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**Lord of the
Flies**

AQA GCSE English Literature



York Notes Rapid Revision

Lord of the Flies

AQA GCSE English Literature

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INTRODUCTION Who was William Golding?

Three key things about William Golding

1. Golding was a schoolmaster's son and eventually worked as a **schoolmaster** himself, after spending time as an **actor, producer** and **writer**.
2. He served in the **Royal Navy** during the Second World War.
3. Golding received the **Nobel Prize** for Literature in 1983 for his novels.



What experiences did Golding have in his life?

- He studied Natural Sciences before changing to English at Brasenose College, Oxford.
- As a teacher, he understood very well how hierarchies among pupils work in schools.
- He was disgusted by people's behaviour on both sides during the war.

Why did he write *Lord of the Flies*?

- Golding was left feeling extremely pessimistic after the Second World War.
- He was angered by his countrymen's relief at being (as they thought) better than the Nazis. He believed strongly that there was the potential for evil in everyone. The war had shown him that being British did not necessarily make a person 'good'.
- He used his teacher's knowledge of how schoolboys think and act, along with his belief that anyone could 'turn bad', to inform his writing.

How important has *Lord of the Flies* been?

- *Lord of the Flies* was published in 1954 with some success, and was soon recognised as an important literary novel.
- Golding was able to leave teaching and write full time in 1961, by which time he had published three further novels.
- There are two film versions of *Lord of the Flies* and it has also been adapted for theatre. It has been studied in schools in the UK and other English-speaking countries continuously since the late 1950s.

INTRODUCTION Plot summary

Chapters One and Two

- Boys being evacuated in a war find themselves marooned on an island after their plane crashes.
- They elect Ralph chief and he puts Jack in charge of hunting.
- The younger boys express fears of a 'snake-thing' on the island.
- A fire is lit and gets out of control.

Chapters Three and Four

- Ralph fails to get shelters built – he does not have enough help.
- Jack, increasingly obsessed with hunting, paints his face.
- The fire burns out due to Jack's neglect and they miss a potential rescuer.
- The hunters catch a pig.

Chapters Five and Six

- The boys have a meeting and Ralph tries to re-establish rules.
- The boys discuss the 'beast' again.
- Sam and Eric mistake a dead parachutist for the beast.
- Jack leads a hunt for the beast.

Chapters Nine to Twelve

- Simon is killed when he is mistaken for the beast in a frenzied dance.
- Jack sets up a separate camp and attacks Ralph's camp at night, stealing Piggy's glasses.
- Roger kills Piggy up at Castle Rock by levering a rock over a cliff onto him.
- Jack's group sets the island on fire, which is seen by a passing ship and the boys are rescued.

Chapters Seven and Eight

- Robert is hurt in a game celebrating the hunt.
- Ralph, Jack and Roger see the parachutist and run away scared.
- The hunters kill a pig and put its head on a stick.
- The pig's head seems to speak to Simon, telling him it's the 'Lord of the Flies'.

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Chapters One and Two

Three key things about Chapters One and Two

1. The **island** setting is introduced: it is a place of **contrasts** with incredible **beauty** and the **threat of danger**.
2. We meet the **main characters**, boys who have survived a plane crash: **Ralph**, who is elected **chief**; **Piggy**, who **struggles** to keep up physically; and **Jack** who **bullies** Piggy immediately.
3. The idea of **order** and potential **conflict** is established as important, with the boys deciding who should be in charge and discussing **rules**.

What happens in Chapter One?

- Various boys find themselves marooned on a desert island. They assemble throughout the chapter.
- Ralph and Piggy find a conch shell, which they use to call others.
- A group of choirboys, led by Jack, marches along the beach, looking like **'something dark'**.
- Simon, one of the choirboys, faints.
- Ralph reveals Piggy's nickname to the other boys.
- The boys vote Ralph to be their chief, to Jack's disappointment. Ralph offers for Jack to lead a smaller group of hunters.
- Ralph, Jack and Simon go exploring. Jack almost kills a piglet.



What happens in Chapter Two?

- The explorers return to tell the others that there are no other people on the island.
- The boys agree that they need rules to keep themselves safe until they are rescued.
- The littluns (short for 'little ones' – the younger boys) report being afraid of a **'beastie'** on the island.
- Ralph suggests lighting a signal fire to attract rescuers. They light a fire on the mountain top using Piggy's glasses, but the fire gets out of control.
- Piggy realises that the boy with the mulberry-coloured birthmark is missing after the fire.

Five key quotations

1. Ralph's appearance and nature: **'a mildness about his mouth and eyes that proclaimed no devil'** (Chapter One)
2. The island setting: **'a bird, a vision of red and yellow, flashed upwards with a witch-like cry'** (Chapter One)
3. Jack introduces himself: **'I'm chapter chorister and head boy. I can sing C sharp.'** (Chapter One)
4. Piggy reports what the beast is like: **'A snake-thing. Ever so big. He saw it.'** (Chapter Two)
5. Piggy plays the adult: **'Like kids!' he said scornfully. 'Acting like a crowd of kids!'** (Chapter Two)

Note it!

Notice how Piggy's glasses are used to light the fire, **symbolising** both Piggy's clear-sightedness and human ingenuity. Note, too, that Jack **'snatched'** them from Piggy, rather than asking for them.

Exam focus

How can I write about contrasts? AO2

You can use Chapter One to write about contrasts in the setting.

Golding creates a setting which is full of contrasts. On the first page, Ralph's progress is halted when a bird, a vision of red and yellow, flashed upwards with a witch-like cry'. This shows both the startling and exotic beauty of the island, and its potential threat to the boys. The adjective 'witch-like' could be seen as an example of foreshadowing, warning the reader of danger to come.

Topic sentence makes overall point

Embedded quotation to illustrate

Explanation of contrast illustrated by quotation

Linguistic terminology 'zooms in' for analysis

Literary terminology used to analyse effect

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph about how Piggy is introduced. Use one of the quotations from the list.

The opening chapters introduce the idea of conflict through the presentation of Piggy, who is lecturing the other

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Chapters Three and Four

Three key things about Chapters Three and Four

1. **Savagery** on the island develops rapidly, through the hunting party's face-painting, **failures in rules** and routines and the **increasing cruelty** to the littluns and Piggy.
2. **Ralph's** concern for **order** and **civilisation** is made clearer with his focus on building shelters and his anger about the fire being allowed to go out.
3. Secondary characters such as Roger and Simon are developed in more detail as we begin to see **Roger's cruelty** and **Simon's natural helpfulness**.

What happens in Chapter Three?

- The chapter opens with Jack on a solo hunt, which is unsuccessful.
- Ralph is frustrated that he is not getting enough help with building shelters – although everyone agrees to work, they wander off after five minutes. He sees Jack's hunting as a fun activity, but one which does not help their safety on the island or their rescue.
- Jack, Simon and Ralph mention the beast again as another reason shelters are needed.
- Simon goes into the forest alone, after helping littluns reach high-up fruit.

What happens in Chapter Four?

- The littluns play in the sand. Maurice and Roger spoil their game and Roger throws stones around Henry, but does not quite dare to throw them at him directly.
- Jack and the hunters paint their faces to help them sneak up on the pigs.
- Simon, Piggy and Ralph see a ship go by, but the hunters have forgotten to keep the signal fire alight.
- The hunters return chanting triumphantly with their first dead pig but Ralph and Piggy's response is to shout at them for letting the fire go out.
- Jack reacts angrily and smashes a lens in Piggy's glasses. He apologises about the fire.



Five key quotations

1. Jack's obsession with hunting: **'He tried to convey the compulsion to track down and kill that was swallowing him up.'** (Chapter Three)
2. Ralph on Simon's uniqueness: **'He's queer. He's funny.'** (Chapter Three)
3. Structures of civilisation: **'Round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and policemen and the law.'** (Chapter Four)
4. Ralph's anger: he **'reached inside himself for the worst word he knew. "They let the bloody fire out."'** (Chapter Four)
5. Signs of savagery: **'Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Spill her blood.'** (Chapter Four)

Note it!

Notice how Piggy is not taken seriously in these chapters. He has an idea to make sundials, showing his link to science and knowledge, but Ralph mocks him. Later, when the hunters return with meat, Piggy is the one they deliberately and explicitly leave out.

Exam focus

How can I write about the balance of civilisation and savagery? AO1

You can use these chapters to write about how civilisation begins to descend into savagery.

In Chapter Four, **Roger's natural cruelty** leads him to destroy the littluns' games in the sand, yet the **structures of civilisation still hold**, preventing him from hurting Henry. Golding shows that **'Round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and policemen and the law.'** **This symbolic 'protection'** demonstrates how **the boys have initially brought civilised ideas with them to the island**, operating as though these institutions still exist around them.

Clear comment on character

Concise reference to theme, linking to question

Reference to literary technique of symbolism

Development of idea relating to theme

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph about the move away from civilisation. Use another of the quotations from the list.

Golding portrays the breaking down of civilisation into savagery soon after the boys' arrival on the island. This can be seen in Chapter Three when Jack

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Chapters Five and Six

Three key things about Chapters Five and Six

1. Ralph's **leadership skills** are emphasised. It is clear that he deserves to be chief, but also that the boys are not following his lead.
2. The **threat of the beast** becomes more important and begins to **divide** the boys.
3. The **island landscape** is developed in more detail.

What happens in Chapter Five?

- Ralph prepares for and holds an assembly to '**put things straight**'. He tries to re-establish rules like cleanliness and organisation and the boys discuss the beast.
- Jack, Piggy, and Ralph agree there is no beast on the island.
- Simon gets philosophical in talking about the beast: '**maybe it's only us.**'
- A littlun, Percival, tries to talk and becomes stuck on reciting his name, address and phone number, which he can no longer fully remember.
- Ralph, Piggy and Simon wish things were as simple and organised as in the grown-up world. Ralph asks for a sign from the outside world.

What happens in Chapter Six?

- A dead parachutist is blown onto the mountain-top.
- Sam and Eric are guarding the signal fire and mistake the parachutist for the beast when they relight the fire.
- An assembly is called about the beast and order begins to break down. Jack states that some have more right to speak than others, regardless of the conch, but Ralph holds power.
- Jack, Ralph and Simon lead a hunt for the beast while Piggy stays behind to look after the littluns.
- Ralph goes ahead in the hunt and the boys find a good place for a fort. Once again, Ralph has to remind the others of practicalities as they carry on in their quest.



Five key quotations

1. Jack's challenge to Ralph: **'Who are you, anyway? Sitting there – telling people what to do. You can't hunt. You can't sing—'** (Chapter Five)
2. The island as dangerous: **'Then the sleeping leviathan breathed out – the waters rose, the weed streamed, and the water boiled over the table rock with a roar.'** (Chapter Six)
3. Fear of the beast: **'Soon the darkness was full of claws, full of the awful unknown and menace.'** (Chapter Five)
4. Breakdown in order: **'... we don't need the conch any more. We know who ought to say things.'** (Jack, Chapter Six)
5. Ralph's leadership: **'I'm chief. We've got to make certain.'** (Chapter Six)

Note it!

When the boys reach the end of the island and see what a good place for a fort it is, most of them are overtaken by savagery. Their initial desire is to be destructive, rolling rocks down the mountainside.

Exam focus

How can I write about Ralph and Jack's relationship?

AO1 AO2

You can use Chapters Five and Six to explore the widening gap between Ralph and Jack.

Order begins to break down in the novel as Ralph and Jack's relationship becomes more strained. By the middle of the novel, Jack is challenging Ralph's power directly, asking 'Who are you, anyway? Sitting there – telling people what to do.' He goes on to hint that he feels he should be leader: 'You can't hunt. You can't sing.' These verbs, 'hunt' and 'sing', emphasise physical skills that he has and that Ralph lacks.

Topic sentence links theme with characters' relationship

Quotation is embedded and explained

Point is developed

Language analysis develops ideas further

Now you try!

Finish this further paragraph about the conflict between Ralph and Jack. Use one of the quotations from the list.

Jack and Ralph's growing conflict can also be seen through Golding's exploration of the theme of order. It is presented through Jack's outburst

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Chapters Seven and Eight

Three key things about Chapters Seven and Eight

1. The boys' **violence increases** with physical harm to Robert through the hunting game, **foreshadowing** Simon's death.
2. The boys **separate** into two groups, the conch group maintaining **routines for rescue** and Jack's group emphasising **physical pleasure** in a self-indulgent way.
3. **Simon's** vision of the Lord of the Flies develops his **outsider** status and the **beast** as **symbol**.

What happens in Chapter Seven?

- The chapter opens with Ralph's thoughts about the boys' physical state.
- Simon tells Ralph he'll get home, which Ralph dismisses as Simon being 'batty'.
- After a boar they chase escapes, the boys play at hunting and turn on Robert, who gets hurt.
- Ralph wants to break off the beast hunt once it gets dark, but Jack taunts him for being scared.
- Ralph, Jack and Roger go up the mountain to look for the beast. Faced with the parachutist in the moonlight, they flee.



What happens in Chapter Eight?

- Ralph, Jack and Roger report back. Jack says his hunters could kill the beast, but Ralph insults them by saying they couldn't.
- Jack calls a meeting. He says Ralph is not fit to be chief and tries to lead a mutiny. Jack leaves, inviting the others to hunt with him.
- The conch group build a fire near the platform, at Piggy's suggestion, and realise that many boys have gradually joined Jack.
- The hunters kill a sow who had piglets and make an offering to the beast of her head on a stick.
- Jack and some of his hunters steal fire from the conch group. Jack invites other boys to join him to feast.
- Simon enters the forest alone. In a trance, he has a conversation with the pig's head (labelled the Lord of the Flies).



Five key quotations

1. Simon's message of hope to Ralph: **'You'll get back to where you came from.'** (Chapter Seven)
2. Violent emotions stirred up by the hunting game: **'The desire to squeeze and hurt was over-mastering.'** (Chapter Seven)
3. Piggy's idea: **'Only Piggy could have the intellectual daring to suggest moving the fire from the mountain.'** (Chapter Eight)
4. Jack's primitivism: **'When we kill we'll leave some of the kill for it. Then it won't bother us, maybe.'** (Chapter Eight)
5. Simon hears the beast speak from the pig's head: **'Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!... You knew, didn't you? I'm part of you?'** (Chapter Eight)

Note it!

Golding manipulates the novel's pace as the boys hunt and become more savage. As their fear increases, the average sentence length decreases. The boys' savagery is associated with a breakdown in their language, e.g. their tribalistic chants in the hunt.

Exam focus

How can I write about the beast? AO1 AO2

You can write about how Golding uses the beast in Jack's character development.

Golding uses the concept of the beast to develop aspects of character. In Jack's case, having earlier denied the beast, his attitude here shows his shift into savagery by leaving offerings as though the beast were a primitive god: 'When we kill, we'll leave some of the kill for it. Then it won't bother us, maybe.' This ritualistic behaviour, along with simple sentence structure, shows how Jack's character is descending into primitive ways of thinking.

Clear topic sentence

Strong statement of key theme

Explanation linking quotation to theme

Brief comment on language

Restated theme phrased effectively

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph about a different character. Use one of the quotations from the list.

Golding also uses the idea of the beast to show how Simon's character develops. When he communicates with

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Chapters Nine and Ten

Three key things about Chapters Nine and Ten

1. The different values of the two groups are underlined: pleasure and **savagery** for Jack's tribe, preparation and **equality** for Ralph's group.
2. The **savagery** becomes lethal with Simon's death, which causes different reactions: Ralph states it was '**murder**', but Piggy, the clearest thinker, describes it as an '**accident**'. Jack's tribe only sees Simon as the **beast**.
3. **Simon's presentation** as a Christ-like figure is clearest when he rushes from the mountain to share the truth like a prophet and is **killed**. The shining sea-creatures that surround his body appear like a **halo**.

What happens in Chapter Nine?

- Simon wakes and discovers the dead parachutist. He realises the truth and decides to tell the others.
- Ralph and Piggy walk near Jack's group and Jack orders them to be given some meat.
- Jack demands to know who will join his '**tribe**' and Jack and Ralph argue about the conch's significance.
- During a ritualistic dance, Simon comes out of the forest into the chanting circle. He is mistaken for the beast, and killed.
- The storm arrives in full force after Simon's death. It helps blow the parachutist's body down off the mountainside. It is washed out to sea with Simon's body.



What happens in Chapter Ten?

- Ralph's group discuss Simon's death. They all agree they were very tired and were not really part of it.
- Jack's tribe sets up camp at the end of the island. His clear rules include beatings as punishments. Roger is happy to have a '**proper chief**'.
- With too little wood to keep a fire burning all the time, Ralph's group decide to let it go out at night. Ralph appears confused and has muddled dreams about home.
- Jack leads a night-time raid on Ralph's camp and steals Piggy's glasses.

Five key quotations

1. Loss of order: **'the conch doesn't count at this end of the island—'** (Jack to Ralph, Chapter Nine)
2. The death of Simon: **'There were no words, and no movements but the tearing of teeth and claws.'** (Chapter Nine)
3. Responsibility for Simon's death: **'Don't you understand, Piggy? The things we did—'** (Ralph, Chapter Ten)
4. Unity in Ralph's group: **'Memory of the dance that none of them had attended shook all four boys convulsively.'** (Chapter Ten)
5. Jack's leadership: **'He was a chief now in truth; and he made stabbing motions with his spear.'** (Chapter Ten)

Note it!

Chapter Ten is entitled 'The Shell and the Glasses', both important **symbols** in the novel. When Jack raids Ralph's camp, Piggy's instinct is to protect the conch, because to him it is a symbol of democracy. To Jack, however, it is worthless, while the glasses can create fire.

Exam focus

How can I write about context? AO1 AO3

You can use these chapters to explore how the two groups relate to the novel's historical context.

Golding contrasts Ralph and Jack as representing democracy and dictatorship in the Cold War context of the 1950s. Ralph's leadership style is collaborative and democratic, which Golding shows as encouraging unity among the boys in his group: 'Memory of the dance that none of them had attended shook all four boys convulsively.' This emphasis on shared experience with 'none' and 'all' shows their connection to one another, developed through Ralph's leadership.

Topic sentence makes point clear

Explicit link to context

Clear sense of author

Focus on specific word choices and effect

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph about context. Use one of the quotations from the list. A function of Jack's tribe is to represent dictatorships. The idea of the inequality in his camp is explored when he tells Ralph

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Chapters Eleven and Twelve

Three key things about Chapters Eleven and Twelve

1. **Ralph** and **Piggy** cling to the last remnants of **order**: they want to approach Jack looking clean and tidy with the conch.
2. **Piggy's** death, holding the **conch**, marks the **end** of order and civilisation.
3. **Jack's** determination to kill **Ralph** results in the **destruction** of the island's natural resources, showing his complete **loss of reason**.

What happens in Chapter Eleven?

- Ralph's group cannot light a fire, so resolve to confront Jack and demand Piggy's glasses back.
- Ralph and Samneric go to Castle Rock with Piggy, where guards have been told not to allow them entry. Jack returns from hunting; he and Ralph fight.
- Piggy shouts, trying to make Jack's tribe see sense and act responsibly. Roger levers a huge rock onto Piggy and kills him, smashing the conch.
- Jack throws a spear at Ralph, wounding him, and Ralph runs off into the forest.
- Jack and Roger attack Samneric for not joining the tribe.

What happens in Chapter Twelve?

- Ralph hides in the forest until evening, seeing the pig's skull in the clearing. Watching Castle Rock, and thinking about his options, he is sad to recognise Samneric on watch.
- Ralph learns from Samneric that they were forced to join the tribe, that Jack will hunt Ralph the next day and that Roger has '**sharpened a stick at both ends**'.
- The hunt begins next morning; boys chase Ralph through the forest, rolling rocks down the mountainside at him.
- Jack sets part of the forest on fire to smoke Ralph out. The smoke is seen by a passing ship.
- Ralph collapses on the beach and looks up to see a naval officer, who **ironically** assumes the boys have been playing at war.



Five key quotations

1. Jack's poor priorities: **'Do you remember how he went hunting and the fire went out and a ship passed by?'** (Ralph, Chapter Eleven)
2. Piggy clings to civilisation: **'You let me carry the conch, Ralph. I'll show him the one thing he hasn't got.'** (Chapter Eleven)
3. Jack's loss of reason: **'The fire must be almost at the fruit trees – what would they eat tomorrow.'** (Ralph, Chapter Twelve)
4. Naval officer's assumptions about boys' adventure: **'I know. Jolly good show. Like the Coral Island.'** (Chapter Twelve)
5. Human nature: **'Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy.'** (Chapter Twelve)

Note it!

Ralph's inability to understand Samneric's warning that **'Roger has sharpened a stick at both ends'** shows how detached from the hunters' new reality he is. The reader has observed both groups and understands that this means he will be hunted like a pig, but the meaning is unclear to Ralph.

Exam focus

How can I write about irony? AO2

You can use the novel's ending to write about irony.

Golding uses heavy irony at the end of the novel, to emphasise the difference between the naval officer's view and reality. The officer assumes that the boys are innocent and playful, calling it a *Jolly good show. Like the Coral Island.* This reference to a children's adventure book, with its *idealised fantasy of boys cooperating on a desert island* is the *opposite of the violence that Ralph is running from.*

Topic sentence makes point clear

Quotation is embedded effectively into ideas

Explanation of what Coral Island represents

Clear analysis of the irony

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph about symbolism in the novel. Use one of the quotations from the list.

The novel's closing chapters make use of the symbolism that threads through the book. Golding reintroduces the symbol of the signal fire to

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Form and structure

Three key things about form and structure

1. The form relates to the **adventure genre**. It subverts this **genre**, as usually these tales are upbeat, celebrating survival skills in overcoming obstacles.
2. The **novel's structure** is linear or **chronological** but the precise passage of time is unclear, probably due to the boys' loss of ability to mark time.
3. The novel is **allegorical**: characters, objects and plot events have **symbolic** meanings and may be interpreted in different ways.

How does Golding use the adventure novel form?

- Boys are marooned on a desert island, where they must look after themselves without adults.
- Some of the novel's most exciting passages are derived from hunting, clearly enjoyed by many of the boys.
- Initially, the boys are excited to be on an island, and they are keen to explore. They see the island as inherently good.



In what ways does the novel follow a three-act structure?

- **Setup**: The characters explore and learn about their surroundings and they develop in response to their new setting.
- **Confrontation**: Jack breaks away from the other boys and this stage ends with Simon's conversation with the pig's head. Piggy's death is the climax.
- **Climax and resolution**: This is approached through the boys' increasing violence and the murders of Simon and Piggy. They intend to also kill Ralph, but this is prevented by the arrival of the naval officer – only external intervention can prevent full tragedy.

What allegorical readings of the novel are possible?

- Characters represent ideas, e.g.: Piggy – logic; Ralph – order; Jack – savagery.
- Political allegory: Ralph represents democracy and Jack symbolises dictatorship.

Five key quotations

1. Time: 'He would like to have a pair of scissors and cut this hair – he flung the mass back – cut this filthy hair right back to half an inch.' (Ralph, Chapter Seven)
2. Adventure: 'this is a good island. We – Jack, Simon and me – we climbed the mountain. It's wizard. There's food and drink, ...' (Ralph, Chapter Two)
3. Exploring the other end of the island: 'This would make a wizard fort.' (Chapter Six)
4. Survival and the fire: 'Ralph's told you often enough,' said Piggy moodily. 'How else are we going to be rescued?' (Chapter Ten)
5. Novel's climax: 'Piggy's arms and legs twitched a bit, like a pig's after it has been killed.' (Chapter Eleven)

Note it!

Golding **subverts** the adventure novel form to illustrate his view that everyone has both good and evil within. This subversion allows him to show the boys introducing evil to the island, rather than dealing only with difficulties that already existed there.

Exam focus

How can I write about allegory? AO2

You can use the presentation of Piggy as logical and reasoned, to write about allegory.

Using allegory makes the novel's themes sharper and more obvious, as they are carried in multiple ways in the text. Piggy's comments are often like an adult's, chastising the other boys: 'Ralph's told you often enough,' said Piggy moodily. 'How else are we going to be rescued?', making his role as representing logic and reason clear. This is further underscored by his association with the symbol of the glasses.

Clear statement of the point

Link made to character

Relevance of quotation explained

Point developed in more detail

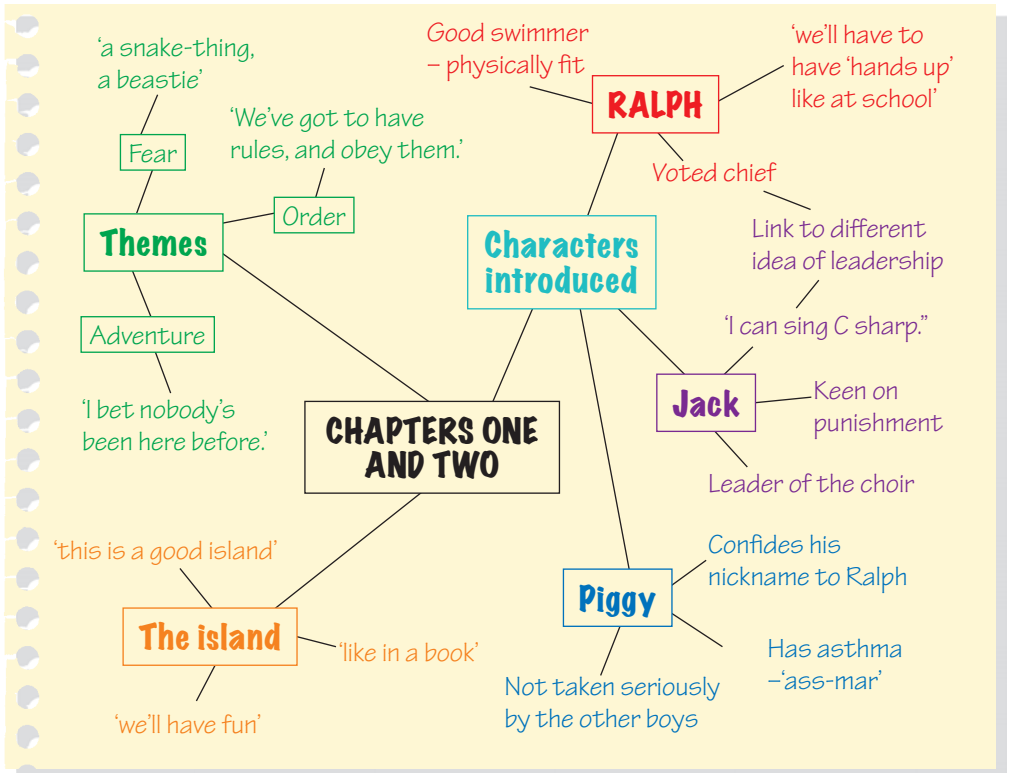
Now you try!

Finish this paragraph linking theme to form and structure in the novel. Use one of the quotations from the list.

Golding uses the novel's structure to clearly show the breakdown of order on the island. This is clear when the climax.....

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Quick revision

1. Look at this ideas map representing Chapters One and Two. Is there anything else you can add?



2. Create your own ideas map for one of the other sections.

Quick quiz

Answer these quick questions about the novel's plot and structure.

1. Who are the first two boys we encounter in the book?
2. Who knows how to blow the conch?
3. How does the first death on the island happen?
4. Why is Ralph angry with Jack after the first hunt?
5. What are the younger boys scared of on the island?
6. What does Simon suggest is the thing they are really scared of?

7. What genre of novel is *Lord of the Flies* based upon?
8. Who throws stones around Henry, but doesn't dare aim them at him?
9. Name three things that Ralph remembers about home at any point in the novel.
10. What do the hunters leave out as an offering?
11. What is the 'Lord of the Flies'?
12. What do Samneric see and get frightened by?
13. How does Simon get killed?
14. Who looks after the littluns when others go hunting for the beast?
15. Why do Samneric join Jack's tribe?
16. What event causes the 'confrontation' stage in the novel?
17. Who steals Piggy's glasses?
18. What gets broken when Piggy is killed?
19. How does Ralph learn that he is to be hunted?
20. How does the naval officer come to realise there are people on the island?

Power paragraphs

Write a **paragraph** in response to **each of these questions**. For each, try to **use one quotation** you have learned from this section.

1. In what ways does Golding show how Ralph and Piggy are very different in the opening chapters?
2. Why does Golding choose to include the incident where Roger throws stones around Henry, but not at him?

Exam practice

Re-read the section in Chapter Eight where Jack calls an assembly (pages 137–140).

Why is this moment significant in the text as a whole? Write **two paragraphs** explaining your ideas. You could comment on:

- Jack's relationship with Ralph
- the theme of fear.

SETTING AND CONTEXT The shadow of war

Five key things about the shadow of war

1. The **Second World War** still had a huge effect in Britain well **into the 1950s**.
2. Many people had had **personal experience of fighting** which had affected them deeply. Others had lost friends and family.
3. The war left many **Britons** feeling pleased they had been on the **'right' side**. Golding did not feel this, having seen **cruelty from some British forces**.
4. The **Cold War** followed the Second World War, lasting until about **1989–1991**.
5. The threat from **atomic weapons** caused paranoia and **tension**.

What was the Cold War?

- This was an indirect battle between the Eastern Bloc, led by the USSR (Soviet Russia) and the West, led by the USA. It was 'cold' because there was no direct fighting.
- The Cold War was ideological, i.e. based on opposing ideas and beliefs.
- The USSR was run under totalitarian communist principles, while the USA represented the principles of capitalist democracy.
- Both sides involved themselves in conflicts in other parts of the world to gain more power (e.g. their involvement in the Korean War 1950–3) but they did not fight each other directly.



How did the Cold War affect people's lives?

- The Cold War brought continual tension between global superpowers, so there was a constant threat of possible war.
- In the West (i.e. the USA and its allies), communism became the new enemy.
- The tensions encouraged black and white thinking (i.e. simplistic views that things can only be, for example, good or bad, with no 'grey areas').

What was the atom bomb?

- It was a nuclear-type weapon, like the one used on Hiroshima in 1944.
- There were school drills in what to do if the 'four-minute warning' sounded to alert of impending nuclear strike.

Three key quotations

1. Britishness: 'I should have thought that a pack of British boys ... would have been able to put up a better show than that—' (naval officer, Chapter Twelve)
2. Effects of war: 'They're all dead.' (Piggy, Chapter One)
3. Two opposing sides on the island: 'We hunt and feast and have fun. If you want to join my tribe come and see us.' (Jack, Chapter Eight)

Note it!

The naval officer assumes the boys have been playing at war when he arrives. Golding uses this attitude to contrast a typical view of childhood innocence with how far the boys have strayed from civilisation.

Exam focus

How do I link context to the novel? AO3

The Cold War context can be used to discuss central ideas connected to the key main characters.

Golding creates an increasingly tense atmosphere in the novel, as relations between **Ralph and Jack**, **representatives of democracy and totalitarianism**, become more and more difficult. **The boys begin as friends, just as the two Cold War sides allied against Hitler**, but gradually Ralph's insistence on the signal fire and conch and Jack's desire to **'hunt and feast'** above all else shows **their separate values**.

Characters clearly linked to context

Connection made between context and structure

Quotation integrated effectively

Clear explanation

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph about the novel's context. Use one of the quotations from the list.

Views of Western and specifically British identity in the Cold War context are explored by Golding through the novel. For example, when the naval officer rescues the boys

SETTING AND CONTEXT Education and adventure

Five key things about education and adventure

1. All the key characters are **schoolboys**, probably from public schools.
2. Golding's personal experience as a **teacher** makes his schoolboys **realistic**.
3. In the 1950s, when the book was set, children had much more **freedom** to **explore** and play unsupervised than today's children. They were also viewed as more **innocent** and unworldly.
4. **Exploration** and discovery of tropical islands would seem like a grand **adventure** in 1954, when foreign travel was far less common than today.
5. There was great interest in **science**, **space travel** and **exploration** at this time.

What was the UK school system like in 1954?

- Schools were either public (paid for by parents) or state (funded by taxes). Some public-school places were given as scholarships to poorer children.
- Children were divided at age 11 into grammar (academic) or secondary modern (vocational) schools.
- Public and grammar schools created a highly-structured environment based on established tradition and strict rules.



What is the adventure genre?

- The adventure genre presents heroic **protagonists** overcoming dangerous obstacles, often in an unfamiliar environment. It was popular in the 1950s.
- *The Coral Island*, mentioned twice in *Lord of the Flies*, is a typical example of an adventure novel. In it, Ralph, Jack (no coincidence) and Peterkin work together against vicious native inhabitants and dangerous animals.
- Golding subverts the genre by making the boys themselves the evil element.

Why did Golding use schoolboys as his main characters?

- He wanted to show that evil was present even in an innocent child.
- The fact that it is the head choirboy with a pure singing voice who leads the savage tribe is significant.
- Golding also shows the boys initially trying to implement routines and rules 'like at school', but the shift from order to chaos is inevitable.

Three key quotations

1. Schoolboy skills: **'I can sing C sharp.'** (Jack, Chapter One)
2. Parallel with adventure stories:
'It's like in a book.'...
'Treasure Island—' 'Swallows and Amazons—' 'Coral Island—' (Ralph, unnamed replies, Chapter Two)
3. School discipline: **'Remember old Waxy at school?' 'Boy—you-are-driving-me-slowly-insane!'** (Eric, Sam, Chapter Six)

Note it!

The boys could also seek to discover their environment on the island properly, and try to continue their education by learning more about the island and its wildlife. Arguably, the fact that they do not is one reason **'things break up'**. Ralph tries to understand this after the groups split.

Exam focus

How can I write about literary context? AO3

The context of adventure novels can be used to write about the themes of the novel.

Golding makes an explicit link to adventure novels at the start of the novel, with boys excitedly shouting out the names 'Treasure Island-', 'Swallows and Amazons-', 'Coral Island-', while Ralph is trying to explain about the island. The book titles are used to show the boys' enthusiasm for the adventure that they believe lies before them. This shows how the novel starts symbolically in a place of order and good.

Clearly stated topic sentence

Quotation is well contextualised

Effect of contextual information explained

Subtle indication that the boys are wrong

Connection made to novel's themes

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph referring to the context of education in the novel. Use one of the quotations above.

The context of the boys' education is used by Golding to support the novel's themes. This is seen when Jack argues