

Lord of the Flies

Chapter 1

1. As you read the first page, what images- sights, sounds, smells- come to mind? What questions come to mind?
2. What can you tell about the reason the boys were on the plane? Why did they crash?
3. What is the “scar” and what caused it?
4. What happened to the adults? How do the boys feel at first about being alone without any adults around?
5. What are your impressions of Ralph and Piggy? How do they get along?
6. How do Ralph and Piggy solve the problem of organizing the survivors? How else could they have summoned the others? How many are there and who are they?
7. Who becomes the leader? How? Who else wanted to be chief? Do you see evidence that the chosen leader has leadership qualities? Do you think Piggy would make a better leader?
8. Why is Piggy angry with Ralph? Is Piggy being oversensitive? How does Ralph respond to Piggy’s anger? What does this show you about Ralph?
9. What is the contrast between Jack’s and Simon’s responses to the bushes around them? What does this show you about the differences in their personalities?
10. Why doesn’t Jack spear the piglet? How does he feel about not doing so?

Prediction: Jack says next time he will kill a pig. Will there be a next time? What are the boys’ chances of being rescued? How long do you think it will be?

Chapter 2

1. Of the meeting held after the expedition, the author says, “There were differences between this meeting and the one held in the morning”. List the differences.
2. How does Ralph boost the boys’ morale?
3. How does Piggy help Ralph in his job as leader?
4. What are some things Ralph begins to discover about himself- both good and bad? Have you ever had an experience of observing yourself acting in way that surprised you?
5. Why does the boy with the birthmark want to speak?
6. Why do the boys start a fire? Could this purpose have been served in another way? Do you think this is the problem that should be attacked first?
7. What is the “grotesque dead thing” that the boys inched up the rock? How does that description make you feel about what they are doing?
8. Why do the boys grab Piggy’s glasses? Do you think he would have handed them over voluntarily?
9. What happens to the fire? Is it anyone’s fault? Are their reactions appropriate?
10. What happens to the boy with the birthmark?

Prediction: Will the boy with the birthmark turn up? Who do you think will build the huts on the beach?

Chapter 3

1. How can you tell that time has passed between Chapters 2 and 3? How much time do you think has passed?
2. What is Jack's new "compulsion"? How do you explain it? Is it like any compulsion you have ever had?
3. How does Ralph feel about Jack's compulsion?
4. Who is helping Ralph build the shelters? What is Jack's opinion of Ralph's helper?
5. What are some of the different words Ralph and Jack use to describe how crazy the littluns are to be afraid of a "beastie"? Why do you think they use these words for "crazy" ?
6. Golding says, in comparing Jack and Ralph, "they walked along, two continents of experience and feeling, unable to communicate". How are the boys like continents?
7. List the images you recall from the description of the jungle. How does that description make it feel? Is the jungle a threatening or a beautiful place?
8. How does Simon get along with the littluns?
9. Where does Simon go to be alone? Would you want to be alone in the jungle if you were stranded on this island?

Prediction: Will Ralph and Jack be able to overcome their differences? Will Simon continue to be such a loner? What does the title of the next chapter suggest? Who are the ones with the painted faces?

Chapter 4

1. What do the littluns do all day? How old are they? Do you think a typical group of 11-12-year-old schoolboys today, in this situation, would take more care of the younger ones than the boys in this story do?
2. How do Jack and his tribe kill the pig?
3. Is killing the pig essential to the survival of the group? What was neglected while Jack and his hunters were out killing the pig?
4. Why do the boys enjoy retelling the story of killing the pig? Do you think their feelings are shared by most people who enjoy hunting and fishing today?
5. How does Ralph react to hearing about the pig hunt? Why? Do you think Ralph is jealous?
6. How are Piggy's glasses broken? Does Jack feel guilty at all?
7. As Simon bends to retrieve the glasses, "passions beat about Simon on the mountaintop with awful wings". What does this image suggest? What is Simon experiencing?
8. Ralph and Piggy are angry with Jack and the hunters for letting the fire go out, yet they join in the feast. Why? Do you think they should? Would you?
9. Why does Jack yell at Simon and throw meat at his feet?
10. Describe the dance that the boys do? What does it remind you of?

Prediction: Why will Ralph call an assembly in the next chapter? Will the fire be going the next time a ship passes?

Chapter 5

1. At first, Ralph was surprised by how clearly he was able to speak and think. How is that changing? What do you think is the reason?
2. Explain the statement, "...every path was an improvisation and a considerable part of one's life was spent watching one's feet." How does Ralph feel about this kind of life?
3. Why did Ralph call the assembly?
4. What does "taken short" mean?
5. Why do you think things are breaking up?
6. Why does Ralph not want to talk about fear at the assembly? Who doesn't talk about it? Why? Do you think it would be better if Ralph talked about more positive things? Do you find that it helps to talk about your own fears, or not?
7. How does Ralph explain what the littlun saw when he woke up? Have you ever had this kind of dream-within-a-dream?
8. What happens when little Percival takes the conch? How do the others respond?
9. How does Simon feel about speaking up? What is it about "mankind's essential illness" that he is trying to explain?
10. Why does Piggy encourage Ralph to blow the conch after the meeting breaks up? Why doesn't Ralph want to? Why is it important to Piggy that Ralph remain chief?

Prediction: Do you think Piggy's fear that Jack will hurt him has any basis?

Chapter 6

1. What is the sign which comes down from the world of grownups? Who saw it land?
2. What are Sam and Eric like?
3. What is the beast? How do Sam and Eric describe it? Why is their description so different from how the parachutists actually looks?
4. Jack says that it is time to leave decision-making to those who are most capable. What do you think? Should they try to maintain a democratic system?
5. Does Simon believe Sam and Eric's story? How does he imagine the beast? How do you explain Simon's vision?
6. What do the boys do about the beast from the air? What might they have done?
7. How do Ralph and Jack differ in their actions as they climb the new hill?
8. How do you explain the phrase, "something fluttered there in front of his mind like a "bat's wing" when Ralph yelled at the boys for rolling the rock into the sea?
9. Why didn't Ralph feel pain when he struck the skin of his knuckles?

Prediction: What will happen if the boys find the parachutists' body? Will they recognize it for what it is? How will they react?

Chapter 7

1. What is the physical condition of the boys hiking along the shore? Do they mind? Have you ever been in this sort of condition, perhaps when you went camping? How did it feel?
2. Why are Ralph's fingernails bitten? What childhood comforts did you have?
3. Why do you think Simon says, "You'll get back all right"? What does she seem to be implying about his own future?
4. "Jack came up against some emergency of his craft and soon the procession stopped," What does this mean?
5. What is Ralph's daydream about his childhood? What dramatic purpose does this accomplish?
6. How can you tell that Ralph's life hasn't always been easy?
7. How does Ralph feel when he participates in the hunt?
8. How do you think Robert feels during the ritual?
9. Why does Simon go off alone? What do Ralph, Roger, and Jack find at the top of the hill? Do they realize what it is? Do you think the story would be better if the reader didn't know what it is?

Prediction: Will the older boys realize the "beastie" is really only a man's body? What do you think will happen in the next chapter entitled "Gift from the Darkness".

Chapter 8

1. What choices do the boys have, once they confirm with their own eyes that there is indeed a beast? What does Simon suggest?
2. How can you tell at the next meeting that Jack has grown very antagonistic towards Ralph?
3. Are you surprised by the boys vote? Is Jack surprised? How does he react?
4. Why do you think that after they have voted for Ralph, some boys leave him and go off to Jack's group? What would you have done?
5. Why can't the boys keep a signal fire on the mountain anymore? How do they solve that problem?
6. How does Piggy change after Jack leaves? Why?
7. What adjectives would you use to describe the killing of the sow? Assuming the boys may be on the island a long time, why was killing the sow an especially stupid thing to do?
8. Who is the Lord of the Flies?
9. What does the Lord of the Flies "say" to Simon? Do you think the Sow's head really talked to Simon? How else could this scene be explained?
10. What is the Beast?

Prediction: Will Simon talk to the "Lord of the Flies" again? Will anyone else commune with it? One child has apparently already died on the island. Will anyone else die? Who?

Chapter 9

1. What does Simon discover about the ape-like beast? How does he feel when he makes the discovery?
2. Why do you think Simon released the tangled parachute lines? What does this show you about him?
3. Ralph teases Piggy by squirting water toward his glasses. How would Piggy usually react? How does he react this time? Why this change, do you suppose?
4. Why do Ralph and Piggy go to the pig roast? How is their reason prophetic?
5. When Ralph and Piggy come upon Jack's party, what is it that "breaks the ice"? Do you know anyone who serves this "scapegoat" function? Are there any similarities between the person you know and Piggy?
6. Jack "looked down from behind his paint at Ralph and Piggy"? What does that rather unusual sentence convey that more common phrasing would not?
7. Describe the dance on the sand during the storm. In your mind, what color best describes the dance?
8. Who crawls out of the forest? Why don't the boys recognize him- or do they?
9. How does the mood of the chapter change when the rain ceases?

Prediction: How will the boys who killed Simon act and feel the next day? Will they continue to kill other boys? What is the connection between "The Shell and the Glasses" in the next chapter?

Chapter 10

1. How does Ralph feel the morning after Simon is killed?
2. Eventually, how do Ralph, Piggy, Sam, and Eric deal with their consciences? Did they show typical reactions to guilt? Have you ever heard someone deny that something happened because of a guilty conscience?
3. How does Jack's leadership style differ from Ralph's? Compare them using a t-chart.
4. Why does Jack have Wilfred beaten? How do Robert and Roger feel about it?
5. What sacrificial offering does Jack's group make to the beast? Does this remind you of any other sacrificial offerings you have read or learned about?
6. Ralph tries to motivate Sam and Eric to keep the fire going, but he finds he can't remember what it is that is good about fire. Why not? What do you think is happening to him?
7. What is Ralph's "nightly game of supposing"? Why does he play it? Why does he decide against including wild ponies in his fantasy?
8. Why does Jack's group attack the four boys in their hut?
9. During the attack, it seemed to Ralph that there were "a dozen others". Why? How many were there really? Who was Ralph actually fighting with?

Prediction: How will Ralph and the others make fires now? Will they get Piggy's glasses back? Will the fantasy Ralph creates during his "supposing" ever come true?

Chapter 11

1. The four boys left on the beach after Piggy's glasses have been stolen don't want to be "savages" like Jack and his group. How do they plan to make the distinction?
2. Whose idea is it to go to Jack and demand Piggy's glasses? Are you surprised that he wants to go? Do you think it is a good idea?
3. What is ironic about Piggy's question, "What more can Jack do than he has?"
4. Piggy grabs the conch and talks to Ralph and the other boys about the alternatives they have. What comparisons does he make? Is he correct? Does what he says pertain to the world beyond that of the boys on the tropical island? Could he have added anything else to make his argument more convincing?
5. On the way to Castle Rock, Ralph's band sets off across the beach, which is "swept clean like a blade that has been scoured". What tone is set by this detail of setting?
6. What happens when Ralph's band arrives at Castle Rock? Should Ralph have foreseen this outcome?
7. Describe the details of the tragedy.
8. What do you know about Roger?
9. What is meant by the narrator's statement that "the hangman's horror clung round Roger". Who is most responsible for Piggy's death?
10. How do Jack's "savages" treat Sam and Eric? What is the significance of the fact that Roger "edged past the chief, only just avoiding pushing him with his shoulder"?

Prediction: Will Sam and Eric join Jack's group? What is going to happen to Ralph? Will Roger ever be punished for murdering Piggy?

Chapter 12

1. How does Ralph manage to survive once the hunt for him begins?
2. Why does Ralph crack the skull of the "Lord of the Flies"? Does it make him feel better?
3. Sam and Eric tell Ralph that Jack has sharpened a stick at both ends. What does Jack intend to do?
4. Why does Jack start the whole area on fire? How does this plan back fire on Jack?
5. How do Jack's boys know where to find Ralph?
6. Once Ralph starts running from his pursuers, he knows that he must decide quickly what to do. What are his alternatives? What would you do?
7. What do you think would have happened without adult intervention?
8. What is the "better show" the Navy officer thought British boys should have made? Do you think the boys would have made that "better show" if Jack had not been there?
9. What is ironic about the fact that the adult who saves the band of boys from their own savagery is a naval commander? What is ironic about his comment, "fun and games"?
10. Why does Ralph cry at the end of the book? How do the other boys respond?