The novel *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding is a story of adventure, leadership, and savagery. When a plane full of schoolboys crashes on an uncharted island, the boys learn to fend for themselves. A boy named Ralph is elected their chief, and under his leadership, the boys create a community and structure of their own. But another boy named Jack is full of jealousy for Ralph, and he and his band of hunters (previous choir boys) revolt. They go off and form their own tribe, where they take prisoners and torture them. Two boys, Simon and Piggy, are killed because of the tribe’s savage ways. Finally, a Naval officer, who sees the smoke from the fire the tribe starts on the island, rescues the boys. It becomes clear through this story that in order to have a successful community, you need to work together. There is one character to blame for the loss of structure in *Lord of the Flies*. Because of his intense opinions and impulsiveness that led to the demise of their community, Jack is the most interesting character.

When we first meet Jack Merridew, he appears as an arrogant but confident person and leader. He makes this very clear during the debate for chief. “‘I ought to be chief,’ said Jack with simple arrogance, ‘because I’m chapter chorister and head boy. I can sing C sharp’” (p.22). Jack makes it known that he looks down on the other boys, and doesn’t really care what they think at all. When Piggy tries to tell him something, he responds with “Shut up, Fatty”. He came from a place where he was solely in charge, to a place when someone else was in power, and he resents that. However, Ralph puts him in charge of the choirboys, who are hunters and in charge of keeping the signal fire going. Jack is willing to compromise for a short amount of time.

As the story progresses, Jack becomes more independent and distant from the rest of the boys, hunting alone and not respecting Ralph’s wishes. His first sign of rebellion is when Piggy of all people confronts him about letting the fire out, and not helping to build shelters. Jack is humiliated and angry, and to cover up for his humiliation, he punches Piggy in the stomach, causing his glasses to fall off and break. Later, Jack begins to go crazy. He criticizes Ralph in front of all the boys, trying to convince them to make him chief instead. He shouts, and speaks out of turn. When Ralph tells him that he’s breaking the rules, he offhandedly shouts back, “Who cares?” (p. 91). Jack’s disregard for the rules is so different form his earlier eagerness for them.

When Jack is unable to remain under Ralph’s leadership, he forms his own tribe, and reveals the savage that he truly is. However, just once, he shows us his human feelings as well. Just before he leaves, he says, with tears of humiliation, “I’m not going to play anymore. Not with you” (p.127). It is interesting to see Jack show any form of remorse, but for Jack to refers to everything he’s done and is about to do as a game. It is a sign of his savagery, hidden underneath child-like terms. Some of the other boys join his tribe later, mostly in the hope of getting meat and protection from the Beast. The boys go on a pig hunt, and slay a pig violently and without mercy. They care nothing for the pig- only for the rush of the hunt and the joy of the kill. Toward the end of the story, Jack’s minion Roger kills Piggy at Castle Rock. After Piggy is dead, and the conch is destroyed, Jack attacks Ralph. There is nothing left for Ralph to fight with. The conch, and all trace of democracy, is gone. Jack finds that he is able to lead on impulse, without Ralph or Piggy to hold him back.

Jack played a very important role in *Lord of the Flies*. He was the main antagonist of the story, and he caused many of the troubles on the island. The loss of structure was his fault. Jack rebelled with such impulse and force that it was impossible to keep everyone organized and working. Perhaps Jack’s biggest problem in this story is that he showed no sign of *wanting* to be rescued. He wasn’t interested in keeping the fire going or building shelters so they wouldn’t get wet or attacked in the night. He only wanted to hunt, a luxury that implied he expected to be there for a while. Jack, it seems, would have been perfectly happy to live on the island forever if he could have his own way. But it was imperative that he didn’t. He would’ve killed Ralph, and every boy on the island would have been a savage or dead. Jack is an interesting character because he is so highly opinionated, but when it comes to honest leadership, he knows nothing at all.