

# Lord of the Flies

by William Golding

## Teacher's Guide

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## Synopsis

### Chapter 1

Evacuated from England during an atomic war, a planeload of schoolboys ranging from elementary school to preadolescence escape the burning fuselage of the plane, which breaks apart over an uninhabited coral island somewhere in the Indian or Pacific Ocean. The first two evacuees to appear are Ralph, tall, attractive, and fair-haired, and Piggy, a roly-poly, myopic intellectual who suffers from asthma. In the lagoon, Ralph finds a conch shell, which he blows to summon the other boys to the beach.

### Chapter 2

The gathering of survivors elects Ralph their chief. Ralph, Jack Merridew, the chapter chorister and head boy, and Simon climb to the top of the outcropping at the center of the island and confirm the fact that the children are marooned on a desert island. To expedite their planning sessions, the boys establish rules of order. Central to their organization is the right to speak, which belongs to the person holding the conch.

A small boy, unnamed but marked by a mulberry-colored birthmark, upsets the others by describing a "snake-thing" or "beastie," which frightened him in the undergrowth. Ralph convinces the others that they should build a signal fire on the highest peak. The fire rages out of control. The group realizes that the small boy who saw the beast has disappeared.

### Chapter 3

In a few weeks, Jack becomes increasingly competitive with Ralph. He spends much of his time crawling through jungle underbrush stalking a pig,

which he plans to kill with a sharpened stick. At the same time, near the beach Ralph and Simon struggle to erect flimsy huts out of palm fronds. Simon departs into the jungle and arrives at a verdant clearing.

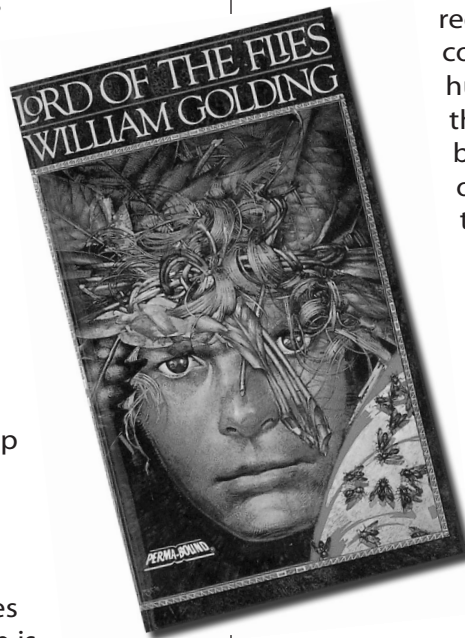
### Chapter 4

The smaller boys do little more than swim and play. Roger and Maurice return from the forest and destroy the children's sand castles. Jack, determined to kill a pig, paints his face with red and white clay and black charcoal. After he leads his band of hunters into the jungle, Ralph sees the smoke of a ship on the horizon, but because the signal fire has gone out, the boys fail to communicate their whereabouts.

When Jack and the hunters return with the carcass of a pig, Ralph and Piggy berate them for neglecting the fire. Angered, Jack hits Piggy, breaking one lens of his glasses. The hunters exult in their quarry. Maurice plays the part of the pig while the others circle and act out their conquest. They dance and sing in delight at the pig's death. Ralph determines to call a meeting.

### Chapter 5

To point out the group's failings, Ralph takes the chief's seat and summons the boys, but they constantly interrupt with jokes and laughter. Against the backdrop of advancing night, Ralph fears that discipline is eroding. A small boy comes forward to describe a horrible form that moves in the night. Percival weeps uncontrollably about beasts that come from the sea. The boys vote that ghosts exist, and the meeting breaks up with chanting and wild dancing. Ralph threatens to give up, leaving Piggy in doubt and Percival still wailing.



**Chapter 6**

Simon and Ralph carry Percival to a hut. Later that night, a dead parachutist lands on top of the outcropping. Samneric, the twins who have been sleeping at the signal fire, wake up and see the corpse, which they conclude is the beast. They run to warn the others. Led by Ralph, the boys start for the outcropping, but first stop at Castle Rock, where they play on the boulders and in the caves and put thoughts of the beast out of their minds. Ralph points out that the rock fort lacks food, water, and shelter and forces them back to reality.

**Chapter 7**

Ralph feels filthy and longs for a bath and haircut. Simon prophesies that Ralph will return home safely. Ralph, Jack, and Roger finally climb the mountain. As they search for the pig, Ralph asks why Jack hates him. Jack turns away into the pig tunnel. When they locate the dead parachutist, they flee in terror, convinced that they have encountered the beast.

**Chapter 8**

Ralph informs Piggy that they saw the beast. Ralph concludes that without a signal fire, they are beaten. Jack calls the next meeting, where he and Ralph again clash. Jack calls for a new vote for chief, then dashes off to the forest in tears when he gains no support. Simon proposes that they climb the mountain. The other boys begin building a signal fire by the bathing pool. Simon departs on his own. Several boys accompany Jack on a hunt and kill a huge sow. Jack hangs the sow's head on a stick as a sacrificial offering for the beast. While the boys feast on roast pig, Simon discovers the truth about the mysterious apparition, suffers a seizure, and sinks into unconsciousness.

**Chapter 9**

When Simon awakens, his nose is bleeding. He locates the parachutist, becomes ill, but manages to loosen the parachute cords so that the rotting corpse will subside into the ocean. He totters back to join the others and tries to relate the truth about the beast. The boys, frenzied by their barbaric feast and demonic dancing, kill him. During the night Simon's body sweeps out to sea with the tide.

**Chapter 10**

The next morning, Ralph punishes himself for taking part in the ritual killing. Piggy, whose glasses contain only one lens, claims that he could not see the act and suggests that it was an accident. The group, unrepentant for its barbarity, splits into two bodies: the majority follow Jack to Castle Rock and live like painted savages. They make a raid on the remainder of the boys and steal Piggy's glasses. Ralph is pleased that the conch is safe.

**Chapter 11**

Ralph follows the hunters to try to retrieve Piggy's glasses. Jack orders his hunters to tie up Samneric. As Ralph and Jack fight for control, Piggy holds the conch and attempts to speak. Roger shoves a boulder down on Piggy, smashing his head open on the rocks below. Waves pull the body out to sea. Jack usurps the role of chief and hurls a spear at Ralph, who flees through the forest. Roger menaces Samneric.

**Chapter 12**

With murderous intent, the savages pursue Ralph into the jungle and trigger a forest fire. The smoke attracts a passing ship. When Ralph staggers out of the jungle and pleads for mercy, he finds a British naval officer waiting on the beach. An unnamed officer rescues the boys. He turns aside as Ralph weeps for his lost innocence and for the death of his friend Piggy.

**Timeline of the Action**

- mid-20th century** During the reign of Elizabeth II, a planeload of schoolboys is evacuated from England during an atomic war. The plane breaks apart over an uninhabited coral island somewhere in the Indian or Pacific Ocean.
- after the crash** The first two evacuees, Ralph and Piggy, establish a meeting place. Ralph blows a conch shell to summon the other boys, who elect Ralph their chief.
- later** Ralph, Jack Merridew, and Simon climb the outcropping at the center of the island and confirm that they are marooned on a desert island. The boys build a signal fire on the highest peak. The fire rages out of control, killing a small boy.

**weeks later** Jack competes with Ralph and stalks a pig while Ralph and Simon erect huts. Simon departs into the jungle, leaving the others at play.

**later** Roger and Maurice return from the forest and destroy the children's sand castles. Jack leads his band of hunters into the jungle. Ralph sees the smoke of a ship on the horizon, but can't signal because the fire has gone out.

**late afternoon** Jack and the hunters return with the carcass of a pig. Jack hits Piggy and breaks one lens of his glasses.

**that night** They dance and sing on the beach. Ralph fears that discipline is eroding. A small boy describes a monster. Percival fears beasts that come from the sea. The meeting breaks up.

**late that night** A dead parachutist drifts onto the outcropping.

**next morning** Samneric see the corpse and warn the others. The boys climb to Castle Rock. When they locate the corpse, they flee in terror.

**later** Jack calls the next meeting, then dashes off to the forest. The other boys begin building a signal fire by the bathing pool. Simon departs on his own.

**meanwhile** Several boys accompany Jack on a hunt and kill a huge sow. Jack hangs the sow's head on a stick.

**that evening** The boys feast on roast pig.

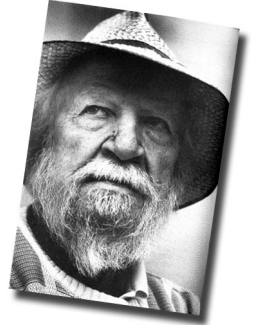
**meanwhile** Simon discovers the parachutist, suffers a seizure, and faints. He pushes the corpse into the ocean and returns to the beach, where the others kill him.

**during the night** Simon's body sweeps out to sea with the tide.

**next morning** Ralph and Piggy regret the killing. The majority follow Jack to Castle Rock.

**later** They raid the others and steal Piggy's glasses. While Ralph and Jack fight for control, Roger shoves a boulder down on Piggy. Ralph flees through the forest. The savages trigger a forest fire. The smoke attracts a passing ship. A British naval officer rescues the boys.

## Author Sketch



One of the twentieth century's most studied, analyzed, and discussed fiction writers, William Golding wrote deftly and surely of the human conscience. Born September 19, 1911, in St. Columb Minor near Newquay, Cornwall, England, William Gerald Golding lived in a fourteenth-century home that sparked his imagination from childhood. The son of schoolteacher Alex A. and feminist Mildred A. Golding, he read adventures by Jules Verne, Daniel Defoe, and Edgar Rice Burroughs and manifested an interest in writing at age seven. By age 12, he had launched a multi-volume novel. He attended Marlborough Grammar School, and, switching from a major in physics to Anglo-Saxon literature, received his B. A. from Brasenose College, Oxford University, in 1935. He taught English and philosophy at Bishop Wordsworth's School at Salisbury and wrote, produced, and acted in minor stage plays.

In 1940, Golding joined the Royal Navy and served on cruisers and destroyers. He was lieutenant commander of a rocket-launcher during the D-Day landing and took part in the sinking of the *Bismarck*, a German battleship. With new insight into evil and violence, after the war, he returned to his literary ambitions. After 21 turn-downs, in 1954, he published *Lord of the Flies*, his masterpiece, and followed with *The Inheritors* the next year.

After devoting himself entirely to writing in 1961, Golding produced at a steady pace. He served as writer in residence at Hollins College and submitted short pieces to *Encounter*, *Holiday*, *Listener*, *New Left Review*, and *Spectator*. His career languished with subsequent novels, novellas, essays, and plays, which became more philosophically intricate and ethically demanding. He again scored popular success with *Rites of Passage* in 1980, which won the Booker Prize, and followed with *The Paper Men* (1984). In 1983 he became the first English author to win the Nobel Prize since Winston Churchill thirty years earlier. Golding earned the Order of the British Empire in 1988, six honorary doctorates, and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and was named a member of the Royal Society of Literature. He died June 19, 1993, from a heart attack, at his home near Falmouth.

## Critic's Corner

Written in savage retort to Robert Michael Ballantyne's *The Coral Island: A Tale of the Pacific Ocean* (1857), a pleasant idyll about shipwrecked boys, *Lord of the Flies* was an immediate popular and critical success after it appeared in the United States in paperback in 1959. Famed for its incisive view of primal atavism, Golding's chilling dystopian novel quickly rivaled J. D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* as the teen bestseller of the 1950s. Like other of his works, the action immures his characters from contact with modern society in order to assess their moral and ethical capabilities. This extreme limitation of setting creates a fable milieu, which enhances his analysis of human nature. Golding's vision of innate evil inspired a cult following and earned the author a place among the best of post-war moralists and visionaries. To his credit, his work was listed among books that build character and the frequently challenged works for young adults.

The black-and-white film version of *Lord of the Flies*, produced semi-professionally in 1963 by Allen-Hogdon/Two Arts and starring amateurs, preserved much of Golding's dark allegory. The film was reprised in 1990 in an R-rated American color version produced by Columbia Pictures and directed by Harry Hook. It replaced the meager, colorless scenery of the first film, but strayed from the philosophical purpose of Golding's novel with multiple embellishments.

## Golding's Published Works

*Poems*, 1934  
*Lord of the Flies*, 1954  
*Pincher Martin*, 1955  
*Sometimes Never* (contributor), 1956  
*The Brass Butterfly*, 1958  
*Free Fall*, 1960  
*The Inheritors*, 1962  
*The Anglo-Saxon*, 1962  
"Break My Heart," 1962  
*The Spire*, 1964  
*The Hot Gates, and Other Occasional Pieces*, 1965  
*The Pyramid*, 1967  
*The Scorpion God: Three Short Novels*, 1971  
*Darkness Visible*, 1979  
*Rites of Passage*, 1980  
*A Moving Target*, 1982  
*The Paper Men*, 1984  
*An Egyptian Journal*, 1985

*Close Quarters*, 1987  
*Fire Down Below*, 1989  
*The Double Tongue* (posthumous), 1993

## Related Reading

Avi, *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*  
Steven Vincent Benet, "By the Waters of Babylon"  
Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*  
Karel Capek, *R.U.R.*  
Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim*  
Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*  
Stephen Crane, "The Open Boat"  
Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*  
David Feintuch, *Midshipman's Hope*  
Paula Fox, *Slave Dancer*  
Pat Frank, *Alas, Babylon*  
John Glenn, "A Day in Space"  
Esther Hautzig, *The Endless Steppe*  
Robert Heinlein, *Farnham's Freehold* and *Tunnel in the Sky*  
Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar*  
Stephen King, *The Stand*  
Barbara Kingsolver, *The Bean Trees*, *The Poisonwood Bible*, and *Animal Dreams*  
Theodora Kroeber, *Ishi*  
Jack London, *Call of the Wild*  
Lois Lowry, *The Giver*  
O.T. Nelson, *The Girl Who Owned a City*  
Robert C. O'Brien, *Z for Zachariah*  
Gary Paulsen, *Nightjohn* and *Hatchet*  
Ayn Rand, *Anthem*  
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*  
Neville Shute, *On the Beach*  
Gore Vidal, *A Visit to a Small Planet*  
Margaret Walker, *Jubilee*  
Yoko Kawashima Watkins, *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*  
Elie Wiesel, *Night*

## Cross-Curricular Sources

For more information about morality, bullying, isolation, survivalism, grief, and other subjects and issues deriving from the novel, consult these sources:

*Acting on Your Values*, Rosen Publishing Group  
*Bully: A True Story of High School Revenge*, Avon  
*Characters in Crisis*, Center for Humanities  
*Grief Recovery Handbook*, HarperCollins  
*No Man Is an Island*, Center for the Humanities  
*Stand Tall*, AGS Media

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- "'Lord of the Flies' Author William Golding Dies at 81," [http://www.elibrary.com/yahooligans/10044/fetch/flies\\_02.htm](http://www.elibrary.com/yahooligans/10044/fetch/flies_02.htm).
- McCarron, Kevin. *William Golding*. University, Miss.: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 1996.
- Oldsey, Bern, and Stanley Weintraub, "Lord of the Flies: Beelzebub Revisited," *College English*, November, 1963, 90-99.
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- "Sir William Golding, Winner of the 1983 Nobel Prize in Literature," <http://www.almaz.com/nobel/literature/1983a.html>
- Subbarao, V. V. *William Golding*. New York: Envoy Press, 1987.
- Swisher, Clarice, ed. *Readings on 'Lord of the Flies.'* San Diego, Calif.: Greenhaven, 1997.
- Wershba, Joseph, "Review," *New York Post*, Dec. 17, 1963. "William Golding," <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/6249/index.htm>.

- "William Golding, 'Lord of the Flies' Author, Home Edition," [http://www.elibrary.com/yahooligans/10044/fetch/flies\\_04.htm](http://www.elibrary.com/yahooligans/10044/fetch/flies_04.htm)
- "William Golding, 1911-1993," <http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/wgolding.htm>.
- Williams, Nigel. *William Golding's 'Lord of the Flies.'* New York: Faber & Faber, 1996.

## General Objectives

1. To define dystopia
2. To describe the physical, mental, and emotional effects of marooning
3. To pinpoint symbols of a power struggle
4. To characterize group dynamics among the oldest, middle, and youngest children
5. To list ways in which random murder reveals deep-seated evil
6. To account for misgivings about location and rescue
7. To question the value of celebrating an animal's death
8. To assess the harm responsibility does to an immature mind
9. To isolate moments of disillusion, innocence, and fatigue
10. To account for an ominous tone and atmosphere

## Specific Objectives

1. To characterize Jack's ambition
2. To compare Simon, Piggy, Samneric, Percival, and Roger as survivors
3. To characterize the relationship between Jack and Ralph
4. To comprehend nighttime sources of bad dreams and visions of beasties
5. To list reasons that Ralph becomes a hunted animal
6. To explain how the rules of order give way to island chaos
7. To account for the symbolic names of Simon, Piggy, Jack Merridew, and Samneric.
8. To contrast island games with the pig hunt
9. To analyze Simon's role as prophet and martyr
10. To characterize the emotional upheaval in Ralph when he is rescued

## Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of William Golding's novel, present the following terms and applications:

**Allegory:** a literary work that functions on two or more levels of meaning by comparing objects to symbols beyond the scope of the work. The structure of *Lord of the Flies* points to a deliberate symbolic superstructure. Jack's masculine name and perverted form of leadership links him with dark forces, which cause him to paint himself, arm for the hunt, and lead his band into a rocky hideout and into the forest in search of meat. In contrast, Ralph and his lieutenant, Piggy, thrive in the idyllic surroundings of lagoon, pink granite rock, and beach huts. When the opposing forces clash, the strength of evil overcomes the innocent idealism of Piggy, but fails to quell Ralph, a wiry survivor whose native intelligence keeps him out of harm's way. Objects that enhance the struggle between good and evil include the conch, plane, parachute, and broken glasses, emblems of failed technology, and the wind and tide, the gentle earth powers that accept the bodies of Simon and Piggy and restore the beach to sandy whiteness.

**Bildungsroman:** [bihl' duhnz . roh . mahn] literally a "formation novel," which describes the coming-of-age of an untried or naive youth. The emergence of Ralph as an idealist and group leader and Jack as a rebel pits the two boys in a perpetual battle for primacy. Through experience, Ralph adapts to the role of protector of the weak and rational savior of the survivors. A symbol of life forces, he learns to build, comfort, nurture, and unify. The opposing death force, Jack, who develops into a killer, longs for the thrill of the chase and the glory of stalking and subduing an animal. The arrival of the cruiser officer, *a deus ex machina* or unforeseen rescuer, halts the brief study of the two boys before they can complete their battle for control.

**Irony:** an implied discrepancy between what is said or done and what is meant. The end of the marooning derives, not from Ralph's rational urging for a signal fire, but from Jack's out-of-control hunters and the roaring forest fire that forces Ralph into flight for his life. At the appearance of a grownup, the boys shrink from larger-than-life

characterization back to their childish pre-island selves. The scruffy choirboy with broken glasses dangling from his belt is no longer the savage aggressor, and Ralph, the voice for sanity and democracy, can do no more than weep from relief at sight of the cruiser and from sorrow that Piggy did not survive to be rescued. The officer, who misunderstands the situation, pictures the boys' behaviors as demonstrations of weakness, which subvert the picture of stoic young Englishmen. Ironically, he has no clue to the intense images of human nature that preceded his arrival. Thus, he has no inkling of the struggle between savagery and civilization that Golding suggests is a pervasive human burden.

## Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* should include these aspects:

### Themes

- disaster
- isolation
- survival
- power
- rebellion
- violence
- totemism
- self-knowledge
- guilt
- coercion
- rescue
- grief

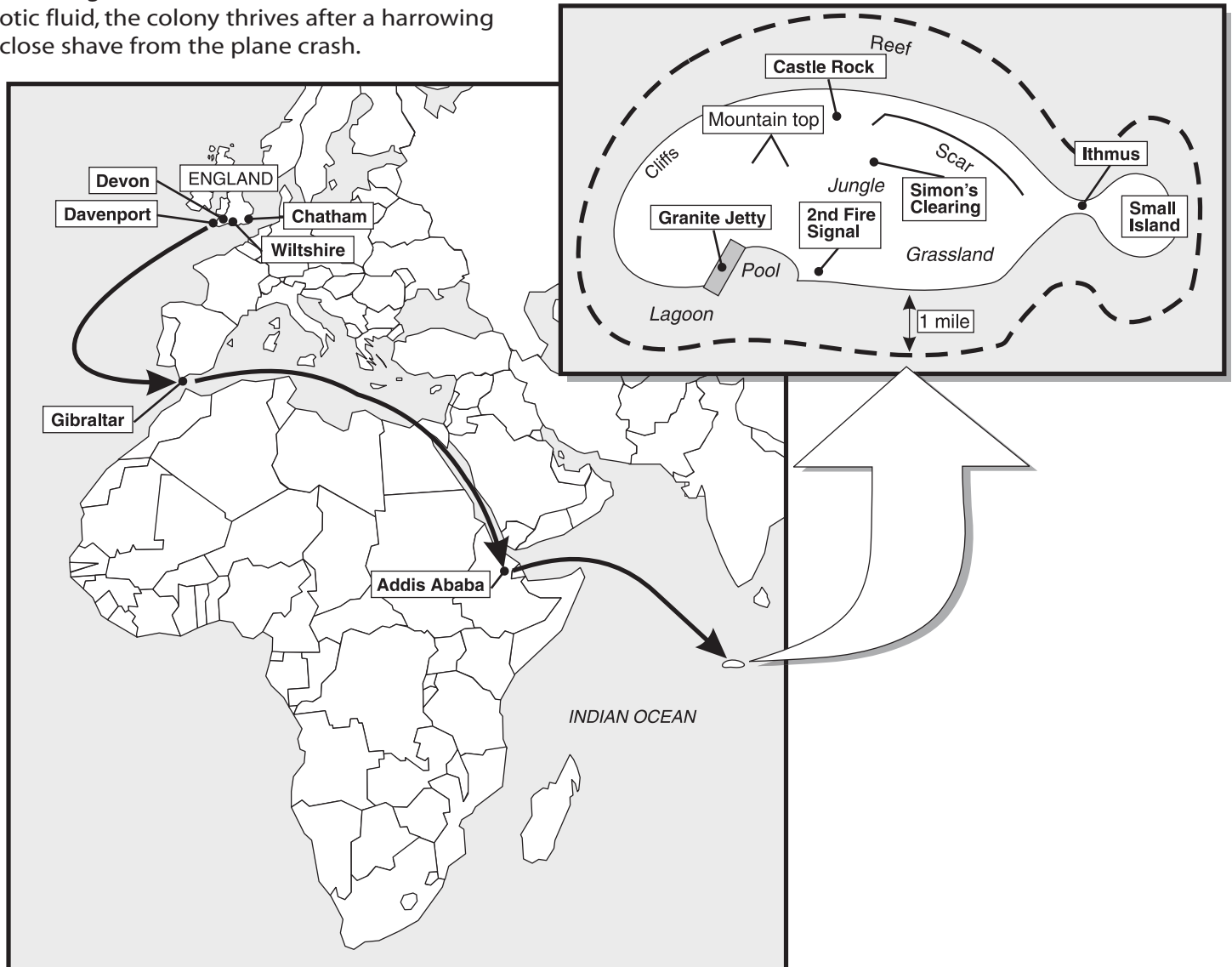
### Motifs

- coping with the aftermath of war
- undisciplined children
- development of democracy
- bipolar political struggle
- celebrating victory
- taking responsibility for actions
- grieving the loss of a friend

## The Importance of Setting

The milieu of *Lord of the Flies* is a fictional microcosm more in keeping with psychology than topography. The flight carries the boys to Gibraltar, a rocky link between Europe and Africa, the standard geographical icons of enlightenment and savagery. The boys visited Addis Ababa, another location linked to Africa, the continent that England and other European powers colonized in previous centuries to extract the raw wealth of a preindustrial society. Apparently, the plane travels east and crashes on an uncharted island in the Indian Ocean or perhaps the Pacific Ocean. The terrain of the island suits the survivors by providing warm sands, fruit, fresh water, palms, and temperate lagoon, which is cut off from heavy surf by a surrounding reef. Like a fetus bathed in warm amniotic fluid, the colony thrives after a harrowing close shave from the plane crash.

The topographical elements—scar, pink granite, rock fort, grasslands, and jungle—are unremarkable for the locale, yet they comprise the background of tragedy. Far from the placid shore, Simon withdraws to study the evil beastie and Jack leads his hellions in search of adventure. Laden with meat, they return to the shore for a victory celebration that precipitates Simon's death. Later forays from one geographical extreme to the other violate the human balance, pitting peacemakers against brigands, gatherers against hunters. The upshot of Ralph and Piggy's penetration of hostile territory is Piggy's demise and Ralph's introduction to the island's heart of darkness.



## Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page numbers are given so that you can note the context from which the item is taken.

1. Ralph used one hand as a fulcrum and pressed down with the other till the shell rose, dripping, and Piggy could make a grab. (Chapter 1, p. 16)  
*(Ralph turns his two hands into a lever, a mechanism that directs muscle power to force the shell out of the lagoon. The act is ironic in that Ralph employs a primitive engineering device to uproot an object which, for a time, unites the boys in a democracy. Another irony lies in its delicate cream and pink beauty, which contrasts with the blood-red savagery that swirls about its demise.)*
2. "It's like in a book."  
At once there was a clamor.  
"Treasure Island—"  
"Swallows and Amazons—"  
"Coral Island—" (Chapter 2, p. 34-35)  
*(In their innocence, the boys liken their abrupt evacuation to a coral island to adventure books popular with young male readers, including Arthur Ransome's Swallows and Amazons, R. M. Ballantyne's Coral Island, and Robert Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island. The boys naively conclude: "This is our island. It's a good island. Until the grownups come to fetch us we'll have fun.")*
3. "My father's in the Navy. He said there aren't any unknown islands left. He says the Queen has a big room full of maps and all the islands in the world are drawn there. So the Queen's got a picture of this island." (Chapter 2, p. 37)  
*(At the time this novel was published, Queen Elizabeth II had been on the throne for only a year, following the death of George VI. Like other adults mentioned in the discussion, she represents rescue and return to normalcy, which the boys are starting to miss. Ralph falls back confidently on the adult world when he promises, "And sooner or later a ship will put in here. It might even be Daddy's ship. So you see, sooner or later, we shall be rescued.")*
4. "We're English, and the English are best at everything. So we've got to do the right things." (Chapter 2, p. 42)  
*(Jack Merridew obviously lacks an understanding of democracy. In his ignorance, he reduces the matters of order and rationality*

*to a chauvinistic belief in nationhood. His childish overconfidence belies the dark treachery and sadism that become his trademark.)*

5. A tree exploded in the fire like a bomb. (Chapter 2, p. 46)  
*(As the children realize that the boy with the mulberry-colored birthmark has disappeared, the scene turns into a menacing tableau: the exotic eden bursts like the bombs that threatened England. Like multiple serpents of the garden, "tall swathes of creepers rose for a moment into view, agonized, and went down again." Instinctively, the smaller children scream, "Look at the snakes!" The gentle pink and blue of sand, lagoon, and sky give way to a lurid red glow from the setting sun. In the distance, thunder sounds ominously.)*
6. "Meetings. Don't we love meetings? Every day. Twice a day. We talk." (Chapter 3, p. 51)  
*(Prefatory to one of the early confrontations between Ralph and Jack, Jack, hot and thirsty from the rigors of the hunt, swallows a much-needed drink of water while Ralph and Simon stabilize a thatched hut. Ralph, immersed in his role as spokesman, falls prey to one of organized society's weaknesses—bureaucracy for its own sake. Jack, obsessed with the "compulsion to track down and kill," tries to convey his purpose, which is diametrically opposed to Ralph's organizing, building, and gathering. Because Ralph needles him for failing to kill a pig, Jack explodes with anger. The two, representing variant roles in society, scrap over the need for meat as opposed to the need for shelter, which will lessen the boys' nightmares by protecting them from the dark and bad weather. For the time being, Jack and Ralph end their debate amicably.)*
7. "Things are breaking up. I don't understand why. We began well; we were happy. And then—" (Chapter 5, p. 82)  
*(At a crucial point in the plot, Ralph, saddened by failed signal fire, wearied by myriad details of governance, and angered that Jack has attacked Piggy and broken one lens of his glasses, calls an unprecedented late meeting. He covers mundane matters, particularly the need for sanitation, before tackling the real issue. With a saddened heart he announces that there is a breakdown in their society and that he has no ready answers to rebuild it. Altruistically, he urges, "we can start again and be careful about things like the fire. . . . And be happy.")*
8. By him stood Piggy still holding out the talisman, the fragile, shining beauty of the shell. (Chapter 11, p. 180)  
*(To revitalize the boys' grasp on civilization, Piggy clutches the conch, his magic charm against the hunters' savagery, but the tribe has bypassed opportunities to avert disaster. As primal*



sounds intone “an incantation of hatred,” Roger positions the rock that will shatter not only the shell, but also its holder. In the next instant, Piggy and shell are no more and barbarity controls the island.)

9. “Might it not be possible to walk boldly into the fort, say—“I’ve got pax,” laugh lightly and sleep among the others? Pretend they were still boys, schoolboys who had said, “Sir, yes, Sir”—and worn caps?” (Chapter 12, p. 186) *(Ralph, reduced to a hunted quarry, decimates the grinning pig skull, then waits for nightfall. Alienated from the others, he is doubly alone on this isolated island, bereft of Piggy, his co-commander, who has died hideously. Like a child, Ralph proposes an immature form of truce to the events that have engulfed the boys. Imagining that he can call “peace” and return to the previous level of camaraderie, he represses the savagery he has witnessed so he can be a normal boy again.)*
10. “I should have thought that a pack of British boys—you’re all British, aren’t you?—would have been able to put up a better show than that—I mean—” (Chapter 12, p. 201- 202) *(Ironically, the officer who arrives from the cutter makes a chauvinistic remark that duplicates Jack’s statement in #4 above. He misconstrues the boys’ activities and teases them about killings during their “war.” Jack, reduced once more to a “little boy who wore the remains of an extraordinary black cap on his red hair” no longer menaces his rival. Ralph, inarticulate in his explanation of how their order deteriorated to rout and riot, tries to explain. The officer, still patronizing the boys, labels their activities, “Jolly good show. Like the Coral Island.”)*

## Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages from the novel.

### Questions 1 - 5 Literal Level

1. Describe the setting. *(The novel, set on an unidentified part of the Indian or Pacific Ocean, takes place on a boat-shaped coral island filled with natural loveliness. A mile from the outer rim of the island lies a reef. The inner ring of water forms a warm lagoon that is safe for play and swimming; nearby is a convenient platform of pink granite surrounded by palms. At one end of the island lies a separate island, which is actually attached by a slim rocky isthmus. Surrounding the stretch of beach grow plants indigenous to the*

*tropics—snaky creepers, coconut palms, banana trees, a shrub covered with fragrant, candle-shaped buds, and other jungle undergrowth.*

*Man-made, ignoble disturbances of nature stand out against the edenic grandeur of the island. Far in the jungle the hunters raise a totem to the dead pig. Distant from the crudely formed huts, surrounding rocks serve as the survivors’ latrine. A quarter mile of the island greenery is marred by fire; in addition there is a scar made by the fuselage of the plane when it crashed and broke apart. Rising from the island is a mountain, which gives the boys a good view of the terrain and provides a suitable spot for a signal fire. On the far end of the island rises Castle Rock, which the hunters make into a stronghold, where they commit murder.)*

2. Explain Golding’s use of literary devices. *(Much of the power of Lord of the Flies depends on William Golding’s skill with literary devices. For example,*
  - a. Irony: “What have you been doing? Having a war or something?” (p. 201) *(The naval officer, who patronizes the children for their savage activities, carries with him a revolver; his boat contains a sub-machine gun. He obviously overlooks the savagery of grownups, whose atomic war is the reason the boys were evacuated from England.)*
  - b. Allusion: “Treasure Island—”  
“Swallows and Amazons—”  
“Coral Island—” (p. 34-35) *(Golding refers to idyllic adventure novels with which the boys are familiar.)*
  - c. Simile: The Lord of the Flies was expanding like a balloon. (p. 143) *(Through the eyes of Simon, who suffers from seizures and possesses an artist’s eye for surrealism, the pig’s head appears to grow more menacing.)*
  - d. Symbol: Meanwhile Ralph continued to blow till voices shouted in the forest. (p. 18) *By him stood Piggy still holding out the talisman, the fragile, shining beauty of the shell. (p. 180) (The commanding sound of the conch, which symbolizes order and authority, draws the scattered survivors from all parts of the area. At Piggy’s death, order, too, falls victim as the shell lies shattered.)*
  - e. Slang: “Whee-oh!”  
“Wacco!”  
“Bong!”  
“Doink!” ( p. 33) *(The interjections and boyish slang give an idea of the emotional state of the survivors as their moods vary from childish enthusiasm to brooding fear to overt savagery.)*

- f. Repetition: *Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!* (p. 152)  
*(Like atavistic hunters, the boys join the rhythmic dance which impels them to savage a helpless boy.)*
  - g. Personification: Then he backed away, keeping his face to the skull that lay grinning at the sky. (p. 185)  
*(The pig, dismembered and bearing little resemblance to its original form, takes on evil features and appears to leer upward.)*
  - h. Alliteration: The stake was in his hands, the stake sharpened at both ends, the stake that vibrated so wildly, that grew long, short, light, heavy, light again. (p. 199)  
*(Golding emphasizes Ralph's physical response to weapons and pursuit by a string of sibilant descriptions.)*
  - i. Comic Relief: "We wanted smoke—" "Now look—" (p. 45)  
*(Samneric, like parts of a whole, speak antiphonally, as though they share one brain and one point of view.)*
  - j. Theme: And in the middle of them, with filthy body, matted hair, and unwiped nose, Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy. (p. 202)  
*(Golding concludes with a clear statement of theme as perceived by Ralph, the most sensitive and the most traumatized of the survivors.)*
3. What is the dramatic situation at the beginning of the novel?  
*(During an atomic war that threatens England, a group of schoolboys varying in ages from primary grades to preadolescence is evacuated by plane, which has flown to Gibraltar and Addis Ababa before crashing over an island in the ocean. The children recall bits and pieces of their departure from the fuselage, which broke away from the burning nose of the plane and slid over the island before coming safely to a halt. They remember that adults directed their evacuation with megaphones and are dimly aware that the nose of the plane, containing pilot and other boys, was washed out to sea.)*
4. What causes the boys' terror?  
*(The children, parted from parents and other authority figures, fear the unknown. In the darkness of a deserted island, the littluns see shadows of vines in the trees and fear that snake-like beings or beasties are after them. When one mulberry-marked child gives an eye-witness account of a beastie in the trees, the others give way to fear. Simon, the truth-seeker, braves the jungle and confronts the fearful object, which bows and sighs in the trees. He realizes that the beastie is a decaying corpse, entangled by parachute cords in such a way that it cannot fall free. He*

*loosens the lines, then totters away from the reeking carrion to tell the others that they need not fear the parachutist.*

*Meanwhile, around the campfire, Jack's hunters stir up another kind of fear—the suppression of the weak by the merging of a powerful amoral coalition. Led by Jack and Roger, his sadistic lieutenant, the group strikes out against unnamed forces. So mesmerizing is their chant and rhythmic circle that they draw Ralph and Piggy, the contemplative members of the group, into their ritual. Combining voices and weapons against the unnamed intruder, the group murders the gentle Simon.*

*The next morning, daylight brings remorseful awareness to Piggy and Ralph, who confront a more debilitating fear—an evaluation of their own consciences, which blame them for taking part in mindless slaughter. Piggy, claiming that he saw little of the event through his single-lensed glasses, suggests that it was all an accident. Ralph takes little comfort from his rationalization.*

*After Piggy's murder, Ralph alone maintains his humanity as he darts through the jungle, reminding himself to think as he evades the double-ended spears. With a final cry for mercy, he dashes toward the beach and finds himself face-to-face with the rescue he has planned for. Unable to cope with the deaths of Simon and Piggy, he weeps.)*

5. What is Simon's role in the story?  
*(A poignantly sweet and nonaggressive character, Simon's vision contrasts with Piggy's intellectualism, Ralph's leadership, and Jack and Roger's barbarism. The representation of soul, Simon has a pure heart that leads him into the dark jungle to locate truth and end the sweep of fear that robs the children of restful sleep. A humanistic, prophetic, Christlike character, he acknowledges the dignity of the dead parachutist, even though the foulness of rotting flesh causes him to vomit.*

*On his return to the beach, lightning flares overhead, presaging the release of energy that is about to stir the hunters. Against shattering noise from the heavens, Simon is unable to make himself heard and fails to communicate his message. Symbolizing a doomed messianic effort to restore order and relieve the others of degeneracy, Simon is bludgeoned and pierced with spears. His small form lies at the water's edge, grows silver in the moonlight, and merges into the natural cleansing of the tide, which draws him out to sea for an appropriate burial only a short time after he accorded the same end to the parachutist.)*

**Questions 6-8 Interpretive Level**

6. Discuss the importance of colors in the narration.

*(Much of the novel is marked by bright colors, shimmering mirages in the hot tropical sun, or enveloping darkness, which removes color from the children's perception. As morning takes shape on the horizon, first pearl, then opalescence appear in the sunlight. A red and yellow bird flits past, contrasting clusters of white butterflies. Surrounding vegetation shows feathery green against gray trunks.)*

*Against the pulsating peacock blue of lagoon, dark blue, foam-flecked sea, and brilliant sky lies the bright pink of the platform, a natural jetty that becomes the boys' assembly point. This color intensifies around the fire in later scenes, which reveal the innate evil the boys release from their psyches. On Castle Rock, a red shade permeates the outcroppings, which become the murder weapon by which Roger, red-haired Jack's assistant, kills Piggy. As Piggy's crushed skull spills open on the red rock in the sea below, "stuff came out and turned red.")*

7. Explain how Jack is able to overcome Ralph's control of the boys.

*(Ralph involves the boys in a true democracy in which each can speak, but must first obtain the conch as a symbol of order. The boys, whose attention span is too short to tolerate lengthy discussions of what they should do and how they should do it, wiggle and chafe at the annoying proprieties of assembly. Jack, who bridles at the thought of Ralph in control, reminds the group that he is chapter chorister and head boy. Boasting that he can sing high C, he accepts an aggressive role, starts the fire, and leads the hunters to find meat.)*

*After divesting themselves of shorts, school sweaters, and other garments, the boys mimic Jack and begin shucking off the constraints of civilization. The exercise of limbs in long climbs and chases down the pig runs stave off boredom and focus the boys' minds on purposeful action. Gradually, they tire of Ralph's insistence on sanitation and sturdy huts. Jack's leadership brings more satisfying activity and whimsical release from their homesickness and anxieties through face paint, dancing, totemism, and ritual. Fulfilled by the slaying of a sow, the hunters bond completely with Jack.)*

8. Explain where evil is present on the island.

*(As Jack's control replaces Ralph's institution of democracy, the evil inherent in human beings surfaces in the hunters. Demonstrated earlier in the jeering cruelty to Piggy, an outcast bullied because of his glasses, asthma, sissy behavior, and fat, Jack's evil takes on a more virulent form during the hunt. As the boys act out their fantasies of a fort complete with gang leader and guards, they tie up Samneric and stand by while Roger murders Piggy.)*

*Immediately, Jack directs their murderous motives toward Ralph, whom Jack labels a pariah. The boys, who once had names and personalities, merge into a faceless, unidentified horde that terrorizes Samneric and surges through the jungle after Ralph. Like the buzzing flies that infest the carrion sow's head, the hunters cluster instinctively around Jack, the monstrous devil whom they emulate. When rescue ends their hellish pursuit, they turn back into boys, "appearing now, tiny tots some of them, brown, with the distended bellies of small savages." Jack, the autocrat and embodiment of villainy, changes back into a "little boy who wore the remains of an extraordinary black cap on his red hair and who carried the remains of a pair of spectacles at his waist . . ."*

*Ralph, who evolves into the group's conscience, has no words to explain the raging fire and his pursuers' rampant barbarity. Struck dumb, he allows cleansing teardrops to flow down his cheeks, like the waters that carried both Simon and Piggy to a final rest. Central to his grief is a realization of "the darkness of man's heart," a spontaneous regression that is the only explanation of Piggy's murder.)*

**Questions 9 and 10 Critical Level**

9. Discuss why critics refer to this novel as an allegorical fable.

*(Lord of the Flies fits the definition of allegory: an extended image in which people, things, and actions stand for meanings that exist beyond the novel itself. By representing one thing in the form of another, the author shapes the whole work into a single abstraction, a microcosm of lawlessness and barbarity in human society. Without giving up interest in the basic story, Golding leads readers to an understanding of the overriding moral truth—that evil is an integral part of humanity.)*

*As the events of the story separate the boys from their normal hold over wrongdoing, the action turns from desert island adventure story to didactic allegory. The author deliberately makes a statement about vengeance, jealousy, cruelty, and war, all of which permeate the novel. The submergence of the children in the darker side of their personalities allows them to act out a parallel to the war that serves as a framework to the novel. Ironically, the story ends with a false rescue in their departure from the hellishness of child-made evil into the more menacing atmosphere of atomic war.)*

10. Why is this novel counted a part of anti-war literature?

*(Golding, by creating a microcosm that deteriorates from childish frolic to satanic ritual and murder, mirrors any society that lapses from rationality into barbarism, social disintegration, and anarchy. Although Golding holds the atomic war far in the distance, the situation that brings about the marooning remains on the periphery. As the scene shifts abruptly from man-hunters*

stalking Ralph to the arrival of the naval cutter, complete with sub-machine gun mounted in the stern, the author indicates that the children are unable to escape war, whether created in miniature on the island or in the skies over England, where atomic bombs decimate the population. As the *Lord of the Flies* chortles to Simon about the inevitability of humanity's destructive self, "Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!"

**Questions 11 to 16—Creative Level**

11. Explain in a short speech why critics link the novel to the biblical account of Adam and Eve and Noah and the flood.
12. Make a bulletin board display explaining the following phenomena: mirage, coral reef, lagoon, wildfire, and decay.
13. Lead a panel discussion of the irony of the final fire, which threatens Ralph's life, leads the boy to ultimate barbarity, destroys the island refuge, but draws the rescuers to the island.
14. Propose an explanation of the following character traits:
  - a. Piggy's cowardice
  - b. Ralph's disillusionment
  - c. Piggy's gluttony
  - d. Simon's mysticism
  - e. Jack's jealousy
  - f. Roger's savagery
  - g. the fear of the boy with the mulberry-colored birthmark
  - h. Samneric's duplicity
  - i. Roger and Maurice's bullying
  - j. Ralph's homesickness
15. In a theme, discuss the interrelations of spirit, earth, air, fire, and water to the themes of the novel.
16. Discuss the author's purpose in marooning children from adult society as a means of examining human behavior.

**Across the Curriculum**

**Cinema**

1. View films and television series on dystopias such as *Brave New World*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *The Net*, *1984*, *The Planet of the Apes*, *THX-1138*, and *The Twilight Zone*. Discuss with a small group the weak points of tyranny, dictatorship, and democracy.
2. View films and television series on people in some way isolated from society, such as *Now*, *Casablanca*, *Citizen Kane*, *Dances With Wolves*, *Farewell to the King*, *Hawaii*, *Highlander*, *The Heart of Darkness*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Lord Jim*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *The Sand Pebbles*. Discuss with a small group the weak points of tyranny, dictatorship, and democracy.
3. Compare one of the film versions of *Lord of the Flies* with another film about the aftermath of a devastating war, such as *Damnation Alley*, *The Day After*, *On the Beach*, and *The Postman*.

**Science and Health**

1. Compose a lecture on the causes of emotional breakdown. Contrast the pressures on Simon, Piggy, Jack, Percival, and Ralph. Comment on the sources of Ralph's tears as he confronts the officer from the cutter and on the weeping of Piggy, Simon, Percival, and Jack.
2. List the dangers of bullying, vengeance, gang behavior, and coercion. Explain why Jack fails to win the vote for chief and why other boys are mesmerized by his primitivism.
3. Explain how the combined drain of myopia and asthma sideline Piggy and reduce his value to athletes like Jack.
4. Explain to a small group what survival techniques Ralph employs to make life on the island more regular and less hazardous, such as building huts, explaining sanitation measures, tending smaller boys, and organizing an island government system.

**Geography**

1. Create a mural or web site that introduces these settings: Addis Ababa, Gibraltar, Devon, Wiltshire, Chatham, and Devonport. Sketch a

coral island in the Indian or Pacific Ocean marked by granite outcrops, jungle, pool, grassland, scar, cliffs, lagoons, pig runs, nearby island, and an outer rim of reef.

2. Compose a paragraph contrasting the topography of the beach with Jack's stronghold at Castle Rock. Explain why Golding links Jack's hunters with rugged terrain, while Ralph and Piggy flourish in a peaceful pool near palm trees and fresh fruit. Contrast Simon's clearing with other settings.

**Art**

1. Using desktop publishing or other artistic media, design a road sign indicating the Queen's map bunker, an in-flight menu, a letterhead for a British boys school, a placard or banner welcoming the boys back to England, a poster on the threat of atomic war, pamphlets on survival techniques or a boys choir, business cards for a candy shop or a naval recruiter, an announcement or television news item about the boys' return and the passengers who died on the island, or a forum schedule for psychologists treating the boys for grief or post traumatic shock syndrome.
2. Lead a panel discussion of contrasting colors, particularly the blue lagoon, colorful sunsets, green jungle tendrils, pink granite, and white sand.
3. Research and illustrate the type of plane and/or boat from the book, with complete identification of their various parts and equipment.

**Law**

1. Launch an Internet web site inviting readers to explain the emergence of chaos after Ralph and Piggy establish order. Propose other measures that the two might have initiated to keep the little boys safe and the hunters from strong arming peaceful survivors.
2. How does current law treat children who kill people? What would happen to Jack and the others if they were subject to today's laws.

3. Research and debate punishments/treatments in various societies around the world in reference to murder of peers and/or children.

**Economics**

1. Determine the cost of a rescue operation in search of the downed plane and the dead parachutist. Add figures on the medical examination, grief counseling, and treatment of the rescued boys.
2. Explain why the island needs no economy or legal tender.

**Social Studies**

1. Write a brief address explaining the need for moral education. Cite the qualities of civilization that schools should teach, for example, fair play, cleanliness, nonviolence, and compassion for smaller, weaker, or sick individuals such as Samneric and the other littluns, Percival, Piggy, and Simon.
2. List ways that boys like Jack and Roger grow into monsters rather than consolers, leaders, and builders like Ralph and Piggy.
3. Research the taboos, mores, etc. of island societies, especially isolated ones. Comment on how these rules maintain law and order in these societies.

**Psychology**

1. Make contrasting chalkboard definitions of bullying, competitiveness, guilt, treachery, coercion, and terror. Explain how the terms define the controlling emotions felt by Simon, Samneric, Ralph, Piggy, Jack, Roger, Percival, and the littluns.
2. Determine what factors force the boys to climb the mountain. Summarize their plans to keep a signal fire going and to locate the monster to end the younger boys' nightmares and weeping.
3. List causes and symptoms of strain, especially exaggerated fears, diarrhea, sleeplessness, bad dreams, heavy responsibility, isolation, and mental and physical demands. Suggest some short-term countermeasures, such as

sleep, outdoor exercise, games and sports, conversation, singing, dancing, pets, meditation or prayer, cooking, grooming, and crafts.

4. Compose a short speech in which you describe how violence, paranoia, guilt, and deception have altered the boys' lives, compromised friendships, and lessened chances of survival.

**Mathematics and Computers**

1. Using desktop publishing, compose an annotated time line of the atomic age. Include Marie Curie's research, splitting of the atom, the Manhattan Project, Albert Einstein's warning to Franklin Roosevelt that an atomic weapon threatens the world, and the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

**Music**

1. Work with a group to list music and soothing sounds to accompany a staging of peaceful moments in *Lord of the Flies*. Consider bird calls, flute music, ocean breakers, rain, harp melodies, and exotic instrumentals.

**Language and Speech**

1. Compose individual posters explaining these terms: Berengaria, cutter, epaulette, incantation, distended bellies, cruiser, fathom, crepitation, cordon, lair, diddle, ululation, antiphonal speech, pax, tendrils, talisman, chasm, polyp, vicarage, effigy, ha'porth, rugby, hams, taboo, pig trotters, node, mulberry, bastion, matins, precentor, hambone frill, typhoon, mirage, diaphragm, lagoon, squid, and "Three Blind Mice."
2. Characterize in separate paragraphs the difference between killing for pleasure and killing to survive. Discuss why Ralph and Piggy shoulder so large a share of the guilt for Simon's murder.
3. Rewrite a section of dialogue from the book, replacing the British terms in the book with current slang and dialect.

**Literature**

1. Read aloud from nonfiction, novels, plays, and stories about isolation and survival. Include John Glenn's "A Day in Space," Lois Lowry's *The Giver*, Gore Vidal's *A Visit to a Small Planet*, Esther Hautzig's *The Endless Steppe*, Elie Wiesel's *Night*, Paula Fox's *Slave Dancer*, Karel Capek's *R.U.R.*, Yoko Kawashima Watkins' *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Theodora Kroeber's *Ishi*, Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game*, Margaret Walker's *Jubilee*, Avi's *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Gary Paulsen's *Nightjohn* and *Hatchet*, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James Houston's *Farewell to Manzanar*, Jack London's *Call of the Wild*, and Barbara Kingsolver's *The Bean Trees*, *The Poisonwood Bible*, and *Animal Dreams*.
2. Using examples from *Lord of the Flies*, define dystopia. Differentiate between utopia and dystopia.
3. Draw a character web representing the interconnectedness between the boys, their parents, Piggy's aunt, queen, parachutist, and officer from the cutter. Show the division of survivors into peace lovers and hunters.

**History and Current Events**

1. Examine the growth of various movements against nuclear weapons, such as Ban-the-Bomb and Citizens for Nuclear Disarmament.
2. Re-create by time line, webbing, flow chart, mural, or web site the post-World War II era and the emergence of atomic powers, including Russia, China, France, and India.

**Education**

1. Brainstorm ways of returning the children to normality, for example, by treating them to Boy Scout camp, visits to patriotic sites and museums, opportunities to enjoy peaceful hobbies and activities, healthful diet and rest, and discussion groups among other survivors of the atomic war.

## Student Involvement Activities

1. Organize a panel discussion of human nature. Discuss how William Golding's novel isolates the potential for good and evil in most of his characters, including the parachutist and naval officer.
2. Launch a discussion group to determine why Ralph weeps as he is being rescued. Explain why the loss of Piggy burdens him more than the other deaths among the group.
3. List questions to ask at an interrogation of the officer who locates the boys. Determine why Ralph was pushed so near his limit, why the rules changed at the whim of the hunters, why Jack discounts Piggy and the conch, how and why the hunters stole the spectacles, why the hunters preferred Castle Rock to huts on the beach, how the forest fire alerted the crew of the cutter, and why the officer misconstrues the events he interrupted. Append a summation of uncivilized behaviors, including attacks and raids on unarmed boys, tying up and intimidating outsiders, reenactment of the pig's death, and Roger's murder of Piggy.
4. Using desktop publishing, compose a web site on the themes and symbols that intrigue readers, especially pink granite, boat-shaped island, broken lens, entangled parachutist, snake dreams, conch, wildfire, seizures, pig's head on a stake, and the Lord of the Flies.
5. Explain with a collage, shadow pictures, or mobile how isolation, fear, loss, homesickness, and lack of discipline bring out the best and worst in young survivors.
6. Dramatize a meeting between parents and sons. Express mutual concerns for safety of the family and nation and an explanation of the plane crash.
7. Create a list of images from the novel that appeal to the five senses. Use these as models: "Before them, something like a great ape was sitting asleep with its head between its knees," "He passed his tongue tentatively over

his teeth and lips and heard far off the ululation of the pursuers," "Apart from food and sleep, they found time for play, aimless and trivial, in the white sand by the water," "His head opened and stuff came out and turned red," and "Wave after wave, Ralph followed the rise and fall until something of the remoteness of the sea numbed his brain."

8. Write a scene in which Ralph and Jack attend Piggy's funeral. Stress their regret that Jack and Roger chose evil over good and that Piggy and Simon's lives ended so tragically.
9. Discuss the effects of warmth, fresh fruit, sand, and shelter on the littluns. Explain why they choose to play rather than to concentrate on island meetings.
10. Draw a cause-and-effect diagram illustrating the changes that take place in Ralph and Jack. Comment on the constant struggle for possession of the conch and on Ralph's fear that discipline is breaking down.

## Vocabulary

Match each boldfaced synonym in the passage below with the original term from the list that follows.

accord	cynically	goaded	mirage	shimmering
acid	eclipsed	immense	morrow	tremble
antiphonal	essayed	impenetrable	partially	ululation
butts	fluke	inquisitive	quenched	unmenacing
charred	formation	jeer	reef	unquenchable
compact	fulcrum	jetty	reeled	vegetation
cordon	gibbering	leaden	scoured	wrenched

They set off along the beach in (1) **procession**. Ralph went first, limping a little, his spear carried over one shoulder. He saw things (2) **incomplete**, through the (3) **shaking** of the heat haze over the flashing sands, and his own long hair and injuries. Behind him came the twins, worried now for a while but full of (4) **boundless** vitality. They said little but trailed the (5) **bases** of their wooden spears; for Piggy had found that, by looking down and shielding his tired sight from the sun, he could just see these moving along the sand. . . The boys made a (6) **tight** little group that moved over the beach, four plate-like shadows dancing and mingling beneath them. There was no sign left of the storm, and the beach was swept clean like a blade that has been (7) **scrubbed**. The sky and the mountain were at an (8) **huge** distance, (9) **glistening** in the heat; and the (10) **shoal** was lifted by (11) **illusion**, floating in a kind of silver pool halfway up the sky.

They passed the place where the tribe had danced. The (12) **burned** sticks still lay on the rocks where the rain had (13) **doused** them but the sand by the water was smooth again. They passed this in silence. No one doubted that the tribe would be found at the Castle Rock and when they came in sight of it they stopped with one (14) **will**. The densest tangle on the island, a mass of twisted stems, black and green and (15) **unyielding**, lay on their left and tall grass swayed before them. Now Ralph went forward.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_



## Comprehension Test A

### Part I: Matching (30 points)

Match the following descriptions with characters. Choose your answers from the list of names below. You may use some of the answers more than once and some not at all.

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| _____ 1. suffers a seizure.               | A. queen             |
| _____ 2. has a map room.                  | B. Roger             |
| _____ 3. paints his face.                 | C. father            |
| _____ 4. recites his address.             | D. Percival          |
| _____ 5. hangs like a puppet on a string. | E. birthmarked boy   |
| _____ 6. treats a nephew to candy.        | F. auntie            |
| _____ 7. locates a conch.                 | G. parachutist       |
| _____ 8. steals broken glasses.           | H. Lord of the Flies |
| _____ 9. speaks to Simon in the clearing. | I. Piggy             |
| _____ 10. longs for a bath and haircut.   | J. Ralph             |
| _____ 11. turns away from boys weeping.   | K. Samneric          |
| _____ 12. loosens a rock.                 | L. naval officer     |
| _____ 13. speak antiphonally.             | M. Jack              |
| _____ 14. is killed on the sand.          | N. Maurice           |
| _____ 15. demands a second vote.          | O. Simon             |

### Part II: Identification (10 points)

Explain the significance of the following details:

1. hambone frill
2. seizure
3. smoke
4. conch
5. scar

**Comprehension Test A (Page 2)**

**Part III: Cause and Effect (20 points)**

Finish each of these statements.

1. Castle Rock is a likely stronghold because  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Jack refuses to explain his hatred of Ralph because  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The war isolates the boys because  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Jack's choirboys become his hunters because  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. The fire gets out of hand because  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. The boys build a second fire on the beach because  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Ralph explores the mountain because  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Night is harder on the boys because  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. The beast proves harmless because  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Simon is a loner because  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Part IV: Essay (40 points)**

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Account for Piggy's natural ability to counsel and advise.
2. Describe the scene just before the officer arrives.
3. Discuss the significance of Simon's confrontation with the pig head.
4. Summarize details of the victory dance and feast.
5. Explain why the hunters force Samneric to join them.

## Comprehension Test B

### Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Identify a setting that fits each of the following descriptions. Select your answers from the list that follows.

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| _____ 1. A singer faints.                            | A. scar                      |
| _____ 2. The hunters take refuge.                    | B. shore                     |
| _____ 3. Piggy is killed.                            | C. Castle Rock               |
| _____ 4. A natural jetty forms a platform.           | D. Gibraltar and Addis Ababa |
| _____ 5. Ralph carries a sleeping child.             | E. lagoon                    |
| _____ 6. Simon views flowers that look like candles. | F. clearing                  |
| _____ 7. The plane strikes the island.               | G. sea                       |
| _____ 8. The conch lies partially buried.            | H. jungle                    |
| _____ 9. Tendrils look like snakes.                  | I. hut                       |
| _____ 10. Smoke identifies a ship.                   | J. pink granite              |

### Part II: Fill-In (20 points)

Fill in the paired blanks with answers that complete each statement.

1. Ralph and \_\_\_\_\_ use \_\_\_\_\_ fronds to erect huts.
2. Roger and \_\_\_\_\_ destroy the children's \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ awaken alongside the signal fire and see the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The boys leave off their feasting and \_\_\_\_\_ and kill \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ on a stick is a sacrificial offering to the \_\_\_\_\_.

## Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

### Part III: Identification (30 points)

Place an X by statements that refer to Ralph.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Punishes himself for taking part in the ritual killing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Unties Samneric at Castle Rock.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Recalls that his father has seen the island on naval charts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Flees the hunters through smoke and flames.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Polishes the single lens.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Uses a stick to loosen a boulder.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Fears that discipline is breaking down.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Puts clay on his face.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Sits in the chief's seat to summon an assembly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Longs for a bath and haircut.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Prefers common sense and order.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Suffers asthma attacks.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Embarrasses the officer by weeping.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Leads a raid.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Loosens the strings and pushes the parachutist out to sea.

### Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. List and describe scenes in which Ralph loses his innocence.
- 2. Describe the scene in which the hunters return with the pig.
- 3. Explain why Jack is driven to kill.
- 4. Account for Percival's tears.
- 5. Compare the symbolism of fire and water.

**Answer Key**

**VOCABULARY**

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. formation    | 9. shimmering    |
| 2. partially    | 10. reef         |
| 3. tremble      | 11. mirage       |
| 4. unquenchable | 12. charred      |
| 5. butts        | 13. quenched     |
| 6. compact      | 14. accord       |
| 7. scoured      | 15. impenetrable |
| 8. immense      |                  |

**COMPREHENSION TEST A**

**Part I: Matching (30 points)**

- |      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. O | 6. F  | 11. L |
| 2. A | 7. J  | 12. B |
| 3. M | 8. M  | 13. K |
| 4. D | 9. H  | 14. I |
| 5. G | 10. J | 15. M |

**Part II: Identification (10 points)**

- The frill marks Jack and the other choirboys as a part of their uniform.
- Simon's physical handicap sets him apart as a victim and prophet.
- Smoke is a necessity as a signal to passing ships and potential rescuers that the boys are marooned on the island.
- The shell, a found treasure, becomes the chosen symbol of order and fair play.
- The scar across the island is the intrusion of the plane on nature and on the boys' innocence.

**Part III: Cause and Effect (20 points)**

Answers will vary.

**Part IV: Essay (40 points)**

Answers will vary.

**COMPREHENSION TEST B**

**Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)**

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. D | 6. F  |
| 2. C | 7. A  |
| 3. B | 8. E  |
| 4. J | 9. H  |
| 5. I | 10. G |

**Part II: Fill-in (20 points)**

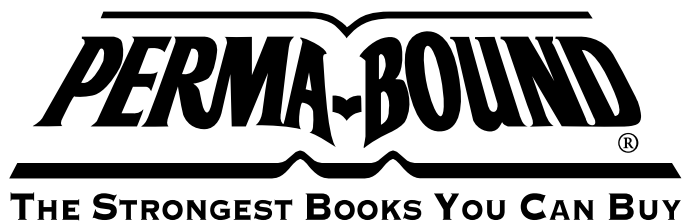
- Simon, palm
- Maurice, sand castles
- Samneric, corpse
- dancing, Simon
- head, beast

**Part III: Identification (30 points)**

- |      |      |       |
|------|------|-------|
| 1. X | 6.   | 11. X |
| 2.   | 7. X | 12.   |
| 3.   | 8.   | 13. X |
| 4. X | 9. X | 14. X |
| 5.   | 10.  | 15.   |

**Part IV: Essay (30 points)**

Answers will vary.



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