

Lesson Name : 12

Lesson Title : Lord of the Flies Chapter 3, Section 1

Course Name : English 2 Part 2 [Honors]

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Essential Instruction

Read William Golding's [*Lord of the Flies*](#), Chapter 3, pages 66-74.



Symbolism

A **symbol** is a word or object that stands for a greater concept or idea. Authors use **symbols** as a way to discuss larger issues within the context and narrative of the story.

The novel *Lord of the Flies* consists of many objects and events that represent greater ideas and meanings.

Throughout *Lord of the Flies*, Golding draws on themes, images, and symbols from Judeo-Christian mythology. Recognizing these themes, images, and symbols can create a deeper understanding of the text.

At the beginning of the book, Golding sets up parallels to the story of the Garden of Eden. In that story, Adam and Eve are tempted by a snake (representing evil) to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. Because they give in to temptation, they are punished and banished from the Garden of Eden.

In *Lord of the Flies*, the boys land on a seemingly idyllic island that symbolizes the Garden of Eden. And, like Adam and Eve, their paradise is threatened by the presence of a snake-like beast.

“As if it wasn’t a good island.”

Astonished at the interruption, they looked up at Simon’s serious face.

“As if,” said Simon, “the beastie, the beastie or the snake-thing, was real. Remember?”

The two older boys flinched when they heard the shameful syllable.

Snakes were not mentioned now, were not mentionable.

“As if this wasn’t a good island,” said Ralph slowly. “Yes, that’s right.”

On a literal level, this passage demonstrates the boys’ fear and their embarrassment about feeling that fear. If you read this passage and recognize the biblical references, however, you can make predictions about what may happen later in the story. The story of the Garden of Eden is a story about good and evil. Adam and Eve are tempted by evil to disastrous results. Similarly, the boys in *Lord of the Flies* are tempted by their fear of the beastie. By understanding the story of the Garden of Eden and recognizing Golding’s references to it, you might be able to guess that paradise will not last on the island and that the boys’ temptation to let the beastie drive their actions will continue to grow more significant.

As you continue to read, think about these symbols and themes that Golding draws from the Bible. What do you think he is trying to say about good and evil?

Plot, Setting, and Characters

The **plot** is the storyline or the sequence of events that take place throughout a story. The **plot** for the beginning of Chapter 3 shows Jack tracking and trying to kill a pig in the forest. He is once again unsuccessful. He returns to find Ralph and Simon unsuccessfully trying to build shelter to call a “home.”

The boys’ lack of success, Ralph feels, is a direct reflection of the absence of help from the other boys, and he asks Jack to get his hunters back in line. They argue and do not come to an agreement. Ralph also mentions that the younger boys are scared, and they need to do something to help reassure them.

The **characters** are representations of people in the story. The **characters** in a story act out the plot.

The difference in Jack’s and Ralph’s characters is explored as Jack seems to lose sight of the hope of leaving the island, and instead, seems to become obsessed with hunting and killing. Ralph, more practically, tries to build shelter for the boys and keep a fire burning to alert passing ships. This difference in opinion is slowly and subtly driving a wedge between the two characters. Here is a passage from the text where Jack describes his passion for hunting, and his lack of concern for being rescued:

“The best thing we can do is get ourselves rescued.” Jack had to think for a moment before he could remember what rescue was.

“Rescue? Yes, of course! All the same, I’d like to catch a pig first—” He snatched up his spear and dashed it into the ground. The opaque, mad look came into his eyes again. Ralph looked at him critically through his tangle of fair hair.

The **setting** is the time and place of a story. It is the location for the **characters** to act out the story.

The **setting** is described as Ralph studies the signal fire from their position on the beach. He determines that the smoke may not be thick enough for a ship to spot them. Here is the passage from the text that describes the **setting**:

The two boys trotted down the beach, and, turning at the water's edge, looked back at the pink mountain. The trickle of smoke sketched a chalky line up the solid blue of the sky, wavered high up and faded. Ralph frowned.

Internal and External Conflicts

Internal conflicts that take place within a character's mind. You can see an **internal conflict** when a character struggles with a decision.

Jack has an **internal conflict** about his ability to kill an animal. He is becoming more obsessed with hunting, and each time that he is unsuccessful, his tension builds. Here is the passage from the text that shows his **internal conflict**:

"I went on," said Jack. "I let them go. I had to go on. I—"

He tried to convey the compulsion to track down and kill that was swallowing him up. "I went on. I thought, by myself—" The madness came into his eyes again.

"I thought I might—kill."

External conflicts exist between a character and another outside force, such as another character, an animal, nature, or even society.

Ralph and Jack have an **external conflict** as they argue about what is more important, hunting or building shelter. Jack has become obsessed with hunting, and Ralph doesn't have much help in building his shelter. Additionally, Ralph complains that no one has control over the other boys and they are not helping with the labor. Here is the passage from the text where they argue:

Now the antagonism was audible.

“But I shall! Next time! I’ve got to get a barb on this spear! We wounded a pig and the spear fell out. If we could only make barbs— ”

“We need shelters.”

Suddenly Jack shouted in rage.

“Are you accusing—?”

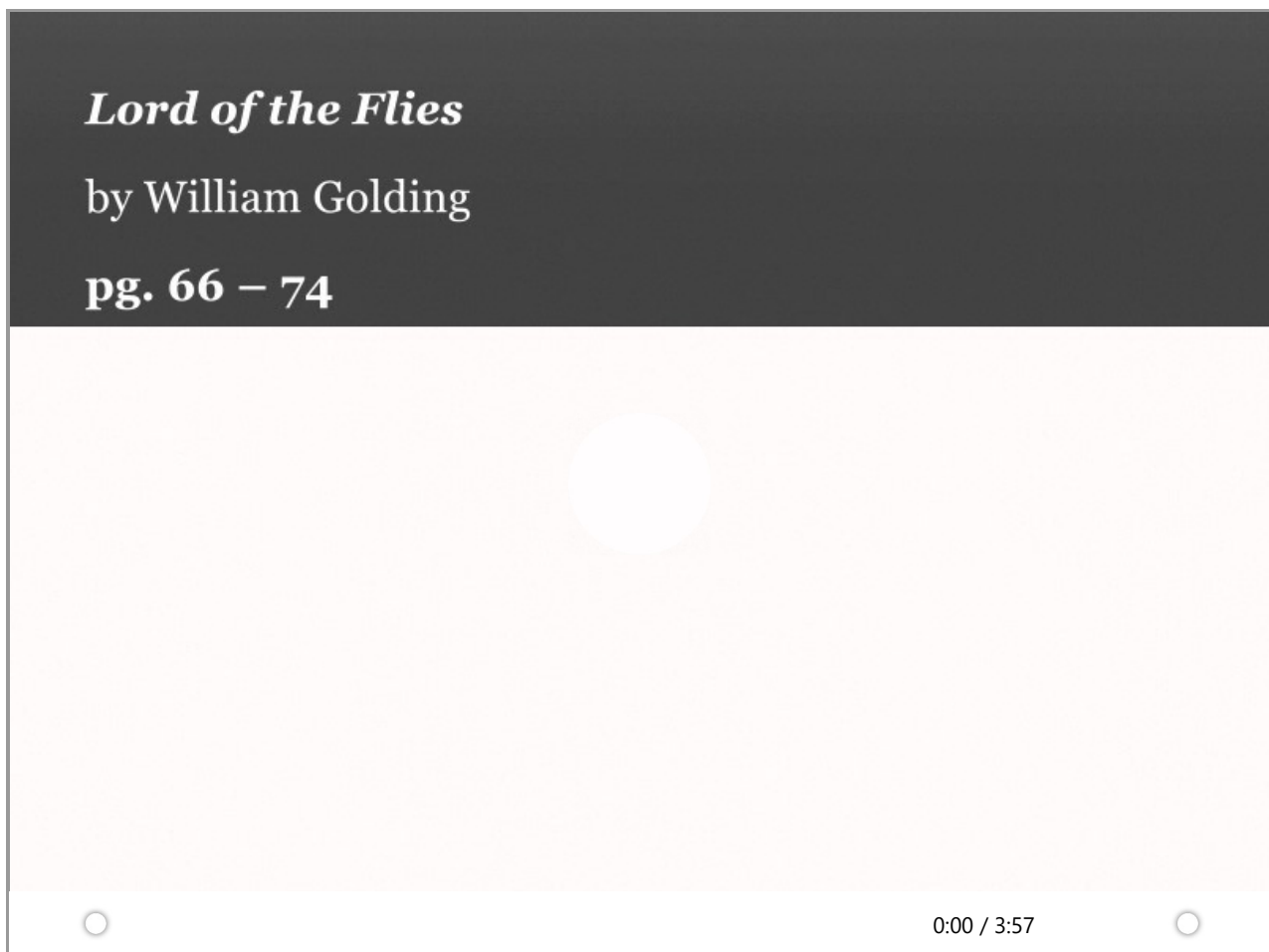
“All I’m saying is we’ve worked dashed hard. That’s all.”

They were both red in the face and found looking at each other difficult.

Lord of the Flies

by William Golding

pg. 66 – 74



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Vocabulary

Understanding vocabulary words can help you to gain more meaning from the work. Let’s look at some of the vocabulary from this lesson.

1. **node** – noun – a small round part on the stem of a plant where a leaf grows

2. **gaudy** – adj. – bright or colorful in a tasteless way; flashy
3. **trodden** – adj. – walked on and crushed down
4. **inscrutable** – adj. – difficult to understand; causing people to feel curious or confused
5. **castanet** – noun – a musical instrument that consists of two small, round parts that are clicked together with the fingers
6. **vicissitudes** – noun – the many changes or problems that happen over time
7. **contrite** – adj. – feeling or showing regret for bad behavior
8. **incredulous** – adj. – not able or willing to believe something
9. **declivities** – noun – downward slopes