

Reader response questions book review

[Sociology](#), [Community](#)



a.

One of the most powerful elements of *The Lord of the Flies* is the universal applicability of the story. This series of events could have happened to any group of boys, from any developed nation on the planet, that ends up shipwrecked on an island together. This is why Golding does not give the reader much information about the boys' lives before they came to this island. Once they are shipwrecked and form their own society, all of the events that had happened earlier in their lives became irrelevant – all of their slates were wiped clean.

b.

Jack and Roger take on the worst tendencies of human nature in *The Lord of the Flies*; because they are in the group that is shipwrecked, Piggy, Simon and Ralph find their deaths. However, even if Jack and Roger had not been among the group that made it to the island, there is no guarantee that the three deceased boys would have made it. Without Jack and Roger, it is likely that other boys would have taken their place, becoming the cruel alpha males who are interested only in consolidating their power.

c.

I do not find the boys' survival in this story to be particularly realistic. If a similar event happened to a group of boys of this age, even in modern times, the survival of that group would be a dicey proposition at best. The ability of the boys to shift for themselves, in terms of building shelter and finding food, is represented somewhat idealistically in Golding's tale. Of course, the purpose of this story is to comment on human nature – not render the most realistic outcome of the shipwreck.

d.

Even though Ralph wins election as the leader of the group of boys on the island, it is clear to me that Jack was the best leader on the island. He was experienced, compelling, and powerful – three traits that any effective leader needs. Even after Ralph is voted in, Jack uses his charm and power to influence everyone to follow his lead. After a while, even though he was not the nominal leader, the voice of Jack became law. While there might be leaders who would have been wiser among the children, he had the ability to take control of the situation – and he used that ability to its fullest extent.

e.

Whether it's a group of pre-adolescent boys or a group of adults, once a leader is established, the rest of that group will go along with the leader, even if that leader starts to make some errors in judgment. It takes quite a bit of ineptitude to lose a position as a social leader. For the rest of the boys, shipwrecked far from home, it is much easier to listen to the orders of Jack than it would be to make their own decisions. Jack's emergence as a leader takes a lot of the mental responsibility away from the rest of the boys – as a result, they reward Jack by following him.

f.

If you're going to be stranded, it is better to do it as a group – at least as far as long-term survival would go. The combined brain power can make a host of problems easier to solve. Even though strife can break out when the minds do not agree with one another, the truth is that we need solid relationships in order to solve our problems, allowing emotion and reason to intertwine. Tom Hanks' character might well have made it home in Cast

Away, but even his solitude was broken by his relationship with a volleyball.

g.

If I were stranded with a group, dividing resources would be a challenge. It's one thing to find a coconut tree or to figure out how to grab fish out of a river. These are things that can be accomplished alone. It would be the emotions of solitude that would make me struggle, as the daily silence would begin to weigh down on me. It wouldn't take that long for me to lose my sense of optimism. It would be far better, then, to get stranded with a group – and then work with that group to ensure safety, mental happiness, and emotional well-being.

h.

The rules that I would have would ensure a respect for the property of others and a devotion to the dream of the community. Typical rules might include a forbidding of stealing from others, the installation of a specific work duty schedule, and restrictions on personal practices that end up harming the community. The more rules we had, the easier it would be for people to fail; however, it is important to figure out the central rules.

i.

At the age where the boys are when they are shipwrecked on the island, it would be natural for them to elect a leader. However, having this leader is completely unnecessary, as the boys could act as a council and put together the foundations of a way of life. After all, the whole group suffers the same state, and any reputable leader would know this, and keep the emotions of situations under check. In a leader, I would look for restraint, and respect for the police.