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Good vs. Evil Quarter 2 Summative Essay

A great thinker named Freud once stated, “...men are not gentle creatures, who want to be loved, who at the most can defend themselves if they are attacked; they are, on the contrary, creatures among whose instinctual endowments is to be reckoned a powerful share of endowments.” The question of whether humans are good or evil has been long debated. In the novel, *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, a large group of young boys get stranded on an island for about a year with no adults and struggle between the forces of good and evil. Humans are inherently evil because they revert to their inner savage when rules and civilization are taken away, and they listen to leaders and do what they say without thinking about the consequences. Humans can also be seen as evil because they assume that because they have been bad, people will do bad things to them.

One reason why humans are inherently evil is that they revert to their inner savage once rules and civilization are taken away. In *Lord of the Flies*, when the mob kills Simon, the text states, “At once the crowd surged after it, poured down the rock, lept on to the beast, screamed, struck, bit, tore. There were no words and no movements but the tearing of teeth and claws.” (Golding 153) By looking at the text, the readers can assume that the group of boys went into full savage mode and left civilization and laws in the past. The evidence suggests that humans are inherently evil because once rules are taken away, they let go and lose all their values. In the short story “The Most Dangerous Game,” Rainsford and the general’s discussion bring out the evil in humanity. The general says, “Why should I not be serious?” and Rainsford replies with, “Hunting? Good God, General Zaroff, what you speak of is murder.” (Connell 13) In this example, the readers learn that the general is getting away with committing murder by playing games with his victims that land on his island. Readers can come to the conclusion that humans are inherently evil because the general is acting savage because no one knows what he is doing on the island. Humans can be seen as inherently evil because they go into savage mode once they do not have to abide by the rules.

Due to the fact that humans listen to corrupt leaders and do what they say without thinking about the consequences, they can be viewed as evil. In “The Lottery,” the text states, “Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. A rock hit the side of her head.” (Jackson 8) In this example, the readers learn that humans will listen to wicked leaders and rules without thinking about the consequences. It is important to note this because it shows that the villagers acting barbaric and not really questioning what they are actually doing. Also, in the activity associated with “The Lottery,” the class reenacted the stoning from the end of the story and when the teacher told us to throw the paper, those who listened to the teacher without question realized how close to the surface their inner savage is. In *Lord of the Flies*, Jack says, “You two. Get back. [...] Tie them up! [...] Go on. Tie them.” (Golding 178-179) Jack orders the tribe to tie up Samneric and the tribe listens to Jack and results in the tribe becoming more and more obedient and does whatever he says. As a result, readers can infer that humans are evil because the boys listen to their unethical leader, Jack, without question and do what he says. Based on all the evidence, humans are inherently evil because they listen to immoral leaders and do what they say unquestioningly.

Additionally, humans are inherently evil because they assume because they have been immoral or bad, that others will do the same to them. In *Lord of the Flies*, Samneric tell Ralph, “They hate you, Ralph. They’re going to do you. They’re going to hunt you tomorrow.” (Golding 188) The text also states, “Then Ralph was running beneath trees, with the grumble of the forest explained. They had smoked him out and set the island on fire.” (Golding 197) In this example, the readers learn that the boys in the tribe hate Ralph despite the fact that he did nothing to them, plan a manhunt on Ralph, and set the entire island on fire, which is completely irrational because they are also endangering themselves in doing this. Based on the evidence, readers may draw the conclusion that humans are evil because the boys hate Ralph to the point where they would endanger their own lives to kill him, even though Ralph did nothing to make them hate him. In “The Sniper,” the text states, “The woman darted towards the side street. The sniper fired again. The woman whirled round and fell with a sudden shriek into the gutter.” (O’ Flaherty 35-37) In this example, readers learn that the sniper felt that it was necessary to kill a defenseless woman just because she was an ally to the “enemy.” As a result, readers can assume that humans are evil because the sniper felt it necessary to kill the “enemy” who was just a defenseless woman. Subsequently, because humans expect bad things to happen to them because they have been bad, they can be seen as inherently evil.

Although some people think that humans are inherently evil, others may argue that humans are born good and are taught to be evil. Despite the opposition, humans are born with natural instincts for survival and will act savage without law and civilization. In fact, there is a “warrior gene” that all humans have and with those with a low- performing gene are more prone to aggression and violence. Humans are evil by nature because they act savage when laws and government are taken away, and they listen to corrupt leaders without hesitation. In addition, humans are evil because they assume since they’ve been bad, others will act the same to them. It is essential for people to recognize that humans are evil and be aware of who one trusts and the actions that one takes.