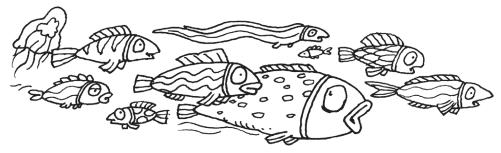# Down to the Bones: Fishbone Map

Skills Objectives

Sort out relationships in complex ideas or events.
Recognize cause and effect.
Organize information in a hierarchy.

Students can use a **Fishbone Map** both during and after reading. This kind of graphic organizer allows them to structure ideas on a topic and make multifaceted information more manageable. It provides readers with a framework for recognizing the main idea and supporting details. This kind of map can be used to analyze a complex event, but it is flexible and can be adapted to suit the level of complexity of any text students are reading.

1. Give students a copy of the **Down to the Bones reproducible (page 24)**. Point out how the lines on the map are shaped like fish bones. Explain that this kind of graphic organizer can help them break down events in a story to find main ideas and supporting details.

2. Demonstrate how to fill out the map using the plot from a familiar book such as *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding. Discuss each character and what part he plays in the story. Invite students to share their ideas as well.

> **Sample Character List: *Lord of the Flies***
> **Ralph:** Hunted by the boys; narrowly escapes being killed
> **Piggy:** Smart but vulnerable; spectacles used to start fire; his death leaves Ralph alone
> **Sam and Eric:** Twins loyal to Ralph; tribe captures them; won't tell where Ralph is hiding
> **Simon:** Has insight and vision; understands that fear is unfounded; killed by the hunters
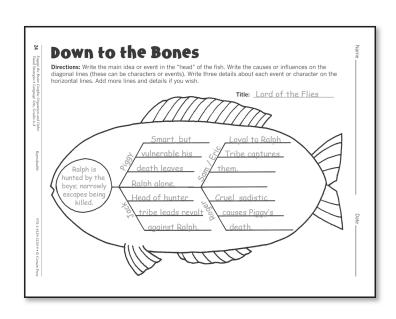> **Jack:** Ralph's rival and leader of the hunters; leads a revolt against Ralph; convinces his followers to destroy Ralph
> **Roger:** Jack's cohort; cruel, sadistic boy; causes Piggy's death
> **Maurice:** Easily led; supports Jack; helps steal Piggy's glasses

3. Explain that in the beginning of the book Ralph is the leader. At the end, he is running for his life from the tribe. At the "head" of the fish, write the main idea: *Ralph is hunted by the boys and narrowly escapes being killed.* Tell students you will be using the main characters to show how this plot change came about.

4. On the board, write the character names and key factors about each boy. Demonstrate how to complete the fishbone map so the most important characters and direct causes are closest to the head of the fish. Write the names of the characters on the diagonal lines.

5. Instruct students to consider each cause or influence for the change of plot and help you fill in two details about each one. Prompt them with *who, where, what, when* and *why* questions. Write character elements that led to the main event on the two horizontal "detail" lines associated with each name.

6. Discuss the finished organizer with students. Ask if they could add any details that would show how each character contributed to the plot of the story. Add more lines and details as needed.

7. Now invite students to use their fishbone map to organize main ideas and details, or story elements, about a book they are reading. Before they begin, make sure they understand that the main idea goes in the head of the fish and supporting details move from the front to the back in order of importance.

8. Display students' work on an ocean-themed bulletin board titled *A Sea of Ideas*. Encourage students to read classmates' fishbone maps to see how they organized ideas about their reading.

Extended Learning

• Invite students to consider how the end of the story might change if any elements changed. For example, in *Lord of the Flies*, what if several adults had also survived? What if the survivors were both girls and boys? All girls?

• Ask how the choices some characters make affect the other characters. Have student pairs perform a dialog to demonstrate this idea.

Down to the Bones

Directions: Write the main idea or event in the "head" of the fish. Write the causes or influences on the diagonal lines (these can be characters or events). Write three details about each event or character on the horizontal lines. Add more lines and details if you wish.

Title: Lord of the Flies

Ralph is hunted by the boys; narrowly escapes being killed.

Piggy — Smart, but vulnerable his death leaves Ralph alone.

Sam / Eric — Loyal to Ralph Tribe captures them.

Jack — Head of hunter tribe leads revolt against Ralph.

Roger — Cruel, sadistic causes Piggy's death.

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Down to the Bones

Directions: Write the main idea or event in the head of the fish. Write the causes or influences on the diagonal lines (these can be characters or events). Write three details about each event or character on the horizontal lines. Add more lines and details if you wish.

Title: _____