

LOTF Study Questions – Chapter 5

1. Is the island still a storybook kingdom to Ralph? What does he realize?

The island is no longer a storybook kingdom - it has been replaced by dirt and illness. Ralph realizes that he is losing control.

2. As Ralph walks along by the water, what does he resolve to do?

Ralph resolves to accomplish discipline and order.

3. What does he scold the boys about?

- failure to support any assembly decisions, especially those regarding sanitary matters

- failure to build shelters, get daily supply of drinking water or to keep the signal fire going

4. How is the fear of the boys handled?

Ralph tries to speak rationally to them, to point out that most of their fears are imagined ones.

5. What are Simon's comments on the "beast" that the boys fear? Do you think there's any truth in it?

Simon says that there is a beast to fear, it exists within their own hearts. There is truth to this - "we have nothing to fear, but fear itself".

6. How does the meeting end?

The boys, led by Jack, run off, re-enacting the pig kill. Ralph, Piggy and Simon remain.

7. Why doesn't Ralph summon the boys back to the assembly?

Ralph is afraid that if he summons and no one returns, that all order on the island will be destroyed forever.

8. Who reassures Ralph of the need for him to keep his authority as leader?

Simon

9. In this chapter, what does the darkness of night become a symbol of?

Darkness is a symbol of the confused and irrational impulses of the boys. Darkness in man can destroy him if not checked by imagination and reason.

LOTF Study Questions – Chapter 6

1. What happens while the boys are asleep?

While the boys sleep, there is a battle between air craft in the upper atmosphere above the island. A parachutist floats down to the island.

2. Ralph said, "If only they could send us something grown-up...a sign or something." What is ironic about this "sign"?

The grown-up sign that comes is a dead man, victim of the ongoing world conflict.

3. Who are the firewatchers who are frightened by the "beast"? What is interesting about their version of the "Beast"?

Sam and Eric are the watchers. They give a dead man teeth, claws, and the ability to slink through the trees in pursuit.

4. Jack shouts, "Conch! Conch! We don't need the conch any more. We know who ought to say things." What is the significance of this speech?

Jack is becoming more and more powerful, while Ralph is losing control.

5. The boys decide to hunt the beast. Where do they hunt for it and where should they have gone?

They look on the rocky tip of the mountain, rather than in the jungle.

6. For a short time, the feeling of comradeship exists again between the boys. Why?

The comradeship is a result of them working together to find the beast.

7. What is the importance of this passage: "However Simon thought of the beast, there rose before his inward sight the picture of a human at once heroic and sick."

Simon could not believe that there was a beast. He felt that it had to be a human.

8. The boys discover Castle Rock. Why does it appeal to the boys as an ideal home now?

Castle Rock represents the increasingly primitive nature of the boys. It is an ideal home for barbarians - a natural fortress with caves to hide in and boulders to roll down on enemies.

9. What is the importance of the rock being mentioned again? Is there any foreshadowing or preparation for something in the future to happen?

The reader is reminded of Jack, Simon and Ralph in Chapter One, and the destructive forces that

are at work on the island. It is foreshadowing a death of one of the boys.

LOTF Study Questions – Chapter 7

1. Only three boys seem to understand the gravity of their problems at this point in the story. Who are they?

Ralph, Simon and Piggy.

2. "The instinct to hunt and destroy a living creature is universal". Who finally realizes this? Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Ralph is the one to realize this. Is it a universal instinct, or were we made to eat plants?

3. What almost happens when the boys re-enact the hunt in a savage dance? What is this preparing us for?

The boys almost kill Robert before they realize what is happening. This prepares us for an actual killing later on.

4. Why do some of the boys go search for the beast at night, when they all feared the darkness?

The boys are attempting to show that they are not cowards.

5. Who volunteers to carry a message back to Piggy and the littl'uns? Why is he not afraid like the others?

Simon volunteers. He is not afraid because he knows that fear comes from within.

6. The pilot's body replaces the signal fire on the mountain. It also represents the opposite of fire. What is it?

The pilot represents the deterioration of human hope.

7. There is a lesson in the pilot's figure on that mountain but the boys fail to see it. Why?

The lesson is that they are all becoming less human, and more animal-like by succumbing to the pleasures of the hunt. They can't see this because they all - even Ralph - have changed.

8. What characteristic of Roger is revealed here?

Roger is an instrument of destruction, as revealed by his cruel treatment of the littl'uns.

9. Who would have found out the identity of the beast, had he been there?

Simon, as he is not afraid. He would have investigated.

LOTF Study Questions – Chapter 8

1. There is a big “blow-up” at the assembly. What does Jack do?

Jack calls for an assembly, says there is a beast and calls Ralph a coward, unfit to lead. No one, however, votes against Ralph, and Jack walks away alone.

2. What are the separate reactions of Ralph, Simon, and Piggy, after Jack leaves?

Ralph - dismay, then he regains control of himself

Simon - wants to look for the beast

Piggy - pleased, overjoyed - Jack's aggressiveness terrifies him

3. Who solves the problem of the location of the new signal fire?

Piggy suggests to build a new fire on the beach.

4. Jack and his new tribe are now established at Castle Rock with Jack in complete control. How does he solve the boys' fears of the beast and bad dreams?

Jack says that the beast will leave them alone if they leave something for it to eat.

5. Jack and his hunters now succeed in killing another pig. Is there any significance in the fact that they chose a sow to kill this time?

The sow is symbolic of motherhood and domesticity - the boys have become totally savage.

6. In describing the kill, Golding allows us to view it with detachment. How does he do it and why does he use this approach?

Golding doesn't follow the scene from the point of view of the boys, but from a high camera. He does this to allow the reader to see the blood, lust, and violence with rational detachment - the reader can draw his or her own conclusion.

7. The killing of the sow is considered to be the turning point in this book. Why do you think this is so?

The killing of the sow, of motherhood and domesticity, is the point at which the powers of destruction, embodied by Jack, triumph over the restraints of civilization, represented by Ralph.

8. The sow's head becomes a "gift" for the beast. What does it become another symbol of?

The pig's head becomes a further descent into savagery - an offering. It is a symbol of terror.

9. What is happening to Ralph and Piggy?

Ralph and Piggy discuss and try to understand what caused the break-up of the group, and the inability of the boys to organize for their own survival.

10. Simon is the type that wanders off by himself and can sit for hours, observing nature. Would you consider him to be "normal"? What, do you feel, is "normal"?

11. Simon stares at the pig's head on a stick, called "The Lord of the Flies". He has a conversation with it. What does the "beast" mean when he says, "You knew, didn't you? I'm part of you? Close, close, close: I'm the reason why it's no go? Why things are as they are?"

The Lord of the Flies is explaining that there is no sense in trying to hunt and kill the beast, as evil is within each boy.

12. The Lord of the Flies also answers the question of why the civilization of the boys is a failure. Why?

He says civilization failed due to the destructive element within each boy.

13. "Lord of the Flies" is a literal translation of the word Beelzebub. Who is he? What did he represent? What does he represent here?

Beelzebub is the name of the devil in the Bible. He represented the evil of sin. Here he represents the evil of unreason.

14. Is the speech of the Lord of the Flies actual or a figment of Simon's imagination? Give reasons for your answer.

Simon is prone to fits and possesses an active imagination, but the Lord of the Flies utters truths that are beyond the knowledge of a mere boy.

15. The encounter between Simon and the Lord of the Flies represents the conflict between good and evil as it occurs in every person. Ralph, Piggy, Simon, Jack, Roger, and Samneric also each represent universal tendencies. What are they?

Ralph - adventure, common sense

Piggy - intellectualism

Simon - religious and poetic feelings

Jack - appetite for destruction

Roger - willingness to torture

Samneric - desire to please other people

LOTF Study Questions – Chapter 9

1. The first paragraph describes the coming of what?

The first paragraph describes the coming of a storm.

2. Despite his fears and fatigue, Simon crawls up the hill and discovers the cause of terror. What does he find, what does he do about it, and what is his next plan?

Simon finds the dead pilot, frees the parachute lines and moves off to inform the others what he has found.

3. Why do Ralph and Piggy decide to attend Jack's feast?

Ralph and Piggy attend Jack's feast because they are hungry and want to try to keep some control over things on the island.

4. Why does Piggy urge Ralph to leave the gathering?

Piggy wants Ralph to leave because he fears he and Jack will fight to assert authority.

5. The author describes Jack as "Power lay in the brown swell of his forearms; authority sat on his shoulder and chattered in his ear like an ape." What does this mean?

This means that Jack is powerful and full of authority. He is in total control of the "tribe".

6. Why does Jack suggest a dance? Why do the others eagerly join in, even Piggy and Ralph?

Jack says to dance because it is dark. The rest join in because it helps to banish their fears of what is in the darkness - it is both primitive and irresistible.

7. The boys savagely kill Simon before he has a chance to reveal the identity of the beast.

a. Why is it believable that they could kill him?

So far in the novel, the best informed boys are the least listened to. Besides, they almost killed Robert before.

b. Why is it necessary to the story that they do kill him?

Simon understood the true nature of the evil on the island. Because of his understanding, he was a threat to the existence of the evil, so that evil had to destroy him.

c. Why is it all right now for the body of the dead parachutist to be blown out to sea?

The beast on top of the mountain is no longer necessary, as it has been replaced by human beasts.

d. There has been a progression of killings: from pig - to sow - to a human victim. Why are these "scapegoats" necessary in the society the boys have established?

The boys need somewhere to deposit their guilt - thus a scapegoat is needed. The first act, however, only increases the need for purgation and the killings become progressively more criminal.

e. Why is Simon's body carried out to sea so that no concrete evidence is left?

If Simon's body had been found the next day, the boys would have had concrete proof of their crime, and it may have changed the way they acted and governed themselves. Without concrete evidence, Simon replaces the beast as the imagined source of evil, and their society continues to degenerate.

LOTF Study Questions – Chapter 10

1. Why do Ralph and Piggy not want to discuss the events of the night before? How does each one react? What about Samneric?

The boys are ashamed and reticent. They react by rationalizing and making excuses. Samneric are also ashamed and make excuses.

2. Back to Castle Rock, how is Jack ruling his tribe? Why is Wilfred being punished?

Jack rules harshly. Wilfred is punished for some minor and unrevealed infraction of Jack's rules.

3. Who becomes second in command?

Roger, the torturer....

4. How does Jack handle the memories of last evening's events? Why is it necessary for them to believe there still is a beast?

Jack says that last night was actually the beast in disguise. They must believe in an external beast, otherwise the internal one will take over.

5. Why is there a rock poised on the cliff?

The rock is poised to be let go on the enemy. It is a symbol of Jack's mortal hatred of both Ralph and Piggy.

6. How are the remaining boys at the beach handling the maintenance of the signal fire?

It is an increasingly difficult job for so few - and it is hard to remember the purpose for it.

7. Jack's tribe steals Piggy's glasses, despite the fact that the boys on the beach were willing to share the fire with the others. (a) What does this tell us about Jack? (b) What does the stealing of the glasses symbolize?

(a) Jack has become primitive, destructive and a creature of instinct. He wants to be in total control.

(B) The theft of the glasses is a symbol of the complete defeat of the intellectual by the savage.

8. What is the basic law of the jungle that has taken over all civilized forms and romantic dreams?

Kill or be killed.

LOTF Study Questions – Chapter 11

1. There are only four remaining boys near the signal fire but they still go through the formal ritual of holding an assembly. Why?

Ralph, Piggy, and the twins hold the assembly to discuss their predicament and maintain some vestige of civilization.

2. What do they decide to do? Why do they take the conch shell along?

The four of them go to Castle Rock to try to talk some reason into Jack. They take the conch along as a reminder to the tribe of the order and sanity which once prevailed on the island.

3. How are the boys treated when they arrive at Castle Rock?

Upon their arrival, they are mocked and stoned.

4. Ralph tries to reason with Jack but Jack isn't interested in reason. Why?

Jack has become a savage. He has no time for reasoning. He works on instinct and urges.

5. What is the significance of Ralph's statement, "which is better, law and rescue, or hunting and breaking things up?"

Ralph's statement summarizes the conflicts in this story between the ideals of modern society and the impulses of primitive man.

6. In Chapter 4, Roger could not throw stones directly at a human being. Now he not only throws stones, but releases a huge boulder that kills Piggy. Why could he do it?

Roger has become so complete a savage that he is no longer habitually restrained.

7. What does the death of Piggy symbolize?

Piggy's death symbolizes the obliteration of intellect and reason from the island.

8. What does the smashing of the conch shell at the moment of Piggy's death symbolize?

The smashing of the conch represents the loss of the traditional systems of authority, so cherished by Piggy.

9. Why couldn't either Simon or Piggy continue to exist, in this civilization?

Because it is the story of human civilization in reverse, from civilized to primitive.

10. Why do Sarnneric join Jack's tribe?

Jack and Roger torture the twins into joining the tribe.

LOTF Study Questions – Chapter 12

1. While Ralph stays hidden in the jungle, what is he still unable to understand?

Ralph is unable to understand the strange events on the island - how a group of civilized schoolboys can become a band of primitive, barbaric savages.

2. As he runs away, however, he reveals a truth about humans when they are running away in fear. What?

Ralph reveals that fear is a part of himself, and a part of everybody.

3. Why did the twins reveal his whereabouts?

The twins had become loyal to Jack as a part of his tribe. They were also likely worried about being tortured.

4. Why does Jack have the whole area set on fire? How does he show his irresponsibility as a leader when he does this?

Jack sets the area on fire to smoke Ralph out. This is irresponsible because it could burn the whole forest down, which would mean a loss of food, shelter, and fuel.

5. What fate does Jack have in mind for Ralph?

Ralph is to be treated like the sow. His head will be stuck in the ground on a stick sharpened at both ends, his body cooked and eaten by the cannibalistic boys.

6. Ralph is at last driven to the beach and confronts the naval officer. That is ironical about the officer's comment, "I should have thought that a pack of British boys would have been able to put up a better show than that - I mean -"?

The officer is no better - after all, he is in the midst of fighting a "civilized" war.

7. "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." What does this mean?

Ralph has grown up. He will never be the same person he once was. He has seen and recognized evil. He mourns for his friend, Piggy.

8. The fire scorches the island entirely. What could this be paralleled to?

While this illustrates the irresponsibility of the boys, the island, more than ever, resembles a city consumed by atomic warfare. The boys appear to have been acting out what was taking place in "civilization"