Evaluating structure: Ralph's nostalgia

Lord of the Flies, Chapter 7 | Year 9 | 40 minutes

Lesson slides, with teacher notes and two pupil sheets at the back

Learning objective and success criteria

1 min

LO: To evaluate how the writer uses structure to emphasise Ralph's sense of nostalgia.

Secure	I can say what structure means and describe how the order of ideas changes the mood.
Developing	I can explain how a structural device (contrast, flashback, the ending) makes Ralph's nostalgia stand out.
Extending	I can evaluate how effective the structure is and judge what would change if the order were different.

Teacher note: *Read the objective aloud. Ask for a quick thumbs rating of confidence with 'evaluate' and return to it at the end.*

Starter: Memory snapshot

1-5 mins

Write **three words** about a place, person or time you miss or remember fondly. You have **90 seconds**, then share one word with a partner.

Nostalgia (noun): a sentimental longing for the past, often for a time or place that felt safe or happy.

Think: Why might Ralph feel nostalgic at this point in the story?

Teacher note: *Offer picture prompts to pupils who struggle to start. Take 3-4 words from volunteers; look for shared themes (warmth, safety, family) and link to Ralph, who is tired, dirty and far from home.*

What is structure?

5-9 mins

Structure is how a writer **arranges** ideas: the **order**, the **shifts**, the **contrasts**, and how a section **starts** and **ends**.

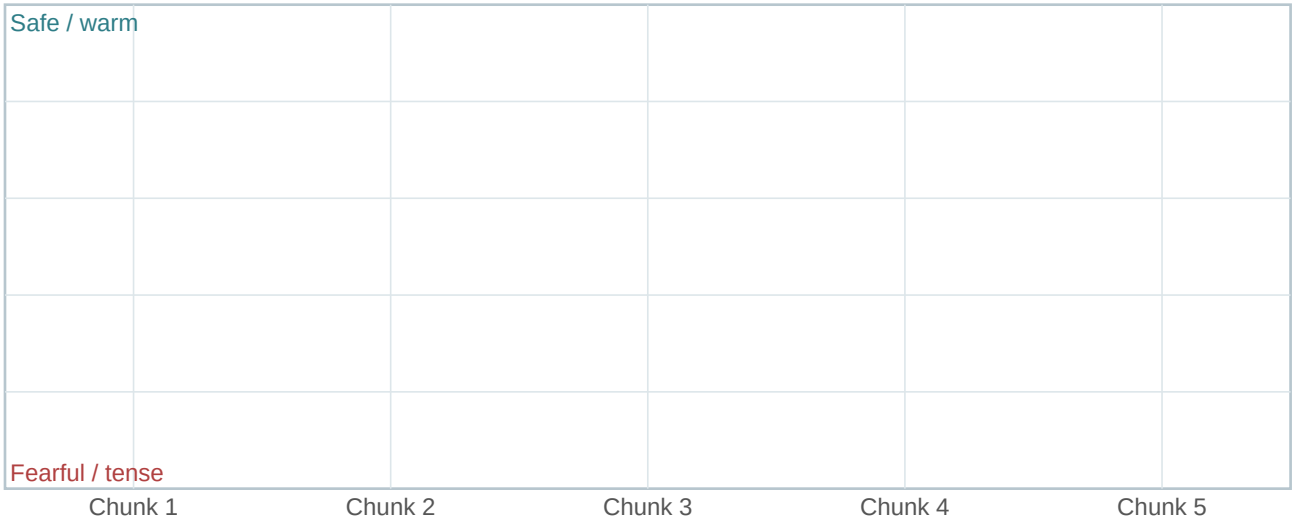
Structural device	How it can show nostalgia
Order of ideas	Memories grow warmer and more idealised
Contrast	A safe memory against a frightening present
Flashback / memory	Takes the reader out of danger and into Ralph's mind
Shift of focus	Shows where Ralph's thoughts go
Beginning and ending	A gentle ending leaves a feeling of loss
Build-up and pace	A slow, calm memory against urgent action

Teacher note: *Use a playlist as the analogy: why is the best song often last? Leave this slide up as a toolkit during the writing task. Pupils only need one or two devices, not all six.*

Activity 1: Mood graph

9-17 mins

Your listening job: after each chunk, put a cross on the graph and write **one feeling word**.



Passage: from *"Once, following his father from Chatham to Devonport"* to *"everything was good-humoured and friendly"*.

Where does your line **rise most**?

Teacher note: *Read the passage in 3-5 short chunks. Pupils plot a cross on Sheet 1 after each chunk. Support: ruler under each line and a pre-labelled axis. Extend: add a second line for the narrator's tone.*

Activity 2: Stage map and reorder test

17-25 mins

1. Map the **order of ideas** in the passage in a few words each, on Sheet 1.

Stage	What Ralph remembers or notices	Feeling
1 (start)		
2		
3		
4		
5 (end)		

2. Reorder test: shuffle your five stages into a different order and read it aloud. Is it **stronger, weaker or just different**? Then finish: *The writer chose this order because...*

Teacher note: *Check your own five-stage summary against your edition before the lesson and adapt the labels. Support: partly filled labels. Extend: test two orders and justify which is weaker.*

Activity 3: Zoom out, the sandwich

25-28 mins

Tension and danger

the fear, tiredness and frightening events

Ralph's warm memory

calm, cosy, safe: the 'filling'

Danger returns

the story pulls us back to the island

Discuss in pairs:

- Why might Golding place the memory **here**, between moments of danger?
- What does the contrast make us feel about Ralph?

Teacher note: *Quick discussion only: think-pair-share, then take 2-3 answers. Check the chapter's surrounding events against your edition. This sets up the 'contrast' point in the paragraph.*

Model paragraph: PEE plus a judgement

28-31 mins

Point: Golding emphasises Ralph's nostalgia by building his memories towards a feeling of complete safety. **Evidence:** The passage starts with a plain, factual memory of a journey with his father and ends with "everything was good-humoured and friendly". **Explain:** The move from a simple journey to a warm, general feeling suggests his memories grow cosier and more idealised the longer he thinks about them. **Evaluate:** This structure is effective because the passage ends on its calmest note, which contrasts sharply with the fear and tension around it. The reader feels how much Ralph has lost, which makes his present situation seem even more frightening.

Evaluation words: effective, powerful, emphasises, highlights, in contrast, however, an alternative would be...

Teacher note: *Read aloud; pupils highlight P red, E teal, E amber and the judgement purple. Ask which sentence is the judgement and which words show it.*

Your task: write an evaluative paragraph

31-37 mins

Question: How does the writer use structure to emphasise Ralph's sense of nostalgia?

Support

Write one PEE paragraph about how the **order of ideas** shows Ralph's nostalgia.

Help: sentence starters and one short quotation.

Core

Write one paragraph that names a **structural device** and explains its effect.

Help: the toolkit slide and sentence starters.

Extend

Write **two** paragraphs: the order of ideas, and the contrast with the rest of the chapter. **Evaluate** how effective the structure is.

Help: evaluation words.

Sentence starters: This structure is effective because... / The order makes the reader feel... because... / If the writer had started with..., the effect would be...

Teacher note: *Pupils use Sheet 2. Circulate to Support first. Extend pupils aim for two paragraphs (order of ideas, and contrast with the rest of the chapter).*

Swap, then exit ticket

37-40 mins

1. Swap and check (2 mins): use the checklist on **Sheet 2**. Find the point, evidence, explanation and judgement. Give **one star and one wish**.

2. Exit ticket (1 min): rate the structure **1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5** for how effectively it emphasises Ralph's nostalgia, then complete:

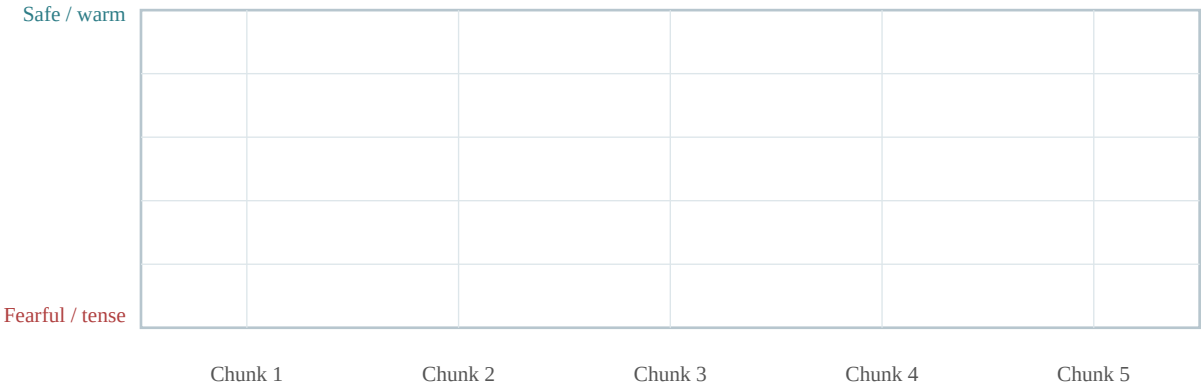
The structure is effective because _____ , which makes the reader feel _____ about Ralph.

Teacher note: *Partners swap books, underline P, E, E and the judgement, and give one star and a wish (checklist on Sheet 2). Collect Sheet 2 as pupils leave and compare ratings with the starter thumbs.*

Sheet 1: Mood Graph, Stage Map and Reorder Test

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part 1: Mood graph. *After each chunk, put a cross on the graph and write one feeling word under it. Join the crosses with a line.*



Where does the line rise most? Why? _____

Part 2: Stage map. *Map the order of ideas in the passage in a few words each.*

Stage	What Ralph remembers or notices	Feeling
1 (start)		
2		
3		
4		
5 (end)		

Part 3: Reorder test. My new order: ____ , ____ , ____ , ____ , ____ It feels (circle): **stronger / weaker / just different**

The writer chose the original order because...

_____

_____

Sheet 2: Evaluation Planner and Exit Ticket

Name: _____ Date: _____

Question: ***How does the writer use structure to emphasise Ralph's sense of nostalgia?***

Layer	My notes
Point: Golding emphasises Ralph's nostalgia by...	
Evidence: a short quotation, or a clear reference to the order of ideas	
Explain: This suggests...	
Evaluate: This is effective because... / The reader feels...	

Swap and check (partner marks)

Check	Yes
Point answers the question about structure	[ ]
Evidence is a short quotation or a clear reference to the order	[ ]
Explain says what the structure suggests about Ralph	[ ]
A structural device is named and there is a judgement (effective because...)	[ ]

Star: _____

Wish: _____

Exit ticket

How effectively does the structure emphasise Ralph's nostalgia? Circle: **1 2 3 4 5** (1 = not effective, 5 = very effective)

The structure is effective because _____ , which makes the reader feel _____ about Ralph.