

Lord of the Flies, Chapter 11

Objectives:

- Identify major plot points in *Lord of the Flies*.
- Analyze the development of a complex character in *Lord of the Flies*.
- Identify and analyze the development of key symbols in *Lord of the Flies*.
- Identify external conflicts in *Lord of the Flies* and explain how these conflicts develop over the course of the text.

Plot and Conflict

Chapter 11 of *Lord of the Flies* contains several external conflicts that propel the plot toward its climax. These conflicts are the culmination of the smaller conflicts that occur between Jack and Ralph throughout the novel.

Throughout the book, Jack and Ralph have clashed because they have different priorities. Ralph wants to maintain the signal fire in hopes that they will be rescued from the island by a passing ship. Jack, on the other hand, is more interested in hunting. This conflict is made worse by the fact that Jack resents the fact that Ralph is the leader. Throughout the book, Jack and Ralph butt heads about these things, which leads to Jack splitting off from Ralph and starting his own tribe.

In Chapter 11, these preexisting conflicts come to a head. Jack and Ralph begin to physically fight when they cannot reconcile their differences. Jack feels the need to demonstrate his power over Ralph by taking Eric and Sam hostage. Worst of all, Roger kills Piggy, using the weapon Jack created.

After Piggy's death, Jack feels triumphant. Ralph has no allies, and Jack is unquestionably the leader. Fueled by this glee and his hatred of Ralph, Jack throws his spear at Ralph, and he and his group drive Ralph away from Castle Rock.

Because these conflicts have been well developed throughout the novel, the reader feels invested in both the plot and characters.

Symbolism

A symbol is an object that represents an abstract concept. *Lord of the Flies* contains many symbols, and these symbols develop and evolve as the novel progresses. Throughout the novel, the conch shell has been a symbol of unity, order, and Ralph's leadership.

In Chapter 11, the conch shell is destroyed by the same rock that kills Piggy. The destruction of this shell is as symbolic as the shell itself was. When the conch shell is destroyed, Jack has the following reaction:

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!”

Jack views the destruction of the conch shell as the end of Ralph’s leadership. The shell, which had been the one remaining symbol of unity and order on the island, is gone, and with it go the last vestiges of civilization.

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.

Word	Definition	Use in Context
multitudinous (adj.)	consisting of many	“There was silence, except for the <u>multitudinous</u> murmur of the bees.”
propitiatingly (adv.)	in a way that indicates an effort to please or to make someone less angry	“Piggy nodded <u>propitiatingly</u> .”
truculently (adv.)	in an annoyed, angry, or argumentative way	“ <u>Truculently</u> they squared up to each other but kept just out of fighting distance.”
cessation (noun)	the stopping of some action	“The twins, puzzled, looked at each other; while Piggy, reassured by the <u>cessation</u> of violence, stood up carefully.”
incantation (noun)	recited words designed to produce a particular effect	“The storm of sound beat at them, an <u>incantation</u> of hatred.”

Try using these words in your own sentences to improve your understanding and knowledge of them.

Summary

The conflicts in Chapter 11 of *Lord of the Flies* are the culmination of the smaller conflicts that have developed throughout the book. Jack and Ralph fight, Sam and Eric are taken hostage, Piggy is killed by Roger, and Ralph is driven away from Castle Rock when the other boys begin to throw spears at him. These actions show the significance of Jack's hatred for and resentment of Ralph, which has been growing since the beginning of the book. The destruction of the conch, which symbolizes the end of Ralph's leadership, solidifies Jack's triumph over Ralph.

Concept Reinforcement

1. What is one example of external conflict in Chapter 11?
2. Why does Jack feel triumphant after Piggy is killed and the conch shell is destroyed?
3. Why is the destruction of the conch shell an important symbol?