

2. Who is involved?

In Chapter 7 it seems as if the emotions of all the boys except Simon are becoming more intense and their thinking is becoming less logical. Jack and Ralph put themselves in danger in order to compete to be heroes. Ralph suddenly becomes like the others when he attacks the boar. Although they are older than Samneric, Jack and Ralph also panic when they see the airman.

Ralph

- In this chapter we see two sides of Ralph. At the start he wishes he could be clean and neat again and daydreams about his home (the civilised side); then we see his pride when he wounds the boar (the uncivilised side).
- After that Ralph loses his self-discipline and moral sense and is caught up in the "Kill the pig" dance, joining in the attack on Robert. "Ralph too was fighting to get near, to get a handful of that brown, vulnerable flesh. The desire to squeeze and hurt was over-mastering." This shows us how easily people who are usually good can be caught up in mob hysteria and become violent. (Think of what we still see happening today.)
- Fortunately, Ralph's better self returns and he shows his caring side when he worries about Piggy alone with the littluns.
- Ralph shows his common sense when he realises it is too dark to continue the dangerous climb, but when Jack returns, terrified, after seeing the airman, Ralph silences the "inner voice of reason". The three climb higher before running away in terror when they see the shape "like a great ape" apparently moving.

Jack

- When Jack says, "Kill a littun" the boys think he is joking, but as readers we are not so sure. In the dance he grabs Robert by the hair and waves his knife at him; his violence is only just under control.
- Jack continues to challenge Ralph and suggests he is a coward. We see his anger whenever he feels he is not in the lead. However, in spite of his boasting, his courage fails and he is terrified when he sees the beast.

Simon

- We see Simon as a visionary when he tells Ralph he will go home.
- Simon is happy to go back to Piggy on his own as he has no fear of the beast.

Roger

- Roger says very little and almost never shows any feelings. This makes him mysterious and perhaps we should feel uneasy about him.
- The only feeling Roger shows is fear, when he runs away with the other two boys at the end of the chapter.

3. Themes

Fear

- The beast now has a physical form (the dead airman that looks to the boys like a strange creature) that is confirmed by three of the big boys; they now all believe there is something real to fear.

Savagery

- Robert could have been killed in the "Kill the pig" dance in which all the boys were wildly excited and attacked him. Violence and savagery are increasing: the boys suggest a drum and fire for their dance and a real pig or even a person to attack.

- The title of the chapter "Shadows and Tall Trees", refers not only to the trees and shadows that the boys move through, but also suggests the darkness (shadows/darkness/evil and savagery) growing in the boys' hearts.

Civilisation

- Ralph wants the comfort and order of home – but we also see how easily civilised behaviour can change.

Wisdom

- The only boy to show wisdom is Simon, who tells Ralph he will go home, and who returns to the beach without fear.

Innocence and corruption

- Even Ralph, the responsible and caring leader, can give way to the beast inside of himself and behave violently. It seems as if his innocence has been corrupted.

4. Symbols

The beast

- The sight of the unfortunate dead man confirms the boys' fear that there is a beast on the island. At the same time, the power of the beast inside the boys, particularly Jack, is increasing.

The pig hunt

- This is a symbol of savagery: we see this in the dance in which Robert could have been killed.

