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School: Valencia High School
Grade: Sophomore
Book Title: Lord of the Flies
Book Author: William Golding
Rating: 3.5/5

In *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, a group of British schoolboys become stranded on a deserted tropical island after an unexpected plane crash. Without any adults to guide them, they must organize themselves and find a way to survive until they can be rescued. The boys elect a leader, Ralph, who wants to establish rules and keep a signal fire burning, while Jack becomes increasingly interested in hunting and gaining power. Piggy attempts to help reestablish logic and plan out practicality, but the others do not always listen. As disagreements rise and rumors of a mysterious beast spreads, the island begins to feel less like an adventure and more like a test of the boys' humanity.

I thought the book was interesting because it explores how fear and peer pressure can affect people's decisions and actions. The conflict between Ralph and Jack made me think about the differences between a more responsible, practical leader and leadership driven by power and blind loyalty. Ralph was my favorite character because I could relate to him as one of the older boys, who tries to do what's best for the group. His efforts to act responsibly, even when he was unsure of what to do, made his character feel realistic. I especially found the symbols interesting due to how they contrasted the characters. The conch represented order and democracy, reflecting Ralph's efforts to create a fair community. In contrast, Jack's face paint works like a mask, hiding away his identity and freeing him from shame. It shows how anonymity makes it easier to ignore responsibility. These symbols made the struggle between cooperation and control more interesting to follow. However, I would have personally enjoyed the book more if it had stayed within one character's perspective. Experiencing the island through that person's thoughts and senses might have made the imagery feel more immersive. I understand that Golding's broader perspective helps explore the true darkness of human nature, but I personally prefer stories that make me feel more closely connected to one character's experience.

I would recommend *Lord of the Flies* to teenagers who enjoy suspenseful stories that raise difficult questions about human behavior. It is especially worth reading if you like analyzing characters, symbolism, and conflicts over leadership. Readers seeking a lighthearted adventure might find its atmosphere too dark, although for me, the book's strongest feature is how it encourages readers to consider whether they would stand by their beliefs or follow a group under pressure.