

Erica Mitchell

During the balmy break of my upcoming freshman year, I was presented with the infamous summer reading assignment. Adjoined by scoffs of disapproval, one could only imagine what high school would be like because I was already being bombarded with work before I had been officially enrolled into my zoned school, Hopewell High School. Alas, I took on the challenge, traveling to my arguably distant but local corporate bookstore, *Barnes and Noble*, to pick up the copy of the old English classic: *Lord of The Flies* by William Golding. Being his first publication and one of his everlasting accomplishments, it is listed as one of the top books required to read in schools, colleges, and universities. Upon discovering the task, my peers had a long list of complaints. It seems that every other person had developed a deep hatred for the selection: too many unknown words, the paragraphs are too long, and the sentence structure disrupts the flow of the story--absolutely no recollection of the plot and what is happening.

The other students have me concerned about our current endeavors, but I know it is necessary to continue giving it a try, as there is a grade to be attained. (I later learned that this would not be the case, but the notion that I needed to get this done had a death grip on my fourteen-year-old mind.) Apprehensively, I took a seat on the old, green patterned sofa in my grandma's antique living room, entering a new world of sand, palm trees, and boys at sea. I hadn't anticipated such a scene changing my life forever.

William Golding became the first classic author that I was able to experience, making him an incredibly notable figure in my artistic journey. The British author, playwright, and poet was born a Virgo on September 19th, 1911, in a small neighborhood in Cornwall, England next to a graveyard. Growing up, he was somewhat of a sadistic bully who enjoyed projecting his insecurities onto his fellow peers. Contrary to popular opinion, I admire this fact about him, as I find that it is always good to look up to people with flaws that make sense. This irrational behavior can also be seen in his works, and I enjoy reflections. It enlightened me on the fact that even the most influential people--those who receive Nobel prizes for their literature--feel insignificant at some point in their lives and act illogically.

After secondary school, Golding went to study natural sciences at Oxford University but moved to English literature and philosophy, becoming a lecturer. He temporarily had to leave his teachings to go

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fight in the second world war, in the royal navy, where he experienced the terrible acts of human beings against one another. His entries from a journal that he kept on him for the majority of his life, document these violent discoveries and esoteric ideologies. We have our love for jotting things down and recording our everyday life and thoughts. I have an assortment of notebooks filled with streams of consciousness and dream logs that help me produce my content as well.

Unlike my classmates, his overly descriptive writing style captivated me. I remember reading about the mirage, appearing to be the beauty of the island. It all became so much more than an optical illusion. With an immense amount of imagery and figurative language, I could close my eyes and live in the same fear that paralyzed the feral children. Visuals have been an important part of my life from a very young age, hence why the movie industry is made for me. I want to learn how to write better for both the paper and the screens, majoring in film and cinematography, and hopefully, a minor in creative writing or English literature.

I appreciated his view on human nature and laws of irrationality that run-heavy in the blood of homo-sapiens. I found *Lord of The Flies* to be the portrayal of the effects of lack of guidance and structure and the power of fear; within the mix of humor and verbal confrontation amidst the children comes the exposure to the exhilarating yet dark impulse and resolution of mankind: violence. It took Golding twenty-one rejections before he could get this story published, for it was too raw and gruesome. A differing perspective might say that this content contained incredulous, intimidating ideas that could not be swallowed by those looking to produce a book.

Before William Golding him and his works, ignorance was blissful for me. My morale is too high for comfort and limited. My eyes remained closed, for the sake of being comfortable. Going into this, I was very excited to give a classic novel a chance, something I would never read and see myself enjoying on my own accord. This was the first step to practicing being open-minded. After three days of reading about unruly prepubescent boys on the old, green patterned sofa, my anxiety was triggered, specifically by anything that came after the death of my favorite character, Simon. My love for him is pretty self-explanatory, he was the only one who I thought had some sense of reality and ability to think

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rationally (until he got possessed by a boar skull.) I remember shaking in my black and white All-Star Converse, as the main protagonist Ralph witnessed his partner get pushed off of a cliff and then proceeded to run for his life for two chapters straight. Crashing into the naval officer at the very end of the book left both me and the characters with extreme emotions. Golding exposes the intense concept of humanity being driven by this wild instinct, the blood of an era that is demonized, and so far behind us that we don't think to consider until we're sitting in a classroom learning old aspects of anthropology. For this reason alone, I speak highly of him as an individual who inspires me greatly in both my personal and creative pursuits.