

Worksheet 4. Characters as Symbols (teacher version)

Sometimes characters, individually or as a group, become symbolic. Thought of in this way, the boys on the island symbolize all of humankind, stranded on the island space that represents planet Earth.

Explain what types of individual personalities the following characters symbolize. Include textual evidence in your answers.

Ralph	People with good intentions and many natural abilities, but not quite up to the challenges they must face; people who are more doers than thinkers; strong people who are not naturally prone to violence
Jack	Frustrated individuals with a strong need to control others; people whose veneer of civilization, when eroded, reveals potential for savagery lurking beneath; doers, fighters, and manipulators
Piggy	Gifted individuals who lack the criteria essential to gain popularity, such as good looks and athletic ability, and who often evoke teasing and even ridicule; easily become the butt of jokes that others find funny; victims who, ironically, are most capable of thought
Simon	Good-natured people who are in some way odd or different; loners and thinkers; perhaps mystics, prophets, or people with a kind of gut-sense of good and evil
Sam and Eric	Good but powerless people whose main desire is to somehow survive no matter what the cost
Roger	People with a cruel and sadistic streak that is normally sublimated by the demands of outside authority
Percival	Powerless people caught in a catastrophe they do not understand, or one with which they are entirely unable to cope