

Lord of the Flies: Devise or Demise Background Guide

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Director's Letter

To all and any delegates unfortunate enough to be placed on this island,

As a literature nerd and dystopia fanatic, I warmly welcome you to TMUN 2025 *Lord of the Flies: Devise or Demise*. My name is Patricia Zhang, and I am the director for this committee. A little about myself: I'm a current Grade 12 student at Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute and I've done MUN for about all of Grade 11 and Grade 10. I enjoy all things philosophy – except Camus – and I run a magazine (@purelyliminalmag) in my free time.

The concept of humans stranded in a desolate place is somewhat ubiquitous in modern culture – *Triangle of Sadness*, *Hatchet*, and *The Coral Island* serving as some of the most famous examples. Yet perhaps the most iconic take on this trope is *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, written to be a direct “take that!” to *The Coral Island*. Through themes heavily shrouded in pessimism, the book explores the concept of humanity when we have no bounds, and no rules. As such, the creative freedom in this committee is unparalleled. If you love chaos, betrayal, or serving to create peace for the greater good, you'll love this committee. Spoilers lie ahead, so if you're interested in reading the book firsthand, check it out and then come back.

Lord of the Flies was a committee I wanted to create not because it, alongside *1984*, is insanely popular with English teachers but because I think it allows delegates to rein with creativity and explore MUN at its finest – power is up for grabs and at the start of committee, and belongs to no one in particular. Each delegate will represent (and hopefully embody) one character, with all their distinct goals, quirks, and personalities. Further, some characters are not from the book but rather created to be foils to others, while other minor characters in the book are fleshed out and given more depth. The plot of the book will not be followed – the future is in your hands, delegates.

As the committee will be decently fast-paced with no 100% predestined ending, I encourage delegates to come in with a crisis arc thought out for their character. Creativity as well as embodiment of character will be two of the most important things for this committee. But I don't say these things to be scary – crisis committees are designed to be entertaining, and I wish all delegates to immerse themselves in the experience and learn new things whether you are a veteran or beginner. I'm also just an email away if there's any questions about the committee, or if clarification on a certain point is needed.

Golding seems to think that in a world where there is no social order, we will descend into anarchy and turn on each other. Darkness will spill forth, and no one can be trusted. But we have a chance to prove him wrong (or solidify his nihilism). I look forward to watching how you, dear delegates, shape the island into your vision.

Good luck delegates, and have fun. You have the conch, so make your voice heard.

Best,
Patricia Zhang
Director of *Lord of the Flies: Devise or Demise*
TMUN 2025
patriciazhang07@gmail.com

Committee Background

The cliché of getting stranded on a deserted island has been prevalent in the media since the inception of stories such as *Paradise Island*. *Lord of the Flies* follows this common plotline – a plane amidst a war gets shot down and crashes on a desolate island, thereby condemning a group of English schoolboys to isolation. From here on out, the boys need to learn how to build a community and establish an order to their “society” in order to survive. Spoiler alert, but a peaceful utopia isn’t exactly the product of teenage boys in isolation with no rules or laws. This committee will take place directly after the plane crashes, and the boys have already been assembled together due to a series of actions (to be explained later on) by two characters: Piggy (renamed in this committee to Paul) and Ralph. First committee session will take place directly after all the boys have been assembled.



Fig 1. A map of the unnamed island (drawn courtesy of Crisis Analyst Kathleen Bu)

As for characters, the character matrix includes a hybrid of original major characters from the book, original minor characters from the book but fleshed out with more personality, and finally, new characters not from the book, but added to give more variety to the list of existing characters. These new characters are from other dystopias – and the operative assumption is that they have somehow ended up on this island with the characters of *Lord of the Flies*. Additionally, for the sake of raising the stakes of the committee, the size of the group will be around 100 people, with 20 of them in the committee. This ensures that truly, it is a society that needs to be created.

Delegates throughout committee sessions will be faced with challenges associated with building an entire society from ground-up. Creativity when facing these problems is encouraged, and delegates are expected to embody the traits and goals of their character to make logical decisions. The saviour that appears at the end of the book will not happen in this committee, and cannot be relied upon. It's important to note that traditional power in the form of money, heritage, and nukes are invalid in this committee. Directives should be reasonable, thus we encourage all delegates to bring their best and most creative ideas forward.

This background guide aims to provide some context to the committee, such as detailing resources available. A character matrix is also included to help delegates get in the headspace of each personality. Though not required, if wished, delegates may also read *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding – though the committee deviates a bit from the source material. If assigned a character not from Lord of the Flies, further reading may be useful depending on level of familiarity with the character. As a content warning, this committee will deal with topics of violence and death.

Topic A: Peter Piper Picked a Pecking Order

In the aftermath of such an incident, power struggles are inevitable. Without a hierarchy, the group is doomed to descend into chaos – with no efficient allocation of food, water, and resources, many members of the group will instigate fights amongst each other. The question of government, and more essentially, who will be the leader, has become pressing and substantial. Someone needs to step to the plate. Do you have what it takes to realise your goals?

In the original book, the two main groups of the choir boys led by Jack and the rest of the boys led by Ralph are what are at conflict. Jack gives into more “primal” instincts and believes in hunting and killing for the fun of it. Ralph, on the other hand, works to establish a moral code within a place that seems to not be controlled by reason. However, in this case, there are many more characters and thus many more factors that are in play.

Yet, an overarching villain of the “Beast” is also present in the book – a (maybe imaginary?) monster that torments the little boys. As characters responsible for overseeing the fates of not only those in the committee but others outside, fighting against mob mentality and the fear that seeps into those under your influence are also critical. Though this committee does not strictly follow the plotline of the book, the “Beast” is a creature that still exists in the minds of your subjects.

Guiding Questions

1. How should all the groups with different ideologies work together to create a functioning government on the island?
2. What would an ideal government on the island look like?
3. How will you ensure safety against the “Beast”?
4. How would *your character* specifically fit into the hierarchy of the island?

Topic B: Veni, Vidi, Vici

Though we may push for establishing a government and short-term survival, the long-term future of the stranded remains unclear. Is it viable to live on this island forever? After all, there are many alternatives that need to be considered. With all the time in the world, actions such as a signal fire or building a raft do not seem as far-fetched as they once did. Ultimately, the necessary question is if the group can integrate themselves back into civilization, or die trying.

This topic includes the potential subtopics of gathering the necessary elements of survival such as permanent shelter and food, and the distribution of such items. The island is still relatively unknown, and knowledge about it – and how best to navigate it – will only be uncovered by a consistent effort.

Guiding Questions

1. With the more pressing issues and the fear of the unknown, would it be better to focus more on a signal fire, or a way to escape?
2. What are some short-term and long-term goals that must be accomplished to achieve a functioning society?
3. How can you work to achieve your ideal goals?

Conclusion

History is written by winners. But in this case, the winners are also the survivors. Whether it be a place at the top of the pyramid or a life as a recluse vagabond, every delegate has a role to play in the island. Can peace truly be achieved? Delegates, it's up to you.

Mechanics

Conch Points

For those who desire power, conch points are a measurement of the results of your actions to protect your allies, or to work for what you deem to be the “greater good”. In other words, it’s a measure of your influence or public opinion. This mechanism is applicable to all delegates, but is only essential for delegates who rely on influence to achieve their goals. Conch points can be “spent” in every private directive, and the more you spend, the more you can exercise your “influence” over a group of people to complete a certain action. For example, if a delegate wishes to gather a group of people to hunt down the Beast, this will likely fail without the use of conch points.

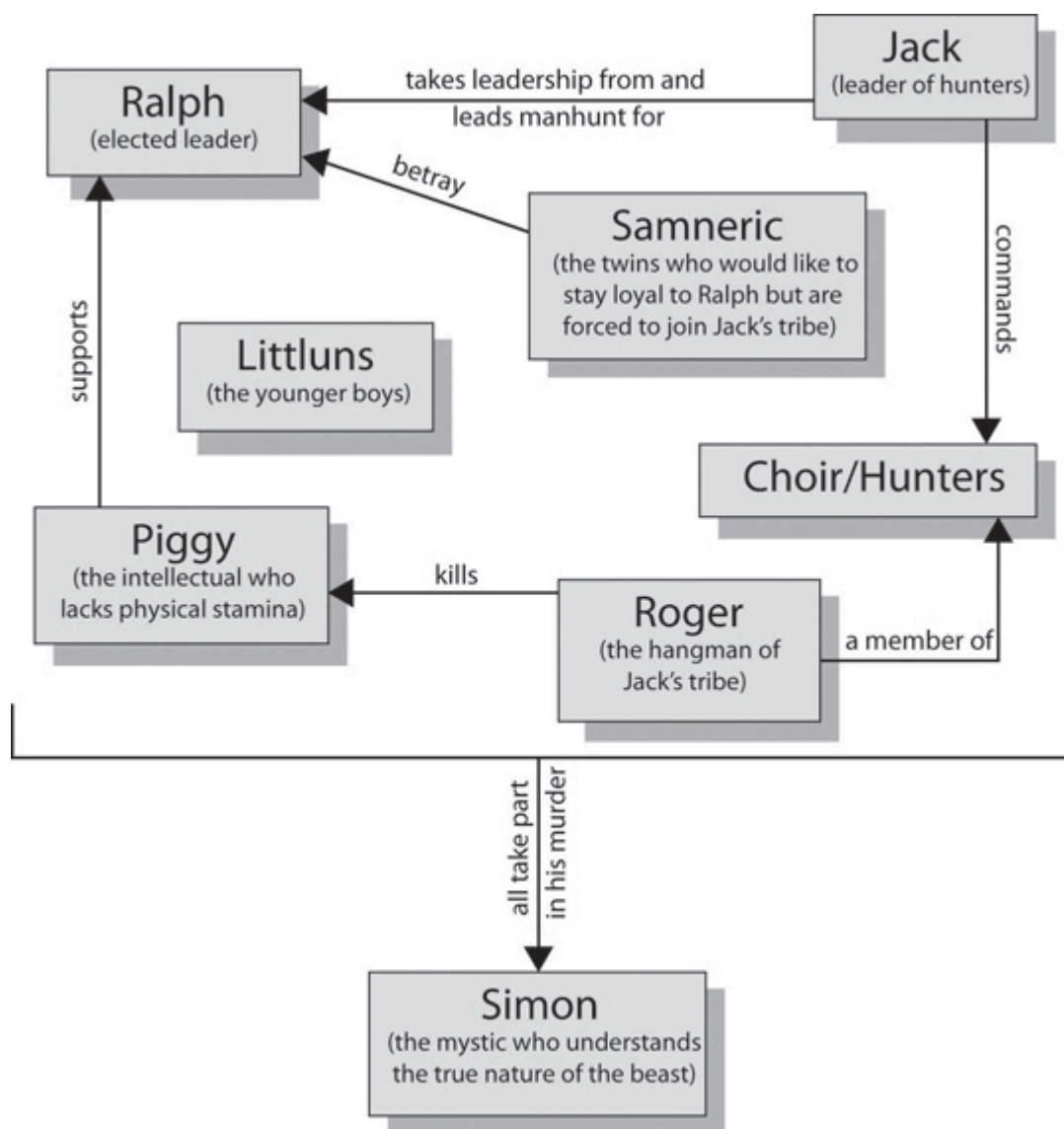
The maximum amount of points you may spend at one time is 5. Conch points can be gained through private directives that further your influence (but you cannot spend conch points to gain more). Each delegate will receive a note at the beginning of the committee detailing the amount of conch points they have.

Abilities

In addition to conch points, each delegate will receive a private note detailing a special ability they possess. This may be a supernatural element or a heightened normal sense that aligns with a specific character.

Character Matrix

The following characters are assumed to be 18-19 when the crash happens. Assume all new fictional characters from other dystopias are also 18-19, and do not possess any other-worldly powers (other than the specific one stipulated by dias – see “Abilities” in the Mechanics section of this background guide). In this scenario, they have nothing with them but their personality traits and past experiences that are canon to them. For example, at 18 years old, Snow and Coin may not know each other, but their character traits have already been developed to contrast each other naturally.



From: <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/l/lord-of-the-flies/character-map>

Ralph

Originally from: Lord of the Flies (Book)

A natural leader, Ralph is charismatic and, as one of the older boys, acts as a role model. He believes humanity should come together in trying times to establish a society – a direct contrast to the more “savage” way of looking at things seen in some other boys. He believes in law, order, and civil society; instead of trying to gain power, he is instead preoccupied with the idea of getting rescued. Though he seems innocent, he still has a more cunning side, such as picking on his right-hand man.

Roger

Originally from: Lord of the Flies (Book)

First seen as broody and mysterious, Roger divulges more into his “innate” sadistic nature as he acts as Jack’s “lieutenant”. While Jack loves power and control, Roger takes pleasure in causing violence and chaos. Though he is initially quiet, as he realises there is nothing governing him, he begins to commit clearer acts of violence. This mounts to his pivotal murder of Ralph's right-hand man by rolling a boulder on him. He seems ambivalent to thoughts of rescue and thinks of short-term pleasure. It should be noted at the beginning of the book, he is the one who suggests they vote for a leader, indicating that he himself does not want to lead, but rather wants to be told what to do. Of course, at the start of this committee, Roger acts more like a Reddit user than anything else – yet though mysterious in the beginning, his gain in power leads to acts of violence.

Paul (formerly known as Piggy)

Originally from: Lord of the Flies (Book)

Rational and collected, Paul is the voice of reason in the group. However, he is frequently bullied due to his asthma and physical appearance. Paul believes in law and civilization, but is often dismissed. He also has a tendency to appear lecture-y and pretentious, leading to many of the young ones disliking him. However, as a lover of science, at his core, Paul wants to work for a society without violence and instead be ruled by rationality.

Jack

Originally from: Lord of the Flies (Book)

Abrasive and an egomaniac, Jack’s hunt for power and control over others dissents the island into chaos. Ironically, as the leader of choirboys, he encourages an acceptance of violence and embracing inner “savagery.” When fear of the “Beast” consumes those on the island, Jack manipulates this anxiety to further his own goals. Jack’s love of power is innately intertwined with his tendency towards violence, as he finds both exalting and relishes in its excess.

Simon

Originally from: Lord of the Flies (Book)

Though (initially) prone to fainting, Simon is big-hearted and compassionate. Out of pure generosity, he helps Ralph build shelters and he goes out of his way to comfort the little ones. Simon also realises the “Beast” is a pure figment of imagination, and suggests to the others that it is something innate that needs to be confronted.

Samneric

Originally from: Lord of the Flies (Book)

Sam and Eric are twins referred to collectively as Samneric. Since they share the majority of the same personality traits and act together, the delegate of Samneric will act as one person. Though they do not have any agency throughout the majority of the book, their transition into Jack’s group at the end of the book represents the fall of civilization. Though an unheard voice, their actions have the ability to spark change, it’s just up to them to decide if they want to continue to be nameless sheep.

Percival Wemys Madison

Originally from: Lord of the Flies (Book)

Timid and shy than the other boys, Percival is superstitious and is prone to nervous breakdowns. He sticks to a draconian act of reciting his name, address, and telephone number whenever someone older talks to him. Percival also introduces the concept of a Beast who comes from the sea, and thus scares many others with his superstition. Deeply paranoid and scared for the future, his trust is hard to earn and easy to lose.

Mel Medarda

Originally from: Arcane (TV Show: Season 1)

With origins in diplomacy and politics, Mel is an advanced strategist and familiar with manipulating others to achieve her own goals. At her core, she sides with peace rather than her mom’s more aggressive tendencies. Charismatic and intelligent, she cares deeply for her subjects and wishes to see her hometown, Piltover, flourish. However, at age 19, one day as she was going on vacation, her plane crashed into a mysterious island. In a world where her body armour does not protect her and there are no riches to her name, she must adapt to the situation. Can she climb back up to her old position of power?

<https://leagueoflegends.fandom.com/wiki/Mel>

Silco

Originally from: Arcane (TV Show: Season 1)

Radical and passionate, Silco's background in a poverty-stricken area led him to believe in fighting against oppressive rule and towards liberation. Cautious and intelligent, he knows better to believe in the "good of humanity" and has experienced a first-hand betrayal of trust from Vander, someone he considered to be like a brother. In his future, he would become a major crime lord, furthering the corruption of the police force and unleashing a majorly addictive substance to gain power and control. For now, after Vander's crushing betrayal, he found himself in a new world, one without the futuristic technology of his hometown. This, however, is his fresh start. Silco has a chance to finally be equals with everyone, but he knows better than to just hope for the best. Rather, he needs to take action.

<https://leagueoflegends.fandom.com/wiki/Silco>

John Yossarian

Originally from: Catch-22 (Book)

A 28-year old captain of the 256th Squadron of the Army Air Forces in WW2, Yossarian is a peculiar soldier. He is by no means a hero. In fact, his main goal is to avoid death. In a world where people are told time and time again to risk their lives, his dream of holding onto his life seems to be the only logical one. His goal is for self-preservation, or (ironically enough), die trying to achieve this. Yossarian disagrees with risking lives for meaningless reasons, and when one day he wakes up on an island in the middle of nowhere, seemingly de-aged back to 19, he knows he has a chance to escape his world, and never go back to his hellish nightmare.

<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/catch22/character/yossarian/>

Albert Tappman (The Chaplain)

Originally from: Catch-22 (Book)

God gives the toughest battles to his strongest soldiers. Unfortunately, The Chaplain seems to be a prime example of that. As an avid believer in God, the Chaplain is disoriented in a world where killing is a virtue. A friend of Yossarian in WW2, his faith in God is challenged by the horrors of war. Gentle and caring, he is often picked-on by others in an exercise of power. The Chaplain also frequently suffers from déjà-vu, which at times also strengthens his faith in God. After placing his own moral code about military orders and visiting Yossarian, he also finds himself on a mysterious island with Yossarian, and views it as a personal gift from God, who has saved The Chaplain from the war.

https://catch22.fandom.com/wiki/Albert_Tappman

Alma Coin

Originally from: The Hunger Games: Mockingjay (Book)

Coin, just like her name, exercises a sharp duality. On one side, she is a calm and collected person. Yet on the other, she is ruthless and cunning, stopping at nothing to climb the social ladder and get power. Parading goals of equality, she is able to gain influence over many people, though her goals may not be as “for the greater good” as they seem. Her wishes to establish a monolithic government were interrupted at 19 when she was transported to an island in the middle of nowhere. However, this environment might just be the perfect place to establish her influence.

https://thehungergames.fandom.com/wiki/Alma_Coin

Coriolanus Snow

Originally from: The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Snakes and Songbirds (Book)

At 18 years old, Snow’s one affluent family was in decline. Though he lives in the Capitol, the richest part of Panem, a dystopian state, struggles of what to eat for dinner were very much real and pressing. His facade that his family was not struggling, however, was a translucent veneer anyone could look through if they paid enough attention. Snow also had a “tendency towards obsession” – he often thought that fixing one problem would solve all others. These alarming characteristics would be troubling as there’s no telling what would happen if he were to, for example, become the ruler of Panem. However, at 18 years old, before the stuff with Lucy Gray went down, he was somehow transported to an island where his financial decline meant nothing, and all the power was up for the taking. Snow at his core is ambitious and determined, showing how you can take the guy out of the Capitol, but you can’t take the Capitol out of the guy.

https://thehungergames.fandom.com/wiki/Coriolanus_Snow

Han Mi-nyeo

Originally from: Squid Game (TV Show: Season 1)

A fan of making alliances for her own gain, Han Mi-nyeo has lived off the principle of “kill or be killed” since she was young. Her innately pessimistic view of the world has also led her to becoming manipulative and cunning. She views the real world as bleak and horrifying as literal death games – in a world run on money, her lack of it is as good as a death sentence. Working as a con-woman at 19 years old, before she enters Squid Game to seal her fate, she gets a precursor by somehow waking up on the island. This time, though, there’s no ₩45.6 billion prize money.

https://squid-game.fandom.com/wiki/Han_Mi-nyeo

Seong Gi-hun

Originally from: Squid Game (TV Show: Season 1)

Though friendly, caring, and altruistic, Seong Gi-hun has been the victim of countless misfortunes. As a gambling addict, he has experienced the ups and downs of winning and losing big-time. This ludopathy would be the start of a future bad-choice road, where Seong Gi-hun would jeopardise multiple people, including his own mother, for his benefit. However, this does not compromise his good heart, and in life-or-death scenarios, he is often said to be the bigger person, caring for the underdog. When he wakes up on an island with his best friend Cho Sang-woo at 19 years old, he is perplexed, but also eager to get away from a depressing money-tortured life.

https://squid-game.fandom.com/wiki/Seong_Gi-hun

Cho Sang-woo

Originally from: Squid Game (TV Show: Season 1)

Relying on logic rather than emotions, Cho Sang-woo manages to get the upper hand in stressful scenarios by thinking outside the box. His future at Seoul National University seems promising, and everyone around him has high expectations for his future. When placed into Squid Game after a series of bad investments, he still tries his best to help others, until it's his life truly at stake. As the games progress, he becomes more cold-hearted and ruthless, knowing that for ₩45.6 billion prize money, he needs to be willing to do anything. Before this all happens, though, he wakes up on an island with his childhood friend Seong Gi-hun. As his first year in university is the following year, he is anxious to get out, but quickly realises the stakes here may be as serious as his life. Yet the question remains if he is only selfish due to his need for monetary gain, or his life?

https://squid-game.fandom.com/wiki/Cho_Sang-woo

Newt

Originally from: The Maze Runner (Book)

An innovator, Newt was the second-in-command of the Gladers. He lived in the Maze – a random society of boys locked out from the real world in some grassland surrounded by a dangerous maze – for as long as he can remember. After remembering his past of helping set up the Maze as some sort of messed up experiment, he realises the past doesn't matter, and that he needs to help in the present. When they finally escape from the Maze, they are pulled up to a helicopter and are told that they are safe. Unfortunately, the helicopter crashes into an

island. Newt is awakened to realise he is in another version of his past hell. Can he use his past experience in the Maze to help the new society of people?

<https://mazerunner.fandom.com/wiki/Newt>

Minho

Originally from: The Maze Runner (Book)

Caustic, aggressive, but overwhelmingly loyal, Minho is dependent and trustworthy. From the same universe as Newt, Minho was the Keeper of the Runners, a group of people who mapped out the Maze everyday – a brave and daunting task. With peak physicality and combat skills, Minho can be trusted in any physical mission. Out of all the Gladers, Minho is also said to be the most argumentative with the best sense of humour. His sense of respect for others also has helped him gain the trust of many Gladers. With Newt, when their rescue helicopter crashes leaving everyone dead except for them, they find themselves on an island. Another mission, another thing to make it out alive from.

https://mazerunner.fandom.com/wiki/Minho#The_Maze_Runner

Clover

Originally from: Animal Farm (Book)

Sweet but disillusioned, Clover acts as a mother figure to those who are weak. It's in this sense she supports the revolution in Animal Farm. She realises how important it is to have a sense of equality in society. However, when the society begins to become more authoritative, Clover does not stand up for her beliefs. Instead she hides her dismayed attitude. Clover was never fully educated in things such as how to read – and thus her lack of education is something that also prevented her from fully protesting the tyranny that plagued her society. In this committee, she's in human form (yay!), retaining all her knowledge and personality traits.

<https://www.litcharts.com/lit/animal-farm/characters/clover>

Benjamin

Originally from: Animal Farm (Book)

An animal who neither supported nor opposed the rebellion in Animal Farm, Benjamin expresses a very cynical viewpoint. He ignores politics and refuses to meddle in “such matters” as he would call it. Benjamin is one of the rare animals that possesses the ability to read, however he does not frequently exercise this as he feels there is nothing worth reading. Although the donkey – now in human form for the committee – can sense that a society is

changing (maybe for the worse) he does not feel obliged to lift a hoof (haha) to advocate for change – especially if it jeopardises his own position.

<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/animalfarm/character/benjamin/>

Old Major

Originally from: *Animal Farm* (Book)

Presented as some sort of grandfatherly agent of change, Old Major kicks off the revolution in *Animal Farm*. Old Major is wildly persuasive and carries significant influence on the farm, using the art of rhetoric to convince the animals to start a rebellion. In this committee, Old Major is not dead and maintains his personality as well as his political viewpoints.

<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/animal-farm/character-analysis/old-major>

Alex

Originally from: *A Clockwork Orange* (Book)

Aggressive, abrasive, and argumentative, Alex – at the start of the book – is hopelessly violent, characterised as mindless evil. Unlike his other counterparts, Alex isn't interested in justifying his own depravity or seeing how it fits into a larger society. Rather, he acts in mindless self-indulgence. In contrast to Jack, he isn't much of an innate evil than a product of his environment – but is he too far gone to do any good when given a clean slate?

<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/clockworkorange/character/alex/>

Shuya Nanahara

Originally from: *Battle Royale* (Movie)

A resilient and compassionate person thrown into a life-or-death situation, Shuya's strong sense of justice and determination lands him victorious. In this committee, Shuya's character is transported to the island before the events of *Battle Royale II: Requiem*. At that moment, Shuya was in charge of a terrorist organisation known as the Wild Seven, formed by survivors of previous *Battle Royales*. Most notably about Shuya's character is his perseverance to continue to do the right thing, not in the vein of being self-sacrificial but instead a dedication to his friends and loved ones that pushes him to survive.

[https://battleroyale.fandom.com/wiki/Shuya_Nanahara_\(Film\)](https://battleroyale.fandom.com/wiki/Shuya_Nanahara_(Film))

Bernard Marx

Originally from: Brave New World (Book)

Rife with jealousy and rage, Bernard is presented to be the most “human” character in Brave New World because of his constantly expressed envy to some of the other characters. In this committee. Benard is transported to the island during his trip to the Reservation.. This means he is mostly the same as he was at the beginning of the plot of Brave New World. Benard is cowardly yet boastful, an egomaniac with an inferiority complex. However, when he’s in the new, uncharted territory of the Reservation, he relishes in feeling like a rebellious outsider. And that’s when he’s at his most polarising.

<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/bravenew/character/bernard-marx/>

Resources

<https://www.litcharts.com/lit/lord-of-the-flies/characters>

<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/flies/summary/>

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