

2. Who is involved?

Ralph

- Ralph uses violence when his life is in danger. Here he uses his spear three times, but does not seem to have killed any of the "savages". On the third occasion he remembers Roger's spear, which is sharpened at both ends, and, driven by the fear, anger and his instinct to survive, he screams "snarling, bloody", like a trapped animal.
- Ralph's basic decency makes him unwilling to believe that Jack and his savages, having killed Simon and Piggy, intend to kill him, but he also realises that "Jack ... would never let him alone; never." Horrified and terrified by the thought, he shouts aloud, "No. They're not as bad as that. It was an accident." "But, in fact, they are "as bad as that".
- Although Ralph is usually sensible and realistic, when he sees the hideous pig's skull he feels as though it has some sort of life or evil spirit in it and he hits it: "A sick fear and rage swept him."
- Ralph feels very hurt when he realises that Samneric have become part of the tribe: "Words could not express the dull pain of these things." He is in despair because there is no chance of rescue, and "Piggy was dead and the conch smashed to powder".
- Ralph likes to think before he makes a decision, but in his dangerous situation he has no time to think carefully about what to do and he is forced to decide quickly whether he should hide or run.
- When he meets the officer Ralph finds it impossible to explain the situation on the island as he is overwhelmed by the way the island paradise has become a place of death and horror.
- Ralph feels deeply and, overcome by grief, he weeps bitterly. What he has learnt about the evil in mankind makes him very sad and he mourns the death of Piggy, whom he has come to realise was a "wise friend".

Jack

- We do not meet Jack face to face in most of this chapter but we hear his voice and see the results of his lust (desire) for total power and his hatred of Ralph. Jack will stop at nothing to kill Ralph, not even setting the whole island on fire.
- Jack is increasingly cruel in his treatment of anyone who displeases him and does not hesitate to use Roger to torture Samneric to force them to join his tribe and, later, to tell him where Ralph is hiding.
- Although intelligent in some ways, Jack is not wise and he is unable to imagine the consequences (what will happen as a result) of his actions: the fire is destroying the island and their source of food.
- But when the officer arrives, he sees Jack as "a little boy". Perhaps by now we may have forgotten, but Jack is only 12 years old.

- Facing an adult from the "civilised" world, all of Jack's bravado (confidence) vanishes: he starts to say he, not Ralph, is the chief, but thinks it better to keep quiet. Perhaps Jack thinks that someone is going to be blamed for what has happened on the island. He is no longer the all-powerful dictator but a little boy afraid of getting into trouble.

Samneric

- When the twins are captured they are tortured by Roger and forced to join the tribe.
- Although they have abandoned Ralph and are now disloyal to him, they feel ashamed. The twins do not want him to be killed and warn him of the plan to hunt him; they also give him some meat.
- The next day Samneric give away Ralph's hiding place, again after being punished by Jack or Roger, whom they describe as "a terror". It is easy to condemn them as weak, but does any one of us know how we would behave if we were hurt or tortured? Remember, too, that the twins are younger than Ralph and Jack – the twins are not even 12 years old.

The tribe

- They obey Jack willingly and enjoy the excitement of hunting humans. The chapter title, "The Cry of the Hunters", refers to the way they hunt Ralph, shouting and crying out: "The ululation spread from shore to shore."
- When faced with an adult, however, they become "little boys" once more, no longer frightening but "standing on the beach making no noise at all". When Ralph cries, they begin to sob too.

The naval officer

- He doesn't understand the seriousness of the situation on the island and, seeing the boys in their war paint, he says, "Fun and games." Ironically, "fun" was what the beast had promised Simon. By "fun" the beast meant evil and cruelty, not harmless games.
- However, the officer's uniform reminds us that he is taking part in one of the most deadly of adult "games" – war.
- The naval officer disapproves of the disorder he finds and, when Ralph cannot tell him how many boys there are he says: "I should have thought that a pack of British boys – you're all British, aren't you? – would have been able to put up a better show than that –". He shows not only his arrogance in thinking that the British would behave better than other people, but also his failure to understand the evil events that have taken place. He compares the boys' situation to that in a 19th-century children's book called Coral Island, in which a group of boys stranded on an island behave like gentlemen and bring "civilisation" to the island, showing his ignorance of what the boys are really like.