*Lord of the Flies*

Reading Guide

Ch 1

1. Describe Ralph’s attitude toward Piggy in this chapter. Initially the conversation feels collegial and friendly…until Ralph reveals Piggy’s plea and shares his nickname.
2. Why is Ralph elected chief? After the decision is made to hold an election, which is quickly agreed upon by all, Ralph is elected, mainly because he possesses the conch at the time of the election; however, he does possess an air of charisma that makes him the logical choice.
3. What is your interpretation of “the scar” that is mentioned? The word choice of scar indicates a permanent disfigurement that is inflicted onto something.
4. Characterize Jack. As the leader of the choir, Jack possesses some power/authority, although it’s not realized when he is not elected. However, there is also a sense of arrogance and meanness directed towards Piggy.
5. How is Piggy revealed as most closely tied to the world of adults? He frequently references the influence that he has garnered from his auntie. Also, the ideas (which appear sophisticated and intellectual) come from him.
6. How is Piggy responsible for the blowing of the conch? While Ralph pulls the conch from water, Piggy gives him the idea and the how to for blowing and creating the sound.

Ch 2

1. Recall (with some details/context) what question the littlun with the birthmark raises. In the midst of the sharing of the conch, the littlun muttering and crying. Piggy, using the shell, voices the concern for the littlun regarding the snake-thing (that becomes the beastie).
2. How do Jack and Ralph respond to the question about the beast? While Ralph questions the reality of the snake, even explaining how a snake couldn’t be on an island, Jack insists they will hunt and kill the snake-thing.
3. How do the boys finally start the fire? They use Piggy’s glasses to create a spark that leads to the fire.

Ch 3

1. Why does Ralph scold Jack? Ralph voices his frustration regarding priorities, as Jack is more concerned with hunting and meat than rescue or building shelter.
2. What two groups (with differing goals) seem to be emerging? Jack’s group of hunters versus Ralph’s group that is focused on rescue and civilization.
3. Recall the details of Simon going to the bower. Why does he go? Simon escapes into the covert of the woods to isolate himself from the rest of the boys.

Deeper discussion: look back at the three chapter titles. What’s the significance, both literally and figuratively?

Ch 4

1. Why does Roger, when throwing stones, aim just to miss? He, along with Maurice, are tempted to bully. But, “In another life” the boys had received chastisement for similar wrongdoing.
2. Describe the stand that Ralph makes. Ralph is upset that Jack let the fire go out, as a ship happened to pass by the island.
3. Why does Jack refuse to give Piggy meat? Only those that participated in the hunt should be allowed to eat. In rage to assert his dominance and power, he throws meat at Piggy’s feet.

Deeper discussion: what might this chapter’s title indicate?

Ch 5

1. What is the paradox of the boys’ attitude toward the beast? There is both an extreme fear and fascination to see it. They do decide to hunt and kill this fear of theirs.
2. Why does Ralph call a meeting? To reestablish rules and the priority of the fire. He also desires to accomplish what has been decided at each of the assemblies (such as shelter).
3. Explain the ideas involved with Piggy discouraging Ralph from giving up his position. When Ralph voices frustration over the state of the tribe, Piggy shares fear regarding Jack’s leadership; not only is he afraid of there being no fire and only hunting, but he also has a fear for his personal safety.

Ch 6

1. Why do Ralph and Jack insist on going after the beast? As leaders, both feel the need to successfully find/kill the beast, although it is becoming clear they desire leadership for different reasons.
2. Why does Jack say they don’t need the conch any longer? His belief is that the tribe knows who should be saying things; he also believes that the decisions should then be made by those in charge.

Deeper discussion: what is the irony of the dead parachutist landing on the island?

Ch 7

1. What happens when Ralph wounds the boar? Ralph was full of fright and apprehension, but also pride. It appears he enjoyed the thrill of the hunt/kill.
2. Recall the uncomfortable question Ralph asks Jack. He asks Jack, “Why do you hate me?” (118).
3. Interpret the scene of the boys running from the dead parachutist. The description of something like a great ape, asleep with its head between its knees, suddenly lifts it head causing the boys to race away in fear.

Deeper discussion: can you infer and/or predict why Simon tells Ralph “you will get back all right”?

Ch 8

1. Why do the boys refuse to vote for Jack but then slip off and join him later? After “reelecting” Ralph, it appears the boys still understand that Ralph is the better leader (and may fear Jack).
2. What does Jack tell his new tribe? His tribe can do what it wants (and he will protect them and feed them).
3. Retell the details of the killing of the sow. The scene depicts a hunt that is full of depravity; that instead of hunting for meat, the hunt and subsequent sacrificial beheading of the sow is about bloodlust.
4. What does the Lord of the Flies tell Simon? It confronts Simon with taunts and insults, telling him he isn’t wanted, and he should be afraid of the beast. It also reveals it is the Beast but the beast is part of them.

Deeper Discussion: what happened?

Ch 9

1. What reason does Ralph see as the reason for the boys’ defection? He says it is to play war, by putting on war paint and hunting.
2. Characterize Jack as a leader. Jack, unlike Ralph, rules out of fear and power. But also out of loyalty/duty, after providing for his minions.
3. Why do Ralph and Piggy join the dance? Initially, the fear of the beast causes them all to react; however, it is the loss of self, when in a large group, that allows even Ralph and Piggy to participate.

Deeper discussion: what is the symbolism of Simon?

Ch 10

1. Describe the conversation between Ralph and Piggy at the chapter’s opening. Piggy tries to justify the murder by noting their fear amidst the darkness, while Ralph openly sees the horrors of what they did.
2. What is Wilfried punished? Simply because Jack demanded it, as Robert does not know a reason.
3. What is Jack’s recollection of the prior night’s events? His assertion is that the Beast came disguised (as a boy) and that they should continue to be aware and careful.

Deeper discussion: what does this chapter title imply?

Ch 11

1. Why do Ralph and Piggy decide to visit Jack’s camp? They decide to visit Jack to retrieve the glass so they can start a rescue fire and so that Piggy can se.
2. What is the reaction of Jack’s tribe to Ralph’s talk of rescue? They mock and ignore the ideas, and capture the twins.
3. Summarize what happens when Piggy holds up the conch and tries to talk. After Jack punches Piggy, tries to speak about law, order, and the need for rescue, Roger in a sense of delight, pulls a lever that drops a boulder onto Piggy, killing him and destroying the conch shell.

Deeper discussion: what is your reaction to this chapter?

Ch 12

1. Recall what the plan is for Ralph and how he learns/feels about it. Sam shares news that Jack and Roger hate Ralph and plan to hunt him, similar to a pig. Ralph doesn’t understand his transgression and begs for the twins to come with him. However, frozen with fear, they do not. Ralph then sees Roger sharpening a stick at both ends, most likely to stake him similar to the sow.
2. What is the metaphor being made as Ralph is chased? The description of the chase, after Sam and Eric reveal Ralph’s plan, is similar to a pig hunt. They attempt to smoke him out and into the range of hunters with spears.

Deeper discussion: discuss your interpretations of the events from the chapter’s end, such as the irony of the fire, the implications of Percival forgetting his name, and the emphasis of Piggy’s fall.