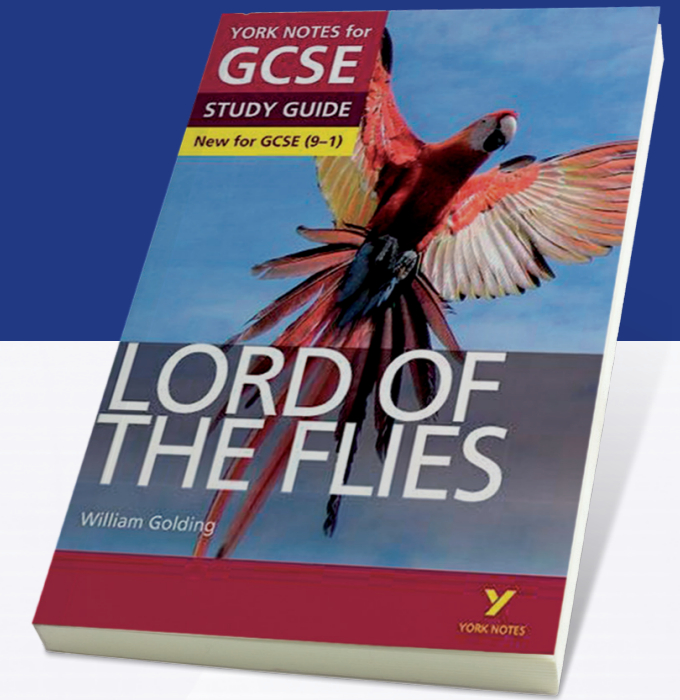


Top 10 Study Tips

The Top 10 things you **need** to know when studying...



Lord of the Flies

1 Read the book!

If you haven't already read the book in class, you should spend a few hours **reading the novel for yourself**. Whilst reading, **highlight** your **favourite moments, any lines that you particularly like** or anything that really stands out. Doing this means that you are **interacting critically with the text**, which will serve you well when you come to study the text more closely.

2 Good and evil

Good and evil is a **central theme** in the book. One way of getting to grips with this theme is to make a note of precise moments in the novel that illustrate the **collision** of good and evil, for example:

- Roger destroying the littluns' game
- Ralph's gang versus Jack's gang: how do they differ?
- Piggy's death; Simon's death
- Jack's gang hunting Ralph

Also think about how the two groups that form represent the battle between good and evil: **Jack's barbaric group** versus the **democratic and ordered group of Ralph, Piggy, the twins and Simon**.

3 Context: know your history!

Think of the context like the **backdrop to the novel**: without understanding it, the novel will **not make complete sense**. Make sure you are familiar with:

- a) the Cold War
- b) the aftermath of the Second World War

How do these events seem to have affected William Golding and his **pessimism** about mankind? Understanding these contexts will help you to understand the theme of **Good and evil**. Where are there references to the war? What other wars and conflicts take place in the novel as a whole? Does this make the plot's action **symbolic**?

4 Quotations

Get some **key quotations** under your belt for **themes, language and characters** – sometimes you can find quotations that touch on all three. Check out our **Key quotations** feature in the **Revise section** of our [Online guide](#) to start you off! Remember: **embed your quotations** into the points of your essay for a more **sophisticated** answer.

5 Literary terms

Nothing is more **impressive** than being able to **identify** literary techniques used by an author and **commenting on how they are effective**. Understanding the techniques used by **Golding** and using the **proper terms** is a sure way to **boost your grade!** For example, do you know what **foreshadowing** is? How about **onomatopoeia** and **symbolism**? Does Golding use **imagery**? Remember: always comment on the **effect** of Golding's techniques.

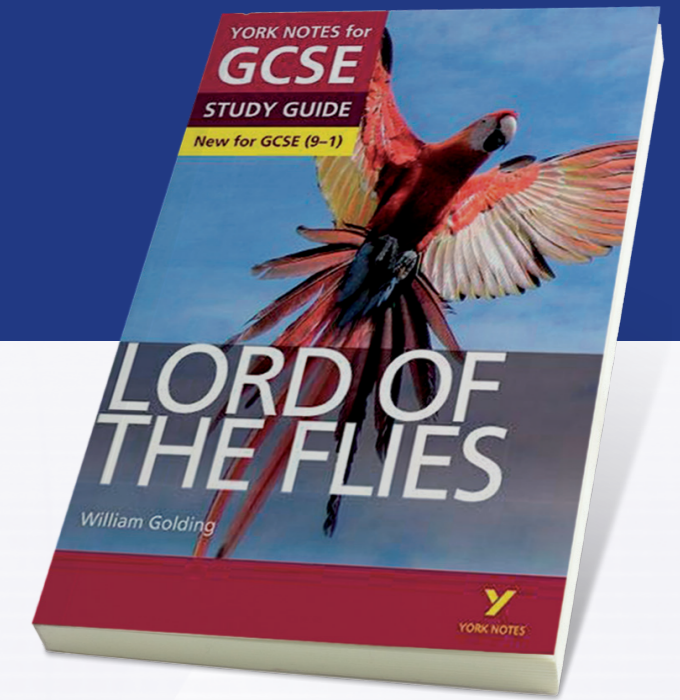
6 Get to know the characters

There are moments where the characters' actions can **alienate** the reader. Do you think that the **evil** in the book is **heightened** or **lessened** by the fact that the characters are only **children**? Does this differ from **traditional** portrayals of children in literature? **Comparing and contrasting** the characters, such as Ralph and Jack, will **unlock** the novel for you, and may even lead you to **identify key points** about **language**.

Why not choose a character from the text and write an **analysis** of how he has been **characterised** through his **actions, speech and opinions**. How is your impression of this character created by Golding and how does your response to him change throughout the novel?

Top 10 Study Tips

The Top 10 things you **need** to know when studying...



Lord of the Flies (continued)

7 Linking key themes with characters/events

Try linking the **key themes** with **characters and events**.

For example, ask yourself which characters/events could be closely associated with the following themes:

- Crowd mentality
- Order and discipline
- Good and evil
- War and conflict

The more you 'map' your ideas, the more likely you are to remember key points about the text as well as developing your own **interpretations**.

8 Language

Considering the language used by the boys is **key** to commenting on the **characterisation** and the **period of time** in which the novel is set. Think about:

- The boys' language compared with the language used today – what words can you pick out that we no longer use? Does this help to **place** the novel in a particular moment in time? Is the boys' language **colloquial**?
- Piggy's language compared to others – what does this tell us about **class** and **status**? How does this clear difference **affect Piggy's position within the group of boys**?

- Golding's authorial voice – how does this differ from the language used by the **boys**? Is his language **colloquial**? What **literary techniques** does he use, and what effect do these have? Remember: it is not enough to say that Golding uses, for instance, **onomatopoeia**; you **need to comment on the effect it has on the reader**.

9 Quick check

How much do you really know about the novel? Try to answer these questions – if you don't know the answers, maybe a bit more revision is needed!

- What is happening in the outside world while the boys are stranded on the island?
- What does the death of the airman signify?
- What does Ralph think about Jack at the beginning of the novel and how do his feelings change towards Jack?
- Why is Piggy probably the most intelligent boy on the island?
- Why does Jack try to overthrow Ralph as leader?
- What is the significance of the conch?
- Why and how does Piggy's speech differ from the speech of the other boys?
- What is irony? Give an example of irony in *Lord of the Flies*.

10 Further questions

It is important to practise for exams or assessments by writing extended written responses. Here are a few exam-style questions to get you started. For more, see our **Progress Booster section** in the **print and online study guide**:

- How does Golding present the relationship between Ralph and Jack?
- How does Golding use imagery in *Lord of the Flies* to explore ideas about good and evil?
- Explore the importance of the conch in the novel. Think about:
 - how it symbolises law and order and free speech;
 - Ralph's style of government.
- How does Golding present Simon? Write about:
 - his contribution to the novel;
 - the methods Golding uses to show what Simon is like.
- How does Golding present Jack's descent into evil? Write about:
 - how Jack is presented at the start of the novel;
 - how he changes and develops as the novel progresses.