

OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/GRADE 9 ENGLISH/HANDOUT 12

REVIEW

Use the shapes below to assess your own engagement with *Lord of the Flies* so far. Focus on one character. He could be a major or minor character.

Thoughts

Quotes

Actions

Feelings

Goals

Description

What others say about character

Something else important

COMPARING REPRESENTATIONS OF NATURE

In this lesson, we will compare and contrast representations of nature in a pop music video and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. We will ask ourselves why artists/writers represent nature in certain ways.

We will watch Justin Bieber's music video, "I'll Show You":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfGaX8G0f2E>

But before that, let's read a review of Bieber's album, "Purpose." The song, "I'll Show you," is in this album:

Web resource: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/13/arts/music/justin-bieber-and-one-direction-joyless-boys.html?_r=0

You have not truly heard the trauma that a lifetime in the spotlight can cause until you hear Justin Bieber sing, "What about the children?/Look at all the children we can change."

That simplistic plea comes near the end of the 21-year-old singer's new album, "Purpose," on a song called "Children." Over an ecstatic dance beat full of jagged synthesizers, Mr. Bieber looks out at the world's grand problems and wonders what he can do, as Michael Jackson might have, or a typical third grader might.

Fame has made this of Mr. Bieber, still the biggest young male pop star of his generation, and now also a cautionary tale: not for the fallout from his various public misdeeds, but for the way his need for redemption — public and religious, in this case — has throttled a worthy talent.

On "Purpose," (RBMG/Def Jam) Mr. Bieber steps down from the cross, still hemorrhaging. Apart from its huge already-released hits "Where Are Ü Now" and "What Do You Mean?" this album exists less as a contribution to popular music than as a plot point in Mr. Bieber's public narrative. He has gone astray. He is sorry. "You know I try," he sings, "but I don't do well with apologies."

The British boy band One Direction is releasing a new album on Friday, but unlike the Canadian singer, these young men are not penitent; "Made in the A.M." (Syco/Columbia) — the group's fifth record since forming on the British "X Factor" in 2010 — is also a placeholder. In March, Zayn Malik left the group suddenly; in August, the act announced it would go on hiatus next year. Fame may be souring them and tearing them apart, but their music barely shows a ripple.

In part, that's because One Direction has always been less of a musical proposition than a marketing one. From the beginning, it defied typical characteristics of boy bands: They didn't harmonize much, and they didn't dance. (It was, to be frank, sort of punk — or rather, a flicker of punk still visible inside an imperious-looking capitalist fortress.)

"Made in the A.M." is much the same, rootless and vague even when it lands on a clear style, like the Coldplay-esque "Infinity," or "Never Enough," a wacky number with intense a cappella gimmickry and exuberant mid-1980s drums and horns that recall, of all things, Huey Lewis and the News. Over all, there's less of the rock that began to color the most recent One Direction albums, but it's clear the Beatles are on the group's mind on "Olivia." The Bee Gees hover over "What a Feeling," one of the album's high points.

That song is also a vocal showcase for Liam Payne, the group's best singer now that Mr. Malik is gone. Throughout the album, he and Harry Styles take turns showing off in small doses — the music is too banal to support exceptional singing. Much of the best material here is of the first-principles nature, not as in a group returning to them, but rather understanding them for the first time, as on the piano ballad "If I Could Fly" or the folk love song "I Want to Write You a Song."

Accordingly, chasteness reigns over most of this album, though there are brief allusions to breakup sex, Champagne flutes and one-night stands, especially on the scalawag anthem “Perfect,” which allows Mr. Styles to share some words for his ex Taylor Swift: “If you’re looking for someone to write your breakup songs about / Baby, I’m perfect.”

Even though Mr. Bieber is younger than all of the men of One Direction, he sounds exponentially more experienced, and exponentially more fatigued on “Purpose.” He is also the best singer of the bunch, and the one with a clear vision for his sound, even if he’s being largely denied it here.

Recent profiles of Mr. Bieber emphasize his piety, his remorse, his desire to be cleansed of the last couple of years. (His indiscretions include throwing eggs at a neighbor’s house and careless driving.) And “Purpose” has restraint embedded into its DNA — here is a young man who’s been squeezed empty of all joy. Here is Mr. Bieber, apologizing on “I’ll Show You”: “This life’s not easy, I’m not made out of steel / Don’t forget that I’m human, don’t forget that I’m real.” Here is Mr. Bieber, making promises on the Christian piano-ballad parable “Life Is Worth Living”:

They try to crucify me
I ain’t perfect, won’t deny My reputation’s on the line
So I’m working on a better me

Not every track here is an act of self-flagellation, but even the songs about pleasure, present or past, feel curiously free of sweat and drool. (For what it’s worth, Mr. Bieber sounds like he’s having more fun — or at least, has had more fun — on the bonus tracks.)

This album succeeds in strategically bolstering Mr. Bieber’s pop bona fides in a climate that’s generally hostile to his preferred milieu, which is gentle R&B. Sometimes, like on “Mark My Words,” he leaps into his sweet, frail upper register and sounds at peace. But mostly, he cedes ground to his producers — Skrillex, Diplo, Blood and others — who provide him with a field dressed version of modern club music: a little light dance hall on “Sorry,” streamlined tropical house on “Where Are Ü Now.” These aren’t Mr. Bieber’s strong suits, but he doesn’t try to sing them down. Part of penitence is playing nice.

He’s clearly biding time, and energy, for the next phase. Both his album and One Direction’s close with songs about a farewell. For One Direction, it’s “History,” which insists, “We can live forever,” in shout-sung unison. It’s optimistic and forward looking, a schematic for helping weeping young fans find release in the group’s coming (possibly permanent) break.

Finality, though, means something completely different for Mr. Bieber, who has been pronounced dead so many times in the news media that he has begun to appear superhuman, or at least like Teflon. The title track comes last here, and while it’s meant as a thank-you of sorts to those who stuck by him, it’s resolutely grim: “Feeling like I’m breathing my last breath / Feeling like I’m walking my last steps / Look at all of these tears I’ve wept.”

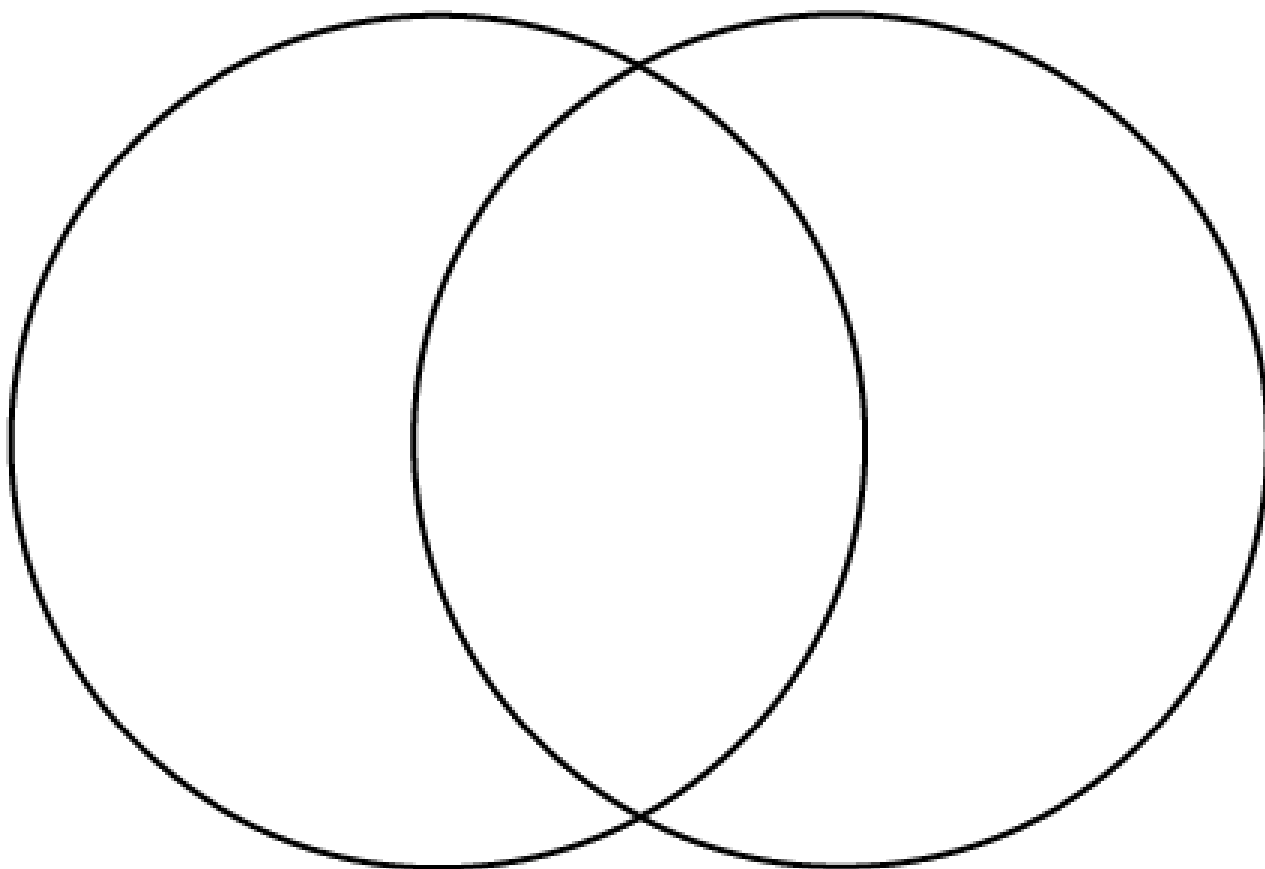
Of course he’s tired: “Purpose” is the 10th project he’s released since 2009 (including a Christmas album and other ephemera). Joy is in short supply.

With Mr. Bieber drained and One Direction preparing for hibernation, there is a window for someone else to break through: the Australian hunk-punk foursome 5 Seconds of Summer. In October, it released its second album, “Sounds Good Feels Good” (Capitol), which debuted atop the Billboard album chart.

This group is mercilessly, relentlessly pop, but of a different stripe, combining all of the bratty grace of the mid-1980s Beastie Boys and dawn- of-the-2000s Blink-182. Unlike Mr. Bieber and One Direction, who have tamped down their salaciousness in service of pop stardom, no one has yet told 5 Seconds of Summer to have anything other than mildly reprehensible fun. “Sounds Good Feels Good” is a

showcase for raw, insipid, glorious young male id, the thing Mr. Bieber and One Direction have all but left behind.

Compare and contrast representations of nature in *Lord of the Flies* and Justin Bieber's music video, "I'll Show You":



Write down a thesis statement that captures the argument you wish to make:
