



Pushing the Limits of Nature Suggested Reading and Discussion Questions

In our environments or within ourselves, the idea of “natural” is complicated. In your discussions consider how we define nature, and if that definition is fixed or in flux.

Lord Of the Flies

William Golding, Fiction. At the dawn of the next world war a plane crashes on an uncharted island, stranding a group of schoolboys. With no adult supervision, their freedom is something they celebrate. This far from civilization they can do anything they want - anything. But as order collapses, as strange howls echo in the night and terror begins its reign, the hope of adventure seems as far removed from reality as the hope of being rescued. - *amazon.com*

- What do you feel Golding's vision of humanity is? Do you think he believes we are born with an instinct for peace and cooperation...or for dominance and savagery? Does his vision accord with your own?
- What do you think about the rules of civilization? Do they free us and enable us to rise to our best selves? Or do the rules constrain a bad nature that lies within us?
- What does hunting mean to Jack...at the beginning, and then later? What happens to his mental state after he kills his first pig?
- What is ironic about the naval officer who arrives to "rescue" the boys? How does Ralph feel about returning to the safety of civilization? Is civilization “natural”?

