**Lord of the Flies**

**Discussion Questions**

During our novel study of *Lord of the Flies*, by William Golding, there will be in-depth class discussion(s) following each assigned reading. The thematic topics described below are meant to be a *starting point* for our discussions; they are **not** the *only* things we will be discussing. As we progress through the novel, it is expected that you will be able to “build” on the observations and analyses of previous readings.

1.) One of (if not *the*) most central themes of the novel is what is often referred to as **civilization vs. savagery** (or **order vs. chaos)**. Throughout the novel, Golding explores the “duality” that exists within each human being, namely that we all possess the *capacity* to commit both “good” and “evil” deeds; more specifically, Golding (not so subtly) implies that the laws of the civilized world are (possibly) the only things that keep the baser “animal” instincts of (most, but not all) human beings in check. Remove the possibility of any kind of consequence(s), and chaos and brutality will reign. As you read the novel, consider the following questions:

1. At the beginning of the story, how are the influences of society (the “civilized” world) apparent in the ways in which the boys conduct themselves?
2. Who seems to values the rules and order of “home”? Who is quick to ignore them? Why might this be so, and what does it reveal about the individual characters?
3. When, how and why does the organized “society” the boys initially create begin to erode?
4. Where do we see dramatic contrasts between the personalities and behaviours of the boys on the island?

2.) While no specific ages are ever given, the oldest characters on the island are just on the cusp of adolescence (i.e. no older than 12 years of age); furthermore, they are all boys. It is obvious that one of the themes of the novel is what is referred to as the **loss of innocence.** Put simply, this term refers to young (i.e. pre-adolescent) characters who are forced to deal with the harsh realities of the adult world much sooner than most people. As you read the novel, consider the following questions:

1. What “innocent” and “child-like” behaviours do the boys demonstrate at the beginning of the novel?
2. When, how and why do (some of) these behaviours begin to vanish?
3. What role does **fear** play in the boys’ lives? How does it influence their decision making and behaviour(s)?
4. In what ways do the boys remain “child-like” throughout the novel?
5. In what ways are the boys’ responses to certain situations and experiences similar to the way in which adults might respond?

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**Symbols**

**Ralph –**

**Piggy –**

**Jack –**

**Simon –**

**Conch –**

**Piggy’s glasses –**

**Signal fire –**

**The “Beast” –**

**The Lord of the Flies --**