

---

## Objectives

- Students will be able to identify symbolism in a work of fiction.
- Students will be able to understand the relationship between plot, setting, and character in a work of fiction.
- Students will be able to identify examples of internal and external conflict in a work of fiction.
- Students will be able to correctly use vocabulary words.

## Symbolism

*Lord of the Flies* is constructed almost entirely of symbols. A **symbol** is something that represents not only itself, but some idea far greater than itself. Here are some of the symbols in this section.

“Side by side, watched by silent boys, the two started up the mountain.”

This symbolizes Ralph and Jack’s battle for leadership. The mountain is high ground and symbolizes power. That both boys go up the mountain indicate that neither one will concede leadership to the other.

## Setting, Characters & Plot



The **setting** is the place where the story takes place. The burnt side of the mountain is the setting. The **characters** are the people in the story. In this case, Ralph, Jack, and Roger are the characters involved. The **plot** is the storyline. Ralph and Jack use the hunt for the “beast” as a test of courage to be the leader as they go up the mountain at night. At one point, Ralph and Roger stop. Jack goes ahead, but returns claiming that he has seen something. It is the dead parachutist still harnessed. When the wind blows the parachute it animates the corpse. This convinces the Ralph and Jack that the beast is real. They run back down the mountain.

## *Internal & External Conflict*

**External conflict** occurs when a character is struggling against some sort of external, or outside, force. The force can be another character, a natural force, an animal, a group, or society. External conflict can also consist of a verbal confrontation between two characters.

In this section, the rivalry between Ralph and Jack continues to build. Here are two examples of external conflict that demonstrates the escalation.

Now it was Ralph's turn to flush but he spoke despairingly, out of the new understanding that Piggy had given him.

"Why do you hate me?"

The boys stirred uneasily, as though something indecent had been said. The silence lengthened. Ralph, still hot and hurt, turned away first.

"Come on."

Jack has been Ralph's antagonist, in both the literary and literal senses of the word, throughout the story. Jack is mocking and threatening while Ralph simply works for the good of the group. He had not understood Jack's behavior before Piggy had the courage to tell Ralph that Jack hates him. Armed with this new insight, Ralph confronts Jack about it in front of the other boys. They are nervous for many reasons; including the fact that everyone *but* Ralph seemed to know about Jack's hatred. However, it was not spoken about since it would be "impolite." So when Ralph comes right out and asks him, it is a direct threat to Jack. It is an external confrontation.

"I'm going up the mountain." The words came from Jack viciously, as though they were a curse. He looked at Ralph, his thin body tensed, his spear held as if he threatened him.

"I'm going up the mountain to look for the beast—now." Then the supreme sting, the casual, bitter word. "Coming?"

Another escalation takes place as Jack presumes to climb the mountain without Ralph, thus wresting leadership from him.

**Internal conflict** is when a character struggles within over a decision. Here is an example from this section.

Now that his physical voice was silent the inner voice of reason, and other voices too, made themselves heard. Piggy was calling him a kid. Another voice told him not to be a fool; and the darkness and desperate enterprise gave the night a kind of dentist's chair unreality.

Ralph berates himself for going up the mountain at night armed with only a stick and accompanied by someone who hates him to look for a beast they believe is there. He realizes that he did it primarily to protect his ego. The voices he hears in his head criticizing him are representative of an internal conflict.

## Vocabulary

Being able to understand the vocabulary in *Lord of the Flies* will help you better understand and appreciate the story. The following is a list of words from this section that you can use to help expand your vocabulary.

**Luxuriance** – noun – The state of being in rich abundance; lushness

The *luxuriance* of the forest floor was evidenced by thousands of ferns, flowers, and mosses.

**Traverses** – verb – Passes or moves over, along, or through

The sun *traverses* the sky every day.

**Haunt** – noun – A lair or feeding place for animals

The large, dead oak tree in my back yard is full of insects, so it is a *haunt* for birds.

**Antagonism** – noun – Hostility that results in active resistance, opposition, or contentiousness

The *antagonism* that the Black Knight felt caused him to oppose Sir Gawain constantly.

**Nausea** – noun – The condition of being sick to one's stomach, leading to regurgitation

*Nausea* is the most common effect of seasickness.

---

## Growth & Assessment:

1. What **symbolizes** power and leadership in this section?
  - a. The spear
  - b. The smoke
  - c. The mountain
  - d. The beast
2. What is the **setting** for this section?
  - a. The shelters
  - b. The burnt side of the mountain
  - c. The inhabited side of the beach
  - d. The scar
3. What is the **plot** for this section?
  - a. Ralph & Jack search for the beast
  - b. Ralph & Simon discuss going home
  - c. Simon & Piggy argue over the conch
  - d. Jack & Johnny bully the littluns
4. What do Ralph and Jack believe they see at the top of the mountain?
5. What does it mean to “traverse” something?