

Symbolism in Lord of the Flies

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Symbolism in Lord of the Flies

In William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, a novel that explores the depths of human nature, plot is irrelevant in comparison to the rich symbolism embedded in nearly all components of the story. The theme of the book is the destructive presence of evil as an influence to mankind, which lies within the breakdown of all order and common sense as a group of British boys stranded on a deserted island evolve into a pack of animalistic savages. The clues to this hidden theme behind the storyline are plentiful, as Golding uses a number of objects to represent certain ideologies and moral values.

The first term used in the book that holds much symbolic value throughout the story is the usage of the word "scar" for the stretch of sandy beach that borders the thick jungle on the island. When the plane [crashes](#) on the lush island, it disrupts the balance and harmony of nature untouched by man's influence. The twisted wreckage of the plane creates an [imperfection](#) in the peacefulness of nature, and leaves the beach a "scar" of what it used to be - beautiful and unharmed by man's destructive impulse. Golding describes the natural surroundings of the island in lush, descriptive [detail](#) all throughout the book, beginning with an account of Ralph's proximity :

"The shore was fledged with palm trees. These stood or leaned or reclined against the light and their green feathers were a hundred feet up in the air. The ground beneath them was a bank covered with grass, torn everywhere by the upheavals of fallen trees, scattered with decaying coconuts and palm saplings. Behind this was the darkness of the forest proper and the open space of the scar." (9-10)

An object which also attains much symbolic relevance as the story unfolds is the conch shell. Delicate, fragile, and white, the conch is what brings the boys together on the first day at the beach. It is used throughout the story as an object of high importance and tradition, as it calls meetings together and determines who has the right to speak, depending on who is holding it at the time. It can be seen as a representation of law and order amongst the boys, as it unites them and prevents chaos from arising.

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