Chapter Eleven:

Castle Rock

**Summary:**

1. Ralph is unable to light the fire without Piggy’s glasses.
2. The conch group decide to confront Jack and his hunters.
3. A scuffle breaks out between the two groups at Castle Rock.
4. Roger leans on the lever which catapults a heavy rock towards Piggy.
5. Piggy is killed by the falling rock and the conch is destroyed.
6. Sam and Eric are captured by the hunters.
7. Ralph is now alone, forced to escape as hunters hurl spears in his direction.

**Why is this chapter important?**

A Despite Jack’s **crimes**, we see that Ralph intends to approach him as a **civilised human being** and explain the seriousness of the situation.

B Piggy’s faith in the **ultimate power of the conch** is exhibited when he **proudly** carries the shell to Castle Rock.

C It is evident that Sam and Eric are forced to join Jack’s savages through **violent coercion** **rather than reason**; the rule of law is coming to an end.

D When the conch is shattered and Piggy is killed, both the **symbol** of **civilised behaviour and the voice of reason are destroyed**.

E With the rest of his group gone, Golding shows us **how Ralph copes with being the sole target of the others’ hatred**.

**The death of Piggy:**

There is a clear parallel between the death of the pigs and the death of Piggy. Look at Piggy’s death – ‘arms and legs twitched a bit, like a pig’s after it has been killed’ (p201) and note the similarities between that and the graphic, earlier accounts of the pig killings (in Chapter 8 for example).

The focus on Piggy as ‘the centre of social derision’ (chapter 9 p165) – a source of amusement – ends.

Schoolboy humour (like laughing when they fall off the log etc) or fun of any sort, is not seen after Piggy’s death.

**An increase in violence**

Understandably in a novel featuring schoolboys, **play** is a prominent form of behaviour and is in evidence when the boys are first on the island. Play in nature is often practice for something else – play fighting prepares animals for hunting, for example. In human beings it may develop beyond the need for survival into more sophisticated social skills.

Roger’s stone throwing became **dangerous** and Jack’s **exaggerated dominance** in the ‘game’ becomes **sinister**. When Piggy is killed and the conch destroyed, **Jack has no remorse**, declaring boldly to Ralph ‘There isn’t a tribe for you any more!’ (p201). He adds, significantly, ‘The conch is gone - (p201) The old rules are over; **childhood innocence is lost**!

When Jack hurls his spear at Ralph, ‘viciously, with full intention’ (p201) this is no game. He clearly means to wound Ralph, who represents the opposition.

**Ralph and Piggy still believe in the power of the conch:**

1. Ralph’s group still use the conch to take it in turns to speak – they’re **clinging to democracy and the old rules**.
2. Piggy believes that if he goes to Jack holding the conch, Jack will return his glasses **because ‘right’s right’**. He still believes the conch can **inspire** decent behaviour.
3. Ralph blows the conch at Castle Rock but the tribe doesn’t respond – the conch has **lost its authority as has Ralph**.

**The atmosphere at Castle Rock is hostile:**

1. Golding **doesn’t name** many of the boys in the tribe – most of them are **just savages**.
2. At first, the savages are just trying to defend the entrance to Castle Rock. They get more and more **aggressive** towards Ralph’s group, eventually becoming a ‘solid mass of menace’.
3. The fight between Ralph and Jack represents the open **conflict** between civilisation and savagery. Ralph still believes he can make Jack see reason – he doesn’t see **that Jack is no longer held back by morals**.

**Language:** By the end of this chapter, Golding **stops** using Jack’s name – instead he writes **‘the Chief’**. He’s completely **lost his old identity** as Jack Merridew, choirboy, and is now the nameless Chief of a tribe of nameless ‘**savages’**.

**Piggy’s death symbolises the death of logic and reason:**

1. Piggy points out to the tribe how savage they’ve become. The boys are angry, but **Roger is calm and he deliberately levers a rock** off the cliff onto Piggy. It kills Piggy and **destroys** the conch, **the symbol of civilisation** and Ralph’s **democratic leadership.**
2. The tribe ‘jeer’ and shriek but as soon as they realise Piggy is dead, there’s complete silence – this shows how **shocked** they are.
3. Simon was killed in a **frenzy of fear** but Piggy’s murder is **deliberate** – Jack declares ‘I meant that!’ Jack and Roger are so savage that they **feel no guilt** about the murder.
4. Jack tries to kill Ralph but he **escapes through ‘instinct’**. He’s now a hunted animal, not a civilised human.

**THEME: Evil – Roger kills Piggy with ‘delirious abandonment’ – he’s turned into a cold-blooded killer. At the end of the chapter it’s clear that he’s become a torturer too.**

**Writing about the rule of law:**

At Castle Rock, Piggy, like Ralph, feels passionately that Jack should respond out of common decency and respect for the rule of law. When Ralph blows the conch, he believes that boys will respond to his call for an assembly.

When Ralph confronts Jack about the theft, Jack retaliates and a scuffle breaks out. It is Piggy who reminds Ralph what they came for.

Jack has not responded well to the sound of the conch. In fact, he orders his savages to capture Sam and Eric, who protest ‘out of the heart of civilisation’ (p198). After Piggy’s death, and the destruction of the conch, there is no rule of law.

**Simon was**