# Human Nature Project

"The Lottery" and *Lord of the Flies* deal a great deal with human nature, and whether we're all naturally "savage." Over the next few weeks we'll discuss a great deal about what the authors believe, and whether we ourselves believe humans are naturally good or "bad."

In this project, your group's job is to create a "visual essay" examining and arguing both sides of the question: Are humans "good" or "evil"? Make a collage of "evidence" that shows that "humans are savage" and "evidence" that shows "humans are good." It should be a collage of words, headlines, whole articles and pictures. Most of you will probably do two halves: one half "good" and the other "bad," but you don't need to do it that way. Be creative.

Your goal is two-fold:
1) The "good" side of your collage should start to convince the viewer that most people are naturally benevolent and kind-hearted—often putting others over themselves.
2) The "bad" side of your collage should start to convince the viewer that most people are naturally selfish and malicious—putting others in harm's way to satisfy themselves/their quest for power.

Showing *only* the extremes of each won't convince the viewer. Make sure you have "everyday evidence," the kind that proves to us that on a daily level, people are naturally selfish or benevolent.

It's going to be worth at least 15-20% of your grade for the trimester, so please make sure you work hard on it! As always, you will receive a group grade, and *you* will apportion those points among yourselves.

| Potential Search Ideas for "Good" | Potential Search Ideas for "Bad" |
|---|---|
| • Nobel Peace Prize Winners<br>• Students who start organizations that help people (penny drives, other fundraisers, etc.)<br>• Small groups and organizations that affect change (for example, a group of women in the Phillipines recently banded together to withhold sex from their husbands until they stopped fighting; Doctors without Borders is another good one)<br>• Individuals—doctors, lawyers, teachers, protesters, police officers, firefighters, and many others—who have risked their lives to help and save people (for example, Air Florida Flight 90) | • Stories of individual guards abusing prisoners during the Holocaust, Khmer Rouge genocide (in Cambodia; 3 million killed), and in Rwanda (in Rwanda, sometimes pastors turned against congregations, husbands against wives)<br>• Stories of people stealing from others (look up ponzi schemes and fraud); not just billions of dollars—find ones where, for example, one person steals from a dozen elderly people<br>• Corrupt politicians, pastors and other leaders<br>• Specific acts of racism, homophobia, and sexism (for example, Emmett Till, Matthew Shepherd, and acid attacks in Afghanistan) |

**It will be graded on:**
• Effort/Quality: Does it look like you worked hard on it and were thoughtful about it, or does it look like you just threw together random pictures?
• Clarity/Effectiveness: Will the viewer *understand* the poster? In other words, while your pictures and words will obviously mean different things to different people, overall will the average viewer be "convinced" by your visual argument?
• Creativity: Have you demonstrated creativity in the format of your poster?