Inquiry Question:

Given the opportunity to act without consequence, will human beings generally do terrible things, or will they resist the urge and try to cooperate? Explain Humanity’s greatest choice; do we chose good, or do we chose evil?

How to write an essay:

1. Always brainstorm / prewrite first
2. Write your thesis before you write anything else.
3. Your body paragraphs are generally the best place to start, finish your intro and conclusion after
4. LEAVE IT THE HECK ALONE FOR 3 DAYS
5. Revise and edit your ideas
6. Proofread and peer edit

THESIS:

MUST BE A STATEMENT.

IT CANNOT BE A QUESTION.

IT CANNOT BE AN EXCLAMATION.

IT MUST BE NARROW ENOUGH TO ADDRESS YOUR TOPIC IN CERTAIN LENGTH

IT MUST BE FOCUSED AND IT MUST SEEK TO ANSWER THE QUESTION.

Bad Examples:

1. In looking at human nature, we can see that human beings can avoid evil, can’t they?
2. Humans are not evil they are generally good!
3. Human beings have been evil throughout history and this book shows just how evil they can be.
4. Humans show just how strange they can be without being particularly focused on good or evil in this book.

Human beings cannot be always evil and are not always good.

Draft Example of thesis:

In the beginning, human beings are neither good nor are they evil; they are generally self-interested. However, in dire circumstances, this self-interest leads people to make hard choices between what is good and what is evil. In William Golding’s Lord of the Flies, the actions of Piggy, Simon, Jack and

Ralph shows how personal interest shape the spectrum of human morality.

PREWRITING:

YOU CAN DO SEVERAL THINGS WHEN YOU PREWRITE FOR AN ESSAY. I PREFER TO USE TWO TACTICS:

1. BRAINSTORM
2. MIND MAP

BODY PARAGRAPHS

FIRST BODY: PIGGY

Transition –

Statement –Piggy’s primary interest is to effectively order and structure the group.

Evidence – When the boys first arrive on the island, Piggy is the first to realize that there is no adult and that they are trapped on the island. Piggy is also the first to realize the need for order and structure. Piggy tries to take note of everyone, counting and naming the survivors and then is also the one to locate and explain the significance of the conch.

Xplained – Piggy’s interests direct him toward ordered and law abiding action, making him a sort of moral compass for other characters in the novel. His focus on structuring meetings with the conch and his desire to take roll of the other boys simulate the structure of the society that the boys come from.

S - This simulated social structure also simulates the moral structure of their former society.

E – Piggy’s ideas are the impetus for the group’s productive actions. Because of piggy, the boys decide to come to decisions through democratic means, they use a form of “talking stick” with the conch to govern communication and they even decide to attempt a rescue by creating a signal fire at the top of the mountain.

X – Piggy’s interests, therefore, are symbolic of an ordered moral approach to structuring a society. Like the adults on the mainland, Piggy’s actions are moral and ordered. His personal interests make him stand out from the other boys as a moral exemplar and many of his actions and ideas, harken the boys back to a time where they were safe and protected by the laws and society in which they used to live.

Transition Sentences:

1. Use transition words:
   1. Although
   2. Also
   3. Yet
   4. Moreover
   5. Nevertheless
   6. However
2. Use part of the previous sentence to shift from one thought to another (example below)
3. Contrast what is said in previous paragraph to show connection

Body 2 – Jack

Transition: While Piggy’s primary interests center around the promotion of civilization and moral action, Jack’s motivations are far more destructive.

Statement: Jack is interested in a far more primordial and sinister desire, obtaining meat.

Evidence – Jack is so focused on catching meat that he forgoes all of his other responsibilities.

Explain - Jack is so obsessed with meat he lets the signal fire go out, electing instead to go out hunting.

Statement - This obsession with meat, however, is far more important than forgetting about the signal fire. Jack’s obsession begins to take ahold of his entire moral structure.

After he lets the fire go out, he identifies purely as a hunter. He asks the boys, “I am a hunter am I not?” and then uses this assertion to take control of the boy’s town hall meeting (Golding, 90).

Jack’s identity as a hunter is made more important still as the hunters begin to disobey the call to order of the conch: “Conch! Conch…we don’t need no conch any more. We know who ought to say things!”(Golding, 110) As Jack evolves as a hunter, becoming bolder and more ruthless in his hunting of the sow, the boys descend further into anarchy and immorality.

Jack becomes more than an agent of chaos, he becomes the opposition to order and logical thought. After the hunters leave and form their own tribe, they hunt without thinking about how to cook the pig. Instead of asking for the means to cook the pig, they elect to steal fire from Ralph and Piggy. This act signifies their opposition to order and cements Jack as the winner of the conflict against ordered thought. In the stealing fire, even the narrator admits, “[Jack] was a chief now in truth…[where] from his left hand dangled Piggy’s glasses”(Golding, 186).

Rules for quoting:

1. Always quote with two “Brackets”
2. Be sure to frame your quote. Never start a sentence with a quote.
   1. Ex. He stated, “Piggy was fat.”
   2. Not: “Piggy was fat.”
3. Always ensure you tell us where you got your quote. Ex. (Golding, 184)
4. Make sure you punctuate your quote correctly.
5. Use [ ] and … where appropriate.

Body Paragraph 3 – Ralph

Transition: Whereas Piggy and Jack frame the moral and immoral interests of the boys on the island,

Statement: Ralph’s interests show how the boys experience a degrading moral society.

Evidence: Initially, Ralph is interested in holding to the ordered moral society of his British ancestry. He heeds Piggy’s words about the importance of ordered assembly and Ralph also advocates for constructing a signal fire.

Xplanation: His interests thereby shape the moral environment of the boys. Because Ralph relates structured and ordered thought to the likelihood of being rescued, the boys behave in an ordered way.

Statement: However, as the boys spend more time on the island, Ralph’s interest in operating in structured society begins to wane. Ralph is torn between partaking in the Savage behaviour of Jack and trying to uphold the moral and ordered society that supports Piggy’s interests.

Evidence : This is clear in the final tribal meeting, where Jack fights over who should lead the tribe:

“…Yes. The beast is a hunter. Only-shut up!... Ralph said my hunters are no good…”

“He’s like Piggy. He says things like Piggy. He isn’t a proper chief.” (Golding, 138)

Xplain –

In this scene Ralph is forced to compete with Jack’s savagery if he wishes to maintain control of the tribe. Although Ralph knows that Piggy is right about keeping order, he is also interested in maintaining control of the boys so that Jack cannot push forward his interests.

Ralph is torn between two ways of thinking; he cannot decide which interests will serve him best. The boys see this as weakness in leadership and chose to follow the boy who is most radical in their ideas. Ralph is left to ponder whether it is more moral to be more ordered or wilder in thought and intention, and he does not discover the answer until two of his friends and himself are placed in mortal danger.

Conclusion: R.A.C it up.

Restate: Human morality is shaped by the by the interests of people. The characters in Lord of the Flies show that these interests shape a spectrum of morality that can be logical and ordered at its best, or sinister and chaotic at its worst.

Acknowledge: People have the propensity to be good or evil. However, it is the strength of a character’s interests that dictate the shape of how those morals play out in a society.

Conclude: In the end, humans are not predisposed toward being savage and chaotic, nor are they more likely to be law abiding citizens, they are creatures of interest – self interest.

Introduction:

Hook:

In society, human actions are morally polarized.

Background information:

As we grow up and begin to understand the world the way it exists, it becomes apparent that society defines how humans act “Good” or “Bad.” Often, the individual committing these actions is ignored. The individual interests that motivated these “Good or Bad” actions in the first place are forgotten, and the individual is instead labeled by their actions. In William Golding’s Lord of the Flies, the focus that society places on action is problematized. Instead, Golding’s characters seem to emphasize the importance of a characters personal interests, showing human beings are neither good nor are they evil; they are generally self-interested.

Thesis:

Through the voices of Piggy, Jack and Ralph, Golding shows that human morality is shaped by self-interest, leading characters to develop their own spectrum of what is good and what is evil on the island.