

Kyle Tseng

Dr. Warner

ENGL 112B

December 6th, 2024

### Seeing things from a Rebel's perspective

#### Rationale

As students go into high school, they begin to develop their mind more than ever. With so much coming at them at once it's very common for them to sit back and just do as they're told. At this age many students begin to go into a "rebellious" phase where they don't agree with or like how their parents or other authority figures operate. Students will find a cause they believe in and want to support that.

I want to invite students to look through a different perspective than what they might commonly look for. In *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, there are essentially two factions that form on an island that they crash on. There is the representation of order with Ralph and his very by the book way of going about things and trying to get rescued. On the other hand there is Jack. Jack is consumed by his desire for power. It begins with him hunting and having fun but he quickly realizes how many people follow him and how great that power feels. Jack's rebellion is very dangerous and evil, highlighting how fighting for what someone wants isn't always for the greater good, it could very much be for a selfish cause. While understanding this book, I want students to realize that not all acts of rebellion are selfish. In this unit we will put a focus on looking at Jack's perspective and motivations throughout the novel.

Other novels that follow this same line of thinking are *We were here*, *After the First death*, and *Whale talk*. While these novels are not as selfish as *Lord of the Flies*, they offer multiple sides to rebellious behavior and show there are people who really fight for what they want in a selfless way or for the better of their country.

### Introducing the Unit

1. To begin the unit I will have the students do an activity I call “Looking at my World”. In this activity students will look at their own lives through their own perspective. In this case the students themselves are the “rebels”. Students will write down what they like about the “order” that is in their lives. Students will then list things they would want to change about the order that is set whether that be rules in their family or the government. This is a chance for students to write down what they are feeling and why. What are their frustrations and do they want to change them? With teens beginning to feel their own sense of self and acting rebellious it would also be a great way for them to think about and see everything written down. Sometimes we are so overwhelmed by all these things going on that we don’t see a way out. When everything is written down, we can see things we want to change or improve about ourselves.
2. Secondly, I will have students do an activity I call “Looking at the Whole World”. Similarly to the earlier activity students will look through the eyes of a rebel. They will do a bit of research on either an event in history or one that is ongoing where people are rebelling against the set “order” and fighting for what they believe in. Students will analyze who the group are, who they are against, and the

motivations of both parties. The student will then determine who they think is in the right and why. This writing assignment would be a couple pages and meant to set their mindset in the right direction for the unit. Students will then share this part out in small table groups. This will allow them to learn about different events happening around the world or ones that have happened, broadening their understanding of the world as a whole.

### Through the Text

While reading the book, I will have students do annotations for themes. They should also write a couple notes per chapter which will help with their understanding of the novel and the in class activities. Most of the reading will be done at home because the book isn't too difficult. I will have the students read 1-2 chapters a week. In class we will be doing table group quote analysis. This is where each group will take a theme and find two quotes in the chapter that fall in line with that and write an analysis on it. This will help students build a foundation for quote analysis which many struggle with in high school. Then after everyone is done each group will share what they said and I will point out any grammatical errors or things students should change. That way when they write their essays they won't make the same mistakes. Since the book is pretty short, I will do small quizzes with each chapter that hold students accountable for their reading. I will also do quizzes where students need to say who said the quote and the quotes' significance.

I will also have some discussion questions for students to better understand the text. For example:

1. The novel shows a clear divide between Jack and Ralph. Who would you join? Would you rebel against the set civilized order or follow it?
2. How does the idea of the beast affect both sides?
3. Does each character's motivations justify their actions?

The questions are meant to help students understand while pushing them to think about perspectives. Students will answer these questions in small groups and share out with the class.

### Ending the Unit

Students will write a short essay at about 750 words. The purpose of the essay is to allow students to write about something regarding the general theme of rebellion. They can choose to write about an issue in the real world and how they would change it or about Miro and whether he was in the right or wrong. This would be similar to an expansion of the first writing prompt except in an assessment format. I want to see that students have learned from the different parts of the unit and incorporated it in their writing. Lastly, students will write a short 1 page reflection on the unit that would give extra points for the essay.

### Beyond the Text

1. *We were here*- *We were here* is slightly different from the other texts in that our three central characters have all done something wrong already. They leave at first on a quest to escape but realize that maybe the order set in place will help them and will better their lives. Sometimes the want for change ends up with

characters realizing that they have what they want. It doesn't always have to end in change occurring.

2. *Whale Talk*- In *Whale Talk* by Chris Crutcher the students are rebelling against the school. Things are run in a discriminatory and hateful way. It favors those who fall in line with the sporty and athletic mold and push out those who are not. In creating this swim team T.J. is rebelling against the order and tradition that has been set in place for decades and fighting for what he believes is right. Without that change characters like Chris would be bullied and hated forever. A lot of the time change is very necessary and *Whale talk* is a great reflection of what happens in the real world as well.
3. *After the First Death*- In *After the First Death* Miro and Artkin are labeled as terrorists and Ben and his father look like the good guys. While Miro and Artkin's deeds are harming many people they have their own justification. These characters have their own motives with many layers. My goal is for students to look at that justification and understand it. Most people don't do bad things or go against the government just for the thrill of it. Many people have very real problems that are ignored by the government because of discrimination, the issue being too small, and many other factors.

Work Cited

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Crutcher, Chris. *Whale Talk*. HarperTeen, 2001.

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Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*. Faber & Faber, 2011