

Chapters 3–4

Roger gathered a handful of stones and began to throw them. Yet there was a space round Henry, perhaps six yards in diameter, into which he dare not throw. Here, invisible yet strong, was the taboo of the old life. Round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and policemen and the law. Roger's arm was conditioned by a civilization that knew nothing of him and was in ruins.

Vocabulary:

The words in the left column are taken from the text. Match each word with the best definition found in the right column.

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| 1. _____ tendril | a. implied without words |
| 2. _____ pallor | b. loose material from destruction |
| 3. _____ inscrutable | c. a slender, spiral leaf or stem |
| 4. _____ castanet | d. murmur or whisper |
| 5. _____ vicissitude | e. paleness |
| 6. _____ tacit | f. incapable of being sensed by touch |
| 7. _____ susurration | g. hard to understand |
| 8. _____ opalescence | h. changeable |
| 9. _____ impalpable | i. a rhythm instrument |
| 10. _____ detritus | j. reflecting a colorful light |

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Character Study:

For each of the passages below, write down what the passage reveals or suggests about the character.

1. Simon:

. . . the littluns who had run after him caught up with him. They talked, cried out unintelligibly, lugged him toward the trees. Then, amid the roar of the bees in the afternoon sunlight, Simon found for them the fruit they could not reach . . .

2. Roger and Maurice:

Roger led the way through the [littlun's] castles, kicking them over, burying the flowers, scattering the chosen stones. Maurice followed, laughing, and added to the destruction.

3. Roger:

Roger gathered a handful of stones and began to throw them. Yet there was a space round Henry, perhaps six yards in diameter, into which he dare not throw. Here, invisible yet strong, was the taboo of the old life. Round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and policemen and the law.

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4. Ralph:

They were both red in the face and found looking at each other difficult. Ralph rolled on his stomach and began to play with the grass. . . . He paused for a moment and they both pushed their anger away. Then he went on with the safe, changed subject. . . . They faced each other on the bright beach, astonished at the rub of feeling. Ralph looked away first, pretending interest in a group of littluns on the sand.

5. Piggy:

“We could make a sundial. You could put a stick in the sand, and then—”

“And an airplane, and a TV set,” said Ralph sourly, “and a steam engine.”

Piggy shook his head.

“You have to have a lot of metal things for that,” he said, “and we haven’t got no metal. But we got a stick.”

Questions:

1. With what does Jack seem to have become obsessed?

2. What does Jack do to himself that turns him into an “awesome stranger”?

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3. Who are the littluns?

4. What do the littluns dream about?

5. In Chapter 4, Jack gets one of his greatest desires fulfilled, and Ralph has his greatest desire torn away. What are these two events and how are they related?

Analysis:

6. Look at the description of Jack in the first four paragraphs of Chapter 3. What does this description tell you about Jack? List the words and phrases that influence your answer and explain their impact.

7. An *allusion* is a reference to an event, place, or person from history or literature that the author assumes the reader is familiar with and that carries with it added meaning. For instance, saying that someone has met their Waterloo would be an allusion to the great and unexpected defeat of Napoleon's troops at Waterloo, Belgium, in a battle that eventually led to the French emperor's total military and political defeat. In Chapter 3 of *Lord of the Flies*, what is "the abyss of ages" mentioned in the fourth paragraph? What is the context of the reference, and why would Golding use such an allusion here?

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8. *Point of view* is the vantage point from which a story is narrated. *First-person* point of view is when the narrator is a character in the story. *Second-person* point of view is when the narrator is a person, but is not in the story itself. *Third-person* point of view is when the story is told by someone outside the story. Third-person point of view can be *omniscient* (where the narrator reveals the thoughts and emotions of all the characters), *limited omniscient* (where the narrator reveals the thoughts and emotions of a few of the characters), and *objective* (where the narrator doesn't reveal characters' thoughts or emotions). From which point of view is *Lord of the Flies* told, and how does that vantage point contribute to the story?

9. *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.

10. There is another juxtaposition of characters framing Chapter 3: the chapter begins with Jack alone in the forest and ends with Simon alone in the forest. Compare the language Golding uses to describe these two boys and the forest. What do the two descriptions tell us about Jack and Simon?

Dig Deeper:

11. When the boys decide to elect a chief in Chapter 1, Jack immediately responds “I ought to be chief . . . because I’m chapter chorister and head boy. I can sing C sharp.” Golding writes,

This toy of voting was almost as pleasing as the conch. Jack started to protest but the clamor changed from the general wish for a chief to an election by acclaim of Ralph himself. None of the boys could have found good reason for this; what intelligence had been shown was traceable to Piggy while the most obvious leader was Jack. But there was a stillness about Ralph as he sat that marked him out: there was his size, and attractive appearance; and most obscurely, yet most powerfully, there was the conch.

Why did the boys elect Ralph as chief? After seeing the events of Chapters 3 and 4, was their decision a good one? Why?

12. Read Luke 22:24–26, 1 Peter 5:1–3. What attitude do these verses say a leader should have toward his followers? How effective do you think Ralph has been at this?
13. A short way into Chapter 4, Golding gives us a brief glimpse of some littluns at play and an encounter between them and Roger and Maurice. Give a brief summary of what happens. What might Golding be pointing out to us about all of the boys in these interactions?

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14. From what does Jack “liberate” himself when he puts on the face paint? Are these things from which we need liberation, or are they things we should keep?
15. After Jack has returned from the hunt and has been chastised by Ralph they have this exchange:

“All right, all right!”

[Jack] looked at Piggy, at the hunters, at Ralph.

“I’m sorry. About the fire, I mean. There. I—”

He drew himself up.

“—I apologize.”

The buzz from the hunters was one of admiration at this handsome behavior. Clearly they were of the opinion that Jack had done the decent thing, had put himself in the right by his generous apology and Ralph, obscurely, in the wrong. They waited for an appropriately decent answer.

Yet Ralph’s throat refused to pass one. He resented, as an addition to Jack’s misbehavior, this verbal trick.

Is Jack’s apology sufficient? Why doesn’t Ralph accept it? Would you? Is there a difference between apologizing and reforming or repenting? Explain your answers.

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16. If we are not careful, it can be easy for us to adopt Jack's attitude toward apology when we have committed a wrong. Read Psalm 51:16–17, Isaiah 29:13, Ezekiel 33:31–32, John 14:23–24. What kind of “apology” does God want from us?

17. 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?

18. The tenor or point of *Lord of the Flies* seems to change in Chapters 3 and 4 from an adventure story about boys stranded on an island to something much deeper. What most clearly illustrates this turning point for you in these chapters? Why?

19. In Chapter 2, when Ralph is addressing the boys at the meeting he tells them, “we may be here for a long time. . . . But this is a good island.” Just a little later he says, “This is our island. It's a good island. Until the grownups come to fetch us we'll have fun.” But in the middle of Chapter 3, when Jack, Ralph, and Simon are talking, they say, “They talk and scream. The littluns. Even some of the others. As if—’ As if it wasn't a good island.’” A few paragraphs later

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Ralph repeats “As if this wasn’t a good island. . . . Yes, that’s right.” What do the boys mean by “a good island”? Can the island really be “good” or “bad”? What could make a place good or bad in the sense the boys mean?

Optional Exercises:

1. *Discussion:* 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. Have the students create a mask for themselves, illustrating either who they are or what they would like to project of themselves to others. Discuss why Jack changed when he painted his face, why he seemed to feel free from normal constraints. How is this similar to or different from using figurative masks, or image or reputation, to hide our true selves from others? Some verses relevant to discussion might be 1 Samuel 16:7, Psalm 139:1–12, Hebrew 4:12–13.
2. Research stories of people stranded away from civilization. Write a one-page essay comparing or contrasting real-life accounts with the action seen thus far in *Lord of the Flies*.
3. Read the following passage about Simon. Write a poem or draw a picture of Simon and the littluns.

Flower and fruit grew together on the same tree and everywhere was the scent of ripeness and the booming of a million bees at pasture. Here the littluns who had run after him caught up with him. They talked, cried out unintelligibly, lugged him toward the trees. Then, amid the roar of the bees in the afternoon sunlight, Simon

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found for them the fruit they could not reach, pulled off the choicest from up in the foliage, passed them back down to the endless, outstretched hands.

4. Read James 1:22–25. Use the events from Chapters 3 and 4 to illustrate and explain these verses.