

Lord of the Flies

Chapter 4 — Continued

TODAY'S LESSON

We continue our exploration of Chapter Four, diving deeper into the tensions, power struggles, and shifting loyalties that define this pivotal chapter of Golding's novel.

Learning Objectives

By the end of today's lesson, you will be able to:

1

Describe

The key conflicts that arise in Chapter Four and the tensions they create between characters.

2

Explain

How Jack and Ralph interact in this section of the chapter, and what their behaviour reveals about their characters.

3

Evaluate

The struggle for power in this part of the chapter, considering each boy's motivations and methods.

Starter: What Do the Boys Think of Piggy?

READING ACTIVITY

Read from *"Ralph climbed out of the bathing pool"* to *"taut blue line of the horizon."* *(p76 paragraph 1-p78 first two lines)*

What to Look For

As you read, pay close attention to how the other boys treat Piggy. Notice their words, their actions, and any moments where Piggy is excluded, mocked, or ignored. What does Golding reveal about the group's attitude towards him?

Your Task

Find **at least two quotations** from the extract that support your interpretation. Be ready to explain your choices — what do these quotations tell us about how Piggy is perceived, and what does this suggest about the group's values?



Answers:

Piggy: The Outsider

Golding uses Piggy as a symbol of rationality and civilisation — and the boys' rejection of him reflects their growing distance from those values. Consider these interpretive angles:

A Target for Ridicule

The boys mock Piggy's weight, his asthma, and his accent. He is never fully accepted. Their cruelty towards him reveals a pack mentality beginning to form on the island.

His Voice Goes Unheard

Even when Piggy offers sensible ideas, he is dismissed or talked over. His lack of social power on the island mirrors the boys' rejection of reason and order.

His Glasses as Symbol

Piggy's spectacles represent intellect and civilisation. The boys' attitude towards Piggy — and later towards his glasses — is deeply significant in Golding's allegorical scheme.

Activity 2: The Hunters' Chant

DISCUSSION

"Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Spill her blood."(p.81)

What Does the Chant Show?
Discuss With a Partner

What does this chant reveal about the boys as a group? Think about:

- The language Golding chooses — why these specific words?
- What the chant tells us about Jack's influence over the others
- Whether this behaviour could happen in real life — and why



Answers:

What Does the Chant Show?

The chant is rhythmic, tribal, and violent. It signals the boys' rapid descent from civilised schoolchildren into something more primal. The repetition creates a collective frenzy — individual identity dissolves into the group.

Ralph vs. Jack: Who Is Right?

ACTIVITY 3 — DISCUSSION- READ FROM P. 81 TO P.84

Ralph is furious. Jack took the hunters away from their duties — the shelters remain unbuilt and, crucially, **the signal fire has gone out**. A ship passed on the horizon. They missed their chance of rescue. Jack defends himself by pointing to the success of the hunt.

Discuss: Who do you think is right — Ralph or Jack? Use evidence from the text to support your view.

Answers:

Ralph's Argument	Jack's Argument
The fire is their *only* means of rescue. Letting it go out was an unforgivable failure of responsibility. Rules exist for a reason, and Jack broke them. Rescue must always come first.	The hunt was a success — they have meat. Survival requires food as much as rescue. Jack believes his skills and instincts are what the group truly needs to survive day to day on the island.

The Fire: More Than Just Flames

The signal fire is one of the most important symbols in the entire novel. Its going out is a turning point — not just practically, but symbolically.

What the Fire Represents

- Hope of rescue and return to civilisation
- The boys' connection to the adult world
- Ralph's authority and leadership
- Reason triumphing over instinct

Why Its Extinction Matters

When the fire dies, so does the boys' most tangible link to rescue. A ship is spotted on the horizon at exactly this moment — Golding's timing is deliberate. This is not an accident; it is a **consequence of Jack's priorities**. The hunt — and the excitement it brings — has begun to outweigh rational thinking. Ralph's despair is palpable, and the reader understands what has truly been lost.



Activity 4: Reading Closely

CLOSE READING

We read from *"Jack stood up as he said this, the bloodied knife in his hand"* to the end of the chapter.(p. 84, last paragraph to the end of the chapter)

1 What Jack Does and Says

Track Jack's behaviour carefully — his words, his gestures, his use of the knife. How does he position himself in relation to the other boys? What does his body language suggest?

2 How Ralph Responds

Observe Ralph's reaction. Is he assertive or defensive? Does he maintain his authority? Note any moments where Ralph seems to lose control of the situation — and why.

Jack's Behaviour at the End of the Chapter

Answers:

This closing section is electric with tension. Golding places Jack and Ralph in direct confrontation — and it is Jack who dominates the moment.

The Bloodied Knife

Jack stands with the knife still in his hand — a powerful, threatening image. The blood is not just physical; it marks Jack's transformation. He is no longer the choirboy from Chapter One.

The Apology That Isn't

Jack appears to apologise to Ralph, but the apology is hollow — it is offered to the group, not sincerely to Ralph. It is a performance designed to save face and maintain status.

Ralph's Loss of Ground

Ralph struggles to press his advantage. He cannot fully articulate his anger or assert his authority. This is a pivotal moment: Jack wins the psychological battle even when Ralph is in the right.

Activity 5: What Does Jack Do — and Why?

ANALYSIS TASK- COPY THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR BOOKS

What Jack Does

Rather than accepting blame, Jack redirects the group's energy. He leads the hunters in their chant, re-enacting the kill. He draws the boys into his world of excitement and bloodlust — away from Ralph's world of rules and responsibility.

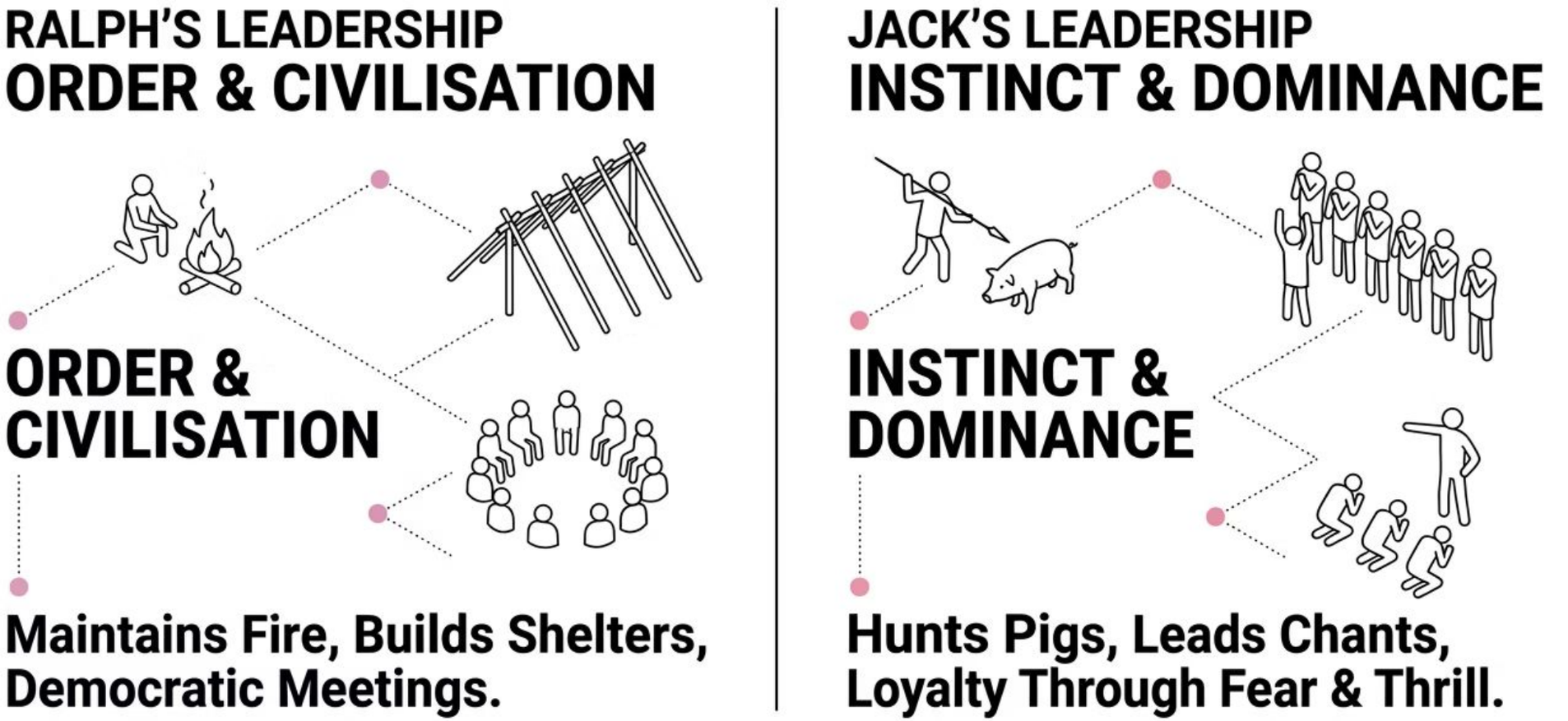
Why He Does It

Jack is an instinctive leader — but one who leads through **excitement, fear, and spectacle** rather than reason. By giving the boys a thrilling experience, he binds them to him emotionally. He understands that *loyalty follows exhilaration*, not logic. This is the essence of his growing power over the group.



The Power Struggle: Ralph vs. Jack

Chapter Four is the chapter where the balance of power visibly begins to shift. Golding presents us with two competing visions of leadership — and two competing visions of what it means to be human.



Key Takeaways from Chapter 4

Today we have explored how Golding uses the events of Chapter Four to deepen the novel's central themes. Keep these ideas in mind as we move forward:

Civilisation is Fragile

The boys' rapid embrace of the chant and the hunt shows how quickly civilised behaviour can erode when social structures weaken.

Power Corrupts

Jack's growing dominance — even at the expense of rescue — shows how the desire for power can override moral responsibility.

Piggy as Symbol

The boys' contempt for Piggy mirrors their rejection of reason, intellect, and the values of the society they left behind.

The Fire as Hope

Every time the fire diminishes, so does the boys' humanity. Its extinction in this chapter is a profound symbolic moment in the novel.

Next lesson: We begin Chapter Five — "Beast from Water" — and the fear that begins to take hold of the group.