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Reading democracy and ethics: educational values of Golding's *Lord of the Flies*

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Abstract

William Golding's 1954 novel *Lord of the Flies* thematizes man's natural evil and the breaking of a social system. The story centres around how a society arises, and it demonstrates what can happen when the democracy is put under threat, as well as the potential for evil in humans. *Lord of the Flies* can thus be used in upper secondary school to bring attention to these topics. To learn about and being aware of democratic values is important to do from a young age to ensure that people become curious and active participants in the society. Practicing critical thinking and ethical awareness will make it easier to ask questions and to critically evaluate the information that one gathers. Practicing both democratic values and ethical awareness will help prepare the pupils to become good members of the society. The importance of critical thinking and ethical awareness is elaborated in the core curriculum. This thesis employs a qualitative methodological approach, by using literature review, literary analysis and two classroom activities to find out what educational value the novel has.

Sammendrag

William Goldings roman fra 1954, *Lord of the Flies*, tematiserer menneskets naturlige ondskap og hvordan et sosialt system bryter sammen. Historien handler om hvordan et samfunn oppstår, og den demonstrerer hva som kan skje når demokratiet trues, samt potensialet for ondskap i mennesker. *Lord of the Flies* kan dermed brukes i videregående skole for å skape oppmerksomhet rundt disse temaene. Å lære om og være bevisst på demokratiske verdier er viktig å gjøre fra ung alder for å sikre at elevene blir nysgjerrige og aktive deltakere i samfunnet. Å praktisere kritisk tenkning og etisk bevissthet vil gjøre det lettere å stille spørsmål og å kritisk vurdere informasjonen man finner. Å praktisere både demokratiske verdier og etisk bevissthet vil bidra til å forberede elevene til å bli gode medlemmer av samfunnet. Viktigheten av kritisk tenkning og etisk bevissthet er utdypet i kjerneplanen. Denne masteroppgaven benytter en kvalitativ metodisk tilnærming, ved å bruke gjennomgang av eksisterende litteratur, litteraturanalyse og to klasseromsaktiviteter for å finne ut hvilken pedagogisk verdi *Lord of the Flies* har.

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1. Introduction

There are multiple values that act like a foundation in democratic societies like Norway, which should be promoted and worked with in school from a young age. These are values that will make the pupils into critical and participating members of the society, that will work towards a better future. Amongst other, these values are connected to democracy, critical thinking, and ethical awareness, that will be focused on in this thesis. The story in William Golding's infamous novel from 1954, *Lord of the Flies*, centres around how a society can arise, how different power relations work in a group, and what can happen when a community lacks rules and structure. In *Lord of the Flies*, a group of young boys from England crash-land on a deserted island at a time of war. These are young boys, aging between six and twelve, and they soon realize that they are alone on the island with no adults there with them. Because of this, they are left to figure out everything from shelter to food, and they need to work together towards being rescued. Some of the boys are nervous and afraid, and in need of guidance and a strong, protective leader to follow and tell them what they should do.

Golding is simplifying the topics of democracy and critical thinking by taking a group of young boys, which might be seen as the most innocent and placing them on an island, where they are forced to agree on common goals and to work together to achieve them. These common goals are at times difficult to agree on. Schanberg (2021) states that "There's an old saying that democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others" (p. 637). This statement is hinting at the complexity of democracy as a political system. Knowing that democracy, like every form of government, has its positive and negative sides.

Democratic values are, however, something that applies to us in many aspects of our lives. The importance of teaching democracy and participation is also elaborated in the core curriculum in Norway, which means that it should be focused on in both primary and secondary education. Another core value in the curriculum has to do with critical thinking and ethical awareness, which are values that will help pupils become curious and critical individuals, that is important in many phases of one's life. In *Lord of the Flies*, one can find examples of the struggle between good and evil, and ethical dilemmas. Therefore, the novel can be used to bring attention to the important topic of ethics.

The statement: "Maybe there is a beast...Maybe it's only us" (Golding, 1954, p. 89) is made by one of the boys in *Lord of the Flies*, and it questions if the evil is a real creature that they

should fear, or if the only evil lies within themselves. The quote shortly summarizes one of the main topics of the novel: the fight between the potential good and evil that exists within every human being.

1.1 Background

When living in a democratic society, there are multiple values that lie as a foundation on how we are supposed to interact and work with others. These values are important to work with from a young age, to how a functioning democracy works and how this can be applied to other everyday situations. By focusing on democracy and citizenship in the classroom, the pupils will learn why and how they can become participating members of the democratic society. The topic of democracy is also mentioned multiple times in the curriculum in Norway, which is emphasizing how important it is to work with.

As mentioned, the novel *Lord of the Flies* shows what can happen in a society when it lacks rules and authorities. The novel is widely used in education, to teach different topics, but I want to argue how it can be used to bring attention specifically to the topics such as democracy and ethics. While focusing on these two topics, I will also include theory on reading and the use of literature in the classroom. Practicing reading skills will always be important, whether it being a sign, a text-message, news-article, or a novel. Reading is also one of the basic skills.

In my experience, many teachers avoid using longer texts to work with in the classroom, because they are afraid that pupils will not follow along, and they are maybe unsure about the educational value in the text they are using. Therefore, I am writing this thesis to contribute to this. I want adolescents to enjoy reading longer works, like novels. I am unsure about how realistic *Lord of the Flies* is, but it does simplify some issues that can make it easier to understand when connecting it to things in real life.

Ethics and democratic values are important and should be a foundation when teaching in the Norwegian school system. Critical thinking and ethical reasoning are nice words, and everyone agrees that this is important, but it is hard to know how to implement this in teaching. In the English subject curriculum, it is stated that pupils shall acquire language and knowledge of culture and society through reflecting, interpreting and critically assessing different types of texts in English (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (Udir), 2020, p.

3). Learning about democratic values and ethical reasoning are both central parts of the curriculum. However, it is not elaborated in what ways this can be implemented in teaching or how the students can work with texts to create a foundation of critical literacy. Thus, this thesis will work as a contribution on how one can implement ethics and democracy by working with *Lord of the Flies* in the classroom.

1.1.1 Why democratic values?

In Norway, we live in a society where democratic values are highly valued. One can say that it is important when it comes to democratic elections, but it can also be relevant in other parts of our everyday lives, because it says something about how we are supposed to interact with other people. In the core curriculum, one of the core values is ‘democracy and participation’. This core value has to do with learning democratic values, and the value of participating in the society in different ways. It is stated that:

The teaching and training shall promote belief in democratic values and in democracy as a form of government. It shall give the pupils an understanding of the basic rules of democracy and the importance of protecting them. (UDIR, 2020, p. 9)

Democracy is about more than just being able to vote at an election, it is a mindset where every citizen is equal and just as important participants in the society. One of the core values of a democratic society is the importance of being curious and critical, to participate open discussions and politics, and to be able to share one’s opinions. Jürgen Habermas, which is one of the central thinkers in critical theory, strongly emphasizes that open discussion is the basis for ethical interaction in a society (Tollefsen, Syse & Nicolaisen, 2014, p. 480-481). English is a language that is spoken all over the world, which makes it easier for English-speakers to communicate with people from different cultures than their own. Democratic values are also a part of the interdisciplinary topic ‘democracy and citizenship’, which is presented in the following way:

In the English subject, the interdisciplinary topic of democracy and citizenship refers to helping the pupils to develop their understanding of the fact that the way they view the world is culture dependent. By learning English, the pupils can experience different societies and cultures by communicating with others around the world, regardless of

linguistic or cultural background. This can open for new ways to interpret the world, and promote curiosity and engagement and help to prevent prejudices. (UDIR, 2020, p.3)

Democratic societies are valuing freedom of expression, equality, and active participating.

1.1.2 Why critical thinking and ethical awareness?

Today, it has become more widespread to be critical to the information we are given. This can be information we find on the internet, or the information we get from the authorities. This can be both positive and negative. The term critical has to do with ethical reasoning and critical thinking, and seeing things from different points of view and taking this into consideration when making a decision. This claim is supported by Luke (2012) who describes how the term critical is derived from the Greek adjective *kriticos*, which is the ability to argue and judge (p. 59).

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR) presents the *Core curriculum – values and principles for primary and secondary education* (2019) which is something that is important in all school subjects. One part of the core curriculum is ‘critical thinking and ethical awareness’. The first part is critical thinking, which means “applying reason in an inquisitive and systematic way when working with specific practical challenges, phenomena, expressions and forms of knowledge” (UDIR, 2019, p. 6). This is a topic that needs to be an underlying value in school, and something that is worked with systematically over time. The subject is also highly relevant to the thesis aim, where I seek to answer how to work with ethics in the English subject classroom in Norway. This brings us to the second part of the aim, which is ethical awareness. Ethics is the central subject in this thesis. In the core curriculum, ethical awareness is described in the following way: “Ethical awareness, which means balancing different considerations, is necessary if one is to be a reflecting and responsible human being” (UDIR, 2019, p. 7).

The aims in ‘critical thinking and ethical awareness’ has to do with helping the pupils to develop better judgement and becoming responsible human beings (UDIR, 2019, p. 7). The teacher shall prepare the pupils for the ‘real’ world and ensure that they are ready to face different issues they may encounter in everyday life.

Students would benefit in many ways by working with ethics in school. The core curriculum says that the school shall help the pupils ask critical questions to develop their critical thinking skills and to act with ethical awareness (UDIR, 2017, p. 6). The argument that learning about ethics will help the pupils is known as the socialization argument, which says that the school has an obligation to create good citizens, and that working with ethics in school would benefit to this (Gardelli et al., 2014, p. 19). A second argument why ethics is important in school, is that learning about ethics will help people live better lives. If people have developed their critical thinking skills, know to ask questions, to be curious and act with ethical awareness will help them do better in life. This argument is known as the quality-of-life-argument, and compared to the socialization argument, it says that the school should help the students to be able to live good lives, and help them become people that acts in a morally correct way (Rowe, 2006, as cited in Gardelli et al., 2014, p. 19). The third and final argument for ethics in school is that, according to Gardelli et al. (2014) the pupils' results in school would improve. This is the tool argument, and it means that when learning about ethics in school in general would help pupils raise their results in multiple subjects (Lovat & Clement, 2008, as cited in Gardelli et al., 2014, p. 19). Critical literacy is in many ways connected to critical thinking and ethical awareness because it has to do with critically assessing the information we are given, and this is an important skill to work with.

1.2 Thesis aim

The focus on ethical reasoning and democratic values in the LK20 curriculum, shows that these are important aims to work with in order to make the pupils ready for everyday life and to work for a better future. The aim of this thesis is to contribute to how pupils can work with these important goals through English literature.

In this thesis, I will discuss how Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies* can be used in the upper secondary classroom in Norway to bring attention to the topic of democratic values, critical thinking and ethical awareness. I will also show how these topics are connected, and why they are important for pupils to learn.

1.3 Outline of thesis

In this thesis, I examine how to use William Golding's 1954 novel *Lord of the Flies* in the upper secondary English classroom in Norway. This thesis aims to provide existing literature and material that will be a basis for further discussion, I will account for relevant aims in LK20, and finally how to work with *Lord of the Flies* in the classroom to teach the topics of democracy and ethical awareness.

I chose to structure my thesis in the following way: first, I present existing theory on the subjects of democracy, democratic values and short on other types of governments. Second, I review theory on ethics and critical thinking, which then bring us to the topic of reading and literature in the classroom, and the importance of critical literacy. The next part of the thesis is a literary analysis of *Lord of the Flies*, where literary devices that are used as symbols is pointed out. This is then connected to the two topics of democracy and ethics, and how they can be used as a basis for classroom work. I have chosen to structure my thesis this way for the purpose of making it easier to read and easier to follow along.

1.4 Introducing Lord of the Flies

Lord of the Flies was published by William Golding in 1954. Since its release, it has faced both admiration and criticism. The story takes place on an island in the 1950s, and it becomes clear that it is at the beginning of or during a war. "Didn't you hear what the pilot said? About the atom bomb? They're all dead" (Golding, 1954, p. 14).

English literature such as *Lord of the Flies* can be used to bring attention to the topics of ethics and democracy, because the novel addresses multiple issues that is still relevant and can be applied to things that is happening in real life. *Lord of the Flies* can be categorized as an allegory, because of its use of symbols and hidden meanings. The novel is full of symbolism, and even if it was published many years ago, it displays issues that are still relevant to talk about to this day. These issues are for example democracy, power, critical thinking, peer-pressure, etc. By reading *Lord of the Flies* and being made aware of the symbolism in it, this can be the start of many interesting and useful class-discussions and activities.

Lord of the Flies is written from a 3rd person point of view, where the narrator stands outside of the story. We know this because the narrator refers to the characters by their names or he/she. The novel is a quick and intense read. By practicing critical literacy, which is important for exploring and understanding the hidden messages of *Lord of the Flies*, the pupils can practice the ability to read between the lines which is an important skill for learners (Rimmereide, 2020, p. 195).

1.4.1 Plot summary

This whole subchapter is a plot summary of William Goldings 1954 novel *Lord of the Flies*:

The story in *Lord of the Flies* takes place around year 1950. A group of schoolboys are on a plane because they are being evacuated from England because of a war. The pilot tells them that an atomic bomb has gone off, then the plane is attacked at it ends up crash landing on a deserted island in the Pacific Ocean. The story begins with the two protagonists, Ralph and Piggy, who meet each other on the beach of the island. They don't know each other from before. Ralph finds a conch and then blows into it which creates a loud noise. Other boys start showing up because they heard the noise, including a group of choirboys. The leader of the choir is a boy named Jack Merridew. Jack argues that the group should elect a leader that can guide them and make decisions, or as they call it, a 'chief'. The group of boys all vote on who they think should be the leader, and Jack loses to Ralph, and Ralph is elected leader.

Ralph decides that Jack can be the leader of the choir, and they will be hunters. The boys find out that there are pigs on the island, which makes Jack excited and makes him want to start hunting right away. From early in the story, one of the smaller children expresses concern because he thinks there is a beast on the island. Ralph tells the boys that there is not beast on the island, but Jack says that he will try to hunt for it when they are going hunting. Ralph thinks they should light a fire at the top of the mountain so that if a boat is passing the island, they will see the smoke and come and rescue them. He is giving Jack and the hunters the responsibility to keep the fire going at the top of the mountain, because he thinks it is important that the fire is always burning.

Jack is busy hunting for pigs, and him and the hunters forget about the fire, so it stops burning, right as they see a boat that is passing. This makes Ralph confront Jack and the hunters, which

creates tension in the group. Jack is going against Ralph to the point where Ralph questions if he wants to be chief anymore, but he decides to continue.

At night-time, there is a dead man that falls in a parachute from a plane above the island, and he ends up hanging from the parachute in some trees. Two of the younger boys sees the dead body and think it is the beast, and they tell the others. Jack and Ralph, and some of the older boys, decides to go look it. When they stumble across it, it's dark out and they all think it is the beast as well. Now, even the older boys are convinced that there is something scary on the island. This did not help the situation, as the group just became more frightened.

Jack and the hunters kill a pig, and they decide to put its head on a stick to try to scare away the beast. A boy named Simon is often wandering off by himself, but when he does it this time, he stumbles upon the severed pig head on a stick. The head starts talking to him, at it tells him that it is the beast, or the 'lord of the flies'. It then tells Simon that the beast is not a physical thing they need to be afraid of, it is rather something that lies within themselves. Then Simon passes out. When he wakes up, he sees the dead man in a parachute, and he understand that it he was not the beast. He rushes to tell the rest of the group what he has seen. While this is happening, Jack and the hunters have a feast where they eat and they are doing a type of 'hunting-dance', and Ralph and Piggy decides to show up and join them, and Jack lets them. As they are doing the dance and running around the bonfire, Simon emerges from the forest to tell them the truth about the beast. As this happens, all the boys attack him and kills him. This includes Ralph and Piggy as well.

In the morning, Ralph, Piggy, Sam and Eric are at the beach. Jack comes to the beach and steal Piggy's glasses. They decide to confront Jack with this to get his glasses back, but Jack and his followers capture Sam and Eric, and Roger pushes a big rock down and it kills Piggy. The stone also breaks the conch, because Piggy was holding it in his hand. Now Ralph is all by himself, and he finds out that Jack and his followers are planning to hunt him down and kill him. The next day, Ralph is hiding from the others, and while they are looking for him, Jack sets the whole island on fire to lure Ralph out. Then, they notice an officer that has come to the island because he saw the fire. The boys are rescued, and they all start crying.

1.4.2 Characters

One of the main characters that the reader is following from start to finish in the novel, is a twelve-year-old boy named Ralph. Ralph is the oldest boy on the island. The reader is introduced to Ralph already in the very first sentence, and he is referred to as “the boy with fair hair”, and later “the fair boy” (Golding, 1954, p. 7), and he is described as being good-looking. Ralph then meets a boy named Piggy. Piggy is first referred to as “the fat boy” (Golding, 1954, p. 7). Piggy also has multiple health issues, in addition to being overweight. Ralph is the type of person that soon takes control and attempts to create order in the group. Piggy comes off as having a different personality than Ralph. Where Ralph is seen as a firm and safe person, Piggy is more careful and withdrawn. Then, another leader-figure emerges, and this is Jack Merridew. Jack was the leader of a choir, and they all come marching in matching clothing. Jack has a strong personality, and he is a type that requires respect and wants to be the leader. There is also a character named Simon, a smart who has a tendency to stay in the background, and he often wanders off by himself. Next, we have two smaller children named Sam and Eric, after a while referred to as ‘Samneric’. Finally, Roger is a person that comes off as having a troubling personality.

2. Research methods

The research method used throughout this thesis is qualitative research in the form of a literature review, a close reading/literary analysis of the novel *Lord of the Flies* (William Golding, 1954). In this chapter, I will explain why this research method has been used and I discuss possible limitations to the chosen method.

2.1 Literature review

The first part of the thesis consists of a literature review, which can be explained as “a systematic, explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluation, and synthesizing the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners” (Fink, 2014, p. 3). This means that the aim of a literature review is to provide an outline of existing literature within the chosen topics, which in this thesis are the topics of democracy and ethics. In addition to this, I have included material on using literature in the classroom. By providing relevant material to create an overview of the topics, it will help me find my own standpoint, and it will be used as a foundation for further discussion of the themes present in *Lord of the Flies*.

To create an overview on existing literature within the fields of democracy and ethics, I have read and reviewed a range of academic sources that were gathered from various database searches. Words that were used when searching for relevant literature included words such as “democracy”, “democratic values”, “ethics”, and “critical thinking”. While reading through the literature, I figured that I had to narrow down the topics to fit what would be natural to include in a classroom setting, as well as what could be connected to examples in *Lord of the Flies*.

As this thesis aims to answer how *Lord of the Flies* can be used in the classroom to shed light on the topics of democratic values and ethical awareness, I provide an overview on relevant aims from the core curriculum and LK20. In addition to this, I supplied with theory on how and why to use literature in the classroom. To locate relevant research on this field, I used search words such as “reading”, “teaching”, “literature” and “education”. While this thesis does include elements of how to work with texts in the classroom, the main focus is, however,

on the presence of symbolism of democracy and ethics in *Lord of the Flies*, and how the novel can be used to discuss these topics in the classroom.

2.2 Literary analysis

The second research method used in this thesis, is a literary analysis of *Lord of the Flies*. The literary analysis consists of a close reading of the novel, where I'm pointing to literary devices that Golding is using to convey specific messages. The focus of the close reading will be on symbolism that is connected to the two main topics of this thesis, which are democratic values and critical thinking and ethical awareness.

One of the aims of the close reading is to find out what Golding's underlying message of the novel is. "A reader conducting any type of close reading will scrutinize a text; this is the common element across close reading paradigms" (Catterson, 2017, p. 3). This means that when doing a close reading, the reader is 'pulling apart' the text to find what the meaning of different literary devices are. When doing a close reading in the classroom, the

When doing a close reading, the reader often has an idea of what they are looking for before they start reading.

Close reading paradigms, however, may differ along many other dimensions. For example, educators may differ in their goals for close reading, ideas about what constitutes a text worthy of close reading, and assumptions about where meaning resides. These beliefs may lead to differences in instructional practice, such as the types of texts chosen, types of questions posed to students, participation frameworks designed, and the overarching curriculum in which close reading is embedded. (Catterson, 2017, p. 3).

This means that the contents of a literary analysis will differ based on what the goals of the close reading is. My goal of doing a close reading of *Lord of the Flies* is to look at the topics of democracy and ethics.

I have chosen to include a literary analysis in my thesis because it is important to point out relevant aspects of the novel that can be discussed in a classroom. The novel is full of symbolism that can be used.

When doing a close reading in the classroom, the learners should be given sufficient background information so that they have an idea on what they should be looking for. The more context the learner has before they start reading, the more they will understand the text.

2.3 Classroom activities

The third and final research method I used in this thesis, are to create suggestions on a plan on how to use *Lord of the Flies* in the classroom, where two of the activities I tested in an upper secondary classroom in Norway.

The two activities were done in an upper secondary classroom that I got to borrow. I informed the pupils why I was there, what they would help me with and why they were going to do the two tasks. I emphasized that it was optional to participate in the tasks, but their answers would be completely anonymous and only used for the purpose of this thesis. I handed the two activities out in the classroom, I read the tasks out loud and explained what their task was, then the pupils answered them individually. The pupils wrote their answers in word-documents. When they were done, they handed their answers to me anonymously.

While it was important to inform the pupils why I was there and what they were helping me with, I did however not give the pupils any background information on what topics I was doing research on (democracy and ethics). I chose not to inform them about this because I did not want it to affect their answers, but rather to see if I was able to draw out any relevance to the topics in the answers they gave. The main aim of doing these activities was to see if they would work in the classroom, and to see what possible answers one could get from them. Then, I am able to discuss how one can keep building on their answers.

The reason why I wanted to include some of my own research in this thesis, is because this thesis is almost entirely theory based, and based on previously done research on the topics. While it is valuable to review existing literature and theory on the topics, I wanted to include research on what possible outcomes one could get from doing the activities I discuss.

The two tasks are connected to how one should use literature in the classroom to spark motivation and to make the pupils interested before starting the reading process. The tasks are, however, not directly connected to the novel *Lord of the Flies*. This is partly because I had limited time with the class that I borrowed, and I concluded that I would not have enough time to bring in the novel itself, because this class was not going to read it. Therefore, I found it beneficial to choose tasks that were not related to the novel itself, but rather to choose tasks that did not need any background information about it.

2.3.1 Task 1

Task 1: If you could introduce one new law, what would it be?

The first task can be connected to the subject of democracy and social systems. In *Lord of the Flies*, the reader is witnessing the creation of and then the breaking of a social system. What the group of boys does at the beginning of the novel, is that they are creating rules to form a sort of structure. It is therefore interesting to hear what laws the pupils would find beneficial to introduce in their own worlds.

In addition to this, the task can bring attention to the topic of ethical awareness. The way this can be done, is that the answers the pupils give, will say something about whether they would put their own interests first, or if they would think of the interests of the majority. Most likely, the pupils will look at the society that they live in now, and then they will look for what they feel is missing. Then they create a law that will fill what is missing.

The way I will discuss the answers to this task, is by seeing whether or not the answers could be used as a basis for further discussion, and I will argue how I would follow up on their responses and how I would continue to work with them.

2.3.2 Task 2

Task 2: A group of young boys (ages between six and twelve years old) are stranded on a deserted island, with no adults with them. What happens? Finish the story.

For this task, I was not aiming for a long and detailed story, but rather that they would predict how they think the story would go, and if there would be a happy or not happy ending. I specified that I wanted the pupils to write at least 200 words. I did, however, not say anything about my expectations to the content of their answers. This way, the task was open to interpretation, and they were free to use as much creativity as they pleased. Task 2 could be a part of the warm-up activities to do before introducing *Lord of the Flies*. This task is not directly connected to democracy or ethics, but it rather allows the students to reflect on their expectations of what would happen in a similar story.

The reason why I chose these two activities to focus on, is because the answers to these questions could be done in the classroom to introduce the novel and the main topics to be worked with. The questions are also open and does not require any background information about the novel or the topics. Because I was not able to work with *Lord of the Flies* itself in a class, I believe these tasks would give an idea of how it would be to start working with the text in the classroom.

As will be further discussed in the novel, an important aspect of working with literature in the classroom has to do with what happens before the students start the reading process. I chose the two questions to focus on because they would be natural to do when starting to work with *Lord of the Flies*. The questions will get the students thinking, and the answers to the questions says something about their expectations to the novel.

2.4 Limitations

As explained, this thesis is using a qualitative research approach, where the aim is to go in depth rather than processing a lot of material. This thesis is almost entirely theory based, and based on previously done research, which can be considered a limitation. The basis of the thesis is done by exploring and discussing existing literature, without contributing with my own done research.

The two tasks that were tested in an upper secondary English classroom is the only part of this thesis that is my own research. A limitation to these tasks is that ideally, they could be connected to the use of *Lord of the Flies* itself. Another approach could be that the results or answers could be different if the activities were done in another student group.

3. Literature review

This section has three main parts. First, I review what democratic values can be drawn from the story in *Lord of the Flies*. Subsequently, I explore the importance of ethical awareness and critical thinking skills. And finally, I examine the importance of working with literature in the classroom and developing critical literacy skills.

3.1 Democracy

In a democratic society like Norway, there are multiple values that works as a foundation for how our society is working and how we interact with each other. In *Lord of the Flies*, Golding use different types of literary devices that can symbolize a few democratic values, and what happens when these values are not upheld.

Schiefloe (2017) states that democracy means government by the people (p. 432). How people work together in a community, has a lot to do with how good the society will work. Kofi Annan, the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, stated in a speech at the CDD Kronti ne Akwamu Lecture how democracy depends on active participation from the citizens (2016). This means that it is important that every citizen in a society is participating, in order to work towards a better existence. Frank (2010) explains how *Lord of the Flies* “portrays a democratic organization which fails as a result of the basic instincts of human nature” (p. 12).

Democracy is mentioned multiple places in LK20. For example, we have the interdisciplinary topic ‘democracy and citizenship’, which has to do with preparing the pupils to be curious and understanding of other cultures and societies. By learning English, one will be able to communicate with people all over the world. English is what is known as a lingua franca, and it is spoken in countries over the whole globe. Being able to communicate with people of other cultures and backgrounds will expand a person’s cultural knowledge, and in turn increase a person’s understanding of how the world works. In the English subject curriculum, it is stated that:

By learning English, the pupils can experience different societies and cultures by communicating with others around the world, regardless of linguistic or cultural background. This can open for new ways to interpret the world, and promote curiosity and engagement and help to prevent prejudices (Udir, p. 3)

To be able to understand but also respect other people's cultures will help the pupils become good citizens. One of the core values is 'democracy and participation', and it explains how school shall teach the pupils what democracy is and the value of participating in the society. "The core curriculum of the curriculum elaborates on the core values in the objectives clause in the Education Act and the overriding principles for primary and secondary education and training" (UDIR, p. 1). It is stated in the core curriculum that democratic values "help us to live, learn and work together in a complex world with an uncertain future" (UDIR, p. 4).

This is important to prepare pupils to be active participants in the society, to work towards a better future. This is a skill that should be focused on from early on. Under section 1-1 of the Education Act, it is stated that the pupils "shall develop knowledge, skills and attitudes so that they can master their lives and can take part in working life and society" (Udir, p. 3).

Democracy is a broad topic, and there are many relevant democratic values that are worth discussing. For the purpose of this thesis, I have narrowed down the subject of democracy by focusing on values that are central in a functioning democracy, that can also be found examples of in the novel *Lord of the Flies*. It is important to be aware of the fact that a democracy is not only an elected representative government (Cam, 2009, p. 41). Democracy also has to do with how people engage with each other, and how people must be open to and listen to each other's opinions.

3.1.1 Democratic values

Democracies emphasize that one should have power over oneself and one's life, and that one should have the opportunity to make one's own decisions without interference from the authorities. According to the Council of Europe, the idea of democracy has two key principles:

1. Individual autonomy: The idea that no-one should be subject to rules which have been imposed by others. People should be able to control their own lives (within reason).
2. Equality: The idea that everyone should have the same opportunity to influence the decisions that affect people in society. (Council of Europe, n.d.).

This means that independence and equality are central values in a democracy. The next central democratic value that should be mentioned, is equality. The concept of equality means that nobody should be treated different from others based on their gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, etc.

Schansberg (2021) states that democracy has three main conditions: “significant citizen participation, substantial social and economic liberty, and equality before the law. Voting is often imagined as the central act of all three” (Riker, 1982, as cited in Schansberg, 2021). The first democratic value is democratic decision making, which is the process of making a decision where everyone is involved, and everyone’s vote is worth just as much. One of the first things one might associate with a democratic society, is that it means that every citizen gets to vote at elections, and that there is a representative government. In most democratic societies, there are elections where the population will vote for who they want to represent them in politics. “In large and complex societies, this involves an indirect form of government, where elected representatives govern with a mandate from the population” (Schiefløe, 2017, p. 432).

Equality is also connected to human dignity, which also means that all people should be treated equally regardless of social factors such as race, class, gender, etc. “At its most basic, the concept of human dignity is the belief that all people hold a special value that’s tied solely to their humanity” (Soken-Huberty, n.d., paragraph 2).

One of the most essential values in a democracy is freedom of expression, or freedom of speech. To have freedom of expression means that one is entitled to express their opinion, without the authorities intervening, and this freedom is a fundamental human right. In the Nordic countries, human rights are highly valued. Human rights denote fundamental rights that every individual should have, and they lie between the state and individuals, not

between individuals. In Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), it is stated that: “Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority” (p. 12). This means that, in addition to be free to speak one’s mind, one is also free to look for and assess information. When having this right, one is able to search for information on different platforms and then one can choose what to do with the information that is gathered. It is up to each individual country to accede to the human rights convention, which means that they are obliged to follow these up. This may also mean that the countries renounce part of their right to self-determination, because human rights are supposed to come first.

Freedom of expression is important because it gives the citizens in a society the freedom to be critical to the information they are given, and to make their own decisions based on the information they have gathered. It also means that everyone is free to openly criticise the government, or any other subject. ECHR specify how these freedoms are necessary in a democratic society in the following ways:

in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

(ECHR, p. 12)

In today’s society, freedom of expression is something that has become more accessible and easier than ever. Where previously only politicians and high-profile people could share their opinions, it has now become possible for anyone with a smartphone to do so. Annan (2016) states that politics is too important to be only left to politicians to discuss. Today, everyone is able to express their opinion in seconds, by the touch of a button. This has become possible thanks to the various social medias we have available, and that we take with us wherever we go. This means that social media and internet has been positive for freedom of expression. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the real impact occurs by participating in democratic elections and exercising one's right to vote.

In addition to this, technology and social media is not only positive. Annan (2018) argued in a speech that technology poses both threats and opportunities to the democracy:

Finally, do not confuse your likes on Facebook with your votes at the ballot box. If the string of electoral surprises over the past few years has proved anything, it is that voting matters. The future is, quite literally, in your hands. Handle it carefully.

(Annan, 2018).

This means that, while change can happen by spreading information on different platforms, real impact happens by casting one's ballot in elections. One can argue that democracy has to do with working together towards a common goal, where everyone is equally as important.

A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity. (Dewey, 1966, p. 87)

As previously mentioned, speaking English will make it possible to communicate with people with different cultural backgrounds around the world. Another ideal that can be considered a democratic ideal, is being open to other people's opinions and being willing to see cases from different points of view. According to Cam (2009), this is considered an important democratic disposition (p. 41). Cam also emphasizes the importance of having an open-minded outlook (2009, p. 41).

The more numerous and varied points of contact denote a greater diversity of stimuli to which an individual has to respond; they consequently put a premium on variation in his action. They secure a liberation of powers which remain suppressed as long as

the incitations to action are partial, as they must be in a group which in its exclusiveness shuts out many interests. (Dewey, 1966, p. 87).

3.1.2 Limitations and threats to the democracy

This subchapter aims to present possible limitations and threats to the democracy. As previously stated, Schanberg (2021) argues that “there’s an old saying that democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others” (p. 637). No form of government is perfect, and they all have their limitations and negative sides to them. The same goes for democratic societies. While the democratic values try embrace everyone, and to create a system that works for every individual, it is never possible to make it work for everyone.

I believe a misconception of democratic societies is that people are living in complete equality. Just because equality is an important democratic value that democratic countries strive for, does not mean that people are living in equality in all arenas in life. Cam (2009) explains that just because people are able to vote, is not valuable if they are experiencing injustice elsewhere: “That they have the opportunity to periodically cast their ballot is not meaningful if their working conditions are tyrannical or their communities are unable to live in the wider society on equitable terms” (p. 41).

When teaching democracy in the classroom, one can for instance draw parallels to how democratic ideals are practiced in school or in the workplace. This is something that would be useful for the pupils in the future when they start working.

One limitation to the democratic system, is that minorities are often not as represented in voting. According to Hersh (2020), political habits in the United States vary significantly based on race and education. This means that people of different races and backgrounds are not equally represented. Schanberg (2021) also argues that education plays a role when it comes to participation in politics, and the ability to think critically: “the more educated are in a better position to learn about politics and public policy (or anything else), given their

advantage in overall knowledge, greater capacity to process information, and stronger ability to think critically” (p. 639).

Threats to the democracy

Kofi Annan did at multiple occasions question the role of technology in democratic systems. He explained how internet once was view solemnly as a positive thing for the democracy, but it eventually turned into something that can also be negative, and something one needs to be aware of when roaming the internet:

The Internet and social media were once hailed for creating new opportunities to spread democracy and freedom... But authoritarian regimes soon began cracking down on Internet freedom. They feared the brave new digital world, because it was beyond the reach of their analogue security establishments... In fact, these regimes have begun to wield social media for their own ends (Annan, 2018).

Social medias are still platforms that can offer a lot of positive things to the democracy but it is also important to be critical of the information we find there. The information we are exposed to, is often biased, and it is based on the writers’ personal opinions. It is therefore crucial that we do our own research and don’t blindly trust everything we read online. Especially at this time of fake news. Another threat to the democracy is when people base their knowledge solemnly on information found on social media, but this information is not always correct.

Threats to the democracy is something we can find multiple examples of, for example the 2021 riot of the US capitol. Following this, the former president of the United States, Donald Trump, was banned from the social media platform Twitter. Some may argue that by doing this, Twitter deprived Trump from his freedom of speech.

3.1.3 Other political systems

We find different political systems around the world, and each system has different things that characterizes it. Schiefloe (2017) presents three main forms of governments. Next to democracy, we have totalitarian and authoritarian regimes. At the very end of the scale lies

the totalitarian society, where the state strives for complete control over the population and uses all means to achieve it (p. 431). Meanwhile, authoritarian regimes find themselves in an intermediate position between the totalitarian and the democratic (p. 431). The main differences in these types of governments, has to do with the relationship between the people and the ones that are in power, as well as how much power the individuals have. The way a society is working is also dependent on what kind of 'leader' it has.

Another type of government, or perhaps the absence of government, is anarchy. Simply explained, Havercroft and Prichard (2017) states that "anarchy is the absence of rulers, of a centralised authority or a system of self-help" (p. 252-253). Anarchy, and the absence of rulers is something one finds symbolism of in *Lord of the Flies*, as well. Frank (2010) states how *Lord of the Flies* "portrays a leader who must eventually retreat into savagery like his enemy and his followers" (p. 12)

In countries such as Norway, the state is relatively active, but it is not authoritarian. One can say that the state has both positive and negative power. The concept of positive power means that they must intervene if someone is exposed to injustice, or if someone breaks the law. An example of negative power that the state are required to refrain from intervening in your private life and your discretion. The exception to this is if we're talking about a crime.

Authority has a lot to do with being respected by others, and to come across as a confident and strong individual. Mayborn (2021) is explaining the relationship between authority and legitimacy: "it implies a belief in the validity or bindingsness of an order. It is not just laws or governing institutions that international political may lack, but most importantly a sense of legitimacy" (Milner, 1991, p. 74, as cited in Mayborn, 2021, p. 582). He continues by stating that this critique to the concept of authority helps clarify what an anarchy is, and how the lack of a proper authority on the island in *Lord of the Flies* created chaos (p. 582). This is emphasizing the importance of having structure and authorities that create and enforce the rules.

It is important to understand the different power relations in a society, and examples of what is giving certain people and instances power:

Relations of domination are not haphazardly and randomly developed. Rather, the very structures of our social institutions and predominant norms, values and beliefs of our

society sanction, indeed define and reinforce them. The ability to control and manipulate others also derives from privileged access to and control of valued resources such as education, personal wealth, housing, food, health care and weapons of war. (Kreisberg, 1992, p. 11).

3.2 Critical thinking and ethical awareness

Another central topic in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, has to do with ethics and critical thinking. The story is about a group of young individuals that is prone to peer pressure and being faced with ethical dilemmas. In this part of the chapter, I explore the importance of ethical awareness and critical thinking skills. In Section 1-1 of the Education Act, it is stated: "The pupils and apprentices shall learn to think critically and act ethically and with environmental awareness. They shall have joint responsibility and the right to participate" (Udir, 2020, p. 3).

The chosen title of this section, 'critical thinking and ethical awareness', is taken from the core curriculum in Norway. This core value is showing how ethics and critical thinking is connected. Students can benefit in many ways by working with ethics in school. Critical thinking and ethical awareness being a core value means that it is supposed to be focused on in any subject in school, in both primary and secondary education. The core curriculum elaborates on the importance of developing critical thinking skills:

Ethical awareness, which means balancing different considerations, is necessary if one is to be a reflecting and responsible human being. The teaching and training must develop the pupils' ability to make ethical assessments and help them to be cognizant of ethical issues. (Udir, 2020, p. 7).

The aim of this core value is to influence and prepare pupils to become good citizens, that will make good decisions that are well thought-through. To make good decisions, one must learn to see things from more than only one point of view, and be aware of the possible consequences of ones actions before making a decision. In the core curriculum, it is explained how the school must motivate students to be curious and to develop their ethical awareness (Udir, 2020, p. 6). Developing ethical awareness and critical thinking skills is not

an easy process, but rather a gradual process that takes many years, and it is not something that is ever learned once and for all.

3.2.1 Ethics

Ethics is something that has been around for ages. It is therefore a widely researched and discussed subject, and one can find many definitions. Ethics is a complex topic with many dimensions that could be reviewed. A topic that is closely connected to ethics, is morals. Tollefsen et al. (2014) states that one can distinguish between the terms ethics and morals by saying that “ethics is the ‘subject’, while morality is about the individual’s personal attitude and choice” (p. 101).

However, the two terms are often used interchangeably, and for the purpose of this thesis, I will stick to the term ethics. Ethics is, as previously mentioned, a complex term, but in simplified form it applies to the way you are supposed to live your life. This claim is supported by Blackburn (2001), who argues that ethics is a surrounding climate of how to live (p. 1). Ethics is, however, not a set of rules that applies to everyone, neither something that everyone agrees on. This means that it can be hard to tell if something is ethically right or not, because it depends on who you ask, and the personal beliefs of that person. If they are religious, a person’s values can also be influenced by that religion.

One way to measure ethical value is by looking at what the majority think. Gardelli et al. (2014) argues that ethical value is connected to social facts, for example by claiming that: “‘good’ means the same as ‘favored by the majority’ (a form of meta-ethical naturalism), or that the good is determined in some other way by the majority favors” (p. 19). This is one way to look at ethical value, and if one agrees that something is ethically right based on what the majority think, a parallel can be drawn to the topic of democracy. But just like in a democracy, there will always be someone’s opinions that are not represented. From we are born, we are thought what is right and wrong, and as we grow up, we are influenced by our surroundings.

People do, in general, want to make their own decisions and they need to find an inner motivation within themselves that tells them that it is the right thing to do. Blackburn (2001)

states that people do not like to be told what to do (p. 6). Because of this, some people can find it hard to respect and to submit to different authorities in a society. Some people have problems with law enforcement, others can have problems with trusting the government. Not liking to be told what to do is something we find examples of in *Lord of the Flies*, as well, and it shows the reader what can happen when people don't respect or have faith in the ones who are supposed to lead them.

Since the topic of this thesis is how to promote critical thinking skills and ethical awareness in a classroom, it is relevant to include research on approaches to ethics in school. Gardelli, Alerby and Persson (2014) presents three approaches to ethics in school. First, in the descriptive facts about ethics approach (DE approach), teachers would present facts about ethics and what opinion people in a society have about some ethical dilemmas (Gardelli et al., 2014, p. 17). Examples of such ethical dilemmas could be people's opinions on electrical cars, recycling, nuclear power, etc. (p. 17). These are all moral issues that are relevant today, but other relevant issues are the 'Black Lives Matter' movement, or perhaps the discussion of abortion laws. Second, in the moral fostering approach (MF approach), Gardelli et al. explain that "the aim of the school is to mediate to the students some pre-defined substantial values" (2014, p. 18). These are values that are often considered good and sometimes natural in the society. For example, one shall not lie, one shall take care of the environment and not pollute (Gardelli et al., 2014, p. 18). The idea of MF has strong roots in Western societies, and the ideas are even evident in Plato and Aristotle (Gardelli et al., 2014, p. 18). Finally, the philosophical ethics approach (PE approach) is the approach that Gardelli et al. (2014) are arguing as being the best:

According to the PE approach to ethics in school, school shall help students evaluate different moral standpoints, to evaluate the strength of various arguments, to distinguish between different ways of ascribing value, and so on. (p. 18).

The apparent difference between the PE approach and the DE- and MF approach is that the PE approach is mainly focusing on students' own critical thinking, and they need to learn to evaluate on their own, and not simply being told what is right and what is wrong. I will not review these approaches further, but I find it relevant to include them in my thesis because it says something about how ethics should be incorporated in teaching.

Ethics and morals are something people might find hard to discuss. This is because it questions whether you are doing or thinking the right or wrong thing, which for some people can find uncomfortable to think about. Blackburn (2001) argues that ethics is something disturbing that people can get uncomfortable while talking about with others: “We are often vaguely uncomfortable when we think of such things as exploitation of the world’s resources, or the way our comforts are provided by the miserable labour conditions of the Third World” (p. 7). There are chances that examples such as these will surface in a discussion about whether one has good or bad morals, because it is something that is in fact happening today. It is, however, something that one would rather not think about. The discomfort some people experience when they think about sad or unfair situations, is something that also happens in the story in *Lord of the Flies*, which will be discussed further in a later chapter.

Spitz (1970) talks about how Golding is showing the creation of a civilization out of innocence, by detaching a group of young people and putting them in a state of nature: “there to found a civil society on such principles of decency as seem to them appropriate, and to follow with a close and carefully eye their inevitable course of destruction” (Spitz, 1970, p. 29). Research has priorly been done on how *Lord of the Flies* can be used by students to explore ethical and moral issues. Naylor, McGuinn and Skaikh (2021) did a qualitative research study on this. The research was done by doing an online literary exchange, where students discuss the novel and their thoughts about the novel in relation to the topics of human nature, law and order, and moral issues. The students were given three questions to guide them and to help stimulate discussion:

What elements did you talk about in your literature circle? What connections in your group did you make between the novel and your own experiences? Do you see any relevance of Golding’s novel to you now?

(Naylor et al., 2021, p. 2).

This research-study is relevant to my thesis because it says something about how students can connect elements from the novel to their everyday lives. If *Lord of the Flies* were to be used in a classroom, the pupils should be able to see the relevance of the novel, how issues in the novel are still relevant today, and how this can be connected to parts of their everyday lives.

In addition to this, the students in the research-study were asked to discuss the elements of law and order and moral issues in the novel, which is also relevant to my thesis.

Participants from three groups (1, 3 and 4) talked about the moral development of the characters in their group discussions in a total of five mentions, talking about how characters had turned from ‘innocence to savages’ or from ‘civility to savages’ (Naylor et al., 2021, p. 12).

One student stated how he “lost the faith in humanity while reading this book” (Naylor et al., 2021, p. 12). This statement is showing how the story in *Lord of the Flies* is quite dark, and how it questions man’s ability to be good and moral individuals, when they are far away from structure and civilization.

3.3 Reading

In this part of the chapter, the aim is to put forward a definition on what literacy is, the role of reading in the English classroom in Norway and the importance of developing reading skills. When talking about reading, a relevant term to bring up is *literacy*. Literacy is often defined as the ability to read and write (Tishakov, 2020, p. 177). This is a broad definition of the term, and there are several definitions out there. For the purpose of this thesis, literacy will be referred to as the ability to read and write. Nevertheless, reading does not only mean that one can understand the letters on a page. When reading a text, one is also retrieving both social and cultural information. Luke (2018) states that literacy is about cultural knowledge and social power, and that literacy is the “distribution of knowledge and power” (p. 30). This means that being able to read, understand and assess different types of texts equals power. Therefore, these are important skills to develop. In addition to this, in genre pedagogy, one of the basic principles is that students’ literacy skills have a big impact on their learning success (Tishakov, 2020, p. 180).

In the English subject curriculum in Norway, reading is one of the basic skills, along with writing, digital skills and oral skills. Reading in English is described in the following way:

Reading in English means understanding and reflecting on the content of various types of texts on paper and on screen, and contributing to reading pleasure and language acquisition. It means reading and finding information in multimedia texts

with competing messages and using reading strategies to understand explicit and implicit information. (Udir, 2020, p. 4).

Reading is, nevertheless, something that is an important skill to master in any given subject, as well as in everyday life. Reading different types of texts in English will help increase one's insight in other people's cultures. Tishakov (2020) states that there are a range of reasons why students should practice reading, for example to "be able to identify the main points of a text, to gain insight on a specific topic, and to reflect on the content, and its source" (p. 179).

In the English subject curriculum, working with texts in English is one of the core elements.

Working with English language texts helps give pupils knowledge about and experience with linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as insight into the ways of life, traditions and cultures of other people. By reflecting on, interpreting and critically assessing different types of English language texts, pupils acquire language and knowledge about culture and society. Developing this intercultural competence enables pupils to relate to different ways of life, ways of thinking and communication patterns. (Udir, 2020, p. 3).

The new digital world that is constantly developing opens for new ways to work with texts. When referring to texts in the past, one would maybe think about traditional, academic texts, but today, it is equally as important to remember digital texts. Today, we are faced with a world that is increasingly filled with technology (Vasquez, Janks & Comber, 2019, p. 300).

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the possible use of Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies* in the classroom. *Lord of the Flies* is a novel on approximately 200 pages, and if one is going to have pupils read it and work with it, it is important that the teacher applies different strategies to ensure learning for the pupils. The level of literacy skills in a classroom will always vary, and not every pupil will be on the same level. Therefore, by incorporating different strategies and activities during the process of working with literature, one can ensure that the pupils will learn as much as possible. Reading strategies can be defined as a way of making sense of a text (Munden & Sandhaug, 2017, p. 289).

Texts are described as a multifaceted tool used to learn the English language (including vocabulary, grammar, and sentence and text structure), to gain general knowledge about various topics, to gain cross-cultural insights and expand one's perspective on the world. (Tishakov, 2020, p. 179).

The first part of working with the novel would be to give the pupils context. The more context and background information we have, the more meaning we will get from the text.

The first part of a reading task involves preparing students for reading by setting the scene ... This includes pre-reading activities that can aid the students' reading of the text and make them think about or discuss relevant background information. (Tishakov, 2020, p. 181).

These activities can be to discuss the topic in groups, where the students share what they already know about it. In the case of working with *Lord of the Flies*, a topic for discussion is democracy. By doing this, the students will also keep the topic in mind when reading the novel, which can make them notice examples of it. The students can also make connections to their current understanding of the topic (Tishakov, 2020, p. 182).

3.3.1 Critical literacy

Critical literacy is in many ways connected to critical thinking and ethical awareness because it has to do with critically assessing the information we are given, and this is an important skill to work with. Critical literacy is a relevant topic to include in this thesis, because one could argue that it connects critical thinking and literacy skills. There are different takes on what critical literacy means and entails, and this subchapter aims to negotiate this field to find a functional approach to critical literacy. The origins of critical literacy lie in critical social theory, which was developed by the Frankfurt School, as explained by Alford (2021, p. 6) and Vasquez et al. (2019). One of the most central thinkers in the Frankfurt School was Jürgen Habermas, and critical theory played a big role in radical political thinking between the 1960s and the 1970s (Tollefsen et al., 2014, p. 480).

Alford (2021) states that at the roots of critical literacy, it was about economic oppression, but it later developed to be more about social life (p. 6). This means that what started as a

skill to understand and work against economic oppression, later implemented other social factors, such as class, gender and ethnicity. Critical literacy is about understanding and questioning the information given to us in society. Vasquez et al. (2019) states that critical literacy is about “making sense of the socio-political systems through which we live out lives and questioning these systems” (p. 307).

One can argue that critical literacy means to read between the lines, as well as understanding the connection between the words they read and what lies behind those words, such as who wrote them and why they wrote them. According to Janks (2013), “critical literacy is about enabling young people to *read* both the word and the world in relation to power, identity, difference and access to knowledge, skills, tools and resources” (p. 227). What this statement can imply, is that it lies a lot of useful information behind texts. Critical literacy can, as previously mentioned, be connected to critical thinking and ethical awareness, because it has to do with what kind of information one can receive when reading different types of texts, and what one chooses to do with that information.

Critical literacy is important to practice because it will always be relevant. People face texts of different kinds every day, and it is important to be critical as to what the texts are telling us. Janks (2012) explains that critical literacy always will be relevant, no matter how much of a perfect world we live in: “In a peaceful world without the threat of global warming or conflict or war, where everyone has access to education, health care, food and a dignified life, there would still be a need for critical literacy” (p. 150). As we know, we don’t live in a perfect, peaceful world.

As previously mentioned, the rise of technology has made people more exposed to different types of texts every single day. Critical literacy is highly relevant today also because of this. We are faced with long and short digital texts over the internet and social media. Therefore, it is increasingly important to be read texts in a critical way, for example to be able to spot fake news or texts that in other ways try to position the reader. Texts are always written for a specific purpose, and the purpose of a text is often to plant an idea and thought in the reader’s head, and the writer will argue why their opinion is the right one. “A critical approach recognizes that language produces us as particular kinds of human subjects and that words are not innocent, but instead work to position us” (Janks, 2013, p. 227). An example of this is how influencers advertise for different products on their social media

accounts and influence the reader to buy the products, or how political parties use social media to front the view of their party and argue why you should vote for them. These are only two examples of endless ways texts can be used to convey specific messages.

Nevertheless, Vasquez et al. (2019) argues that texts are constructed and created from a particular perspective, and the purpose of the texts are to convey specific messages (p. 306). This means that all kinds of texts have a purpose: to get a specific message across. The main job of a text is to position the reader, or the receiver of the message, according to Vasquez et al. (2019), who argues that texts have the reader think and believe certain things (p. 306). A critical reader will be aware that texts are made to influence them, and that they are made from a certain standpoint that is not neutral. The goal of the writer is not always clear, and their message can be camouflages as something else. A critical reader, that is aware of this, will recognize that the world is never neutral (Janks, 2013, p. 227).

As previously stated, one of the core values of a democratic society is to be curious, participate and being able to share one's opinions. Here it can be drawn a parallel to critical literacy. Alford (2021) states that "questioning and attendant discussion or dialogue are central to critical literacy practice" (p. 7). Habermas, being one of the central thinkers in critical theory, who strongly emphasizes open discussion as the basis for ethical interaction in a society, and one of his central points is that reflection and conversation are a prerequisite for real social criticism and thus for all liberation from oppression (Tollefsen et al., 2014, pp. 480-481).

A way to practice critical literacy in the classroom while working with *Lord of the Flies*, can be done by asking questions like 'who wrote the text?' and 'what message do you think the author of the text want to give the reader?'. This can, for example, be done by doing a close reading of the novel while trying to identify what literary devices the author is using to convey specific messages. Teachers can, by focusing their teaching on helping the pupils understand and re-mediate what texts are attempting to do in the world, it will enable them to be more critical to the world they live in (Luke, 2000, as cited in Alford, 2021, p. 7).

There are multiple positive effects to practicing critical literacy. Vasquez et al. (2019) explain how pupils who engage in critical literacy are ready: “1) to make informed decisions regarding issues such as power and control, 2) to engage in the practice of democratic citizenship, and 3) to develop an ability to think and act ethically” (p. 307). This statement is summarizing the conclusion to this chapter.

4. Literary analysis

This chapter consists of a literary analysis, of Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*. As previously stated, the goals of a close reading may differ, based on what the reader finds meaningful. The goal in this chapter is to point out elements in the novel that can be connected to the main topics of this thesis. The literary analysis is done by doing a close reading of the novel, with the focus being on the topics of democratic values and critical thinking and ethical awareness.

First, I discuss examples of literary devices in *Lord of the Flies* that symbolizes democratic values and other political systems, for example how different characters are used to symbolize this. Next, I will look at the topic of ethics and critical thinking in relation to the story. By doing this, I am able to show how *Lord of the Flies* can be used to point out democratic values and the importance of critical thinking.

The literary analysis consists of background information about the author William Golding, a plot summary, and a close reading where I'm pointing to symbolism in the novel. The focus will be on symbolism that is connected to the two main topics of this thesis, which are ethics and democracy.

4.1 Democracy

One of the first things to notice at the very beginning of the story in *Lord of the Flies*, is how the boys are faced with lack of structure and rules around them. Golding is taking some of the most innocent things one can imagine and putting them somewhere isolated with no guidance or feeling of safety or familiarity. Spitz (1970) states that Golding's method was to create a civilization out of innocence by detaching a group of young people and putting them into a state of nature (p. 29).

Even though the group is stripped from a safe environment, it is clear that they are trying to create structure. The group is trying to find a civil society that is close to what they are familiar with, and the reader gets to see how this plan unfolds (Spitz, 1970, p. 29). Being part of a structured society is, at the beginning of the story, still fresh in the boys' minds, because that is what they were used to. They are used to some sort of authority (for example parents or teachers) telling them what to do, what not to do, and what is right or wrong. This was a natural

part of the boys' lives, and it is therefore something they are trying to recreate in their new, uncertain environment. Ralph and the other boys are quick to start organizing and creating rules. They start by electing a group leader, and they do this by having a democratic vote, where every boy vote for the one they want to be leader. Or as they call it, 'chief'. Here we find an example of a democratic value, which has to do with a democratic election where the boys have a vote, and the majority decides what will be the outcome.

The elected leader is Ralph. It can be many reasons why Ralph was elected leader, but one can argue that he is coming off as a safe person to be around, because he seems to listen to and be interested in the other boys' interests and thoughts. Ralph is also positive with the whole situation, and he is confident that his father is looking for them and that they will be rescued eventually. After the vote is done and the boys have elected Ralph as leader, Ralph starts to delegate tasks between the boys. For Ralph, the main goal is to work towards getting rescued. He sees it as a possibility that planes or ships might pass by the island, and that they need to create some kind of signal so that they can be spotted. In addition to this, one can argue that it is important for Ralph to create a safe environment for the time they will be stuck at the island.

Jack also wanted to be the leader. When Ralph is elected leader, he is delegating tasks between the boys, and he decides that Jack can be the chief of the hunters, or what is known as the choir. Jack and the hunters are also given the responsibility to keep a fire going at the top of the mountain. The fire would create smoke that could move far away from the island, which then could attract possible rescuers to the island. Ralph is thinking that keeping a fire going at the top of the mountain should be a priority, because he believes that it will increase their chances of getting rescued. Jack and the rest of his group wants to take advantage of the situation, being stranded somewhere without adults telling them what to do, by spending time hunting for pigs. Meanwhile, Ralph is working with creating shelters and Piggy is taking care of the smaller children. Piggy is, even more than Ralph, spending time comforting the younger children on the island.

At the beginning of the novel, things seem to be doing fine. The boys appear to be on the same page in many cases, and they seem to be getting along. This state is short-lived. As previously stated, Frank (2010) argues that *Lord of the Flies* is showing how a democratic society starts to fail, as the members of the society is succumbing to basic instincts of human nature (p. 12).

Perhaps one of the most infamous symbols in *Lord of the Flies*, is the conch. A conch is a type of seashell that is initially housing sea snails. The two boys Ralph and Piggy find the conch at the start of the novel. Ralph and Piggy are debating whether they think there are other people at the island, and how they can find out. When they find the conch, Ralph says that: “We can use this to call the others. Have a meeting. They’ll come when they hear us” (Golding, 1954, p. 12). It is a known fact that it is possible to use a conch as a horn by blowing into it. Ralph blows into the conch and it creates a loud noise, and the boys that are scattered around the island can hear it. The other boys follow the noise, and they eventually find Ralph and Piggy by the beach. This shows that the initial function of the conch is to gather the group. This is important to point out because it was used to form the community, by bringing all the boys together to have a meeting. The boys also decide that the conch is to be used to gather the group every time they want to arrange a meeting.

Ralph: “Where the conch is, that’s a meeting (...)”

Jack: “I agree with Ralph. We've got to have rules and obey them. After all, we're not savages. We're English, and the English are best at everything” (Golding, 1954, p. 42).

Based on this, one can argue that the conch represents order and civilization. After a while, the function of the conch slightly changes. It is still used as a tool to create order in the group, but in a different way. One of the most central values that lies as a foundation of a democratic society, is the freedom of expression, as priorly stated. This democratic value can also be pointed at in *Lord of the Flies*. The boys decide that the person who is holding the conch at the time of the meeting, gets to speak and share their thoughts and opinions. While the person with the conch is speaking, the rest must be quiet and listen. When the conch is used like this, one can argue that it symbolizes freedom of expression as well because it makes it possible for each person to speak their mind. As we know, a democracy is more than just a government. Members of a democratic society must work together and have a mutual understanding that every member is equally as important and worthy of a voice. This brings us to the topic of equality, which is also considered a democratic value, as well as a fundamental human right that is vital in a democratic society. While this value is visible at the start of *Lord of the Flies*, it quickly fades away and it is not upheld for where long, when some of the boys are starting to prioritise differently.

4.1.1 The fair boy (Ralph)

Ralph is a twelve-year-old boy, and he is the first person the reader is introduced to in *Lord of the Flies*. I want to discuss how Ralph in some ways symbolize democracy (or the democratic values if equality and respect). In the very first sentence in the novel, before the reader knows his name, Ralph is described as “the boy with fair hair” (Golding, 1954, p. 7). *Fair* is a description of his light or blonde hair. However, one could argue that the word fair, in this example, is ambiguous. Being fair does also mean being trustworthy, or someone who treats people equally. Ralph is then referred to simply as “the fair boy” (1954, p. 7), where it is not specified to be about his hair. As previously discussed, some of the central values of a democracy has to do with equality and treating people equally regardless of who they are, what they look like, where they come from, etc. Describing Ralph as the fair boy can hint at how Ralph is as a leader.

The reader is following Ralph throughout the novel. Apart from the natural childlike features he has, Ralph comes across as a likeable and safe person. Golding talks about Ralph in the following way:

He was old enough, twelve years and a few months, to have lost the prominent tummy of childhood and not yet old enough for adolescence to have made him awkward. You could see now that he might make a boxer, as far as width and heaviness of shoulders went, but there was a mildness about his mouth and eyes that proclaimed no devil (1954, p. 10).

The last sentence here, where it says that Ralph’s eyes has proclaimed no devil, can mean that he is still an innocent individual. It also says how he is somewhere between childhood and adolescence. That Ralph has a mildness to his mouth means that he is kind and soft-spoken, and these descriptions of Ralph helps the reader to like him and root for him.

Ralph is quick to come up with ideas, and while he has ideas as to how he thinks things should be done at the island, he is open for suggestions, and he shows that he is willing to listen to the other boys. I believe it is intentional of Golding to present Ralph as a smart and safe character because he wants the reader to relate to him and root for him, because of the type of person he is. For the reader, Ralph is one of the characters that has the hero-status. He takes control and collects the group at the beginning, showing that he has certain leadership skills.

He also wants to collectively create rules that the group should follow, and to establish what their common goal is, and he wants to listen to the rest of the boys as well.

One could say that Ralph has a soft but steady leader style at this point. This type of leader style is something that works at the beginning, perhaps because the group of boys are in need of this type of leader at that time. The smaller boys are seeking safety, compassion and warmth. After a while, his leader style and his thrive towards a community that works together falls apart, as he loses both the respect and trust from many of the other boys. The reason why this happens, is partly because another leader-figure emerges, and this leader-figure wants to take control and rule differently than Ralph does. To summarize, Ralph does, based on his personality and way of being, represent democracy.

When Ralph sees that things are starting to fall apart and the rules are not being followed, he calls an assembly because he wants to talk about it with the rest of the group. Just like in a democracy, Ralph is valuing open discussions. He says: Things are breaking up. I don't understand why. We began well; we were happy. And then-" (1954, p. 82). Ralph figures that the reason why the group is falling apart is because of fear, and they that they need to understand that there is nothing to be afraid of there. He wants to open for a discussion on this, to try to collect the group again. This fails and it ends up with the group splitting up even more, but the fact that Ralph wants to have a discussion rather than the group breaking apart, adds to the theory that Ralph is a symbol of democracy and democratic values. As previously stated, a democracy values open discussions and freedom of expression.

One could argue that one of the reasons why Ralph fails as a leader is because he is not kind, and he is not respected enough because of this. If we compare this to the way Jack is a leader, which will be discussed further in the next subchapter, many of the boys fear Jack, and he gets more power that way. Because Ralph is too kind and because he is open for input from the other boys, this does in some ways weaken him as a leader, at least in a society such as the one on the island. One could ask the question if Ralph would get more respect from the boys if they feared him, and if that would make it possible for him to be chief for a longer time. This might be the case, but that does not mean that the situation on the island would be better, or that the outcome would be any different.

Golding describes the conch as a "white, magic shell", and "the talisman, the fragile, shining beauty" (1954, p. 180). Just as Golding refers to the conch, a democracy is also fragile, and it

is prone to many outside forces that can ruin it. Examples of these threats that are visible in the novel will be discussed further. The novel uses the conch as a symbol of structure and order, and it shows what can happen when a social system breaks. In Naylor et al. (2021), some of the students that are participating in the research study are pointing to the incident where the conch breaks at page 181, as a “point of no return in the savagery of the boys” (p. 12). The breaking of the conch can symbolize the end of the democracy on the island, or the end of order and civilization. This does also mark a turning-point in the story, where Ralph is left by himself because he has lost most ‘members’ of his group, and he does not have any followers on his side anymore. Ralph is the only part of the democracy that is left, and he is being hunted by the other boys.

4.1.2 Uniformed superiority (Jack)

In *Lord of the Flies*, it is portraying a society that eventually is broken down because of a lack of structure and authority. The reader is first witnessing in the story how a society takes shape, and how the members of the society is trying to create something that is close to what they are used to live in. But what happens when this community is threatened by people who disagree with the rules and tries to fight them using violence? We saw how the boys were quick to pick a leader, create rules and build a community that is working towards a common goal. As a leader, it was important to Ralph to work towards getting rescued, but also to create shelters so that they would be safe while they were stuck on the island. Ralph worked towards this goal by delegating tasks in the group, in an attempt to constitute and uphold order and some sort of stability. As we know, Ralph did not get to ‘rule’ in peace for very long. Even though he tried to make Jack happy by making him the chief of the choirboys, this was not enough for Jack. Jack was, from the start, not happy with Ralph being elected leader, because Jack wanted to be the one in charge and because he wanted to spend his time on different things from what Ralph found important. Nevertheless, Jack was cooperative at the start, but as the story progressed, he changed.

When the reader is first introduced to Jack Merridew, he is marching with the rest of the choir boys. The boys are all wearing matching clothing, but it was still clear that Jack was the leader because he was wearing a golden cap badge (1954, p. 19). In addition to this, the boys that saw them coming could hear Jack shouting an order:

When his party was about ten yards from the platform he shouted an order and they halted, gasping, sweating, swaying in the fierce light. The boy himself came forward, vaulted on to the platform with his cloak flying, and peered into what to him almost complete darkness. (Golding, 1954, p. 19).

At the start of the story, Golding is describing Jack's appearance as "uniformed superiority" (1954, p. 21). Describing him as uniformed can be a reference to the group's matching outfits. One can also argue that it can be a symbol of Jack being an authoritative figure. The state of being superior is also something that means power or dominance. Golding is then saying that Jack has an "offhand authority" (1954, p. 21), which is something that confirms that Jack is coming of as a powerful person with authority. This description also fits his personality. Coming of as a strong and dominant person might sound like what is a good leader, but there are other factors that are just as important, especially in a democratic society.

Ralph and Jack are discussing what they should prioritize, and Ralph starts by saying that: "The best thing we can do is get ourselves rescued" (1954, p. 53). In this scene, it is interesting to look at Jack's reaction and answer to this statement "Jack had to think for a moment before he could remember what rescue was. "Rescue? Yes, of course! All the same, I'd like to catch a pig first—" (Golding, 1954, p. 53). First of all, Jack had for a moment forgotten what it meant to be rescued. What this tells the reader is that being rescued was not in Jack's mind at all, and it was clearly not a priority of his. He does, nevertheless, say that he agrees with Ralph, but he wanted to hunt for pigs first. For Jack, it is more important to try to catch a pig, then they could work towards getting rescued. He wants to make the most of the situation, cause this is not something that he is used to. With no adult supervision, he gets to do things that he does not get to do at home, and he sees the situation as an opportunity to go 'crazy', because no authority is there to enforce any rules. For Ralph, one of the most important things to do was to try to get rescued, and he also believed that people were out looking for them. Jack's priorities here is the first indication that Jack can represent a lack of rules.

As the story progresses, Jack becomes annoyed at Ralph and his many rules that he does not agree with. As Blackburn (2001) previously stated, people do not like to be told what to do (p. 6). Jack is feeling embarrassed when he was not elected leader, and he will therefore, naturally not agree with all the rules that Ralph is coming up with. As previously discussed, one of the core values in a democracy is that people are free to question the authorities and to share their opinions on all kinds of topics or issues. The democracy is valuing open discussion and to

solve problems through reasoning. In *Lord of the Flies*, Jack does question Ralph's way of leading, but he does it in a questionable way. For example, when he decided to go against Ralph as a leader in chapter eight. First, Jack attempted to make the group vote that Ralph would be removed as the leader. This did not work, however, because the boys were just staring down at the ground and did not dare to speak their minds. What Jack did next, was to bring his hunters away from Ralph: "I'm going off by myself. He can catch his own pigs. Anyone who wants to hunt when I do can come too" (Golding, 1954, p. 127). At this point, Jack is threatening to take the food away from the rest, by saying that they can catch their own food. We know that Jack and the hunters were the ones who fed the rest, so he was able to scare the boys by saying that he would take this away from them. The boys stay with Ralph for a bit, but they eventually sneak away to join Jack.

When Jack wanders off and many of the boys join him, Jack is deciding that he will be the leader of the group. He did not ask the boys, he just made the decision and they listened. Jack says: "We'll hunt. I'm going to be chief" (Golding, 1954, p. 133). Where Ralph was a calmer leader that was open for input from the other boys, Jack was a more direct leader that would make decisions solemnly based on his own personal views, and he would not give the rest an opportunity to speak their mind.

As previously stated, Jack did not always behave badly at the island; but his character develops and changes for the bad during the course of the story. At the beginning of the story, when Ralph is elected leader and Jack is not, Jack is feeling embarrassed, and he did not like it. But despite this, he did cooperate, and he seems somewhat okay with Ralph leading them in the beginning. This was partly because Ralph allowed Jack to be the leader of his choir. As the story progresses, Jack's lust for power and need to do things his way becomes too strong. The way Jack's character is developing symbolizes how some people can change as they are going further away from order and a structured society. The boys are slowly turning away from a civilized society and into chaos and anarchy. This is emphasizing how important it is for people to be able to work together in groups. Only at the end of the novel, when the navy officer appears and saves the boys, the hierarchy was restored, according to Mayborn (2021, p. 581).

As we know, Ralph did not get to rule in peace for very long. A second character, Jack, tries to fight the way Ralph is doing things, and the two characters have different priorities. For

Ralph, it is important to establish safe shelters and to work towards getting rescued. On the other hand,

“And you shut up! Who are you anyway? Sitting there – telling people what to do. You can’t hunt, sing –“

“I am chief. I was chosen”

“Why should choosing make any difference? Just giving orders that don’t make any sense”...

“The rules!” shouted Ralph, “you’re breaking the rules!”

“Who cares?”

Ralph summoned his wits. “Because the rules are the only thing we’ve got!”

But Jack was shouting against him. “Bullocks to the rules!”.

(Golding, 1954, p. 100).

Going back to the quote by Kreisberg regarding power and leadership: “The ability to control and manipulate others” (1992, p. 11), fits the description of Jack, being a character with a strong personality and strong beliefs. His personality is intimidating on many of the boys, and they fear him at times because of his strong and strict personality. Kreisberg is also stating how power derives from control over valued resources (1992, p. 11), which Jack and his hunters have. This is something that makes Jack more respected. He has something the rest of the group need: food. Jack is trying to convince the group that Ralph is not a good leader, by saying that Ralph could not have fed the group: “He’s not a hunter. He’d never have got us food” (Golding, 1954, p. 126). Another valued resource is weapons, which Jack also has, because he had a knife with him. Before Jack got to kill his first pig, it seemed like Jack was struggling with the idea of taking a life: “They knew very well why he hadn’t; because of the enormity of the knife descending and cutting into living flesh; because of the unbearable blood” (1954, p. 29).

Jack is the type of leader who tries to turn the group against Ralph, to make himself seem like a better leader. “...Ralph said that my hunters are no good”, Jack says, before Ralph interrupts him by saying that he never said that. To this, Jack replies: “I’ve got the conch. Ralph thinks you’re cowards, running away from the boar and the beast. And that’s not all.”... “He’s like Piggy. He says things like Piggy. He isn’t a proper chief.” (Golding, 1954, p. 126). Jack is saying these statements implying that being like Piggy is a bad thing, and that it means that Ralph is a bad leader.

As previously stated, while the story on the island is happening, it was also a war going on in the world. What is happening on the island, where people turn into savages and fight each other, might be a representation of what is happening elsewhere in the world as well, where people are at war. Something else to note is how one person can create such conflicts. This can be compared with what happened during World-War 2, and how Hitler emerged and spread his ideals and his hate. This is in a way what happens in *Lord of the Flies* as well. Where Jack wants to be leader and he wants to create a sort of separation in the community on the island. He is stating how he and the choir boys are better than Ralph and Piggy, and how Piggy is not worthy to speak his mind or be heard.

I would argue that two of the characters are opposing forces, who each represent a type of government and a way structuring a society. They are also two different leader-types, who use different strategies to gain power over the group. If students can see these differences and the different types of leaders, it can be the basis of a class-discussion, and one can use it to point to things in real life that is happening today – or something that has happened throughout history.

4.1.3 Threats to the democracy (Piggy)

The second boy the reader is introduced to, is a boy that goes by the name of Piggy. Golding is using various methods to portray Piggy as an outsider and a weak character, in some ways based on his looks. At the start, before one gets to know this name, he is referred to merely as “the fat boy” (Golding, 1954, p. 8). As well as being described as overweight, he has multiple health issues, such as asthma and bad eyesight, so he wears glasses. These are all characteristics that are used to represent weakness. This is especially visible thinking of the setting of the novel: the boys are on an island all by themselves, where they need to be strong to survive and be rescued. In addition to this, Piggy states that he can’t swim because he wasn’t allowed by his overprotective aunt (Golding, 1954, p. 13). Despite having all these negative characteristics, Piggy is a wise and caring boy that is likeable to the reader. He is not the type of kid to take up the most room or speak the loudest in the group, but when he is allowed to share his thoughts, he often has wise input in the discussions. In some ways, Piggy could be a good leader, because of his intellect combined with his ability to care for others.

As previously mentioned, if we think about the core values of a democracy, it is way more than just a form of elected representative government (Cam, 2009, p. 41). In the beginning of the story, the boys did have a seemingly democratic election of chief. Despite this, other democratic values are not upheld. A democratic value that is not practiced on the island, is the ability to respect and value each other's opinions. The characters in *Lord of the Flies* are children, and children are not known to be the most respectful. The group is often fighting and arguing, using bad language and making fun of each other. Nevertheless, there is one character that ends up being bullied the most, and that is not valued and respected by the rest of the boys, which is Piggy.

An important value in a democratic society, is the freedom of expression, which means to be free to speak one's mind and to question the authorities. As previously stated, the conch represents freedom of expression, and Ralph is trying to enforce this rule, but it does not always work. Piggy is symbolizing a threat to the democracy, where freedom of expression is not enforced. Piggy is at multiple occasions not taken seriously and he is made quiet by the other boys, especially Jack. Jack is telling Piggy to be quiet many times, and he is calling him degrading and bad names, for example when he says: "You shut up, you fat slug!" (Golding, 1954, p. 91).

Jack is not only telling Piggy to not speak with his words. Piggy is at times so scared of Jack, that Jack is able to silence him simply by looking at him in a special way. An example of this is at page 43: "Piggy opened his mouth to speak, caught Jack's eye and shut it again" (Golding, 1954). This is showing what kind of power Jack had over Piggy. This is symbolizing a threat to the democracy, because even if the rule or law is present, if it is not enforced in the right way, it will not work. Later, when Jack has left Ralph and Piggy to wander off by himself, one can see evidence of what happens when there is no fear: "Piggy was so full of delight and expanding liberty in Jack's departure, so full of pride in his contribution to the good of society, that he helped fetch wood" (p. 129). This emphasizes the value in feeling like one is contributing to something in the society, and it shows just how scared Piggy was of Jack.

Piggy is not being respected by the other boys, sometimes he is not even respected by Ralph. Another example of a threat to the democracy, is when citizens are being peer-pressured to

participate in things they initially did not agree with. This is also happening in *Lord of the Flies*, and we see an example of it when Piggy and Ralph felt peer-pressured to participate in the feast and the bonfire that Jack and the hunters had. “Piggy and Ralph, under the threat of the sky, found themselves eager to take place in this demented but partly secure society” (Golding, 1954, p. 152).

Based on these examples, one could argue that Piggy symbolizes possible threats to the democracy. We know that the idea of equality has not been considered on the island. This can be seen through the treatment of Piggy. Piggy was also used to make the other boys feel better, by mocking him and putting him down. “the crowd of boys were united and relived by a storm of laughter. Piggy once more was the centre of social derision so that everyone felt cheerful and normal” (Golding, 1954, p. 168). Piggy is also showing possible consequences when the society don’t respect and value you. The democracy is also valuing open discussion and to solve issues without the use of violence if that is possible. As we know, this value was not enforced on the island, either.

Council of Europe explains that the idea of democracy has two key principles:

1. Individual autonomy: The idea that no-one should be subject to rules which have been imposed by others. People should be able to control their own lives (within reason).
2. Equality: The idea that everyone should have the same opportunity to influence the decisions that affect people in society. (Council of Europe, n.d.).

We have in this subchapter seen examples of both of these key principles being broken on the island.

4.2 Ethics

One of Golding’s main messages in *Lord of the Flies*, has to do with man’s inherent evil. The story feeds to the idea that every human is evil at heart. The boys are drawn away from common sense and into savagery, because they are in an environment that lacks the constraints of a society. This is making them forget their initial ethical and moral values.

4.2.1 Man's inherent evil

One of the central messages that Golding wants to get across in *Lord of the Flies*, is that every man is inherently evil at heart, and by the lack of structure and rules, they will be driven away from humanity and moral.

This inherent evil is present on the island, and the boys think that the evil is there in the form of a beast. At the beginning, only some of the boys, mainly the younger ones, believe in the beast, while the older boys try to argue against it. At a point, when Jack and Ralph see the dead man in the parachute thinking it's the beast, they too start to believe that the beast is real.

“I've called this assembly,” said Jack, “because of a lot of things. First, you know now, we've seen the beast. We crawled up, we were only a few feet away. The beast sat up and looked at us. I don't know what it does. We don't even know what it is- “. (Golding, 1954, p. 125).

The boys then all share this common fear, and they disagree on how they are going to deal with it. They are, however, not sure exactly what kind of beast it is, and what shape or form it has. Some are still trying to argue that the beast is not real.

Piggy had his suspicions that the beast was not real, when he states that “I know there isn't no beast – not with claws and all that, I mean – but I know there isn't no fear, either ... Unless we get frightened of people” (p. 84). In this subchapter, it is important to bring attention to the character Simon. An infamous quote from *Lord of the Flies* is: ““Maybe,” he said hesitantly, “maybe there is a beast” ... “What I mean is, maybe it's only us” (Golding, 1954, p. 89). This is spoken by the character Simon, who from early on understands that maybe the beast is not a real creature, but rather something they can't see.

In chapter 7, Simon once again wanders off by himself, and he ends up talking to the lord of the flies (the devil), that is speaking to him through a severed pig-head on a stick. The head says to Simon:

Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill! ... You knew, didn't you? I'm part of you? Close, close, close! I'm the reason why it's no go? Why things are what they are?

Simon understands that there is not a physical being the boys need to be afraid of, apart from each other. The beast is something that lies inside of them, and they need to be careful because that beast is about to reveal itself.

Just like Jack does, Ralph goes through a character development during the story. As Frank (2010) argued how the story is portraying a leader that eventually ends up retreating into savagery (p. 12). As we know, Ralph did participate in the killing of Simon, which I as a reader found shocking and surprising. Based on the type of person Ralph was at the beginning of the story, where Golding is portraying Ralph as the innocence itself, and a good person, that he would be participating in something like a killing seemed very unlikely. The fact that Ralph ended up being peer-pressured into doing that just confirms Golding's view on the darkness of the human heart.

After Simon was killed, Ralph does (at first) not want to face what he has done when he is talking with Piggy. The reader knows that Ralph, being a smart and bright kid, is aware that what he participated in was wrong, and he is feeling uncomfortable when it is brought up. Ralph started out as a kind and innocent individual, before he was peer-pressured and slowly descending into savagery. "And in the middle of them, with filthy body, matted hair, and unwiped nose, Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy" (Golding, 1954, p. 202).

"Ethical awareness, which means balancing different considerations, is necessary if one is to be a reflecting and responsible human being" (Udir, 2020, p. 7). There are multiple examples of ethical dilemmas present in the novel. Piggy does at multiple times ask the rest of the group questions to get them thinking. For example when he asks: "What are we? Humans? Or animals? Or savages? What's grownups going to think? Going off – hunting pigs – letting fires out – and now!" (Golding, 1954, p. 91).

Piggy also asks three questions where he wants the rest of the boys to think about what is best for the group:

"Which is better – to be a pack of painted Indians like you are, or to be sensible like Ralph is?"

"Which is better – to have rules and agree, or to hunt and kill?"

“Which is better, law and rescue, or hunting and breaking things up?”

(Golding, 1954, p. 180).

I would argue that these questions can be ethical dilemmas. For example, when he asks what is best between law and rescue or hunting and breaking things up, he wants the boys to think critically about what is the best. We know that the boys he speaks to want to hunt and go wild, and they don't care much about being rescued. Piggy is asking them this to try to change their mind, and to see that the first option is the best.

5. Educational value (2000 more words)

In this chapter, I discuss how *Lord of the Flies* can be used in the classroom and argue what educational value the novel has. In addition to this, I present the background of and results of two classroom activities that were done in an upper secondary classroom in Norway. It was established in the prior chapter, that *Lord of the Flies* is full of symbolism that can be connected to the topics of democracy and ethics. Many of these examples may not be as clear to every reader of the text, and this is important to remember when incorporating the text in the classroom.

Nevertheless, there are more benefits to using *Lord of the Flies* in the classroom. One benefit is to practice reading. As previously stated, reading is one of the basic skills, and it is stated that reading strategies are important in order to find information, and to understand explicit and implicit information (UDIR, 2020, p. 4). Young people today read a lot of digital texts, on their smartphones or their laptops. Reading a physical book may be something that the pupils are not used to. Regardless of where the pupils are reading a text from, practicing literacy skills will have a benefit on their learning success in general (Tishakov, 2020, p. 180). Reading is about retrieving both social and cultural information. By practicing reading, one will also be able to point out main points in a text and to gain insight and reflect on a specific topic (Tishakov, 2020, p. 179) In the case of working with *Lord of the Flies*, these topics are democratic values and ethical awareness.

Before deciding to use *Lord of the Flies* in a class, the teacher needs to evaluate if their student group is right for this kind of activity. *Lord of the Flies* is a novel consisting of about 200 pages, and for some learners it can be long and difficult to read, while it for others can be a quick and easy read. Because of this, the teacher needs to look at the specific student group, and see if the literacy skills are sufficient to get through the book. In addition to this, the teacher needs to have a good plan and process at hand when working with the text. This is important to make sure that the pupils will get the best learning outcomes as possible, and that it will motivate and perhaps encourage them to read more. My assessment is that *Lord of the Flies* is best suited for upper secondary school, because the novel has an easy language, but the story is quite dark and dramatic at times.

When deciding how to use a novel in the classroom, the pupils' motivation is something to keep in mind when creating a plan. The fact that *Lord of the Flies* is a dark and dramatic story, is not only a bad thing, because many adolescents find action filled stories exciting. This part of the thesis consists of a suggestion on how and why to use *Lord of the Flies* in an upper secondary English classroom to bring attention to two important topics: democracy and ethics. The following plan is highlighting different 'pit-stops', to ensure that the pupils are following along, and this chapter is consisting of activities to do before, during and after reading. The plan does, however, not say anything about how much time should be used on each part. This depends on how many hours of English the learning group in question has, or if one could work with *Lord of the Flies* as a cross-curricular project.

5.1.1 Before reading

The first part of introducing a reading project like this in the classroom, has to do with what happens before you actually start reading the text. One could argue that this part is the most important part, and it should be spent much time at this stage. What is done before one actually starts reading the text, is crucial as to how the rest of the plan will work out.

When working with a text, it is difficult to make sense of it if one does not have enough context. As Tishakov (2020) argues, the more we know about the context of a text, it will increase the readers understanding of the intended meaning of it (p. 181). By providing the reader with background information, it will also be easier for the reader to connect it to experiences in their own lives. This is also connected to increasing the pupils' motivation, because it will motivate them by seeing the relevance in what they are going to work with, and if they are able to tie the topics to their own lives and experiences. Therefore, the first part of working with *Lord of the Flies* should be to provide the pupils with context. The more context and background information they get, the more meaning they will find in the text.

The first part of a reading task involves preparing students for reading by setting the scene ... This includes pre-reading activities that can aid the students' reading of the text and make them think about or discuss relevant background information. (Tishakov, 2020, p. 181).

Like Tishakov argues, the first part should be about setting the scene and preparing the readers on the topics they are about to encounter in the text.

The importance of motivation is already mentioned, but a second thing that is important to focus on from the beginning when you start working with the text, is to make the pupils interested and hooked from the beginning. When the pupils know the relevance and why they are going to work with *Lord of the Flies*, it will motivate them. To get the pupils interested from the start, the teacher can start by doing some simple warm-up activities. These activities should not require much background information for the pupils to participate, but it should rather be open for interpretation and open for the pupils to use their imagination and be creative.

The first thing that can be done is to focus on the title itself: *Lord of the Flies*. For example, ask the pupils what they think the title means. ‘What do you think of when you hear ‘lord of the flies’? What do you think it means?’ This can be done as an oral activity. It might not be so easy for the pupils to figure out what it means, but if they get stuck, they can use the internet to explore some possible explanations. Then the meaning of it can be revealed to the class. Knowing that the ‘lord of the flies’ corresponds to the devil, might capture the pupils’ attention and make them more interested. A follow-up question can be ‘why do you think the novel is named this?’. One way to practice critical literacy in the classroom while working with *Lord of the Flies*, can be done by asking the pupils questions like ‘who wrote the novel?’. This can be done as a task where the pupils use the internet to find information about the author William Golding, to find out who he was, where he was from, etc. Knowing background information about the author can be useful when reading a text, because it can say something about what the intended meaning of the text is.

The next task should also be an oral activity, where the pupils can contribute to a mind-map that the teacher is drawing on the board. An alternative can be to use the digital tool Mentimeter, where the pupils write their answers on their phones, and it appears on the teacher’s computer. There are multiple things that can be put in the mind-map, but the question could for example be ‘what movies, series or books do you know that takes place on an island?’. By asking this question and making the pupils think about this, will help set the scene, but also to connect scene in *Lord of the Flies* to their own experiences and interests. My prediction is that the pupils will not be able to name many books, but chances are that they have seen tv-shows like *Lost*, or perhaps the movie *Cast Away* with Tom Hanks. Nevertheless,

the task will get the pupils thinking and they will draw connections to their prior knowledge to what they are about to read.

In the final task, the pupils will practice their writing skills. The pupils are asked to predict what they think is going to happen in *Lord of the Flies*, alternatively, what is going to happen in a story that is similar to it. Then they will write this down and hand in. They are asked to write at least 200 words. The question that is asked is:

A group of young boys (ages between six and twelve years old) are stranded on a deserted island, with no adults with them. What happens? Finish the story.

The pupils hand it in and the teacher will keep them until they are finished with reading the novel. The teacher can, alternatively, read some of the answers aloud in the class, so that the other pupils can hear the others' predictions.

This is one of the tasks that I have tested myself, and it will be referred to as task 2. The difference in how I did this activity in class, is that the pupils handed their answers in anonymously. In addition to this, the pupils did not get to see their answers again or if their predictions were correct or not.

5.1.2 During reading

The main part of working with *Lord of the Flies* in the classroom, is the action of reading the novel. This will be a close reading of the novel. The teacher has a specific purpose of having the pupils doing a close reading, and in this case, the purpose is to draw attention to the topics of democracy and ethics.

While reading, the pupils can practice critical literacy by reflecting on questions like 'what message do you think the author of the text want to give the reader?'. This can, for example, be done while doing the close reading of the novel while trying to identify what literary devices the author is using to convey specific messages.

The pupils can create a digital document that they will use as a journal (or diary), where they will write about their experiences while reading the novel. This could either be a personal

thing, or something to hand in to the teacher. In addition to this, they can be made to write chapter summaries at the end of each chapter. By doing this, the teacher can establish some sort of control of how far the pupils have gotten and that they are picking up the main events in each chapter. This can also either be kept personal, or it can be handed in to the teacher so that the teacher can give them feedback.

Or, to write from the perspective of Piggy (for example). This is because he is an outsider who is looked down upon by some of the other boys, one can practice critical thinking by imagining what Piggy is thinking and feeling while all this is happening to him. After Simon's or Piggy's death, one could also arrange a group discussion/role-playing. One pupil will be Jack, one will be Ralph, etc. Then, each pupil will argue why the death of Piggy was not their fault, but someone else's.

If ethics is, like Gardelli et al. (2014) states, based on social facts and what the majority of the group think is the right thing to do, this should be possible to use in the classroom. For example, one can choose an ethical dilemma present in *Lord of the Flies* and ask the group what their opinions are. But does this mean that it is the morally correct thing to do? Just because it is favoured by the majority? These could be interesting questions to discuss with the pupils in class.

The final task, I will refer to as task 1, the pupils will reflect on what law they are missing in their everyday lives. This can be expanded to be a group discussion, where the group will create 10 rules they would have if they were stranded on a deserted island, and then range them from most to least important.

5.1.3 After reading

Pick up the pupils' predictions where they were asked to finish the story. Compare this to what happened. The pupils can write a short summary of the events in the novel, then compare this to what they wrote before reading the novel. What are the differences? The pupils can reflect on what they thought about the novel. What did they like? What did they dislike? Who was their favourite character? Why? What was the scene that stood out the most to them? What do they think was the authors message in the novel?

5.2 Results of activities

As mentioned in the previous sub-chapter, there are two tasks that I have tested in an upper secondary English classroom. The following section includes the results of the two classroom activities that I did. The activities were done on Vg1 general studies.

5.2.1 Task 1: create a new law

In this question, the pupils are supposed to create one new law. This task will get the pupils thinking and reflecting. Ideally, they will think about their own lives and the society they live in, and reflect on what they feel like is missing, then create a new law that they feel like covers what is missing. What is interesting in this task, is to see whether the pupils think about what is needed in the world, and creating a law that would benefit a big as possible group, or if they think smaller and find something is missing in their personal lives and create a law that would benefit merely themselves.

The question is as follows:

Task 1) If you could create one new law, what would it be?

The following answers were given:

- 1a) That all countries would have equal opportunities.
- 1b) Make prison sentences in Norway stricter.
- 1c) That everyone can get a driver's license at a car when they are 16.
- 1d) Make a common abortion law for all countries that give everyone right to have an abortion.
- 1e) That women and men would be treated equal in football.
- 1f) That if you have covid, you must stay home. So that people who don't want to get covid would not be afraid to go out.
- 1g) That one would need less evidence to report a rape and win the trial against the rapist.
- 1h) To make it illegal to sell plastic bags because they are a big part of global warming and does an impact to make it warmer in the country.

li) To ban the use of tobacco products in Norway. Because only old people and eastern Europeans use that nowadays, and because it's nothing positive about it.

lj) Stricter prison sentences.

lk) That 17 years olds could take car certificate, because those who live in the village with great distances struggle to get places.

The main thing I notice when looking at the pupils' answers are if the laws they created are beneficial for only themselves, or for as many people as possible. This is interesting in relation to ethical reasoning. It could be considered more ethical if the law they created was for the good of a whole community, as supposed to only one person.

As one can see, there is a great deal of different laws here. Some of the pupils have chosen laws that are very relevant today, such as in relation to the abortion debate or to global warming. Others are criticising the prison system in, what I assume to be, Norway, by saying that they want stricter prison sentences. Some of the pupils want the ability to get their driving's licence at an earlier time, which one can say would fill a need of a relatively small group of people. The wish that 'all countries would have equal opportunities', I interpret to mean every person, regardless of which country they live in. This is connected to the value of equality, and it can be an opening statement for a discussion on equality, but also democracy, seeing that equality is considered a democratic value.

In this task, where the students get to be creative and reflect on what new law they would want to introduce, the answers they give can be connected to be about their morals. For example, by evaluating whether the law they created is beneficial to only themselves or a small group, or if they think bigger and try to cover the needs of as many people as possible. This could be an introduction activity to discuss ethics and morals.

5.2.2 Task 2: predict how the story will go

In the second task, the pupils in the student group were asked to predict how a story would go. The pupils were given the start of a storyline, where the storyline is quite similar to the one in *Lord of the Flies*. The pupils are however not given any other information than what

comes through in the question. The main aim of doing this task is to get the students thinking and to spark their motivation. The following task would be a natural task to do before starting the reading process, because it will help set the scene, and it will set the pupils' expectations as to what they might encounter in the novel. This can make the idea of reading more interesting for them, because they get to see whether their predictions were right or not. Because the answers that were given in this task are longer than the ones in task 1, I have chosen to only include a few of the answers that will show the general tendencies in their answers.

The question is as follows:

Task 2) A group of young boys (ages between six and twelve years old) are stranded on a deserted island, with no adults with them. What happens? Finish the story.

Some of the answers that were given:

Answer 2a)

What should we do now guys?

I don't know, but maybe we should go and find some food.

Can you call mom and dad?

Sorry bro, I can't.

Why?

Since it is no coverage here.

WHAT?!

Yes, we are alone.

No, I will home to mom and dad!

I know, but they are not here.

At the 5am waked they up and heard a sound.

What is that? I don't know.

Should we find it out?

Wow, what is that?

I don't know.

Hey! Stop, what are you doing? Who are you guys?

We are the death.

The way this story was written is by writing it as a conversation, and this is the only answer that was written this way. This pupil is pointing to things that is natural to think when stranded on an island, for example that they need to find food, and that they are missing their parents and they want to go home. Just like in *Lord of the Flies*, this story also includes something that is scaring the boys. It is also interesting to see that this pupil has included 'the death'. This can be compared to the presence of the lord of the flies, or the devil, in Golding's story.

Answer 2b)

They have all made it from the sinking boat and they have all woken up from a little coma. When they had woken up, every parent was gone, they were just a little group of five-six people and they all seemed very young. One of the oldest kids (who was about 12 years old) did collect all the kids. When they were together, the old one said that there probably just were they again from the boat and they had to stay calm. He had played some survival games on his PlayStation and meant that he was the best man for this job. He found out that the other people around were just about 6 to 12 years old. The PlayStation gamer said that they had to build a sign, an "SOS" sign with rocks.

When they had finished the sign, they heard something in the woods. They were scared. The oldest one was commanded to go in the woods because he was the oldest and most experienced. And when he came back, he came back with a dog. The dog could be used as protection or a food source if it would be in critical condition. But at the night everyone started to cry because the youngest feared the dark and some others were missing their parents.

After some days they had survived, they saw something on the water, it was a ship. It saw like a rescue ship that searched for people who had been left behind. They yelled for all they could. And they started a fire. After some time, they saw that the boat has turned direction, and was on the way to them. When the ship had rescued the boys, all of the boys did get a new home when they came home, and there were made a documentary of the boys.

This was an interesting answer to look at. This student mentions multiple things that were close to what happened in *Lord of the Flies*. For example, that one of the oldest kids collected the group, and that he suggested that they should build a sign that could help them get rescued. This is similar to what Ralph does in *Lord of the Flies*. The student also mentions how some of the children are scared and that they fear the dark forest.

Answer 2c)

The boys are on a plane and the plane crashed on a deserted island and everyone else on the plane have died. The boys are Timmy, Chris, and Bob. After some hours they find a cave where they can rest. But there are some sounds in the cave. The sounds are some cannibals that lives in the caves. Some of the sounds made the boys run. And the cannibals followed the boys. They got Timmy. The other two boys just ran to there were out of air in their lungs. The boys had to make a camp. They started making wood for their camps so they could protect themselves against the cannibals. Also, they started to plan, so they could set Timmy free. After some hours of planning and building, the cannibals came to take the boys. They started to throw rocks at the cannibals. That made them back of a little bit. The cannibals started to make a fireplace when they were far away so we could not hit them from where we was. After the fire was completed they showed the boys a cage. It was Timmy. They was going to burn Timmy alive. The boys started to run to the cannibals to save Timmy, but then some other cannibals took the boys from behind. Then they putted the boys in the cage with Timmy and burned the three boys alive. That was a painful death for everyone.

The conclusion of the story is that if you are on an deserted island with cannibals you only have two choices. Either be killed by the cannibals or start to swim and unfortunately die at last.

In this story as well, the topic of death is present. Looking at all the answers combined, a tendency I notice is how in many of the stories, at least one of the characters the pupils have created, dies. It is clear that darkness and death are interesting topics to many of the pupils in this specific student group.

What would be interesting to use these answers to, is to look at what was Golding's main message in the novel: that the scary and evil is not a physical creature that they need to fear, but rather something that lives inside them. What could be done is, when the pupils were finished reading the story, the teacher could pick show the group these predictions and compare them to what actually happened in Golding's story. Of course, it is natural to think that the danger is a physical thing, but this might help emphasize one of the messages in the novel.

6. Conclusion

In this thesis, I have through a literature review, a literary analysis, and classroom activities, researched what the educational value of *Lord of the Flies* is. In this final chapter, the aim is to summarize the main findings in this thesis, and to provide justifications for/arguments for the thesis aim, that William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies* can be used in the upper secondary English classroom to bring attention to the topics of democracy and ethics.

The focus on ethical reasoning and democratic values in the LK20 curriculum, shows that these are important aims to work with in order to make the pupils ready for everyday life and to work towards a better future. The aim of this thesis is to contribute to how pupils can work with these important goals through the novel *Lord of the Flies*. The novel is full of symbolism that brings attention to the topics of democratic values and ethical awareness. Why is democracy and ethics important to learn for pupils? And how can this be taught through working with literature.

By working with this thesis, it is interesting to find how the topics have a connection. For example, democracy and critical thinking. The democracy highly values open discussion and curiosity. Literacy skills, which means making sense of a text (Munden & Sandhaug), is important skills to practice. By practicing critical literacy, which is important for exploring and understanding the hidden messages of *Lord of the Flies*, the pupils can practice the ability to read between the lines which is an important skill for learners (Rimmereide, 2020, p. 195). Since this thesis is about using *Lord of the Flies* in an ESL upper secondary classroom, therefore the plan should benefit the pupils to make sure that they are reaching the competence aims in focus. The core curriculum states that the school shall help the pupils ask critical questions to develop their critical thinking skills and to act with ethical awareness (UDIR, 2020, p. 6).

The novel *Lord of the Flies* is full of symbolism of both ethics and democracy. By taking a group of young boys and stripping them from all they know as safe and secure, Golding is able to bring attention to what is believed to be an inner evil that is supposed to live inside every human being. He is also showing what happens when people are not able to work together for the best of the community.

“Democracy has three conditions: significant citizen participation, substantial social and economic liberty, and equality before the law. Voting is often imagined as the central act of all three” (Riker, 1982, as cited in Schansberg, 2021). To be able to participate in the society, one needs to practice being curious and asking question, in addition to being critical of the information one is given. This can be done by practicing critical literacy skills.

The first symbol of a democratic value in *Lord of the Flies*, is democratic decision making. The boys are, at the beginning of the story, quick to find out that they will need a leader that can guide them and create order. They do this by voting on who should be ‘chief’, both Ralph and Jack want to have this role, but eventually Ralph is elected leader. The next symbol of a democratic value, is the freedom of expression, which as we know is one of the central foundations in a democratic society. When reading the story, one can see how the boys started organizing at the beginning, because they wanted to create something that was close to what they were used to. In the beginning, they boys agreed that they needed to have rules in order to survive, and they needed to keep some of the values that were important where they came from. They decide that whoever holds the conch, is allowed to speak, which symbolises the freedom of expression. This rule is upheld for a while, but it does not always serve its purpose. What one can learn from this, is to see that even though laws and rules are present, they don’t mean anything if they are not enforced by authorities or respected by the citizens. The conch represents freedom of expression, as well as order and structure, and when the conch breaks, it symbolizes the end of the democracy.

One can point at the treatment of Piggy as symbolizing when freedom of expression is not present. Piggy is being bullied and called names, degrading him and making him insecure of his value, as well as making him afraid. This is also showing how fear can give someone power, by looking at what power Jack has over Piggy, even when Jack is not the elected chief. Piggy does not experience that he is free to speak his mind, because he is continuously silenced by the other boys, especially Jack.

I would argue that Ralph and Jack are each representing a type of government and a way of ruling. Both boys have certain leadership skills, but the way they rule is very different. Ralph is valuing order and equality, and he wants every single boy to feel valued and to give them the opportunity to share their thoughts through the rule of the conch. As a leader, Ralph is also soft-spoken, calm and respectful, and he wants to solve problems through reasoning and open discussion. He is what appears to be a natural leader. Because of these values, he represents

the democracy. Jack, on the other hand, has a different way of ruling. Jack is not elected leader, but he is slowly pushing Ralph out of the role, by putting Ralph in a bad light and to convince the boys that himself is the better leader. His arguments is that he has a lot of power, because he is an experienced leader (because he was the leader of the choir), and because he can hunt for pigs so that the boys gets food. Nevertheless, Jack is simply deciding that he will be chief. He did not get elected; he just eventually took the position and told the others that he would now be chief. Based on his type of leadership, and his priorities on the island, Jack can symbolize a more authoritarian regime, or even anarchy. This is because he thinks it is more important to run around, hunt and have fun, than it is to have rules to follow in order to become rescued. Jack fits the description of a natural leader in a more authoritative community. To summarize, where Ralph represents the democracy, order and civilization, Jack, on the other hand, represents anarchy, chaos and savagery. Ralph is valuing a set of rules that will help guide them, where Jack finds the rules worthless and not important.

Ethics can be explained as the surrounding climate of how to live (Blackburn, 2001, p. 1). It is also shortly explained as what is right and wrong. When the boys in *Lord of the Flies* first came to the island, they were all innocent boys that had never witnessed no evil. Most came from good families and were used to living in safe environments. Then, when Golding is removing them from this safe life and putting them on a deserted island to figure out everything from shelter to food, it shows how people can change when they are going farther away from civilization. As time passes, each of the boys are starting to forget how their lives used to be, and some of the boys are eager to become more powerful. The novel strongly suggests that Golding believes that man is naturally evil. By looking at the title of the novel, lord of the flies which means the devil. Also by using children in the story, which is maybe the most innocent one can find, Golding emphasizes that evil can grow inside everyone.

The main message that the pupils can receive while working with *Lord of the Flies*, is the importance of having a functional society that values mutual respect and the freedom of speech. An important message is also that humans are often selfish and eager for power, and there are specific things that makes a person more powerful than others.

6.1 Limitations

The main limitation to the results gathered in this thesis, is that the classroom activities that were done could be more related to Golding's *Lord of the Flies* itself. By doing that, it would be easier to conclude on the educational value that it has. The two tasks that were tested in this thesis, only gives a certain idea of how well it would work, as well as what answers one can suspect to get from the pupils. If one was able to carry out the plan, and introduce the novel itself to a class before testing activities, that would give a better picture of what learning outcomes one can expect. That could be the subject for further research.

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