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Lord of the Flies Essay

### **This Piggy Won't Squeal**

In a world where pig heads are worshipped and boys are taken for beasts, it is interesting to note that it would all begin by electing to ignore someone based off appearance. Piggy, an overweight boy, is instantly rejected by Ralph for his due to his weight and within the first seconds of meeting him, Ralph attempts to abandon Piggy. The children on the island do the same, despite instantly gathering around Ralph for his fair looks and "commanding" physique. They gather around "his" ideas, despite most of them being Piggy's originally, and laugh when Piggy is both interrupted and humiliated by Jack. This action of choosing to ignore Piggy, the only voice of reason they have, ends up setting off a domino effect, leading the island into chaos. This sequence of events shows that humans find it easy to disregard the opinions of someone they don't find inherently trustworthy or attractive -- even if that opinion is in fact valuable.

As seen in chapter two, Ralph is established leader and leads the children up the mountain to form a signal fire. After chaos begins to erupt, Piggy objects to their treatment of him and comes to a realization. "You say you wanted a small fire and you been and built a pile like a hayrack. If I say anything,' cried Piggy with bitter realism, 'you say shut up; but if Jack or Maurice or Simon-" (43) What makes this quote work so well is the fact that Jack, Maurice, Simon and all the other children have, at this point,

known each other for less than a day. Piggy, despite knowing the leader Ralph for a slightly longer period of time, is given much less freedom than the other boys, especially when it comes to speaking. By doing this, the boys are revealing what they were really thinking the whole time. That Piggy wasn't as nearly as good as them or that he would slow down the group. They would follow wildly and blindly for a leader who looked like he could lead, but spared no sympathy for someone who didn't quite fit the mold for survival.

With that in mind, the first connection to *Lord of the Flies* is made. In this real-life example, it reveals the bias of first impressions starting with two Princeton psychologists Janine Willis and Alexander Todorov. Through several experiments, they discovered that it only takes a tenth of a second for a person's mind to form their first impression. Volunteers were shown photographs of unfamiliar faces for one tenth of a second, then half, and later one full second. After each test, the volunteer would be asked to create an opinion for the figure shown in each of the following categories; attractiveness, likeability, competence, trustworthiness, and aggressiveness. Response times were recorded and showed that the participants in the study made their judgements just as quickly when given a longer glimpse at the image than when they were asked to do the same after seeing an image for one tenth of a second. As humans evolved, quick decision making became vital to survival, as it could often draw the line between life and death in a dangerous situation. In today's world, this bias is, arguably, less needed as humans continue to gain more and more time to make rational and thoughtful decisions. Despite this, mankind continues to rely on split second biases to

make their decisions for them, instead of taking a moment to breathe and then pursue a conclusion. This tendency to rely on the bias is what ends up causing people to stop communicating altogether. An individual wearing a Trump hat in Philadelphia is less likely to be asked why they believe what they do and more likely to be yelled at for their opinion than a feminist in Philadelphia. If you were to transport them to the midwest, it would end up being vice versa. After all, there is no point in listening to someone, if you have already made up your mind as to what the answer will be. In addition, humans can be very prideful when it comes to their thoughts and opinions. Rather than attempting to challenge their beliefs and apply themselves for personal growth, they surround themselves with opinions that mirror their own. This could be taken as an example that they would rather be stuck in a loop than to be wrong. In many ways, this reflects towards Jack and the island boys when it comes to their biases against Piggy.

After the chaos on top of the mountain is beginning to settle down, Piggy remains furious for the harassment they put him through, then ends his lecture with a chilling thought for the boys to consider. "Then he [Piggy] laughed so strangely that they were hushed, looking at the flash of his spectacles in astonishment, They followed his gaze to find the sour joke. 'You got your small fire alright.'" (44) What we see here is a large area of personal growth for Piggy and an important decision, made by the other boys, all in a short period of time. While their first impression told them that Piggy was useless, he proved them wrong. However, instead of following or showing more respect toward Piggy, Jack specifically begins to loathe him and downgrade his advice during future discussions. Jack, who had already proved himself to be a prideful child by stabbing

the tree and vowing to kill a pig, is now stumped as the kid whom he called useless ends up outdoing him through thought and reason. Their first impression was incorrect, not only making them appear stupid, but also ashamed as their actions. To the boys, leadership looked like a small hole cut through a box and no matter how hard he tried, Piggy would never fit through. Instead, he just found a way to break the box, putting no walls in between Jack and himself. This meant that Jack and the boys were now facing a challenge of opinions and could no longer leverage the fact that Piggy wasn't as physically capable as them, because in terms of intelligence, he surpassed them. The only way for the children to remain above would be to downgrade Piggy until he would no longer become a threat.

In conclusion, what the reader finds is a complex bias caused by complex emotions that then leads to nasty situations. As people dislike being wrong or dislike a particular person, they tend to not want that person to succeed, otherwise, that person they dislike has the potential to either prove them wrong or show them up, both of which are unpleasantly received. The reader can see that through the way the boys treat Piggy originally and the way the boys will treat him later are only worsened when he proves that he was a valuable part of the group and became a threat to their pride and judgements.

## Works Cited

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## LOTF Essay Draft

*How does the created society of Lord of The Flies compare to today's society? Choose a major issue or event from the book and make a connection between that aspect of the novel to the real world.*

*This connection should be more than just a simple "they are similar" or "they are different" -- you are looking to make a statement that analyzes human behavior in a complex way.*

## Peer Editing Rubric

Category	What's working in this paper? What still needs work?
DESIGN - Essay has a unique, insightful, debatable thesis statement that analyzes human behavior in a complex way.	The thesis statement is indeed interesting but I think that in your intro you should focus more on the theme of your essay rather than the connection the book. Although that is important, in order to understand the importance of your theme in Lord of the Flies, it first needs to be explained.
KNOWLEDGE - Essay shows a thorough comprehension of all materials being referenced – both “Lord of the Flies” and the real world example. The reader is never confused.	You have great quotes from the book which seem to have taken much time to find but something that could use a bit of work is your context. Some of your paragraphs have great amount but your last paragraph in particular needs more work on the context because I am confused what is happening in the quote and why it is relevant to the thesis.
APPLICATION - Essay successfully presents a thesis argument and expands on this idea with the support chosen. Analysis goes beyond just saying that the two examples are similar or different.	This section I think you need to work on the most out of the rest. You have the thesis, you have your quotes, and you have part of your context but analysis is something that you are lacking and it is the most important part of your entire essay. You need to expand this idea to multiple situation. I had given some directions you could go with your analysis in the comments. I think you have a solid essay if you just complete this section.
PRESENTATION - Essay meets all of the criteria for style and conventions: Precise control of language, stylistic techniques, and sentence structures that creates a consistent and effective tone. Few errors, if any, are present in grammar, usage, spelling and punctuation.	You have a unique style that you write in and at times it is a bit difficult to understand the point you are trying to get across. Just make sure to make your points simple and clear in order for the reader to be able to get what you are saying. Your essay does not have many grammatical errors which I had been able to catch so good job in that sense. I wish there had been more of this essay to read so I could better understand the control of language and emotions you have on the audience.

