Representation Of Dark Sides In The Lord Of Flies

The lord of flies’ analytical essay

The lord of flies is William Goldings most recognized piece of writing. The novel explores the “darkness” that comes with human nature through following the behavioural changes of a group of young schoolboys when found stuck on a tropical, uninhabited island after their plane is shot down.

Like every other writer, William Golding uses various literacy techniques to portray certain themes and ideas. In the book the lord of flies, Golding’s message about humanity is displayed through the use of setting, characterization and most importantly symbolism.

In the book the “Lord of flies”, the representation of the chosen setting has a major influence in effectively expressing the main themes of the book (loss of innocence along with the importance of civilization). The setting being a deserted tropical island in the middle of nowhere, takes effect in influencing the boy’s behaviour and mindset. Eventually, the setting “sets” up an environment where the adaptation of the characters becomes crucial in order to survive. Through the setting, the writer also portrays the characters transformation from “innocent” to “evil “and suggests that what is described as a place of “darkness” is in fact not the “beast”.

All humans have a dark side that lies within them, and when civilization is taken away then that darkness can turn to a disaster. That is seen through William Golding’s use of characters.

Golding combines specific kind of characters that hold different values and ideologies to show that the boys must fight the darkness from within themselves to survive and be rescued. However due them being so different from one another, some are seen to be unable to control their inner darkness, something which soon after leads to several unethical decisions that cause risky outcomes.

Throughout the story, Golding uses “Simon” to portray several key messages and ideas. Simon is one of the very few boys that stay sensibly and open-minded about the psychological changes that are taking over the boy’s behaviour. Although he is a character that is portrayed to be very different from the rest, mainly due to his physical weakness and fainting spells he is shown to be holding a significant power that is helping him understand the nature of the “beast”.

Ralph on the other side is a character that is seen to be representing order and leadership amongst the boys. That can be seen through his use of the conch: “I will give the conch to the next person to speak. He can hold it while speaking”. That is indicating ralphs determination to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to express their ideas while being respected by the rest of the group. As we can see, if it wasn’t for ralphs logical thinking and coordination the boys would never have had the opportunity to survive. However, as the novel progresses, we see that ralphs character transforms into an individual that is no longer able to “fight” for anyone but himself.

Golding uses Jacks character to display that the “darkness/evilness” has taken over the boys. Jack is a character that is first seen to be facing several physical/mental changes while adapting to his new surroundings/cruel ways of living. In the beginning of the book, we are introduced to a civilized choir boy who struggles to “kill” a living thing as it is against his beliefs, however, his character transforms and develops a violent side that later contributes to “killing things that are swallowing him up”, a combination of feelings that he is seen to have no control over.

Throughout the novel “lord of the flies”, William Golding exposes the characters to various unique elements which are used to symbolize how the “darkness” that lies within the boys has taken a dominant effect over the power of “innocence”, resulting in a uncivilized environment where chaos and evilness is highly seen.

One of the most important symbols in the book “Lord of the flies” is the beast .The beast is a source of evil that all five boys are deeply afraid of, however in reality, it is just a product of their imagination that we soon after discover is used for the purpose of foreshadowing the “evilness” that has taken over the boys actions. That can also be seen through Simons attempt to share his insight with the rest, “Maybe, there is a beast. What I mean is, maybe its only us”.

The conch on the other hand is used to represent more than just an object, it is used to symbolise the start of a stable civilisation. Throughout the book, the conch has significant power in controlling the actions, behaviour of the boys. However, when it is destroyed, we see that the appearance of order is lost and the relationship between the boys is wrecked.

In William Golding’s book, the boys are shown to have entirely lost their innocence in their attempt to create a civilized society. That can be seen through Golding’s use of symbolic elements/characterization that allow the reader to picture a clear image of the possible behaviour consequences that can occur when humans are left alone with no rules/laws.