

## EXPLORING DAMSELFLY AND LORD OF THE FLIES AS LINKED TEXTS

1

Lord of the Flies is told in the third person, Damsselfly in the first. How does this difference in narration affect the way you interpret the stories and the characters?

2

Compare the chief antagonists in each of the novels: Rittika in Damsselfly and Jack in Lord of the Flies. What commonalities do these characters share? Aside from the obvious differences between them (age, gender, country of origin, etc.), how are Rittika and Jack unique adversaries?

3

Compare the friendship between Ralph and Piggy in Lord of the Flies with the friendship between Sam and Mel in Damsselfly.

4

War and violence are key themes in both novels. WWII is clearly an influence on Lord of the Flies, while Damsselfly makes reference to modern warfare repeatedly, including in this Chapter Six passage:

“We make him our prisoner,” Rittika added. “Torture him till he gives us answers.”

“This isn’t Guantanamo,” Betty said.

“All’s fair in love and war.”

“This isn’t war.”

“Isn’t it?” Rittika asked.

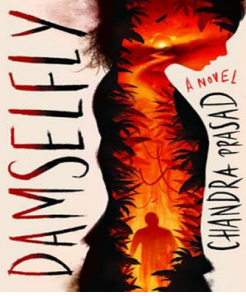
Compare how the characters in both books experience and interpret war, keeping in mind the different eras in which the books are set.

5

Most critics believe Ralph represents civilization and order in Lord of the Flies, while Jack represents impulse and savagery. It has been argued that Mel and Rittika, respectively, represent the same things in Damsselfly. Do you think this is a fair comparison? Explain why.

6

The conch is a powerful symbol of order, civilization, and communication in Lord of the Flies. Conches also appear in Damsselfly. Rittika calls the shell distinctly “feminine” in appearance in Chapter Two. “Conch Lake” is the body of water the kids build their camp beside. Conch meat is a form of sustenance throughout the story. Finally, the giant conch Rittika finds in Chapter 17 beckons Pablo and the old man to appear. How is the role of the conch similar in the two books? How is it different?



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7

The old man at the end of *Damselfly* wears old eyeglasses on his belt that bear a resemblance to the kind Piggy wore in *Lord of the Flies*. The old man also calls himself “Chief.” Do you think he represents the kind of adult Jack from *Lord of the Flies* could have become? Why or why not?

8

At the end of *Lord of the Flies* the boys are rescued. They will survive their own savagery, at least for the time being. The end of *Damselfly* is less clear, for Mel and Sam leave the island while their classmates remain. What do you predict will happen to each of these groups (the boys from Golding’s novel, Mel and Sam on their raft, and the kids who stay on the island in *Damselfly*)? In your opinion which group stands the best chance of long-term survival? What about long-term peace?

9

Do you think the gender of the characters in the novels affects the way they approach leadership, communication, and conflict? Explain why or why not.

10

The teens in *Damselfly* are diverse in terms of race, class, gender, and upbringing, while the boys in *Lord of the Flies* seem to share a fairly homogenous background. Do you think diversity—or a lack thereof—makes a difference in terms of how the characters in each book perceive and treat one another?

11

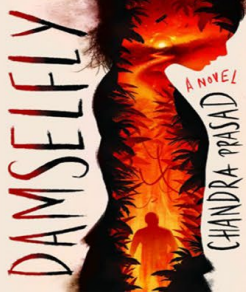
Isolation from society is central to the storylines of both novels. But in *Damselfly*, the garbage that washes ashore on the beach is a constant reminder of human influence and destruction. Do you think true isolation is still possible in the 21st century? Why or why not?

12

Compare the theme of nature in *Lord of the Flies* and *Damselfly*. Which characters in each book try to subjugate nature? Which are subservient to it? Which try to live in peace with their natural surroundings?

13

*Lord of the Flies* is often interpreted as one long allegorical tale. Do you think *Damselfly* is an allegory too? Why or why not?



## EXPLORING DAMSELFLY AND LORD OF THE FLIES AS LINKED TEXTS (CONTINUED)

14

Compare the concept of democracy in the two books. In both cases, democracy eventually disintegrates and autocrats attempt to seize control. Do you think democracy is always unsustainable in the absence of rules, law, and oversight?

Explain your reasoning.

15

Piggy and Anne Marie are similar in that both are vulnerable and bullied within their respective peer groups. What characteristics of these individuals make them easy targets? Do you think either Piggy or Anne Marie would be better protected in regular society? Why?

16

Consider the titles of the two novels. How are they linked? Why do you think Prasad chose the title *Damselfly*?