Year 8 Term 2: 'Civilised Society'

The basic definition of 'society' that we're looking at here refers to all groups of people in a country who share the same laws & rights and often have common traditions. If it's 'civilised', then those groups of people are treated fairly.

This term, you will be exploring how writers present us with contemporary and futuristic societies that aren't civilised.

The main text that you will read is *Lord of the Flies*, written by William Golding in 1954. A group of British schoolboys end up stranded on a deserted island after their plane crashes. They attempt to create a civilised society but things go badly wrong.

Lord Of The Flies context

Golding's experience in World War II had a profound effect on his view of humanity and the evils of which it was capable.

Writing in an era following WWII known as the 'atomic age', Golding tapped into a widespread cultural panic over nuclear war and man's capacity for destruction.

Although *Lord of the Flies* is an allegorical novel, it draws a great deal from adventure literature, a genre that pits humans against nature to explore the personality traits necessary for the survival of the species. However, Golding was more interested in subverting traditional adventure tales and reversing their moral message.

Groupthink

Groupthink is a psychological phenomenon where individual members of a group accept the group's viewpoint, whether or not they believe it to be correct or the best solution. Individuals conform rather than bring disharmony and don't consider the consequences or alternatives. Can you think of examples of groupthink in school? Look out for examples of it in the novel.

Lord Of The Flies themes

- **Civilization vs. savagery**
- **Loss of innocence**
- **Struggle to build civilization**
- **Danger of mob mentality**
- **War and future of mankind**

Lord Of The Flies characters

Ralph: The novel's protagonist is a twelve-year-old English boy who is elected leader of a group of boys marooned on an island. Ralph attempts to coordinate the boys' efforts to build a miniature civilization on the island until they can be rescued.

Piggy: Ralph's "lieutenant." A whiny, intellectual boy, Piggy's inventiveness frequently leads to innovation, such as the makeshift sundial that the boys use to tell time.

Jack: The novel's antagonist is one of the older boys stranded on the island. Jack becomes the leader of the hunters but longs for total power and becomes increasingly wild, barbaric, and cruel as the novel progresses.

Roger: Jack's "lieutenant." A sadistic, cruel older boy.

Simon: A shy, sensitive boy in the group. Simon, in some ways is the only naturally "good" character on the island; he behaves kindly toward the younger boys and is willing to work for the good of their community.

Motifs and symbols

Motifs: Biblical parallels; natural beauty; the bullying of the weak by the strong; the outward symbols of savagery (face paint, spears, totems, chants)

Symbols: The conch shell; Piggy's glasses; the signal fire; the beast; the Lord of the Flies

Dystopian fiction

Because *Lord of the Flies* presents the characters as living in a nightmarish, oppressive society as a result of their **flawed** natures, it is also an example of dystopian fiction. In direct contrast to utopian fiction, which suggests that a perfect society free of suffering is possible, dystopian fiction suggests that societal injustice is inevitable.

Booklet extracts

A Christmas Carol: Scrooge, an uncaring, selfish moneylender, sees for himself the results of his greed and ignorance upon others in society.

Brave New World: Mustapha Mond explains how, in this new society, people have been conditioned to not feel anything too strongly but if they do, they can simply take a tablet so that they don't have to deal with anything unpleasant.

Animal Farm: In this extract we see that the pigs have changed the rules so that they are seen as more important than others even though everyone was supposed to be equal in this new society, which had freed itself from humans.

1984: Winston Smith, the protagonist, realises that the Party controls what people think by persuading them not to trust what they see and hear but only to trust what Big Brother tells them to believe.

The Hunger Games: The narrator explains how the wealthy capitol of Panem selects a boy and girl from each of the surrounding 12 poor, starving districts to fight to the death. Prizes (mostly food) is gifted to the district that produces the one survivor. All of this is used to frighten people from fighting back against an unfair society.

Key narrative elements

Linear structure: The story (narrative) is written in the time sequence that it took place.

Narrator: The story is told by an anonymous narrator who conveys the events of the novel without commenting on the action or intruding into the story.

Point Of View: The narration is in 3rd person and mostly focuses on Ralph's point of view but follows Jack and Simon in certain scenes. The narrator is **omniscient** as the reader is allowed to see what any of the characters are doing/thinking at any time or place.

Protagonist: Ralph

Setting: A deserted tropical island

Tone: Dark; violent; pessimistic; tragic

Y7 grammar recap

Noun types:
- **Concrete** – A noun we can see, hear, touch, smell or taste
- **Abstract** – A noun which we cannot experience with any of the 5 senses e.g. happiness, tension
- **Proper** – A noun which is the name or title of something and is capitalised
- **Collective** – A singular word used to group together a plural e.g. a group, a herd, a class

Subject: Does the action in a sentence or clause

Verb types:
- **Dynamic** – A verb that we can see/hear being completed – a deliberate action
- **Stative** – A verb that we cannot see being completed e.g. I am, I believe
- **Imperative** – A commanding verb e.g. Do this work, sit down, let's go
- **Modal** – A verb expressing possibility or probability e.g. will, should, could, can, must

Past tense: used to describe things that happened in the past
Present tense: used to describe things that are happening now

Main clause – A clause which makes sense on its own as a sentence
Subordinate clause – A clause which does not make sense on its own as a sentence – it needs a main clause to make it make sense – it starts with a subordinating conjunction

Coordinating conjunction – A conjunction which joins 2 main clauses FANBOYS – for, and, nor, but, or, yet and so
Subordinating conjunction – A conjunction which joins a subordinate clause to a main one – e.g. while, as, because, since, if

Simple sentence – A sentence with only one main clause
Compound sentence – A sentence with more than one main clause, joined by a coordinating conjunction
Complex sentence – A sentence with at least one main clause and at least one subordinate clause

Term 1 recap

Adjective types:

- **Descriptive** – An adjective which describes factual characteristics e.g. big, green
- **Evaluative** – An adjective expressing an opinion, can be disagreed with e.g. great, boring, amazing
- **Emotive** – An adjective which makes the reader feel a strong emotion e.g. shocking, starving, dangerous
- **Comparative** – An adjective ending in –er or with 'more' in front of it. e.g. bigger, faster, more exciting
- **Superlative** – An adjective ending in –est or with 'most' in front of it. e.g. biggest, fastest, most exciting

Term 2 grammar

Pronouns: words that take the place of a noun, e.g. I, me, you, he, she it, they, something, somewhere, anybody.

Adverb: words that describe a verb, adjective or another adverb
- **Manner:** tell us how something happens e.g. slowly, angrily
- **Time:** tell us when something happens e.g. tomorrow, yesterday
- **Place:** where something happens e.g. above, outside
- **Degree:** describe the intensity of an action or quality e.g. extremely, very, too
- **Frequency:** describes how often something happens e.g. sometimes, never, usually

Reminder!

ALWAYS check what the word is doing in the sentence as many words have different functions! e.g.

1. The film isn't **that** good. (that = **adverb**)

2. Give me **that**. (that = **pronoun**)