Questions on the essay *Thinking as a Hobby* (1961) by William Golding [b. Newquay (Cornwall), England, 1911. Nobel Prize 1983. Author of *Lord of the Flies*].

1. Do you think that most people take thinking seriously? Or are most of us willing to substitute our own feelings and prejudice for “thought”? think of some examples of “good” and “bad” thinking. What was wrong with the “bad” thinking, and what was right about the “good” thinking?
2. Teachers are supposed to be paradigms of good thinking. Yet, in the essay that follows, William Golding provides several examples of teachers in his schooling who were third-rate thinkers. How do the teachers in your own background stack up against your definition of intelligence, or of good thinking?
3. Golding thinks intelligent people have more difficult lives than those who are more average. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
4. Describe the kind of evidence that Golding uses in this essay. Would it appeal to a reader looking for scientific evidence? Why, or why not? To what kind of readers would Golding’s evidence appeal?
5. Summarize the three kinds of thinking defined by Golding. Would you categorise different kinds of thinking in the same way that Golding does? What categories would you add to his list of three? Do you disagree with any of his categories? Why, or why not?
6. Irony exists when authors suggest something other than what they are actually saying. Golding uses irony when he describes the bust of Rodin’s Thinker in his headmaster’s office. In what ways is the description ironic? What does it tell us about the headmaster, and about Golding’s attitude toward the headmaster? Can you find other examples of irony in this essay? Would you agree that Golding’s overall attitude is ironic?
7. Tone is a term used to describe the way in which authors address readers. Describe Golding’s tone in this essay. Is he friendly, pushy, distant? What evidence from the essay itself would you use to support your description of his tone?