

Answer Key

ANSWER KEY: SHORT ANSWER STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS - *Lord of the Flies*

Chapters 1 - 2

1. Identify:

Ralph - handsome, athletic, natural leader

Piggy - very intelligent, physically less than perfect fat boy, a reader and thinker rather than a boy of action

Simon - poetic, sensitive, loner, rather mysterious boy

Jack - choir leader, "ugly without silliness"

Sam & Eric - identical twins later known as Samneric, as if they were one

Maurice - choir boy as big as Jack, "grinning all the time"

Roger - secretive, "slight, furtive boy" who later shows a natural tendency towards cruelty

"The littluns" - name given to the numerous little children of the group

2. How did the boys happen to come to the island?

These school boys have been ejected from a flaming airplane. It appears no adults have survived the crash.

3. What do the boys have that is the symbol of authority in the society they form?

The conch shell is the symbol of authority. It shows who is boss and who has the right to speak.

4. What does the reader learn about Jack when he slashed the green candle buds?

Jack's method of dealing with the world seems to be violent.

5. Why does Jack hesitate when he lifts his knife to kill the piglet, and what does he promise will happen next time he meets a pig?

Jack's hesitation shows that he must learn to put aside his inhibitions, whether they are learned or natural. He promises that "next time there would be no mercy."

6. Who are the hunters, and what is their job?

The choir boys have become hunters. Their job is to get food.

7. What does a little 'un think he has seen in the forest?

He thinks he has seen a "snake-thing" which he later calls a "beastie."

8. How and why do the boys make fire?

The boys make a fire to act as a signal for their rescue. They use Piggy's glasses as a "burning glass" to start the fire with the sun's rays.

9. Why does the boys' plan for rescue fail?

The boys did not have a well-thought-out plan. They used too much wood for a small, controllable fire, and they never thought of a way to control the fire to keep it from getting out of hand. Most of their readily-available firewood was burned up, making keeping the fire going much more difficult.

Chapters 3 - 4

1. Although Ralph criticizes the boys for their lack of cooperation, does he bear some of the responsibility for the failures of the group to achieve its goals? Why or why not?

Ralph is partially responsible for their failures. He has the desire to bring a measure of civilization to the island, but he lacks the competence to do so. He believes life is much like a story book, and that although there will be obstacles, the clever boys will overcome them all, and they will emerge victorious in the traditional, happy ending. Ralph has an idealized view of life and can never actually get a grip on carrying out his plans.

2. How has Jack's personality developed during his stay on the island?

Jack has degenerated from a superficially civilized school boy to a near animal level. He yearns to kill, yet he too is learning the vast difference between imagining himself a hunter and actually killing a living creature. Once he begins to kill and gets over his initial squeamishness, he will become ruthless.

3. Ralph says of Simon, "He's queer. He's funny." What kind of a boy is Simon?

Simon is one of Ralph's most loyal and helpful workers. Yet, when he has some free time, he goes off by himself to find a place to be quiet and to think. Society, like the boys, distrusts those who are loners. The love of beauty and solitude is suspect.

4. After Maurice and Roger destroy the littluns' sand castles, Roger stalks the young boy named Henry. When he begins to throw stones, why does he just throw them near him instead of directly at him?

The old laws of church and school and family still hold him back.

5. What causes the hunters, who had promised to keep the fire burning, to neglect it and allow it to go out?

Jack's immediate goal is to kill a pig; this is all he can think about. The building of a fire and the rescue are long-term goals. Savages cannot deal with long-term goals; they only live in the present, for instant gratification of their immediate needs.

6. Why does Jack paint his face?

Jack's clay paint effectively blots out his real features, and he can become an anonymous savage.

Chapters 5 - 6

1. How does the author show us that Ralph is finally beginning to face the realities of their existence?

The author tells us that Ralph does not really like to live a life where he has to watch where he walks; nor does he like filthy, frayed clothing or dirty, tangled, long hair. To Ralph, this adventure is becoming messy and real and scary.

2. Compare Ralph's treatment of the littluns with Jack's.

Ralph tries to calm their fears and give them a sense of security. Jack intimidates them and frightens them.

3. What is Simon saying when he thinks the "beast" may be inside the boys themselves?

He is trying to say that the dark side of the human personality can destroy mankind. Reason and imagination are the only checks men have to quell this "dark side."

4. What do Sam and Eric tell the boys they have seen? What is it actually?

They tell the boys that they have seen a beast. It was actually the corpse of a parachutist.

5. Why do Ralph and Jack decide to go find the beast?

They know that they must face the beast if they are to have any hopes of being free from their fears on the island.

Chapters 7 - 8

1. How does Ralph react when a boar comes charging down the path?

Ralph throws his wooden spear and scores a lucky hit. It does not deter the boar, but it does show Ralph a side of himself that he has refused to acknowledge. He exults in his ability to wound a living creature.

2. To what does Ralph's demonstration of his hunting prowess lead?

Robert pretended to be an animal and snarled at Ralph. The boys got into a hunting frenzy, at first jokingly and then really jabbing and poking at Robert. They went out of control.

3. What did the boys see on the mountaintop?

At first they saw a lump or a hump where no rock should be. Then, conquering his nausea, Ralph stood up and saw "something like a great ape." The wind blew and the billowing parachute lifted the head and torso of the "ape," showing them "the ruin of a face."

4. Why is the action of the story increasingly taking place in the near darkness or in the deep night when only the moon and stars give a little light?

Darkness has always symbolized something evil as light has symbolized the "good." "The Prince of Darkness" is another name for the devil, evil.

5. How does Ralph's waning confidence in himself show in his words and actions?
He has begun to bite his nails. He shudders involuntarily and twists his hands unconsciously. He has become bitter at the collapse of his dreams and plans. When Piggy asks, "What are we going to do?," for the first time Ralph answers, "I don't know."
6. Although he is not able to get the boys to vote Ralph out of office as chief, Jack manages to overthrow Ralph's authority anyway. How?
He simply announces, "I'm not going to play anymore. Not with you." His statements reflect the notion that the predicament of the boys is an adventure, a game. With a typical child's reaction, he decides not to "play" anymore since he doesn't like the rules of Ralph's game. He goes off to "play" by himself, to get some of the kids to "play" his game.
7. Jack suggests a way to keep the beast happy. What is it?
He suggests that they should give the beast part of each kill they make.
8. Describe Simon's strange encounter with the Lord of the Flies.
Whether Simon's encounter is imagined, dreamed, or supernatural is not very clear. The content of the Lord's message, though, is central to the book. The Lord of the Flies explains to Simon that it is useless to try to kill the beast. "I am a part of you," he says. Golding seems to imply that no matter what name you give to evil, be it sin, the devil, neurosis, hate, violence, terrorism, or sheer wanton destruction, these traits are inside of man. The conflict between good and evil is inside each boy on the island as it is inside all of us. This book, which pictures the downfall of a small society on an unknown island, also gives a portrait of what it means to be human.
9. Who or what is the Lord of the Flies?
The Lord of the Flies, represented by the pig's head, is evil.

Chapters 9 - 11

1. What does Simon find when he finally reaches the Beast?
He discovers the truth that the beast is actually a dead pilot. The lines of his parachute have been tangled in such a way that when the wind blows and inflates the chute, it lifts the dead figure into a sitting position and thereby gives the figure a semblance of life.
2. What happens to Simon when he returns to the group?
The hunters, doing their ritual dance, kill him. He is never able to deliver a coherent message to them. He stumbles off of the cliff and falls to the sands below.
3. As a result of the storm with its high winds and high tides, what happens to the bodies of Simon and the parachutist?
They are taken out to sea.

4. What does Jack plan to steal from Ralph and Piggy?
He plans to steal fire from them.
5. What will Jack do if someone interferes with him?
He says, "we will do our dance again," meaning the hunters will kill the one who interferes.
6. What happens to the conch and to Piggy?
Roger releases the huge boulder and it shatters the conch which Piggy had been holding. It also shatters Piggy, who falls forty feet, landing on his back on a flat rock, somewhat like the ancient sacrificial victims were placed on an altar and offered up to some savage god.
7. What are Jack's plans for Ralph?
He plans to hunt him down and kill him.
8. What course of action does Ralph take?
Ralph has to either fight or flee. Not being able to defeat all of the hunters, he flees.

Chapter 12

1. What is Ralph's reaction when he encounters the pig's skull?
"A sick fear and rage swept through him." He hits the skull with his fist and splits it open; it lies on the ground, still grinning at him.
2. Driven by fear and hunger, Ralph manages to make contact with Samneric who are standing guard at Castle Rock. Of what do they warn him?
They warn him that the hunters are going to hunt him down tomorrow, and they tell him that Roger has sharpened a stick at both ends.
3. In what ways does the tribe try to hunt down Ralph?
They roll boulders down the hill to try to hit him or cause him to run. Then they try to smoke him out. When he goes to the forest, they continue to try to track him down like a pig.
4. What or who saves Ralph in the end?
His savior is a British naval officer who represents the adult, civilized world, a world combining the military (hunters) and civilians (civilization).