

# Lord of the Flies Quote Assessment Test

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November 14, 2019

## 1. Quote 2

This quote represents the true initiation into savagery on the island for all of the boys. Before this, Ralph, Piggy, Sam and Eric all still walked on the civilized path and were resisting succumbing to base needs, as is seen in the scenes before hand when Ralph fights for Piggy's rights when he has the conch. Ralph states, mustering all of his intelligence and democratic authority that "rules are the only thing we've got", which is true. With rules, the boys can keep steady on their mission to return to society and make sure that the needs of everyone are met. The only way that they can stay civilized is if they maintain this order. However, when the pull of instincts and pleasure becomes too great, Ralph's tribe comes to Jack's feast, where them and the other boys lose this order and reach the edge of pure savagery. They are singing, screaming, running without reason, but still have a sense of humanity. This all changes however, when Jack initiates the dance and the chanting. It's described that the chant "began to beat like a steady pulse", showing that the boys are not thinking anymore and falling prey to the situation. It's also described that Ralph and Piggy "found themselves eager to take place in this demented but partially secure society". This shows that they are all falling prey to their instincts as well. The energy grows and grows, until finally, the arrival of Simon from the woods pushes everything over the line and the murder occurs. This moment is significant to the plot because it shows that they have just lost their all of their humanity, which drives actions such as hunting Ralph and burning down the island for the rest of the book. We can even prove this by the author calling the boys only by the term "savage" after this event.

This quote demonstrates the characteristics of all the characters involved. Starting with Ralph and Piggy, it shows that despite their controlled and civilized appearance, they share the same evil with all the other boys in the book deep down. It shows that just like the others, "under the threat of the sky", they are driven by fear and bloodlust. The only reason that this hasn't shown itself sooner is because of the larger amount of civilized traits which they have over the other boys. They are both older, smarter, and more democratic than the rest of the tribe, and because of this it takes longer for the veneer of society to come off of them. It also shows the savage nature of Roger which he has had from the beginning, as he transforms into the least civil and most animalistic of all the members in the form of him pretending to be the raging pig. It also shows that he is driven by fear and bloodlust like the others though, because he gives up this role to become a hunter, as he wants to kill as well. Another character which this passage displays the characteristics of is Jack. When he notices that the boys might start to listen to Ralph and his democratic ideas, he instantly suggests to initiate the dance. He knows that in doing so, the boys will lose the sense of reason and logic and thus he will have complete control over their instincts. He doesn't care if it leads to violence and death; all he wants is the power.

As for the greater themes of the book, this passage represents how the removal from society destroys innocence and creates destructive people who act purely on instincts. We know this because the reason any of these events are happening is because the boys are removed from society. If they were in society, and adults were around, Jack would not have the authority to tell the boys to dance. If there were adults around, the crazy behaviour would have been reigned in. If they had the rules and laws of a society, none of the events leading up to this one, during it, and after it, such as the bush fire, the power struggles, and the deaths of Simon and Piggy would have happened. Since they don't have society however, the boys stop

playing, stop seeing the island as a magical place, and start acting purely on destructive and evil instincts, and seen in the illogical action of the dance.

## **2. Quote 3**

This quote is quite significant to the plot of *Lord of the Flies* for a number of reasons. The first reason for this is because it marks the end of the struggle. All of the problems that the boys have faced, such as food, the beast, leadership, the island being on fire, and so much more is now behind them, and thus it allows them all to return to a childlike state and the story to end. It also allows the readers to see the big picture and not from the eyes of the children anymore, as we can realize that they really weren't in any danger, and that all of their "justified" actions were for naught. Removed from the delirious perspective of Jack or the traumatized mind of Ralph, we start to see that there was no logical reason for the plot to have happened; it simply happened because the boys acted on their instincts, their evil, and their fear.

This passage also has significance for its depictions of the characters. For one, it brings Ralph and the others back into reality. For the entire book, Ralph has been hiding from obvious truths and burying his emotions, as he did with the deaths of Simon and Piggy. He was slowly losing his missions, his ability to lead, and everything else about him, but now we see him let that all go as tears streamed from his face and he "gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island". The other boys then follow suit, showing that they don't have the characteristic of being truly evil people, but rather of having an evil deep within them and a drive to act on their instincts. It also shows that once reconnected with society, the boys can regain their humanity, but not their innocence. They are feeling emotions, recounting on things logically like the deaths of Piggy and Simon, but they will never forget these

things and cannot regain their innocence even if they return to the exact same lives they left before hand.

One of the most important parts of this quote is that it demonstrates one of William Golding's main messages that he wants to get across in the book, which is that all people have a capability for evil. This is shown when Ralph and the other boys are saved by the naval officer, and realize all of the horrors that have happened. What makes this truly impactful however, is that the boys also realize who they have been saved by. He is a commander, he wears a uniform; he is the epitome of adult civilization. However, he is part of his own war, he is killing his own enemies even though he seems to be "civilized", and this causes Ralph to realize that there is a "darkness of man's heart" in everyone; there is no escaping it.