

Lord of the Flies, Chapter 12, Section 1

Objectives:

- Identify major plot points in *Lord of the Flies*.
- Analyze the development of a complex character in *Lord of the Flies*.
- Identify internal conflicts in *Lord of the Flies* and explain how the conflict drives the plot of the novel.

The Relationship between Plot, Character, and Conflict

Authors use plot, character, and conflict to develop their themes and messages in a work of literature. In *Lord of the Flies*, these three components interact to create a complex message about human nature. Chapter 12 is the culmination of the development of these three components of the novel.

In Chapter 12, the reader sees how the plot, characters, and conflict have worked together to communicate Golding's message that all humans have the capacity to perform evil acts. In this final chapter, Ralph is on the run for his life after his confrontation with Jack and the death of Piggy. In the previous chapter, Jack and the other hunters drove Ralph away by throwing spears at him, and now Ralph is hiding while trying to collect his thoughts. Internally, he feels conflicted, trying to choose between what he knows (that Jack is going to hurt him) and what he wants to believe (that deep down, Jack is still good and that Piggy's death was an accident). This conflict helps to drive the plot in this section of the chapter as Ralph struggles to decide how to proceed.

Later in the chapter, Eric and Sam reveal that Jack does plan to hunt Ralph down, and they imply that Ralph will be killed in the same way the group kills pigs.

This revelation of Jack's plan shows how Jack has developed as a character. At the beginning of the novel, Jack could not even kill a pig when hunting. He struggled to prove himself as a hunter and a leader after the boys elected Ralph instead of him, and he made an effort to get along with Ralph. Throughout the book, he developed into a killer who now plans to hunt one of his peers. The progression of Jack's character is driven by the conflicts throughout the book and fuels the plot; together, these things help to communicate Golding's message.

As you read the final section of the book, continue to pay attention to the way that plot, character development, and conflict work together to communicate a message to the reader.

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
acrid (adj.)	bitter and unpleasant in taste or smell	“He rubbed his cheek along his forearm, smelling the <u>acrid</u> scent of salt and sweat and the staleness of dirt.”
inimical (adj.)	likely to cause damage or have a bad effect	“To carry he must speak louder; and this would rouse those striped and <u>inimical</u> creatures from their feasting by the fire.”
ululation (noun)	a loud cry or howl	“Eric raised his head and achieved a faint <u>ululation</u> by beating on his open mouth.”
goad (verb)	provoke someone to cause some action or reaction	“He could not bring himself to be specific at first; but then fear and loneliness <u>goaded</u> him.”
cordon (noun)	a line of guards preventing access to or from an area	“There he would sit, and the search would pass him by, and the <u>cordon</u> waver on, ululating along the island, and he would be free.”

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

Summary

Chapter 12 reveals how much Jack’s character has changed since the beginning of the novel. Jack has gone from a boy who couldn’t kill the pig he was hunting to a vicious killer with two deaths on his hands. He now plots the death of another of his peers. This is perhaps even more revealing of Jack’s evilness, as this death is coldly planned in advance. The development of Jack’s character is a result of the conflicts that have occurred throughout the book, and these conflicts drive the plot toward its conclusion.

Concept Reinforcement

1. What internal conflict does Ralph face in Chapter 12?
2. How has Jack changed since the beginning of the novel?
3. Golding uses plot, character development, and conflict to create a complex message about which of the following?
 - a. human nature
 - b. maturity
 - c. growth and development
 - d. nature versus nurture