

Lesson Name : 31

Lesson Title : Lord of the Flies Chapter 11

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Essential Instruction

Read Chapter 11 of [*Lord of the Flies*](#) (pages 243-262).

Plot and Character

After the raid on the camp, Ralph, Piggy, Sam, and Eric decide to go to Castle Rock to get Piggy's glasses back from Jack. Piggy, who is practically blind without his glasses, has to be led to Castle Rock by the others. When they arrive, Ralph accuses Jack of being a thief, and they fight.

Eventually, Jack and Ralph break apart, and Jack attempts to prove that he can overpower Ralph simply because he has more followers. He orders the other boys to tie up Sam and Eric, taking them hostage. Piggy and Ralph attempt to restore order, but as they speak, Roger leans on the lever under the boulder above their heads. The rock crashes forward and strikes Piggy, killing him and destroying the conch shell.

Triumphant, Jack rejoices over the destruction of the conch and immediately goes after Ralph. Ralph flees and goes into hiding.

The events in this chapter further develop Jack's character. Jack, although he has always been somewhat mean and bad-tempered, has become truly savage. His reaction to Piggy's death reinforces this characterization:

Suddenly Jack bounded out from the tribe and began screaming wildly.

"See? See? That's what you'll get! I meant that! There isn't a tribe for you any more! The conch is gone—"

He ran forward, stooping.

"I'm chief!"

This passage shows how savage Jack has become. He shows no remorse or guilt over Piggy's death; instead, he gloats in his presumed triumph over Ralph.

Symbolism

A **symbol** is an object that represents an abstract concept. In Chapter 11, the conch shell, which has been a symbol of unity, order, and Ralph's leadership throughout the novel, is destroyed. This is one of the most important symbols in the book, and its destruction is significant.

Twice in this chapter, Ralph blows the conch shell, both to remind the others of his role as the chief and to try to reunite the boys as one group. First, he blows it on the beach to call an assembly after Piggy's glasses are stolen. Next, he blows it at Castle Rock to remind the other boys that they used to be civilized and to show them that they can still restore order.

To the last, Piggy continues to follow the rule of speaking when holding the conch shell. In fact, this is what he is trying to do when he is struck by the rock and killed. The rock that kills Piggy also destroys the conch shell.

Jack is the first to recognize the significance of the destruction of the conch shell. From the beginning, the conch shell has been associated with Ralph's leadership, and Jack has always tried to underplay its significance in order to undermine Ralph. When the conch shell is destroyed, it becomes a symbol of the end of Ralph's leadership.

The destruction of the conch shell also symbolizes the end of all order on the island. Immediately, the other boys attack Ralph and violently drive him away from Castle Rock. The reader knows that with this last symbol of order destroyed, all civilization ceases to exist on the island.

External Conflicts

In a narrative, a **conflict** is a struggle between two opposing forces. An **external conflict** is a conflict that occurs when a character struggles with an outside force, such as another character, society, or nature.

Chapter 11 contains several external conflicts, including both verbal and physical fights between characters. Throughout the chapter, Jack and Ralph continue to argue about the fire, and Ralph accuses Jack of being a thief. This argument leads to a physical altercation:

Jack made a rush and stabbed at Ralph's chest with his spear. Ralph sensed the position of the weapon from the glimpse he caught of Jack's arm and put the thrust aside with his own butt. Then he brought the end round and caught Jack a stinger across the ear. They were chest to chest, breathing fiercely, pushing and glaring.

Other external conflicts occur as well. Jack orders the other boys to tie up Sam and Eric. At the end of the chapter, he confronts and punishes Sam and Eric for not joining his tribe. Piggy's death is the result of another external conflict. Roger unleashes the rock that strikes and violently kills Piggy.

Finally, after Piggy dies, Jack becomes unhinged, and he and the other boys attack Ralph:

Viciously, with full intention, he hurled his spear at Ralph. The point tore the skin and flesh over Ralph's ribs, then sheared off and fell in the water. Ralph stumbled, feeling not pain but panic, and the tribe, screaming now like the chief, began to advance. Another spear, a bent one that would not fly straight, went past his face and one fell from on high where Roger was ... Ralph turned and ran.

The conflict between Jack and Ralph has been developed throughout the book. The external conflicts that occur in Chapter 11 are the culmination of all of the smaller fights and arguments between these two characters. These conflicts create both action and suspense at the end of the novel.

Vocabulary

Understanding vocabulary words can help you to gain more meaning from the work. Following are some vocabulary words from this chapter of the reading.

1. **multitudinous** – adj. – consisting of many
2. **propitiatingly** – adv. – in a way that indicates an effort to please or to make someone less angry
3. **truculently** – adv. – in an annoyed, angry, or argumentative way
4. **cessation** – noun – the stopping of some action
5. **incantation** – noun – recited words designed to produce a particular effect