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## KÖNIGS ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Band 332

### William Golding, LORD OF THE FLIES

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## PRÜFUNGSAUFGABEN MIT MUSTERLÖSUNGEN

In Ergänzung zu den Aufgaben im Buch (Kapitel 6) finden Sie hier zwei weitere Aufgaben mit Musterlösungen. Die Zahl der Sternchen bezeichnet das Anforderungsniveau der jeweiligen Aufgabe.

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### Task 5 \*

**Outline the relationship between Jack and Piggy. Support your arguments with appropriate quotes from the text.**

#### Model answer

Sense versus  
Arrogance

The relationship between Piggy and Jack represents the polarities of intelligence and sense versus autocracy and irrationality. It is characterized by Jack's contempt for Piggy and Piggy's resultant fear of Jack. This already becomes clear when they meet for the first time. Seeing Piggy's rather large and misshapen body, Jack immediately insults him in a totally unacceptable manner, and is supported hereby by Ralph: "'You're talking too much,' said Jack Merridew. 'Shut up, Fatty.' Laughter arose." (p. 26)

Piggy-bashing  
by Jack

Piggy is unable to defend himself against this aggression. Even before this verbal attack, Piggy tries to avoid a confrontation with Jack: "He was intimidated by this uniformed superiority and the offhand authority in Merridew's voice. He shrank to the other side of Ralph and busied himself with his glasses." (p. 25–26)

Jack physically  
attacks Piggy

Piggy is afraid of Jack, who, well aware of the effect that he has on him, constantly takes advantage, tearing Piggy's glasses off his nose while Piggy is lighting the fire, for instance, or preventing him from speaking during meetings, which on occasion he does simply by looking at him, as the following quote illustrates: "Piggy opened his mouth to speak, caught Jack's eye and shut it again." (p. 54) Piggy's logical brain and the resulting consequences are beyond Jack's understanding, which is why he feels no inclination to listen to Piggy. His attitude is not met with any resistance so that in a way Piggy is at his mercy, which of course does nothing to decrease his fear of Jack. However, there is one situation where Piggy forgets his fear and that is when Jack lets the fire go out, thus thwarting an early rescue. Piggy reminds Jack of his duties, which Jack cannot bear to hear: "Piggy began again. 'You didn't ought to have let that fire out. You said you'd keep the smoke going –' This from Piggy, and the wails of agreement from some of the hunters drove Jack to violence. [...] He took a step, and able at last to hit someone, stuck his fist into Piggy's stomach. Piggy sat down with a grunt. Jack stood over him. His voice was vicious with humiliation. 'You would, would you? Fatty!' Ralph made a step forward and Jack smacked Piggy's head. Piggy's glasses flew off and tinkled on the rocks." (p. 89)

Piggy is valued  
by Ralph

When Jack allows the fire to extinguish, everything changes. Not only does Jack lose some of his powers of persuasion ("Jack looked round for understanding but found only respect." p. 93) but he also has to face up to the fact that Ralph has turned away from him and towards Piggy of all people. He feels hurt. He also realizes that Piggy can now count on Ralph's unlimited solidarity, as becomes apparent at the next meeting when Piggy urges the boys to come to their senses, and thus indirectly attacks Jack: "'What are we? Humans? Or animals? Or savages? What's grown-ups going to think? Going off – hunting pigs – letting fires out – and now!' A shadow fronted him tempestuously. 'You shut up, you fat slug!' [...] Ralph leapt to his feet. 'Jack! Jack! You haven't got the conch! Let him speak.'" (p. 113). Jack is jealous and disappointed: "That's right – favour Piggy as you always do –" (p. 113).

Piggy becomes  
Jack's rival

All of these incidences turn Piggy into Jack's rival. Both boys are now competing for power and for Ralph's attentions. Piggy is well aware of what this will mean for him: "I been in bed so much I done some thinking. I know about people. I know about me. And him. He can't hurt you: but if you stand out of the way he'd hurt the next thing. And that's me." (p. 116) And the clever boy is right. But first of all circumstances change for him because Jack leaves the group: "Piggy was so full of delight and expanding liberty in Jack's departure, so full of pride in his contribution to the good of society, that he helped to fetch wood." (p. 159)

Piggy is killed  
and Jack is  
triumphant

However, this is just the calm before the storm. During a night-time raid, Jack steals Piggy's glasses which he is reliant on. Finally, at the end of this chain of violence, Piggy meets his death – even though it is Roger who kills him, and not Jack. Piggy's death is liberating for Jack because, as he is well aware, it means an end to the supremacy of rationality without which Ralph is helpless. Not without good reason does he cry out: "I'm chief!" (p. 220)

## Task 6 \*\*\*

The novel's main theme is man's inherent evil. Outline the narrative episodes Golding uses to give expression to this theme.

## Model answer

As is to be expected, Golding leads the reader through the story stringently and systematically. This stringent and systematic approach gives the novel an internal structure. Its elements include hierarchy, power/powerlessness, imagination and belief, topography of evil and personification.

Power/powerlessness: Henry and the aquatic creature

Golding introduces this theme with the scene in which Henry plays with various aquatic creatures on the beach: "There were creatures that lived in this last fling of the sea, tiny transparencies that came questing in with the water over the hot, dry sand. [...] This was fascinating to Henry. He poked about with a bit of stick, that itself was wave-worn and whitened and a vagrant, and tried to control the motions of the scavengers." (p. 76) The little boy enjoys the power he holds over the little creatures. In the narrator's words: "He became absorbed beyond mere happiness as he felt himself exercising control over living things. He talked to them, urging them, ordering them. Driven back by the tide, his footprints became bays in which they were trapped and gave him the illusion of mastery." (p. 76)

Power/powerlessness: Roger versus Henry

This episode is immediately followed by another scene in which hierarchy plays a role. In this scene Roger, who is bigger than Henry, throws stones at him: "Roger gathered a handful of stones and began to throw them." (p. 77) Roger also enjoys the feeling of power he has when throwing stones at Henry, who is smaller than him. However, due to his social conditioning he does not harm him: "Yet there was a space round Henry [...] into which he dare not throw. Here, invisible yet strong, was the taboo of the old life. Round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and policemen and the law." (p. 77) Roger's time has not yet come. Later, he consciously chooses evil.

Imagination and belief: Snakes and "the beast"

Slowly, the evil starts to gain narrative contours in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. These contours begin with the littluns' fear of snakes that have supposedly been spotted ("A snake-thing. Ever so big. He saw it." p. 45). In this part, Golding uses the symbolism of the snake which in Christian mythology personifies evil. In Christian mythology, evil has a fixed place in the world. And it also finds its way into the world of the stranded boys, in the form of the little boys' imagination. Later on, they become afraid of "the beast", which gains more and more power over their thoughts. At the end of chapter 5, it has taken root in the boys' heads. The boys are all afraid – both the bigger ones, who are to all intents and purposes intelligent, as well as the little ones: "A thin wail out of the darkness chilled them and set them grabbing for each other. Then the wail rose, remote and unearthly, and turned to an inarticulate gibbering. Percival Wemys Madison [...] lying in the long grass, was living through circumstances in which the incantation of his address was powerless to help him." (p. 117) It therefore exists as an idea, however, the question of its location still remains.

Location: Man as bearer of evil

"What I mean is ... maybe it's only us." (p. 110) Simon's assumption is a narrative allusion to the topography of evil and leads to Simon's epiphany. By this narrative means, the precise location of evil is clearly established: "'Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!' said the head. For a moment or two the forest and all the other dimly appreciated places echoed with the parody of laughter. 'You knew, didn't you? I'm part of you? Close, close, close! I'm the reason why it's no go? Why things are what they are?'" (p. 175) According to this quote, evil is therefore an anthropological constant. It is inherent in man and, whether it manifests itself or not, is merely a question of personal decision. Roger for instance has clearly chosen to be evil, as the following quote demonstrates: "He [...] sat still, assimilating the possibilities of irresponsible authority. Then [...] he climbed down the back of the rocks towards the cave and the rest of the tribe." (p. 194)

Personification: Jack is "the beast"

The existence of evil and its topography as anthropological constants have now therefore been established in the narrative. This depiction takes place on an abstract level. However, it is not in the author's interest to leave it on that level as he has written a novel and not a paper on psychopathological phenomena. So the question of the personification of evil remains. Golding has found an astonishingly easy answer to this question. At one of the meetings, Jack poses a rhetorical question: "Am I a hunter or am I not?" (p. 103) And further: "They nodded, simply. He was a hunter all right." (p. 103) And later, in the course of the narration, Jack says: "Yes. The beast is a hunter." (p. 155) Thus, Golding manages to achieve a link between Jack and evil by using simple narrative means. Evil now has a name and it is "Jack". Jack's actions are evil, be it through the pressure he exerts on others or by his brutality towards both animals and human beings. Towards the end of the novel, the narrator clearly names evil when Ralph says to Jack: "You're a beast [...]!" (p. 218)