

Great Books: Lord of the Flies: Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 6-8

Curriculum Focus: Literature

Lesson Duration: Two class periods

Program Description

Examine the provocative moral claims of this popular adventure story and learn how parallels are being drawn between the book and modern inner-city gangs and disaffected youth.

Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

- Hold a mock trial to examine what happens to a group of boys stranded on an island with no adult supervision.
- Investigate what happens to civilized people when the structures of a society disappear.

Materials

- *Lord of the Flies*, by William Golding
- Computers with Internet access
- Pens and paper

Procedures

1. Hold a class discussion so students will understand what happens to the boys. Ask them what the author is saying metaphorically about the structures of society.
2. Divide students into three groups:
 - Group One: The rescued boys looking at the time on the island from Jack's point of view.
 - Group Two: The rescued boys looking at the time on the island from Ralph's point of view.
 - Group Three: Judges, who may play the role of parents, police, or other authority figures. During the mock trial, this group will pose questions to the other groups before passing judgment on them.

3. Have each group prepare for its role. Groups one and two should consider the following:
 - What is this character's goal on the island?
 - What role did this character play on the island?
 - For which events does each boy have firsthand knowledge?
 - Which events did each boy hear about?
 - Which actions will each boy defend most strongly?
 - What will each boy say about the others?
4. After Group Three interrogates the other groups, the members should meet to reach their conclusion. Who was responsible for each development during the stay on the island and to what degree? Why do the judges hold specific boys responsible?
5. Judges will pronounce their decision and give out punishments, or rewards, based on their findings. Encourage creativity in devising consequences for each group. Have the judges make recommendations for avoiding such societal destruction in the future.

Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- **3 points:** Students contributed specific examples to the class discussion; provided meaningful insight into their assigned character's point of view on events that occurred on the island or created thoughtful questions for the judges to ask; participated with well-planned arguments, answers, or questions during the mock trial.
- **2 points:** Students contributed examples to the class discussion; provided some insight into their assigned character's point of view on events that occurred on the island or created basic questions for the judges to ask; participated in the mock trial.
- **1 point:** Students did not contribute examples to the class discussion; provided little or no insight into their assigned character's point of view on events that occurred on the island or created questions for the judges to ask; did not participate in the mock trial.

Vocabulary

apprehension

Definition: Suspicion or fear especially of future evil

Context: The travelers' apprehension grew as the airplane's turbulence became more violent.

depravity

Definition: A corrupt act or practice; moral corruption

Context: Natural human depravity often surfaces in times of war.



irony

Definition: The use of words to express something other than and especially the opposite of the literal meaning; incongruity between the actual result of a sequence of events and the normal or expected result

Context: It is an irony that the poorest people are sometimes the most generous.

profane

Definition: Serving to debase or defile what is holy

Context: Years ago, it was considered profane for women to attend church hatless.

prudent

Definition: Marked by wisdom or judiciousness; shrewd in the management of practical affairs

Context: The family turned to Aunt Celia, a prudent and trusted adviser, to resolve their differences.

sadist

Definition: One who delights in cruelty

Context: The neighborhood bully was a sadist who teased children until they cried

Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit link:

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- Life Skills – Thinking and Reasoning: Understands and applies the basic principles of presenting an argument

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the International Reading Association have developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching the English language arts. To view the standards online, go to <http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards/110846.htm>

This lesson plan addresses the following NCTE standards:

- Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
- Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers,



their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

- Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
 - Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
 - Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).
-

Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the [Discoveryschool.com](http://school.discovery.com) Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>
-

DVD Content

This program is available in an interactive DVD format. The following information and activities are specific to the DVD version.

How To Use the DVD

The DVD starting screen has the following options:

Play Video – This plays the video from start to finish. There are no programmed stops, except by using a remote control. With a computer, depending on the particular software player, a pause button is included with the other video controls.

Video Index – Here the video is divided into four parts (see below), indicated by video thumbnail icons. Watching all parts in sequence is similar to watching the video from start to finish. Brief descriptions and total running times are noted for each part. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the remote for TV playback; on a computer, click once to highlight a thumbnail and read the accompanying text description and click again to start the video.

Curriculum Units – These are specially edited video segments pulled from different sections of the video (see below). These nonlinear segments align with key ideas in the unit of instruction. They include onscreen pre- and post-viewing questions, reproduced below in this Teacher's Guide. Total running times for these segments are noted. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the TV remote or click once on the Curriculum Unit title on a computer.



Standards Link—Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

Teacher Resources—This screen gives the technical support number and Web site address.

Video Index

Part 1 (15 min.)

Inspired by atrocities committed during World War II, William Golding wrote *Lord of the Flies* to address the issue of child murderers.

Part 2 (12 min.)

As in any gang culture, the boys in the novel gravitate to a leader to gain a sense of identity and protection.

Part 3 (12 min.)

Biographical information about the author describes Golding's experience with the behavior of young boys, as well as his understanding of human nature's dark side.

Part 4 (14 min.)

The real-life mayhem caused by the Lords of Chaos in Florida mirrors the events of the novel. Violence spinning out of control demonstrates how childhood innocence can be lost.

Curriculum Units

1. Group Dynamics

Pre-viewing question

Q: People often act one way when they are alone, and another way in a group setting. Why is this?

A: Answers may vary, but may include peer pressure, insecurities, etc. When alone, there is no one to answer to but yourself.

Post-viewing question

Q: What is a gang?

A: Answers should include some form of a dictionary definition. According to Merriam-Webster, a gang is "a group of persons having informal and usually close social relations."

2. Effects of Fear

Pre-viewing question

Q: How does fear affect a person's behavior?

A: Answers could include irrational thinking, fight or flight mode, etc.

Post-viewing question

Q: What vision does *Lord of the Flies* present to Simon?

A: That evil, symbolized by the beast, can be found in everyone.



3. About the Author

Pre-viewing question

Q: How do you think children might act without adult supervision?

A: Answers may include acting out, being rowdy or unruly, using poor judgment.

Post-viewing question

Q: Where did Golding get the character traits for the boys in the novel?

A: He worked as a teacher at a private school for boys.

4. Theory vs. Reality (Why Golding Wrote *Lord of the Flies*)

Pre-viewing question

Q: In theory, how can a totalitarian ruler be beneficial to a society?

A: Answers may include everyone being equal, all citizens having enough to eat, 100 percent employment, etc.

Post-viewing question

Q: What is frightening to realize about this novel?

A: Answers may include that it seems unlikely that civilized young boys would kill each other, even though they do.

5. Getting Settled on the Island

Pre-viewing question

Q: What would you do if you were left alone on a deserted island?

A: Answers may include hang out, celebrate, dance, find food, build a place to stay, try to get rescued.

Post-viewing question

Q: According to the boys, what separates savages from civilized people like the English?

A: Rules