

## Lord of the Flies | Study Guide:

### Study Guide Questions Lord of the Flies Chapters 1-3

1. This book is an allegory (a story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one). Based on the 3 chapters you have read, what do you think is the deeper message of the author? What kind of allegory do you think this will be?
2. Since this is an **allegory**, there will be countless **symbols** pointing to the larger concept or deeper message of the book. Find at least 3 items from these first 3 chapters that you think are symbols pointing to or helping to develop Golding's allegory? List the item and provide an explanation of what you think this item symbolizes and a quote from the book to support your answer for each item.
3. Look up the name Beelzebub in a good dictionary. Who was Beelzebub? Who, or what, is the author alluding to with the title Lord of the Flies? What might this allusion say about the novel?
4. Think back to our discussion on archetypes (junior year – Faustus!). In what ways does the setting and environment of the island allude to the Garden of Eden of Genesis? Read Genesis 2:15-17, 25; 3:1-24. What parallels do you see between these passages and the first two chapters of Lord of the Flies? What implications might this have for the theme of the book?
5. Golding makes wonderful use of the literary device known as **personification**. Define this term and give one example of it from the first 3 chapters. Include page number and the purpose or significance of its use. In other words, what does it add to the story?
6. Is Ralph a likeable protagonist? Why or why not?
7. What role do the littluns play in the novel? Are the littluns important in and of themselves? What might they represent?
8. What types of governments do Ralph and Jack represent?
9. Which of Ralph's survival ideas is Jack most in support of and why is this significant to the story?
10. What does the building and maintaining of the fire symbolize and what is its significance?
11. Would this story be different if the island were populated with a group of girls instead of boys? How?
12. Who has the best leadership qualities at this point? Jack, Ralph, or Piggy? Why? What attitude should a leader have toward his followers according to Luke 22:24-26, 1 Peter 5:1-3? Do any of the boys exhibit this?
13. What does the change in the boys' appearances in chapter 3 tell us about the society on the island?
14. **Juxtaposition** is the placing of two things side by side, generally to draw attention to or emphasize differences between the two things. Throughout most of chapter 3, Golding juxtaposes Jack and Ralph. Describe how he does this and what becomes clear about the two boys in these passages.
15. What does the invention of words like "Samneric" and "littluns" say about the society on the island?

### Study Guide Questions Lord of the Flies Chapters 4-6

1. In your reading this week of LOTF find a sentence or passage where Diction plays an important role in enabling the reader to participate in the author's world and which leads the reader to feel a certain way or experience a certain mood based on the connotative value of the words. Explain your choice. Include page number.

2. In chapter 4 Jack seems to become a different person when he paints his face, creating a mask. Discuss possible symbolism in the colors and composition of Jack's mask. From what does Jack "liberate" himself when he puts on the face paint? How does this tie in with Freudian psychoanalysis?
3. What is significant about the breaking of Piggy's spectacles and only having one eye through which to see? Think about the symbolism of the spectacles.
4. By letting the signal fire die, what can we determine about Jack and his hunters?
5. What is happening between Ralph and Jack? What does their conflict represent? Think about how each uses his power and for what purpose.
6. What theme is Golding developing in the opening paragraph of chapter 5?
7. Interpret the statement: "Simon became inarticulate in his effort to express mankind's essential illness."
8. At the end of chapter 5, the boys discuss how grownups would have solved all their issues. What is ironic about this statement? Do you think this is true—how would a group of grownups fare in a similar situation? What are the grownups engaged in at the time of the novel?
9. Ralph cries out, "If only they could get a message to us...If only they could send us something grownup...a sign or something." In the second paragraph of Chapter 6, Golding writes, "But a sign came down from the world of grownups, though at the time there was no child awake to read it." Why is this sign painfully ironic? How does reminding the reader of the larger setting reinforce the theme of the novel?
10. Golding seems to be leading to the conclusion, and some of the characters appear to recognize at some level, that the true danger or evil is present in the boys themselves. Do you agree with this assessment? Find a scripture verse that compares with what Golding seems to be saying about the boys.
11. At this point, who is the only boy who dismisses the possibility of a beastie on the island, and why is this significant?
12. What are some of the things the beast in the Lord of the Flies symbolizes?
13. What type of religious imagery does the dead pilot's descent down to the island remind you of?
14. Read Romans 1:20-23, 2:14-15. What is Paul saying about people's knowledge of God and sin? Using references from the book, explain whether you think Golding agrees, wholly or in part, with the passage from Romans. Are there characters who illustrate Paul's statements?

### **Lord of the Flies Study Guide Chapters 7-9**

1. Golding makes wonderful use figurative language. Give one example of it from these chapters. Include page number and the purpose or significance of its use. In other words, what does it add to the story?
2. How does Golding change the mood of the story? (think paragraphing and syntax)
3. What does the fact that Jack no longer needs the conch say about Jack?
4. Why do you think the boys are drawn to Jack? What does he offer? Do you think there is a correlation to our world today and what kind of political leaders voters are drawn to? If yes, how so?
5. In Chapter 8 Golding paints one of the most disturbing scenes of the book—the killing of the sow. Why do you think Golding has Jack choose to kill a sow, "sunk in deep maternal bliss...fringed with a row of piglets that slept or burrowed and squeaked"? Some of the language carries

- grotesque, violent sexual implications. What might the sow symbolize and what might this say about the mental state of Jack's group?
6. Golding juxtaposes butterflies dancing on and above the flowers of the open space with the multicolored flies crawling on and buzzing about the sow's head. What do you think was Golding's intent with this contrast?
  7. After Jack and the hunters kill the sow and leave her head on a stick as an offering for the beast, Simon sits in his hiding place and examines it: *A gift for the beast. Might not the beast come for it? The head, he thought, appeared to agree with him. Run away, said the head silently, go back to the others. It was a joke really—why should you bother? You were just wrong, that's all. A little headache, something you ate, perhaps. Go back, child, said the head silently.* To what does this passage refer? What was a joke? What was Simon supposed to be wrong about? What is the meaning of the conversation that Simon has with The Lord of the Flies? What is Simon's revelation in the glade watching the head of the sow?
  8. Discuss the symbolism of Lord of the Flies (pig head on a stick). How does Simon's experience with The Lord of the Flies further explore the religious themes of the novel?
  9. How does Simon act as a foil to the other kids? And consider how Simon complicates the philosophical statement that the novel makes about human beings.
  10. What Biblical parallels may be drawn from Simon's walk in chapter 9? What do you think Golding is trying to communicate by these comparisons between Jesus and Simon?
  11. Simon arrives at the beach in the middle of the storms raging both in the boys and in the skies. What does his death symbolize?
  12. What does Golding seem to imply is the source of evil? Read some of the following verses: Mark 7:20-23, Luke 6:45, John 8:44, Ephesians 2:1-2, James 1:14-15, 1 John 3:8, and Revelation 12:9. What do these verses say are the causes or sources of evil in the world?
  13. Pathetic fallacy is a literary term attributing human traits and emotion to nature (pathetic=feelings/emotions and fallacy=false notion; false notion of feelings). It is closely affiliated with personification. Pathetic fallacy is generally considered to be more sweeping in its scope than personification. Describe why the weather in Chapter 9 might be an example of pathetic fallacy. Or describe why the weather is not an example of pathetic fallacy.
  14. Consider the reversal of the Beast (dead parachutist) ascending into the air and Simon (Christ figure) descending into ocean. What could Golding be implying by this reversal?

### Study Guide Questions Lord of the Flies Chapters 10-12

1. How many archetypes were you able to find in this novel?
2. The day after Simon's death, Ralph tells Piggy he is frightened: "I'm frightened. Of us. I want to go home. Oh God, I want to go home." Ralph has realized something that Piggy either cannot understand or will not admit—that they are just as vulnerable as Jack and his group to doing something horrible. Do you think this is realistic, that anyone can commit such acts? Read Romans 7:15-24. What does Paul say about the struggle of good and evil in his own life? How does this compare with what Ralph has discovered?
3. Contrast Roger with Jack.

4. During *Lord of the Flies*, three boys die and Jack's group tries to kill Ralph. Compare the deaths—how is each different? How do the deaths progress or change from the first to the last, including what Jack's tribe intended for Ralph?
5. Complete the thought "Feast today and then tomorrow..." Read this biblical allusion in Luke 12:19-20 and discuss what it suggests.
6. What is the significance of the simile comparing the skull of the *Lord of the Flies* with the conch shell?
7. Ralph weeps for "the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy". Why do the other boys begin to cry? Has Ralph grown up by the end of the novel? Or does weeping show that he's still a child? Explain where you think Ralph's moment of "loss of innocence" occurs and why. Note that the loss of innocence is an archetypical plot.
8. The naval officer's role in the novel is called a **deus ex machina** (an unexpected figure who shows up almost out of nowhere and who appears only to wrap up the plot and bring it to a speedy conclusion). Why would Golding choose to do this instead of exploring the final implications of the hunter's attack?
9. In a short paragraph discuss this final scene in terms of irony (including the fire) and Golding's message to the reader. Consider the things said, the action of the boys and naval officer, and any imagery. How does Golding leave his reader?
10. How would you describe Golding's worldview based on what you have read in this novel?
11. What is your opinion of the novel—is the story convincing? Does it present a realistic vision of human nature? Have you experienced or observed things that would either support or contradict Golding's ideas?