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Language and Literature

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Ralph's Identity as a Hero or Anti-hero

In the book *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, Ralph can be seen as a hero or an anti-hero. Also, it can be difficult to tell if Ralph is a hero or an anti-hero at the beginning of the book. Can Ralph be identified more as a hero or an anti-hero? Can your perspective on this topic be different than others?

At the beginning of the book, Ralph is introduced as one of the main characters. He can be seen as the hero at first, carefree, happy, hopeful, and a little bit cocky. When Ralph is elected chief, he can maintain the group and keep them sane and safe from any harm.

This quote explains, the boys are going to vote for chief. This also shows how Ralph is a chosen leader, but on the other hand, this shows the starting of him becoming a hero.

He lifted the conch. "Seems we ought to have a chief to decide things."

"A chief! A chief!"

"I ought to be chief," said Jack with simple arrogance, "because I'm chapter chorister and head boy. I can sing a C sharp."

Another buzz...

"All right. Who wants Jack for chief?"

With dreary obedience, the choir raised their hands.

"Who wants me?"...

Ralph counted.

“I’m chief then.” (Pgs.22-23)

This quote explains that at the beginning of the book Ralph starts as a hero or leader. On the other hand, this is also one of the examples of how Jack becomes jealous of Ralph becoming a chosen leader. Now, this quote takes place on the beach by the end of the island near sundown. The boys are sitting around Ralph after he blew into the conch to call them. They decided to vote for a chief, and they all want Ralph. They want Ralph because he has the conch that called them to him. Ralph is handsome according to the book, and he learns everyone's names, unlike Jake who just wanted to be the leader. This explanation shows that all the boys think Ralph can be the hero and the chief.

Near the end of the book, Ralph can be seen as an anti-hero. He has lost his position as chief to Jack who made everyone follow him out of fear. Ralph's characteristics change drastically during the book. He is now scared of Jack and his tribe, alone because his friends are either dead or in Jack's tribe, hopeless, and an outcast from the group.

Now, this quote is going to show how he is an outcast to the group and how this makes him an anti-hero. This will also explain how Jack becomes overpowered.

“I say! You voted me for chief. Didn’t you hear the conch? You played a dirty trick-we’d have given you fire if you’d ask for it-”...

“You could have had fire whenever you wanted. However, you didn’t. You came sneaking up like a thief and stole Piggy’s glasses!”...

“Thief! Thief!”

Piggy screamed...

Jack made a rush and stabbed at Ralph's chest with his spear...

"Listen. We've come to say this. First, you've got to give back Piggy's specs. If he hasn't got them he can't see. You aren't playing the game"...

Piggy's voice penetrated to Ralph.

"Let me speak"...

Piggy held up the conch and the booing sagged a little, then came up again to strength.

"I got the conch!"

He shouted...

The rock struck Piggy a glancing blow from chin to knee; the conch exploded into a thousand white fragments and ceased to exist. Piggy, saying nothing with no time

for even a grunt,... Piggy fell forty feet and landed on his back across the square red

rock in the sea.

Ralph turned and ran. (Pgs.176-181)

In this quote, this explains how Ralph turned into an anti-hero from a hero. He goes to Jack's tribe at what they call castle rock and tries to get Piggy's specs back. Ralph is fighting with Jack to have peace with him, but it turns into something more. When Piggy tries to talk to the tribe, it leads to the conches loss in power and his death with it. The cause of his death was Roger pulling a lever, and many rocks and boulders came down

and caused it to hit Piggy. This leads to Ralph running away leaving the rest of his friends behind him.

In conclusion, Ralph in some opinions can be a hero or an anti-hero. This leads others to have a different view of the book. Did you see Ralph as a hero or more of an anti-hero?