

Advanced Placement in  
English Literature and Composition

Individual Learning Packet

Teaching Unit

**Lord of the Flies**

by William Golding

Written by Kay Hampson

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Item No. 302039

# Lord of the Flies

## Objectives

*By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:*

1. point out and discuss how this story operates on three levels:
  - as an action/adventure story
  - as a psychological novel about people under stress
  - as a symbolic novel about the nature of humankind and the role of civilization
2. understand, define, and give examples of the following literary terms:
  - simile
  - personification
  - hyperbole
  - metaphor
  - foreshadowing
  - alliteration
  - polysyndeton
  - asyndeton
  - synecdoche
  - archetype
  - verisimilitude
  - allusion
  - dramatic irony
  - onomatopoeia
  - zeugma
  - foil
3. cite examples of biblical motifs;
4. identify to what extent Simon is a Christ-figure;
5. construct an interpretation of the following symbols:
  - the conch shell
  - the fire
  - the island
  - the pig's head
  - the spectacles
6. state Golding's view of the essential nature of humanity and comment on civilization's function in regard to humankind;

# Lord of the Flies

## Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. How do the following items function as symbols in this novel: Piggy's glasses, the conch shell, the fire, the pig's head?
2. The Romantics believed that human nature was inherently good but had become corrupted by civilization. The boys in this novel were raised on books like *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Blue Lagoon*, and *Swiss Family Robinson*, in which shipwrecked people make decent lives on their islands. How does this book refute that Romantic notion?
3. Throughout the novel, the nature of the Beast changes for the boys. Trace the boys' perception of the Beast from *Chapter One* through *Chapter Twelve*.
4. Gradually, the boys become less and less civilized and more and more savage. Trace the progression of their devolution.
5. What does it mean to say that *Lord of the Flies* is an allegorical novel?
6. Cite examples from the text to support the idea that Simon is a Christ-figure.
7. Explain Golding's view of humanity as illustrated in *Lord of the Flies*. What circumstances or situations from his background may have influenced his views? With which character does Golding most closely identify? Why? How does Simon fit into Golding's view?
8. Compare and contrast Jack and Ralph; include physical appearance, character qualities, leadership ability, and style.
9. Choose a dynamic character and explain why he is dynamic. Be certain to cite examples from the text to illustrate the changes.
10. Choose a static character and explain why he is static. Be certain to cite examples from the text to show that the character does not change or grow.
11. Interpret *Lord of the Flies* from a Freudian point of view.
12. Chart plot events in the book on Freytag's Pyramid, including: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

# Lord of the Flies

## Chapter One: The Sound of the Shell

1. How do the boys end up on the island?

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2. Who is “the voice” referring to? What does the voice represent?

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3. How does the reaction of the fair-haired boy differ from the fat boy’s at the realization that there are no adults around?

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4. The language in the description of Ralph may foreshadow what?

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5. How old is Ralph?

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6. What is the purpose of the polysyndeton in the paragraph that begins, “Here the beach was interrupted...”? How does it compare to an asyndeton? Cite an example.

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**Chapter Three: Huts on the Beach**

1. How does Golding indicate the passage of time?

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2. The term “insects” as used in this chapter is ambiguous. What two meanings can be applied?

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3. How does Golding create a feeling of verisimilitude in the description of Jack’s hunting adventure?

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4. In addition to the huts on the beach being a shelter from the weather, in what symbolic way does Ralph think that the shelters are important?

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5. What is causing the friction between Ralph and Jack?

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6. When Jack is hunting or talking about hunting, what kind of look does he have? What does this signify?

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**Chapter Five: Beast From the Water**

1. Identify the major conflict of the novel.

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2. What are the secondary conflicts?

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3. What theme is Golding developing in the opening paragraph of Chapter Five?

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4. Which of the characters thus far may be considered to be an antihero?

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5. Contrast this meeting with other meetings. What is its purpose?

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6. How do the topics at this meeting reflect the theme?

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7. What theme does the discussion of fear introduce?

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### Chapter Seven: Shadows and Tall Trees

1. What is significant about Ralph's concern with his appearance as the chapter begins?

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2. How does the view of the horizon differ on this side of the island?

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3. How does the change in this view affect Ralph's thoughts?

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4. What does the anaphora, "...but here, faced by the brute obtuseness of the ocean, the miles of division, one was clamped down, one was helpless, one was condemned, one was..." contribute to the overall tone of the chapter?

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5. At this point, what contrast is presented by Ralph's daydream?

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6. What is significant about Ralph's response to his encounter with the boar?

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7. What emotions does Robert experience in the game? How about Ralph?

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### Chapter Nine: A View to a Death

1. What has happened physically to Simon?  
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2. After reading the first two paragraphs, explain what the title of the chapter may foreshadow.  
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3. What does Simon's vision teach him? When is the vision fulfilled?  
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4. What Biblical parallels may be drawn from Simon's walk?  
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5. What does "parody" mean in the statement, "The tangle of lines showed him the mechanics of this parody; he examined the white nasal bones, the teeth, the colors of corruption."  
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6. What are the structural and narrative purposes of the break and the boys' laughter in the episode of Jack's party?  
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7. What does the dance signify?  
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**Chapter Eleven: Castle Rock**

1. Contrast Jack's and Ralph's attitudes toward their appearance.

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2. What is the significance of Piggy's holding the conch when the boys go to claim back the glasses?

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3. Sam says that Jack will be painted. What is Sam implying?

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4. Ralph insists his tribe wash so they can be like they used to be, but is reminded by the others that they bathe every day. What theme is supported?

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5. The twins see Ralph "as though they were seeing him for the first time." What does the statement imply?

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## Chapter Twelve: Cry of the Hunters

1. Explain the following observation: “But really, thought Ralph, this was not Bill. This was a savage whose image refused to blend with that ancient picture of a boy in shorts and shirt.” What does Ralph mean?

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2. Complete the thought “Feast today, and then tomorrow...” What does it suggest?

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3. What is the significance of the simile comparing the skull of the Lord of the Flies with the conch shell.

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4. What does Ralph attribute his being an outcast to?

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5. Ralph decides to go back to Jack’s camp and finds that it is Samneric’s turn to guard the entrance. What does he find out from them?

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