

Chrysalids Versus Lord of the Flies

Argumentative Writing

J. Wyndham's book *The Chrysalids* can be read as a rebuttal and criticism of W. Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.

Suggested categories:

1. Civilization and Adults. Golding's book suggests that children need adults, religion and laws to avoid turning into savages. Wyndham's novel suggests the opposite, since most of its children are morally and intellectually superior to the adults, and the youngest child could be the smartest of all, and their religious persecutors are obsessed with laws.

Defend these statements or disprove their validity.

2. In Golding's novel, nature and especially forests are dark, scary, and a problem for humans. Simon possibly suffered brain damage when he walked into a tree in the middle of Chapter Six. In Wyndham's novel, it's clear that humanity ruined nature and cannot live without caring for it.

Reflect on these statements and argue in favor of one book while disagreeing with the other.

3. In Golding's novel, hunting for meat leads to murdering and good people are always murdered by bad people. In Wyndham's novel, the children only kill a predator and killing is a sad necessity for self-preservation. This is evident from what Uncle Axel does with his arrow and from what the Sealand woman says and does.

Which book presents more truth or more useful ideas? Especially respond to the opinions of the Sealand woman and her decision to kill the Fringes people and the Waknuk people even as they could have escaped from them without harm.

4. Religion. In Golding's book the cross worn by the children is silver; in Wyndham's novel it is a dark brown. Golding's book is full of religious

symbolism reinforcing the idea that only religion can save humanity. Wyndham's book argues that religion is a cruel and savage force.

Respond with your own opinions, not necessarily referring to the books.

5. Discrimination. In Golding's novel *Piggy* suffers from discrimination, his friend does nothing to stand up for him, and he does nothing to fight back until it's too late and Roger is already poised to kill him. In Wyndham's novel, Sophie's family avoid the society that discriminates against them, the Fringes people fight back against those who discriminate, and the children flee from the world that discriminates against them.

Explore these and other related differences, and decide what this tells us about the authors' views about life, and express your own opinions on how we should respond to discrimination.

6. Portrayal of human leaders and democracy. Golding, being a Catholic fundamentalist, believes only God can lead humanity, so all human leaders and all attempts to organize democratically are failures. In contrast, in Wyndham's novel, Michael and Anne are quite successful and admirable leaders, and the children cooperate and work together quite well.

Argue in support of one of the author's, providing detailed examples from the book, and/or other books, and/or from your experience.