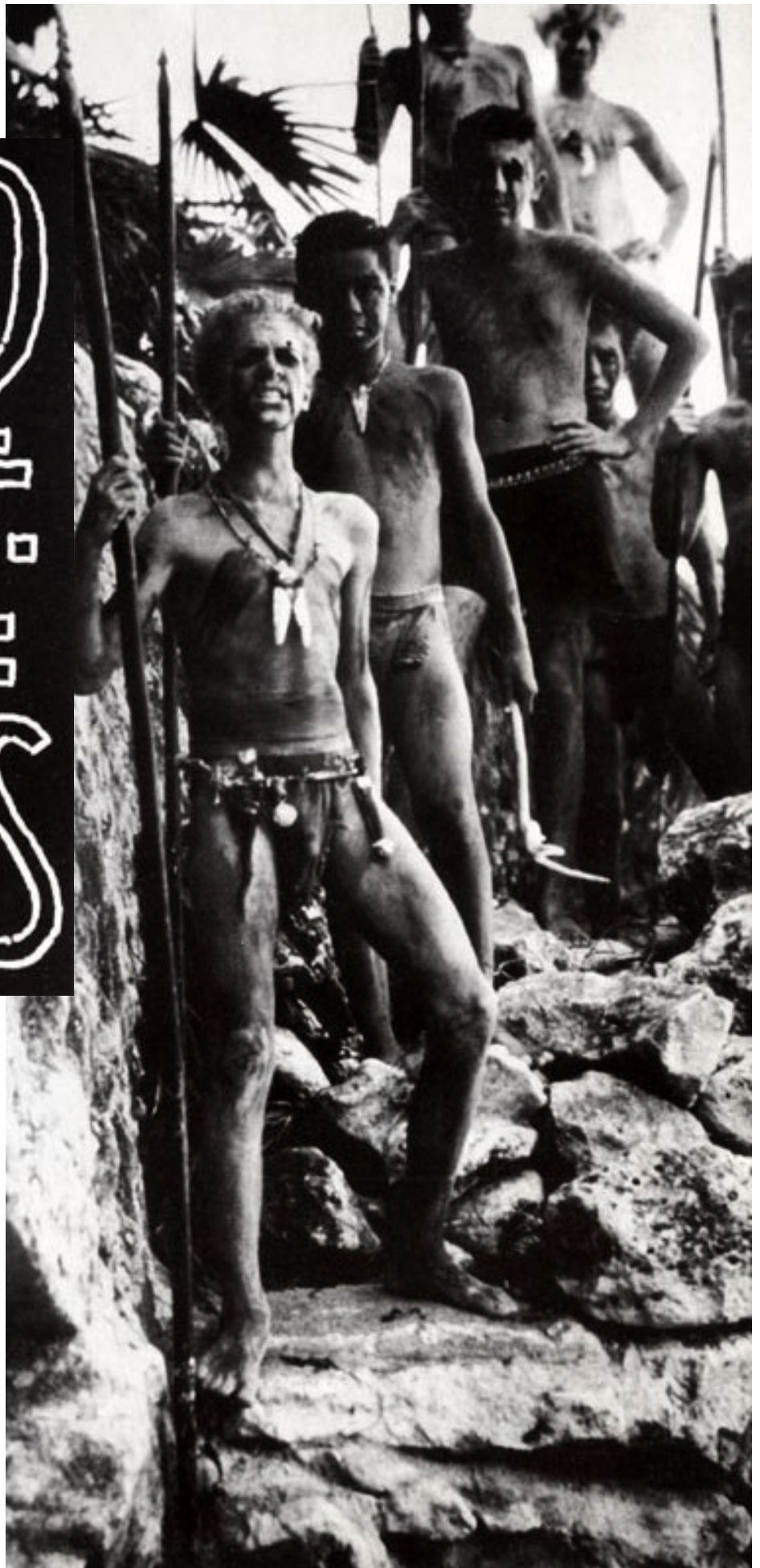


LORD OF THE FLIES



FILMS AND BOOKS

Reading a book is very different to watching a film. The way that we understand both is also different. We firstly need to think of the ways in which films and books tell their stories. In the chart below, try to fill in any ideas that you have about the ways in which each medium tells a story, how each creates meaning for a viewer/reader. Think of such things as character, point of view, descriptions. What can one medium do that the other cannot? (under novel, don't just write down "words" for how it tells a story. Think of the different ways that words are used, for example speech.)

FILM

BOOK

ADAPTATIONS

Adapting a book into a film seems to be very popular with film makers. Can you think of any books that have recently been adapted for the screen? What do you think the attraction is for film makers in doing an adaptation? You should think about both the technical problems and also the problems with an audience.

Why do you think that LORD OF THE FLIES was chosen to be adapted for the screen? What qualities does the book have that might make it an interesting film?

ACTIVITY

Imagine that you are the scriptwriter of the film and you are trying to interest a production company in financing your filmed version of LOAD OF THE FLIES. Write a letter to them explaining why you think that they should fund your film. You will need to give them details of the story, what it's about, who are the main characters and say why you think this story will interest audiences.

DIFFERENCES

As you will already have seen from your work on how different media tell stories, it is impossible for a film to tell a story in exactly the same way as a book (and vice versa). There will be additions and omissions. This does not necessarily mean that one is better than another, it means they are different.

The major difference that you will have noticed is that the boys no longer come from British public schools but instead come from an American military academy. This is obviously a very major change.

Why do you think that this has taken place? Does it have any advantages or disadvantages? Do you think that someone who has read the book would react differently to this change compared to someone who has not?

In order to explore this further, let us look at some of the other differences.

1 Were any of the characters altered?

2 Are they the most central characters or others?

3 On the whole, in what way have they changed?

4 Did the changes in characterisation affect your response to the film as a whole?

5 Did the changes help clarify certain situations for you?

6 Do you think that the changes occurred because of the inevitable condensing of the novel necessary in making a film of ninety minutes?

Fill in the chart below:

SEQUENCE WHICH APPEARED IN BOOK BUT NOT IN FILM	SEQUENCE WHICH APPEARED IN FILM BUT NOT IN BOOK

Having filled in the chart try answering the following questions.

1 What has changed the most?

2 Did the changes in the plot affect your response to the film as a whole?

3 Did the changes clarify certain situations for you?

4 Did the changes in the film in any way alter the way that you saw the message" of the book? Did they harden or soften the impact?

WATCHING AND READING

Because of the way in which we are viewing a film the first live minutes of any film are important: the opening sequences have:

1 To set up a situation, introduce the elements of the story that will get your attention, make you ask what will happen next.

2 To introduce the characters.

This is where film differs very much from literature. Film operates almost in a shorthand way. In a very brief amount of time a character has to be presented in a way that we can recognise almost immediately. Although we cannot instantly identify with characters in the normal way, the same principles apply. As each of the characters appears we are given visual impressions - the way they dress, mannerisms, reactions to situations and other characters - which guide us. Look now at the chart on the following page.

Fill in this chart describing the visual information given about each character as they first appear on screen. Concentrate on mannerisms, dress, accent (if any) and reactions to whatever is going on around them. Then read the opening chapter of the novel. How are the characters introduced to us there? What words, either in descriptions by the author or by the characters themselves, help to give us an idea of the characters of Ralph, Piggy and Jack?

