

Lesson Name : 32

Lesson Title : Lord of the Flies Chapter 12 Section 1

Course Name : English 2 Part 2 [Honors]

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**Essential Instruction**

Read from page 263 to the break on page 275 of Chapter 12 of [\*Lord of the Flies\*](#).

### **Plot and Character**

After Piggy's death, Jack and his hunters drive Ralph away from Castle Rock by viciously throwing spears at him. Chapter 12 shows the aftermath of these events by focusing on Ralph's thoughts, conflicts, and fears.

In the first half of this chapter, Ralph struggles to convince himself that Piggy's and Simon's deaths were accidents, and that Jack will not attempt to harm Ralph. However, this attempt at rationalizing Jack's actions is ruined when Ralph learns the truth from Sam and Eric: Jack plans to hunt Ralph down the way they hunt down pigs.

In the text, Sam and Eric warn Ralph that "'Roger sharpened a stick at both ends.'"

Previously in the novel, a stick sharpened at both ends was used to skewer a pig to carry it back to the camp after the hunt and to mount the pig's head as an offering to the beast. The implication is that Jack and his hunters plan to treat Ralph the way they would treat a pig.

Following this revelation, Ralph has no choice but to hide from Jack and the other boys.

Sam and Eric's revelations to Ralph show how Jack has changed over the course of the book. Think back to the way Jack was at the beginning of the novel. Why did he struggle to kill the pig? Was he capable of killing anyone? What events in the novel changed Jack into the killer Ralph faces in the final chapter?

By examining Jack's development throughout the novel, the reader can trace the development of one of Golding's most important messages: All humans have the capacity to perform evil acts if they are left unchecked by moral or legal consequences.

### **Internal Conflict**

In a narrative, a **conflict** is a struggle between two opposing forces. An **internal conflict** is a conflict that occurs within a character's mind.

In Chapter 12, Ralph faces several internal conflicts. These are revealed through Ralph's thoughts throughout the chapter.

At the beginning of the chapter, Ralph struggles to convince himself that Jack and the other boys will not harm him. This internal conflict is a result of Ralph attempting to reconcile Jack's actions with what he wants to believe:

He argued unconvincingly that they would let him alone, perhaps even make an outlaw of him. But then the fatal unreasoning knowledge came to him again. The breaking of the conch and the deaths of Piggy and Simon lay over the island like a vapor. These painted savages would go further and further. Then there was that indefinable connection between himself and Jack; who therefore would never let him alone; never.

He paused, sun-speckled, holding up a bough, prepared to duck under it. A spasm of terror set him shaking and he cried aloud.

"No. They're not as bad as that. It was an accident."

Deep down, Ralph knows that Jack and the other boys are capable of greater evil and savagery. In order to alleviate his fear, though, he attempts to convince himself that the boys are not that evil. This conflict between what Ralph knows and what he wants to believe is one internal conflict in this chapter.

This internal conflict drives Ralph's actions in this part of the chapter. Despite the fact that Ralph wants to believe the other boys are still good, he knows that he cannot approach them. For this reason, he sneaks around the island and waits until he finds Sam and Eric alone to approach anyone at Castle Rock.

After Sam and Eric's revelation about what Jack plans to do, Ralph faces another internal conflict: What does he need to do to survive?

This conflict will drive the plot of the rest 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. **acrid** – adj. – bitter and unpleasant in taste or smell
2. **inimical** – adj. – likely to cause damage or have a bad effect
3. **ululation** – noun – a loud cry or howl
4. **goad** – verb – provoke someone to cause some action or reaction
5. **cordon** – noun – a line of guards preventing access to or from an area