

Lesson Name : 33

Lesson Title : Lord of the Flies Chapter 12 Section 2

Course Name : English 2 Part 2 [Honors]

Task Id : 54826980

Course Id : 15020



**Essential Instruction**

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



### Plot

The second half of Chapter 12 focuses on the hunt for Ralph. When Ralph awakens in the morning, he discovers that Jack and the other boys are already searching for him. He hides in a thicket near Castle Rock, but his plan to evade Jack is spoiled when Sam and Eric are forced to tell Jack what Ralph revealed the night before. Jack attempts to draw Ralph out by knocking boulders down from the cliff above, but it does not work. As a result, Jack decides to set the island on fire to drive Ralph out.

On the run, Ralph tries frantically to come up with a plan to evade Jack and save his own life. He tries hiding, attacks when he is discovered, and continues to flee as the island burns around him. Finally, Ralph winds up on the beach, where he discovers a naval officer who spotted the smoke and stopped to investigate.

The novel ends with the boys breaking down at the sight of an adult:

Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of a true, wise friend called Piggy.

The novel remains ambiguous, or unclear, about what happens to the boys once they are rescued. Will they be punished for what happened on the island? Will they be able to return to their normal lives? Will they ever recover from the events that unfolded during the book? Golding leaves these questions for the reader to ponder.

## 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 experiences his greatest internal conflict as he tries to decide how to survive Jack's attack. You can see this internal conflict when the narrator reveals Ralph's thoughts:

What was to be done, then? The tree? Burst the line like a boar? Either way the choice was terrible ... If only one could have quiet, a long pause, a time to think!

... He flung himself down by some ferns. The tree, or charge? He mastered his breathing for a moment, wiped his mouth, and told himself to be calm. Samneric were somewhere in that line, and hating it. Or were they? And supposing, instead of them, he met the chief, or Roger who carried death in his hands?

Ralph pushed back his tangled hair and wiped the sweat out of his best eye. He spoke aloud.

"Think."

What was the sensible thing to do?

In this passage, Ralph tries to decide what the best course of action is to save his life. He sees several options, and he has to try to think them through and make a logical decision. This internal debate about what he should do is an example of an internal conflict.

This internal conflict is a direct result of the major external conflict in this chapter. An **external conflict** is a conflict that occurs when a character struggles with an outside force, such as another character, society, or nature. In this case, the major external conflict is that Jack and his followers want to hunt and kill Ralph. This is a conflict between characters.

In Chapter 12, the internal conflict is a result of the external conflict. When reading, it is important to consider how these conflicts relate to one another.

## Point of View

While the book is primarily told using **third-person omniscient point of view**, in which the narrator knows all of the characters' thoughts and feelings, the final chapter plays with the point of view in order to heighten the tension and suspense. The final chapter of *Lord of the Flies* details Jack's hunt for Ralph. During the hunt, the author switches out of third-person omniscient point of view, using both first-person and second-person points of view. Examine the differences between these points of view:

| Point of View           | Definition  | Pronouns                     |
|-------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| First-person            | The narrator is a character in the story who refers to him- or herself by using first-person pronouns.  | I, me, my                    |
| Second-person           | The narrator tells the story directly to the reader, using second-person pronouns. In second-person point of view, the reader is treated as if they are a character in the story. | you, yours, you're           |
| Third-person omniscient | The narrator is an outside presence and knows the thoughts and feelings of all of the characters.   | he, she, him, her, his, hers |

During the hunt in Chapter 12 of *Lord of the Flies*, Golding uses all three of these points of view. Compare these three uses of point of view from Chapter 12:

| Excerpt  | Point of View | Explanation   |
|--|---------------|---|
| Ralph fumbled to hold his spear so that it was point foremost; and now he saw that the stick was sharpened at both ends.   | Third-person  | The author uses third-person pronouns to show what Ralph sees and thinks. This point of view removes the reader from the action and remains objective.  |
| The savage moved forward so that you could only see him from the waist down. That was the butt of his spear. Now you could see him from the knee down. Don't scream. | Second-person | The author uses second-person pronouns to put the reader into the story. This point of view makes the reader one with Ralph. It heightens the tension by placing the reader in the action. The reader feels as Ralph feels.   |
| Perhaps he can hear my heart over the noises of the fire.  | First-person  | The author uses first-person pronouns to express what Ralph thinks. Throughout most of the story, Ralph's thoughts are stated objectively in third-person point of view. In this instance, the author draws the reader into Ralph's mind to help the reader experience his fear on a more intimate level. |

Golding's exploration of the point of view in the final chapter is purposeful. By switching the perspective of the narrator, he creates a heightened level of suspense for the reader.

## Theme

*Lord of the Flies* discusses two aspects of human nature: civility and savagery. Golding develops his major theme around these aspects of human nature. A **theme** is the underlying meaning of a literary work, and may be stated directly or indirectly. To determine the theme of *Lord of the Flies*, you'll need to determine what Golding is trying to say about human nature.

At the end of Chapter 8, the reader, like Simon, learns that the beast on the island is the savage part of human nature. The final chapters of the novel focus on the struggle between this savage nature and civility. Through the plot events in this part of the book, the reader sees this struggle in a variety of ways, as shown in the table that follows.

| Savagery   | Civility  |
|--|---|
| The boys, including Ralph and Piggy, kill Simon when they mistake him for the beast. Jack and the hunters show no remorse. | Ralph, Piggy, Sam, and Eric regret their role in Simon's death. They feel guilty and sick about what they did.  |
| Roger kills Piggy.   | Ralph mourns Piggy's death.   |
| Sam and Eric are captured and forced to join Jack's group.   | Sam and Eric attempt to warn Ralph that he is in danger.  |
| Jack and the hunters try to kill Ralph.  | A naval officer arrives on the island and rescues the boys. The presence of an adult reduces the boys to tears. |

Can you think of any other instances that show the struggle between savagery and civility? What do you think Golding is saying about human nature by writing this book? Do you agree with his message?

## 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. **agonizing** – adj. – causing great physical or mental pain

2. **balked** – verb – stopped by an obstacle
3. **obscurity** – noun – a thing that is unclear or difficult to understand
4. **menace** – noun – a person or thing likely to cause harm
5. **distended** – adj. – bloated