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Candidate session number

Candidate name

School name

Examination session (May or November)

May

Year

2015

Diploma Programme subject in which this extended essay is registered:

English A

(For an extended essay in the area of languages, state the language and whether it is group 1 or group 2.)

Title of the extended essay:

How do the works of Robert Louis Stevenson and William Golding portray human nature when restraints are removed?

Candidate's declaration

This declaration must be signed by the candidate; otherwise a mark of zero will be issued.

The extended essay I am submitting is my own work (apart from guidance allowed by the International Baccalaureate).

I have acknowledged each use of the words, graphics or ideas of another person, whether written, oral or visual.

I am aware that the word limit for all extended essays is 4000 words and that examiners are not required to read beyond this limit.

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Date: Feb 20, 2015

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Please comment, as appropriate, on the candidate's performance, the context in which the candidate undertook the research for the extended essay, any difficulties encountered and how these were overcome (see page 13 of the extended essay guide). The concluding interview (viva voce) may provide useful information. These comments can help the examiner award a level for criterion K (holistic judgment). Do not comment on any adverse personal circumstances that may have affected the candidate. If the amount of time spent with the candidate was zero, you must explain this, in particular how it was then possible to authenticate the essay as the candidate's own work. You may attach an additional sheet if there is insufficient space here.

I discussed with the candidate the difficulties with words like innate, especially as it relates to human failure and limitations. The works however address this issue and so she sought to be careful in how she represented the human race.

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I spent hours with the candidate discussing the progress of the extended essay.

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Assessment form (for examiner use only)

Candidate session number

Achievement level

Criteria	Examiner 1	maximum	Examiner 2	maximum	Examiner 3
A research question	2	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
B introduction	2	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
C investigation	3	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
D knowledge and understanding	3	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
E reasoned argument	3	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
F analysis and evaluation	3	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
G use of subject language	4	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
H conclusion	1	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
I formal presentation	2	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
J abstract	2	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
K holistic judgment	2	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
Total out of 36	27		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>

Name of examiner 1:
(CAPITAL letters)

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Name of examiner 2: _____
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Examiner number: _____

Name of examiner 3: _____
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Examiner number: _____

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How do the works of Robert Louis Stevenson and William Golding
portray human nature when restraints are removed?

January, 2015

Word Count: 3,995 ✓

International Baccalaureate

Subject: English A1 HL

Category 1

Abstract

In the classic novels, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *Lord of the Flies*, the characters are restrained by the societal rules of their civilization which they have internalized. As the storyline in these two novels progresses, these restraints are gradually removed. This essay will investigate and answer the question: **How do the works of Robert Louis Stevenson and William Golding portray human nature when restraints are removed?** In this examination, both internal and external restraints will be considered. In addition, I will discuss how the animalistic nature of humans is revealed as the characters fight to throw off these restraints and give in to their barbaric desires. Stevenson's characters, Jekyll and Hyde, will be compared with the young boys in Golding's work as they both represent humanity's struggle between restraint and malice. Furthermore, the embracement of barbarism after the murder of human life will be discussed and analyzed. Through consulting expert opinions of scholars, I conclude that even after externally imposed restraints are removed, internal restraints continue to limit the naturally savage desires of the characters. The characters find themselves in conflict with this internal restraint as they long to give in to their innate malicious tendencies. However, after what seems to be a full surrender to barbarism initiated by the taking of human life, there remains a chance for redemption to save themselves from being ultimately consumed by savagery. These are the insights that Robert Louis Stevenson and William Golding show when restraints are removed.

Word Count: 248

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Introduction

Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is a story that depicts the human struggle between their good and evil nature. It centers on a character who finds himself struggling in a dualistic life with two equipotent but opposite elements existing simultaneously within him. There is the good, warm hearted Jekyll, and the malignant Hyde. Initially, Jekyll is in control while the malicious Hyde is concealed. However, the desire to free himself from the duplicity of life, drives him to concoct a potion that separates the two facets and allows him to transform from Jekyll to Hyde and vice versa. As the novel progresses it becomes clear that Jekyll and Hyde cannot coexist – a choice must be made between the two. Stevenson demonstrates mankind's moral weakness as Jekyll gives in to the desires of his villainous side and the malicious Hyde becomes the dominant personality. This gradual transition to savagery when restraints are removed is also mirrored in William Golding's, *Lord of the Flies*. In the novel, a group of English schoolboys are stranded on a plentiful and luscious island, with neither adults nor the means for escape. Conflict arises between the boys as they find themselves with contrasting views of how to survive and run the island. Some of the boys try to run the island like adults, with laws and meetings while others want to rule with malice and brutality, eventually throwing off all semblance of civilization and authority. We can see Golding's perspective of human behaviour when there are no controls, as little by little, all but three of the boys give in to the temptations of violence and become like wild animals. My research question is as follows: How do the works of Robert Louis Stevenson and William Golding portray human nature when restraints are removed? I will explore this question by analyzing the restraints that are imposed on the characters in these works, how the restraints are removed, and the evolution of the characters' behaviour. Thus, Robert Louis Stevenson and William Golding demonstrate that humans naturally gravitate towards savagery and ultimately end up destroying each other when restraints are removed.

a conclusion offered here ...

A clear summary of plots and themes

Restraints

In *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, the main character has a natural tendency towards savagery and hostility. However, there are restraints which hold him back from embracing this innate brutality. Stevenson identifies these restraints as both externally and internally imposed. The externally imposed restraint is the pressure from society to be

“good” and the fear of the consequences of not behaving as society expects. In the story, Jekyll has a kind and friendly personality, he behaves how society dictates, upholding a reputation of respectability. In his account of events, he describes the consequences imposed by society for wrongdoings as “the restrictions of natural life (147).” This definition is further supported by Ferrer-Medina who believes civilization lends man “the constraints necessary for him to live a...peaceful life; it stands for morality” (85). It is when these restrictions no longer inhibit Jekyll that a new, savage persona appears called Hyde, “Jekyll’s physical *devil* within, who lacks restraint from the normal moral checks and balances” (Goh, 174). Jekyll, longing to be free of his inner-conflict between good and evil, concocted a potion which severed the ties that trap the two entities in one body. He then had the freedom to switch between Jekyll and Hyde at will. When he is in the persona of Hyde, the consequences enforced by society no longer have a hold upon him. To society, Hyde did not “exist”. As long as the dualistic relationship between the two personas remained concealed, Hyde was free to commit the most horrendous of crimes without fear of consequence. He could simply “swallow the draught...and whatever he had done, Edward Hyde would pass away like the stain of breath upon a mirror” (135). Individuals who grow up with society imposed restraints also build up internal values that limit their actions even if there are no externally imposed consequences. The laws and teachings of our society tells us that it is right and moral to be obedient and peaceful, and actions contrary to those traits are punished. However, these notions of how humans should behave are internalized so that even when the external restraints are no longer being imposed upon us, we still choose to restrain our savage desires. In short, this internal restraint has been conditioned in us by the external society. We restrain ourselves and think we should act the way society dictates rather than how we secretly desire to behave. In Stevenson’s work, this internal restraint is a main contributor to the conflict within the main character. Even when Hyde is free from facing the consequences for his unlawful actions, his vile persona is not fully embraced, rather it is restrained by Jekyll, who behaves as society expects of him. Jekyll says, “Yes, I preferred the elderly and discontented doctor, surrounded by friends and cherishing honest hopes, and bade a resolute farewell to the liberty, the comparative youth ...and secret pleasures that I enjoyed in the disguise of Hyde” (143). This statement shows his reluctance to give in to his desire despite his growing attraction to Hyde’s persona. It is his internal controls

paraphrase

holding him back. In *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Stevenson demonstrates that when externally imposed restraints no longer contain the character's savage tendencies, there exists a second, internal restraint which continues to limit his actions.

Much like in Stevenson's work, there are similar externally and internally imposed restraints on the boys in *Lord of the Flies*. The boys that arrive on the island are English boys from a boarding school. Golding uses the development of the boys' attire to symbolize the throwing off of the externally enforced restraint of societal rules. When the boys gather for the first time, called by the blowing of a conch, Golding describes them as wearing school uniform. The choirboys "from throat to ankle, were hidden by black cloaks which bore a long silver cross on the left breast and each neck was finished off with a hambone frill" (15). From the way the boys are dressed, we see that they come from a very orderly, and civilized society where they are bound by externally enforced rules. However, as put by Ferrer-Medina, "...civilization, seen as ordered and purposeful with all its rules and mandatory repressions, is nothing but a prison for our truest and *original* necessities and desires" (84). Golding's choice of the word "hidden" is noteworthy; the rules of their society force them to appear good and proper, but like their neat uniforms, it simply hides and restrains what is really on the inside. In the absence of societal rules, the boys gravitate towards savagery. Upon finding themselves on the island without grownups, they begin to take some of their clothes off, symbolizing the shedding of externally enforced societal restraints. After these restraints have been thrown off, the teachings of civilization internalized within the characters continue to inhibit them from fully embracing their barbaric tendencies. Stranded on an island without grownups, the boys are no longer bound by the rules of the civilization. However, it is clear that the morals they were taught have been ingrained in them, and they attempt to establish rules on the island that mimic the way their society would deem proper. They "vote for a chief" (18) and assert Ralph as the leader. They make rules and decisions through a kind of *democracy* where everyone has a chance to speak as long as they are holding the conch. They try to replicate the order and structure that they had before being stranded on the island. This effort to be civilized shows internal restraint exists even when there is clearly no externally enforced rules or authority. At the beginning of the story, Maurice, one of the young boys, throws sand into another boy's eye. The narrator goes on to say "in his other life Maurice had received chastisement for filling a younger eye with sand. Now,

though there was no parent to let fall a heavy hand, Maurice still felt the unease of wrong-doing" (63). Even though the external threat of a parent's discipline no longer exists, the internal restraint of feeling something is wrong still weighs on Maurice. Golding shows that our society is maintained by a combination of external and internal restraints. When these restraints are removed, people gravitate towards savagery.

Becoming somewhat repetitive . . .

Struggle for Control

After the externally enforced restraints are removed from the characters in these two novels, wickedness and savagery develops in them. When Jekyll transforms to Hyde in Stevenson's work and when the boys are left without adult supervision in Golding's novel, their only inhibition from fully embracing savagery, is their internal restraint. A conflict arises as the characters are torn between their growing desires to behave wickedly and their discomfort with acting against their society conditioned belief to do good. They eventually break free of the internal restraint and fully give in to their barbaric nature. In Stevenson's work, the struggle between internal restraint and savagery shows that man finds a greater appeal in brutality than in kindness and civility, and that it is our nature to gravitate towards savagery. The internally imposed restraint in the story is depicted by Jekyll, while Hyde represents our natural desires for savagery. Jekyll outwardly behaves respectable and kind as society expects. But internally, he restrains the dark, savage desires of Hyde. As the main character experiences both the lives of Jekyll and Hyde, he describes the rush and excitement of his life as Hyde, who is "younger, lighter, happier in body" (129) in contrast to his experience as the elderly Jekyll who lives a decent yet discontenting life. This attraction to the exciting but savage over the mundane but respectable demonstrates that man has a natural gravitation towards his darker nature. During his first experience as Hyde, the main character states that "It seemed natural, and human" (131). Stevenson uses this quotation to show us that the personality of Hyde is much more innate to man than the personality of Jekyll. Jekyll is simply the *overlay* that our internal restraint uses to cover and control our malicious nature. Moreover, life as Hyde is much easier than the life of Jekyll. Jekyll is tormented by the knowledge of wicked deeds performed by his Hyde persona, and he constantly struggles with the temptation to give in to his innately violent desires. However, Hyde does not share this empathy for other people, and so is free from all guilt and remorse. He does not miss the restraints, much less desire to put them back on, for the very existence of Hyde is savagery without

the restraint of Jekyll. Jekyll writes, "For while Jekyll would suffer in the fires of abstinence, Hyde would be not even be conscious of all that he had lost" (143). Stevenson shows that savagery comes naturally to humans and is more appealing than the "good" life society expects. Restraining ones savage desires is "not a *natural* state of human beings but is artificially imposed" (Ferrer-Medina, 84). This struggle to throw off the ties of internal restraint is further developed in the character's subconscious desires. Even though he consciously chooses restraint, subconsciously he is drawn towards savagery. Lausten and Diken maintain that "The evil exists as a virtual entity, as the social unconscious" (443). Jekyll finds himself in a situation where he must choose between permanently being Jekyll or Hyde. He makes the choice to be the kind elderly Jekyll and do away with the exciting, malicious Hyde. However, he "made this choice perhaps with some unconscious reservation" and "neither gave up the house in Soho, nor destroyed the clothes of Edward Hyde" (143). This quotation demonstrates the conflict within him. The internally imposed restraint encourages him to behave as society instructs and he is convinced that this is the way he should act. However, subconsciously, he is drawn towards the exhilarating, cruel behaviour of Hyde and longs to give in to his secret pleasures. Later in the story we find even though Jekyll was chosen, the main character was inevitably drawn back to becoming Hyde. The decision to restrain hostility when he subconsciously craved malice, is an example of his internal restraint at work struggling against his natural desires.

In a parallel course, after the external restraint has been removed in Golding's *Work*, there is a struggle between the boys' desire to slide into savagery and the internal restraint that inhibits them. In this struggle, the characters find a greater allure to wild behaviour and hunting rather than the polite mannerisms taught to them by their proper upbringing. Despite some of their conscious efforts to restrain themselves, they ultimately descend towards barbarism. Near the beginning of the novel, the boys hunt and corner a pig. When it comes down to the kill, Jack raises his knife, and "there came a pause, a hiatus...only long enough for them to understand what an enormity the downward stroke would be" (28). In that pause, the pig wriggles free and escapes. This pause before the kill, shows the internal restraint at work in the boys. Although they crave the kill, something inside them still holds them back from unleashing their savagery. As the story continues we begin to see this restraint grow weaker as the bloodlust grows stronger. Further, Ralph and Jack have a heated conversation about the importance of shelters versus the

clumsy

importance of hunting. This argument symbolizes the societal values of building and protecting (vs) the savage nature to kill and destroy. As tensions rise, we can see the development of an animalistic nature in Jack. While Ralph emphasizes the need for help on the shelters rather than running around like children trying to hunt pigs, Jack "tried to convey the compulsion to track down and kill that was swallowing him up" (53). There is obviously an allure to violence and savagery that draws Jack in. It is more fun to play hunter than to build huts in the scorching hot sun. Buftin reflects upon this behaviour saying, "the purpose of Lord of the Flies is to show that boys are not so innocently normal as, when restricted by authority, they appear to be" (51). As the novel progresses, even though Ralph is leader, two groups begin to form amongst the boys, both with opposing views of how they should behave. The first group is chiefly headed by Jack and his hunters, who give in more to their bloodthirsty desires and cravings to hunt. The second group is Ralph, Piggy and Simon, who like Jekyll, try to be responsible and proper. We see a struggle between savagery and restraint as Ralph, Piggy and Simon spend much of their time trying to maintain order and work towards rescue by building a signal fire.

Meanwhile, Jack and his hunters enjoy themselves, hunting for pigs, painting their faces and making spears; Jack's group has no desire to be rescued. The rest of the boys on the island are in the middle, struggling between following Ralph and following Jack.

Eventually, these two groups physically split up and Jack takes his choir boys with him to create their own fort separate from the other boys. Jack and his choirboys hunt and brutally kill pigs so they have meat, unlike the other boys who are unwilling to make a kill. Jack's group had "piles of meat...and fruit, and coco-nut shells full of drink" (164), while Simon and Piggy are miserable, "I wish we could go home" (163), and tortured with the desire for food and temptation to join the hunters. Much like Stevenson's work, the characters living a law-abiding, courteous, yet mundane life will be tormented with the temptation of this exciting other life that offers the freedom to satisfy all the base desires of their hearts with the absence of consequence and obligation. This confliction between restraint and savagery is further amplified in the conscious and subconscious thoughts of the boys. When the tension between Jack and Ralph erupts, Jack declares that Ralph is a coward and calls the boys to vote Ralph out of his position as chief. The rest of the boys who had been indecisive for the majority of the story, are forced to make a choice between the life Jack offers and the one represented by Ralph's leadership. Similar to Stevenson's

work where Jekyll's choices are good, the boys choose Ralph who is symbolic of civility and restraint. Jack walks off alone as no one musters the courage to step forward and join him. After the meeting some of the boys secretly leave to join Jack. Like Jekyll, who left the ability to return to the Hyde persona open, the option to follow Jack was also left open to the boys. The temptation of savagery is strong and we can see even amongst the boys faithful to Ralph and Piggy, there is a subconsciously desire to go with Jack. Miyoshi describes these savage desires as an "animal that only waits for the moment of release" (473). When Jack invites the boys of Ralph's group to a feast with him and his group, Ralph and all the boys standing with him, decide to go. They give various excuses for going like "just for some meat" (168), "to make sure nothing happens" (163). As the boys eat and participate in the hunting chants with Jack and his tribe, their internal restraint breaks down and their subconscious desires for savagery begin to overwhelm them so that they eventually join Jack. Golding develops the struggle between internal restraint and savagery through the way his characters are gradually drawn towards malice. Despite the boys' conscious decisions to restrain their violent desires, they subconsciously, innately gravitate towards savagery.

Embracement of Savagery

In *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, the murder of human life is the trigger that removes man's internal restraint and allows his savage side to become dominant. Although there is some semblance of internal restraint that remains after the murder of human life, the restraint is mostly powerless to inhibit the character's savagery. The inner restraint surfaces later in the narrative but it has to take drastic action to prevent the barbaric side from once and for all, consuming the characters. Jekyll finds himself struggling to hold on to his moral self. The more that Jekyll gives in to the temptation to drink the draught and become Hyde, the weaker the internal restraint becomes. At one point, Jekyll is transformed into Hyde simply after he falls asleep, without the aid of the draught. This conflict comes to a head when Hyde beats Danvers Carew to death, murdering him. Jekyll accounts the incident saying "I had voluntarily stripped myself of all those balancing instincts by which even the worst of us continues to walk" (145). By killing Carew, he had finally gratified his "lust of evil" (145). After this incident, Hyde quickly uses the draught to transform into Jekyll in order to avoid societal consequences. Even though he retains the form of Jekyll, it is Hyde who is in control. Jekyll no longer

exemplifies the steadfast restraint that he once did, he forms a condescension towards his evil and has vainglorious thoughts comparing himself to others. This "eventually destroys the balance of (his) soul" (149). His dualistic nature is no longer equipotent, with Hyde far stronger than the powerless Jekyll. Even his transformation to Hyde is no longer under Jekyll's control. Every time he slept or dozed off, he would awaken as Hyde. Throughout the rest of the story, the savage side works to completely eliminate all trace of restraint. As Hyde becomes more powerful, Jekyll becomes more weary and sick. Stevenson allows Jekyll to linger to the end of the story but shows that it was only a matter of time before he would have been eliminated completely; consumed by the Hyde persona. However, Stevenson leaves one final chance for redemption. There is a brief moment where Jekyll temporarily regains control. He takes advantage of this moment to swallow a poisonous solution thus committing suicide which he believes is the only way to be rid of Hyde. Thus, Lausten and Diken declare that "If evil is in us then an ethical act must be an act of self-destruction, an act that undermines what makes us a we" (446). Jekyll was convinced that had he not taken this one chance to rid himself of Hyde, the persona of Jekyll would have been forever banished, slowly fading away until he was no more, and only Hyde would remain. Stevenson shows how the murder of human life tips the balance in favour of our savage side and renders the internal restraint powerless. After this event, the savage side works to completely eliminate the last of the powerless restraint. It is in this period of time that there is a small chance for redemption. If it is not taken, restraints will be vanquished and savagery will consume the individual.

With the murder of human life, the characters in *Lord of the Flies* also experience the same freedom to fall into barbarism, as the internal restraint is rendered powerless. The slow deterioration of restraint is shown in the boys' increasingly frequent talk about hunting. When Jack invites the boys to a feast, they begin a bloodthirsty chant of "Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!" (169). Simon becomes the victim that finally releases the boys' savagery when he comes stumbling out of the woods. He is mistaken for a rumored beast that lives on the island, and is killed in a horrifying manner as the boys "screamed, struck, bit and tore" (169) him to death. Buftin concludes that Simon "becomes in his death...the victim of the wanton evil and savagery unleashed in man" (66). Later, the boys in Jack's group kill Piggy as well, dropping a large boulder on his head. Golding begins to refer to the boys as savages and Jack as their chief, in order to show their

transition to savages, as there is no longer anything to restrain them. Golding also uses language like “snarling” and “crouching” to describe the boys and reinforce the idea that they had devolved into animals (221). The murder of Simon and subsequently Piggy is the trigger that removes the rest of Ralph’s authority and restraint over the boys. The boys, now hunters, exhibit the behaviour of pure savages as they paint their faces and sharpen double edged spears (meant for sticking Ralph’s head on one end, and sticking the other end into the ground). Ralph remains the only boy who desperately clings to civility and order, but he is powerless. Ralph is mercilessly hunted by Jack and the rest of the boys across the island in their attempt to remove all traces of restraint from their world. They hunt for him, searching and setting fire to the island. It would only be a matter of time before they found and killed him, dissolving all remains of morality. However, much like in Stevenson’s work, Golding introduces redemption right before the characters stamp out the last traces of restraint. Before Ralph can be caught and killed, a navy officer, seeing the smoke from the fire, lands on the island and brings back external restraint to the island and the boys. At the re-introduction of authority, the boys instantly lose their savagery, return back to being school boys, and are saved from their barbarism. Had the boys caught and killed Ralph, there would have been nothing left to save.

Conclusion

In conclusion, in both of Stevenson and Golding’s works, humans are portrayed with a natural desire towards savagery. With the existence of societal consequences that are internalized, this desire is limited. But, should this restraint be weakened or removed, then people gravitate towards savagery. Eventually, if a major boundary is crossed such as the taking of human life, then characters are consumed by their savage nature.

Word Count: 3,995

The essay tends to be rather repetitive and circular in terms of argument; the candidate offers a fair discussion, but there was more to be said.

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