Beast From Water

Lord of the Flies – Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, Ralph calls a critical assembly to restore order and address the boys' growing fears. This lesson explores the power of speech, the fragility of leadership, and the dark forces — both real and imagined — that begin to consume the group.

CHAPTER 5 POWER & LEADERSHIP FEAR & THE BEAST



Learning Outcomes

What We'll Explore Today

1

Describe

Identify and describe the key speeches made by Ralph and Jack in Chapter 5, paying close attention to their language and tone.

2

Explain

Explain how the boys respond to Ralph's speech — who supports him, who resists, and why the assembly begins to fracture.

3

Evaluate

Evaluate how the boys' thoughts, loyalties, and fears shift throughout this part of the chapter as power begins to slip.



Starter: Ralph's Challenge

Ralph has called a meeting at the platform — but this time, the stakes are higher than ever. He knows he must **reassert his authority** before the group descends into chaos. Think carefully about the following questions before we begin reading.

💬 What should Ralph say?

What issues does Ralph need to address? Think about the shelters, the fire, and the growing fear of the beast. How can he bring the boys back to reason?

🎤 How should he say it?

Consider Ralph's tone and language. Should he be firm? Reassuring? Authoritative? How can he use the conch to command respect and attention?

Activity 1

Reading Ralph's Speech(p.93 at the bottom of the page-p.98"Ceremonially...)

As we read Ralph's speech aloud together, pay close attention to **what he says** and **how he says it**. Ralph is acutely aware that he must think clearly — Golding tells us he struggles to hold onto thoughts "like a soap bar in the bath." Despite this, Ralph attempts to lay down rules with logic and determination.

Look out for:

- The **rules** Ralph tries to reinstate (fire, shelter, sanitation)
- The **tone** of his speech — is he confident or desperate?
- How the boys **react** — do they listen, mock, or stay silent?
- Moments where Ralph's authority feels **strong or weak**

Key Quotation

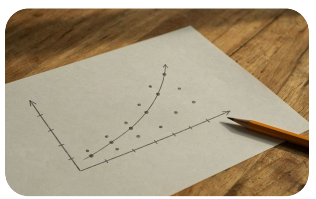
> "We've got to talk about this fear and decide there's nothing in it."

Ralph tries to rationalise the beast — but by addressing fear directly, does he make it more real to the boys?

Activity 2

The Power Graph: Ralph's Speech

As you follow Ralph's speech, plot a **power graph** tracking how much authority Ralph holds over the boys at each moment. Your graph should include **at least five clearly labelled points**, each supported by a quotation from the text.



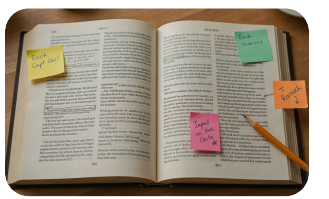
How to Set Up Your Graph

Draw a timeline along the *x*-axis (the speech from start to finish) and a scale of 1–10 on the *y*-axis to represent Ralph's power. Plot five or more points as the speech develops.



Add Your Quotations

Next to each point on your graph, write a short quotation from Ralph's speech. Explain in one sentence why this moment represents a rise or fall in his authority.



Look for Patterns

Does Ralph's power rise steadily, peak and fall, or fluctuate? Identify the **highest** and **lowest** points. What does Golding suggest about rational leadership on the island?

Power Graph – Example Guide

What Your Graph Might Look Like

Use this guide to help structure your own graph. The points below are **examples** — your graph may identify different moments depending on your reading. The key is to **justify every point** with evidence from the text.

📈 High Point — Opening the Assembly

"The conch. He can hold it as long as he likes." — Ralph firmly establishes the rules of the meeting. Power: **8/10**

📉 Low Point — The Boys Laugh

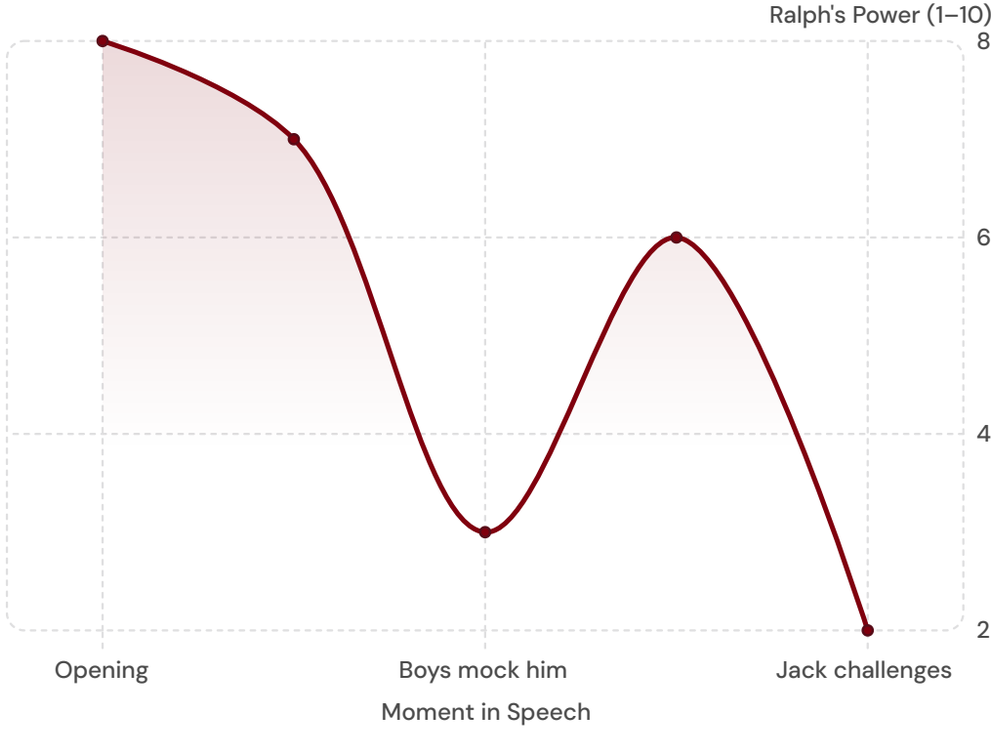
When Ralph speaks of sanitation, the boys mock him and lose focus. His authority is visibly weakened. Power: **3/10**

📈 Recovery — Speaking of the Beast

"There's another thing. We can help them to think. Not to be frightened." Power: **6/10**

📉 Collapse — Assembly Breaks Down

As fear takes hold and Jack challenges Ralph's rules, control crumbles. Power: **2/10**



Your graph should show a **fluctuating line** — not a straight one. Ralph's control ebbs and flows, reflecting how precarious democratic leadership is on the island.

Activity 3

Jack Takes the Conch

We now read from *"Jack stood up and took the conch"* (p.98)to *"The whole assembly applauded him with relief."(p.99)* This is a pivotal moment — Jack's intervention is met with immediate approval, exposing just how fragile Ralph's leadership truly is.

Jack's Approach

Jack dismisses fear through bravado rather than reason. He does not solve the problem — he simply **denies** it, and the boys love him for it. His language is direct, physical, and confident.

The Assembly's Response

The boys applaud Jack *"with relief"* — Golding's word choice is telling. They are not persuaded by logic; they are **desperate to feel safe**, and Jack offers them that, however falsely.

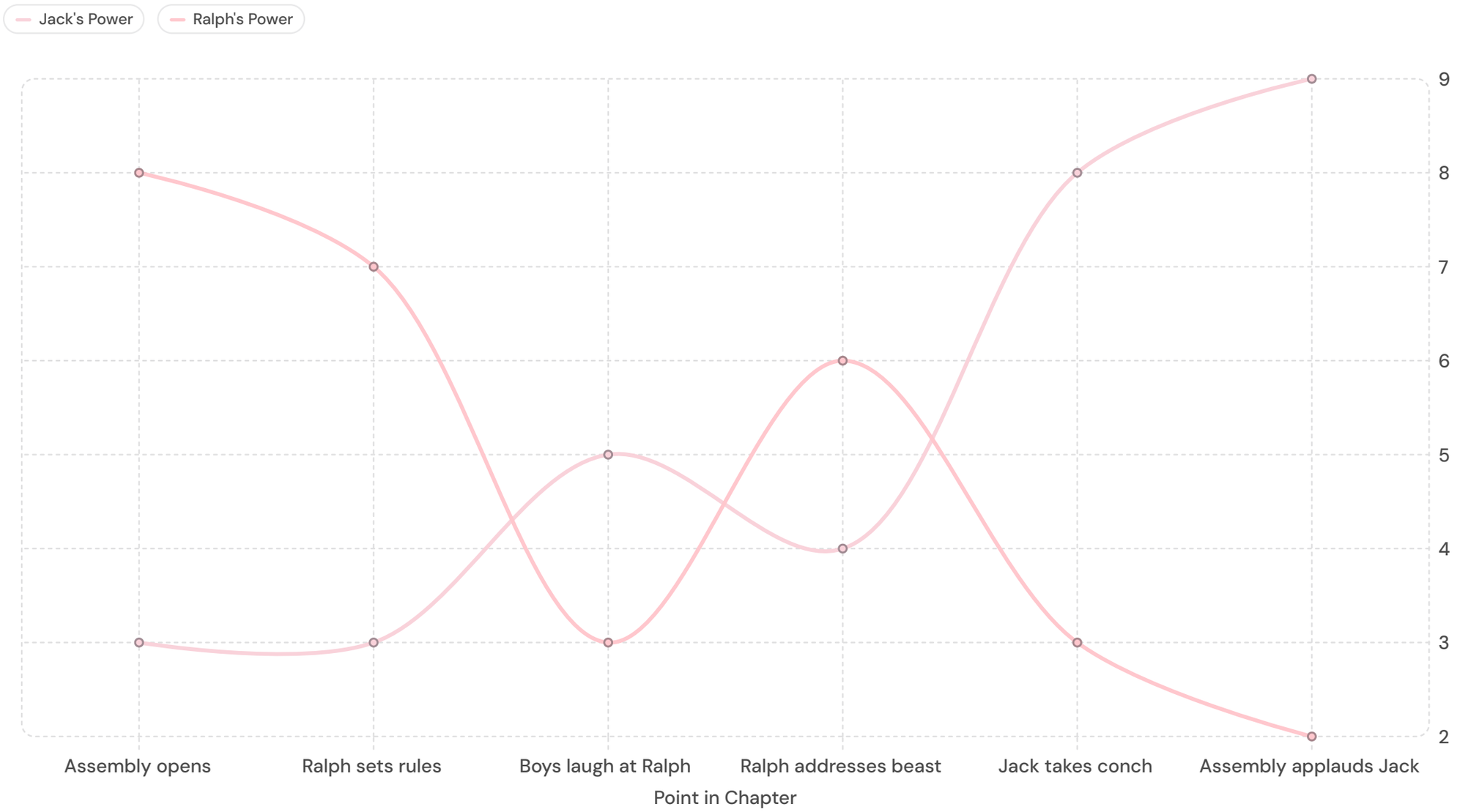
Add Jack to Your Graph

Return to your power graph and plot a **second line in a different colour** for Jack. At the moment the assembly applauds him, how does his power compare to Ralph's?

Power Graph – Comparing Both Lines

Ralph vs. Jack: A Visual Comparison

Your completed graph should now show **two lines** — one for Ralph, one for Jack. Notice how they intersect: as Jack's influence rises, Ralph's wanes. This visual contrast captures Golding's central theme of **civilisation versus savagery**.



Key question: **Why do the boys prefer Jack's speech to Ralph's?** Think about what each leader offers — and what the boys are most afraid of.

Activity 4

Reading On: The Meeting Changes

As we continue reading, keep two key questions in mind. The arrival of **Percival** and the boys' treatment of **Piggy** mark a turning point — the meeting spirals from tense debate into something far more disturbing.-p.100-p.101

🐷 What Do the Boys Think of Piggy?

Piggy is the voice of reason and scientific thinking — yet the boys consistently **mock and dismiss him**. When Piggy speaks, note how the others respond. Does holding the conch protect him? What does this reveal about the rules Ralph has set?

"You can't have no 'beast from water' it's a—" — Piggy is cut off before he can finish. His rational argument is silenced by ridicule.

👦 When Percival Speaks...(p.105"and what about the beast?"-

How does the meeting's tone shift after Percival speaks? Note the specific language Golding uses to describe the boys' reaction.

Answers:

Little Percival's contribution transforms the meeting. He whispers that the beast comes from the sea — and the effect on the boys is immediate and profound. **Fear overtakes logic.**

Notice how one small, frightened child's words carry more emotional weight than all of Ralph's careful reasoning. This is a crucial moment: **Golding shows that fear is more powerful than order.**

Close Reading Focus

The Beast: Symbol and Reality

By the end of Chapter 5, the beast has evolved from a vague nightmare into something the boys half-believe is real. Golding uses the assembly to dramatise how **fear spreads through a group** — and how difficult it is for rational voices to contain it. Copy the following points in your books



The Beast as Psychology

Simon alone hints at the truth: *"maybe it's only us."* The beast may be a projection of the boys' own capacity for violence — not a creature from the sea, but from within.



The Beast as Loss of Control

Each time the beast is discussed, the assembly loses order. The beast functions as a **symbol of chaos** — it grows in power as the boys' civilised behaviour diminishes.



Beast From Water

Percival's claim that the beast comes from the sea links it to the **unknown and uncontrollable**. The ocean surrounds and traps the boys — the beast, like the island itself, offers no escape.

Key Themes

What Chapter 5 Reveals

Democracy vs. Savagery

Ralph's assembly is a **democratic institution** — the conch, the rules, the right to speak. Yet it fails. Golding suggests that without shared values and self-discipline, democracy cannot survive fear and self-interest.

The Power of Rhetoric

Jack does not argue — he **performs**. His speech is emotionally compelling rather than logically sound. The boys respond to confidence and certainty, not to careful reasoning. This foreshadows the collapse of order.

Fear as a Weapon

Fear is not just a theme — it is a **political tool**. Those who can harness the boys' fear (Jack) gain power; those who try to dismiss it (Ralph, Piggy) lose it. Golding critiques how easily fear can be exploited.

The Outsider's Voice

Both Piggy and Simon are marginalised in this chapter. Their insights are the most profound, yet the least heard. Golding uses this to question who society **chooses to listen to** — and why.

Lesson Recap

What Have We Learned?

✅ Describe

Ralph's speech attempts to restore logic and rules. Jack's speech offers bravado and reassurance. Both use the conch — but to very different effect.

✅ Explain

The boys respond to Jack's speech with *"relief"* — they want to be told there is no beast, not taught to think critically. Ralph's rational leadership cannot compete with Jack's emotional appeal.

✅ Evaluate

By the chapter's end, Ralph's authority has been severely undermined. Golding shows that **fear, not reason**, governs the boys — a warning about human nature that extends far beyond the island.

For your next lesson: re-read pages 93–107 and annotate three moments where Golding uses language to show a shift in power. Be prepared to share your annotations.