

Lesson Name : 29

Lesson Title : Lord of the Flies Chapter 9

Course Name : English 2 Part 2 [Honors]

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Essential Instruction

Read Chapter 9 of William Golding's [*Lord of the Flies*](#) (pages 208-221).



Plot

Chapter 9 of *Lord of the Flies* takes a dark turn following Jack's mutiny against Ralph's leadership. The chapter begins with Simon's discovery that the beast is nothing more than the dead parachutist. Although he is ill and barely able to walk, Simon decides to go to the mountain to tell the other boys what he has discovered.

Meanwhile, Piggy and Ralph decide to go to Jack's feast. Despite the tension between Jack and Ralph, Jack offers Ralph meat and allows him to join the festivities. As a result, even Ralph and Piggy join in when Jack and his tribe begin to dance and chant around the fire. As their dance becomes frenzied and a storm begins to rage on the island, Simon stumbles into the group and tries to tell them the truth about the beast. Swept up in confusion and chaos, the boys descend on Simon and kill him. The chapter ends with Simon's body being swept out to sea.

Setting and Mood

Chapter 9 begins with a description of the setting. Read this passage from the text:

Over the island the build-up of clouds continued. A steady current of heated air rose all day from the mountain and was thrust to ten thousand feet; revolving masses of gas piled up the static until the air was ready to explode. By early evening the sun had gone and a brassy glare had taken the place of clear daylight. Even the air that pushed in from the sea was hot and held no refreshment. Colors drained from water and trees and pink surfaces of rock, and the white and brown clouds brooded.

This description of a storm brewing on the island adds to the tension that has been building between Jack and Ralph throughout the novel. This passage helps to set the mood of the chapter, reminding the reader that the tension has reached its breaking point. Like the storm that is "ready to explode" on the island, the tension between the boys will also reach that point in this chapter.

Symbolism

A **symbol** is an object that represents an abstract concept. The conch shell continues to be an important symbol in *Lord of the Flies*.

In this chapter, the conch shell is mentioned, but not seen. Ralph mentions the conch shell to remind Jack that he is the chief, thereby reinforcing the idea that the conch shell symbolizes his leadership. Jack, who longs to be the chief and discredit Ralph, denies that the conch shell has any meaning; he wants to downplay its symbolism to the other boys to ensure his leadership. The conch shell now represents the remains of the boys' society, and Ralph hopes that he can use it to reunite the group and restore order.

Conflict

In a narrative, a **conflict** is a struggle between two opposing forces. **External conflict** is a conflict that occurs when a character struggles with an outside force, such as another character, society, or nature.

Chapter 9 contains numerous external conflicts. The power struggle between Jack and Ralph, the boys' persistence in picking on Piggy, and the storm on the island are all external conflicts that occur in this chapter. The most shocking external conflict occurs, however, when the boys kill Simon:

"Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood! Do him in!"

The sticks fell and the mouth of the new circle crunched and screamed. The beast was on its knees in the center, its arms folded over its face. It was crying out against the abominable noise something about a body on the hill. The beast struggled forward, broke the ring and fell over the steep edge of the rock to the sand by the water. At once the crowd surged after it, poured down the rock, leapt on to the beast, screamed, struck, bit, tore. There were no words, and no movements but the tearing of teeth and claws.

In the heat of the storm, the boys attack and kill Simon as if he were the beast. This is an example of an external conflict between characters.

Vocabulary

Understanding vocabulary words can help you gain more meaning from the work. Following are some vocabulary words from this chapter of the reading.

1. **interspersed** – verb – scattered among other things
2. **corpulent** – adj. – having a large, bulky body
3. **meekly** – adv. – done with a quiet and gentle nature
4. **demented** – adj. – driven to behave irrationally due to anger, distress, or excitement
5. **unendurable** – adj. – not able to be tolerated
6. **phosphorescence** – noun – light produced by something that doesn't produce flame or heat