

Name _____

SYMBOLS in *LOTF*

⇒ **Symbolism** is a technique in which a concrete person, place, or thing not only represents itself --but also has a deeper, more complex (often abstract) meaning. Many symbols come from the Bible (e.g. apple = knowledge, snakes = evil/ someone untrustworthy) or from classical mythology (Cupid's arrows = lustful desires).

The boys as symbols: *LOTF* has been called a fable in which **the characters** are symbols for abstract ideas. Analyze each of the major characters (Ralph, Jack, Piggy, Simon, and Roger) in terms of the distinctive human quality he might symbolize:

- _____ = the scientist/ the rational man; he symbolizes man's **rational/ logical side**.
- _____ = the mystic/ the saint; he symbolizes man's **spiritual side**—one who is always thinking of how to help others and who needs to be restored by reflection and contemplation. He is wise, but his intelligence is not based on facts and data, but on an understanding of abstract forces.
- _____ = the selfish egotist; he represents man's **pleasure loving, selfish, what's-in-it-for-me side**.
- _____ = the sadist; he symbolizes the **side that sometimes gets pleasure from seeing other people suffer**.
- _____ = "**everyman**"; he is the boy who seems to contain pieces of all of these. He is the roundest of the characters. Can you support this assertion?

What possible message(s) is (are) conveyed through Golding's use of these symbols?

Other symbolic connections to the boys' mental state. How do the following symbolize what's happening **inside** the boys?

- Boys' hair and physical appearance ?
- Piggy's spectacles?
- The time of day?
- The weather?
- Clothing?

Don't forget to consider allegorical messages – see chart later in packet.

Other symbols:

Types of power: Identify the thing used to symbolize

_____ = the forces of nature being controlled by man (*Duality alert!* Sometimes this is used for good; sometimes for destruction.)

_____ = technology (tools used to harness nature)

_____ = democracy/ government with the consent and participation of the governed

_____ = tyranny/ cruel and oppressive government / rule through fear (2 possible answers to this.)

What message (s) could be conveyed through any combination of these symbols? Explain.

Symbols of man's stewardship of/ relationship to the Earth. All these "symbols" point to a message about man's relationship to his environment. What is the message?

- The island itself =
- The scar =
- The fire on the mountain =
- The final fire =
- Others?

Message =

Other minor symbols:

- The sand castles that the littluns build =

Religious (Biblical symbols) –

- The island =
- The choir =
- The snake(s) in the Garden? =

Any others?

Symbolism can operate on larger level. **Allegory** is sustained symbolism carried throughout a work. Usually the characters in an allegory have symbolic meaning and may represent particular virtues or psychological states. The plot of the story is worked out in the usual way, but the story carries a second message about life that can be worked out by figuring the symbolism.

- On a **literal** level LOTF is a story about a group of boys stranded on a tropical island without adult supervision
- On a **symbolic** level, LOTF investigates what happens to civilized people when the structures of civilization disappear.

So ask:

- ◆ What is happening on a literal level? Who lives, who dies, who survives in a changed form?

- ◆ What is the author saying metaphorically about human nature.? Look who lives and dies. etc. and replace the each boy's name in the plot with the type of character he represents and see what the general message is about life?

- ◆ In arriving at your message, you might want to factor in some other symbols
 - ◆ What does the island represent?
 - ◆ What does the beast represent?
 - ◆ What do the rest of the boys represent?

What would be the allegorical message in Simon's death?

What would be the allegorical message in Piggy's death?

What would be the allegorical message in Jack's and Roger's survival?

What would be the allegorical message in Ralph's survival and transformation at the end of the book?