

# The Boys' First Law

Back at the beach, Ralph blows the conch to call another meeting. Ralph announces that they're on an uninhabited island. Jack interrupts to say that they still need an army in order to hunt pigs. Jack needs to be in control: he interrupts Ralph to demonstrate his importance. Ralph says that without adults, they'll have to take care of themselves. He makes a rule that whoever holds the conch at meetings gets to speak. The boys' first law is focused on the conch and made by Ralph.

# The Island as a Place of Fun and Pleasure

Jack, excited, shouts out that they can make more rules and punish whoever breaks them. Jack likes law only because he likes to punish.

Piggy takes the conch and says no one knows they're on the island. Ralph agrees, but describes the island as a good place where they'll have fun even if they have to stay for a long time. Only Piggy sees the big picture. Ralph and the other boys focus on short term pleasure and fun.

# The Beastie

When the young boys claim to see a “beastie” at night, this creature represents the evil lurking in the boys’ hearts. Although it has not yet overwhelmed them or drawn them into complete chaos, it threatens their stability. Whereas the beastie’s wandering occurs at night, the boys describe creeper vines that burn and assume shapes of snakes during the day, causing them to tremble with fear and cry. The young boys think of the beastie as a physical being that can be hunted and killed, but there is no beast. The only beast present on the island has no physical form but poses a great threat to the boys: the savage and cruel nature within them. Whereas the young boys sense its presence, the older boys dismiss it until it is too late.

The beast's first appearance symbolizes the evil in human nature. Jack, the symbol of savagery, says the beast doesn't exist but also that his hunters will kill it. He uses the beast to make himself more powerful. Ralph, the symbol of civilization, just denies that the beast exists.

# Building a Fire

Ralph says he's confident they boys will be rescued. He suggests they build a fire on the mountaintop to alert rescuers. Fire leads to rescue, which leads back to civilization.

Excited by the idea of building a fire, the boys jump up and run to collect wood and bring it to the mountain top. Piggy, left alone at the meeting place, disgustedly says that the other boys are acting like a bunch of kids. Civilized and intelligent, Piggy prefers organized plans to short-sighted "fun."

# Rivalry Between Jack and Piggy

The boys make a pile of dead wood on the mountain. They can't figure out how to start the fire until Jack grabs the glasses off Piggy's face. Ralph uses the glasses to focus the sun's rays on the wood. Piggy is terrified, nearly blind without his glasses. Piggy's glasses symbolize technology, mankind's ability to harness nature to build tools. Here the boys use technology to help their return to civilization.

The fire burns out because the wood is so dry. Piggy starts to criticize the boys, but Jack shouts him down. Simon points out that Piggy's glasses made the fire possible. The rivalry between the savage (Jack) and intellectual (Piggy) intensifies.

# Piggy is Intellectual

Piggy notices that sparks from their signal fire have set the trees below them on fire. He argues that instead of running off to start a fire they should have first made shelters. The other boys shout at him again, but are disturbed. Piggy asks where the boy with the birthmark who saw the "beastie" is. No one knows.

Though they know Piggy's right, the other boys still gang up on him. The boy who saw the "beastie" was actually killed, symbolically, by the beast: the boys' savage desire to have "fun."