and the other, the hunters, led by Jack. While Ralph maintains the democratic system, Jack develops a community which is aggressive but which accepts his absolute authority.

To appease a probably existing beast, the hunters stick a pig's head on a stick. They call this gift „The Lord of the Flies“. In course of time, all the boys which joined Ralph's group change to Jack, except Piggy and the twins. One evening, the hunters steal Piggy's glasses. When they try to get them back, a heavy stone, thrown by a boy hits Piggy. He's killed instantly. Ralph manages to flee from Jack's hunters and is hunted the following day. But when he escapes on the beach he is suddenly facing a British naval officer. The soldiers are a little bit confused but think that it is all just fun and games. So they prepare to take the boys off the island.

The main characters

Ralph is a twelve years old boy, athletically built and good-looking. In spite of some weakness in his character, he has a natural disposition to be kind and to do good. As leader he feels responsible for the littluns.

Despite he has natural qualities of leadership, he looses control of most of the boys. Maybe because he thinks slowly and is usually dependent upon Piggy's inspiration. However, Ralph's moral sense survives longer than any other character's. I mention Ralph, because he is the protagonist, who embodies the positive and civilized aspect in the book.

From the beginning **Jack** Merridew appears as the antagonist of Ralph. While first Ralph and him seem to become friends, Jack turns out to be something like the negative pole of Ralph, the evil character. He looks ugly and also differs from Ralph in his lack of sympathy for the littluns. However, he understands better than Ralph that the children's fears cannot be dismissed. He uses their fears and promises them fun and meat in order to become the leader of the group.

Piggy, we never learn his real name, meets Ralph already on the first page of the novel. He is very fat and greedy and suffers from bad health and short-sightedness. He seems to have a less polished education than the other boys, however, he is the most intellectual of the children. But as he isn't strong enough, he needs Ralph's help in the group. In the course of the novel Ralph learns that he and Piggy are something like the king and his adviser.

Piggy often mentions things that are obvious but which the others won't like to hear what makes him unpopular among the others. Until he dies, he remains loyal to Ralph.

In course of time Ralph looses, while Jack gains power. Piggy, as Ralph's adviser, is the victim of this power game.

The Passage

Ralph is being hunted by Jack's tribe, that lit the forest. He is now hiding in a thicket and is watching a hunter looking for him. He hears the war cries in the background. Ralph calls all hunters savages, because they are all painted and naked.

I chose this passage for several reasons. The plot reached it's climax and is instantly falling to an anticlimax, since you expect Jack to be punished by the soldiers but nothing happens. The officer just says hallo. I picked it also because it shows you exactly how Golding is able to describe a situation or an action. You feel as if, you were Ralph, looking out of the thicket, suddenly discovering a hunter who is looking for you, moving in your direction. This passage also shows you how Golding is able to write from the point of view of a boy. You will have also

noticed that Golding doesn't use an understandable language for his books. And this passage is even one of the more difficult ones.

My personal opinion

As for me, I enjoyed very much reading this book. It is, from the first to the last chapter, very interesting and exciting. Golding manages to describe things the way children would see them. He knows exactly what boys are like, how they react and how they talk to each other. He uses for example children slang to create the boys way of talking. The way Golding describes the island and the places of event, makes the reader feel as if he or she was on the island himself. The only thing of the book I disliked was the ending. I expected that the soldiers for example would punish the evil characters. But Golding probably wanted the reader to think about the ending himself. So did I and think that Jack and the others can't be punished, because they acted in a very special situation, and maybe they learned from their behavior for their later lives.

To end my talk I can really recommend this book to everybody.

ululation	Gebrüll
straighten	gerade werden
shore	Küste
to peer	spähen
to decipher	entziffern/enträtseln
foaming	aufbrausend/schäumend
to snarl [sna:l]	knurren
to merge	verschmelzen
to sight	entdecken
a jagged fringe of menace	ein gezackter Rand der Bedrohung
to crouch with arm up to ward off	sich mit erhobenen Armen ducken um sich zu schützen
drill	Uniformstoff
wary	wachsam
bow	Bug
to haul up	heraufziehen
rating	Matrose
stern-sheet	Heckschot