CHAPTER ONE:

1. Why is the chapter entitled “The Sound of the Shell”? 

This chapter is entitled “The Sound of the Shell”, for all of the boys on the island come together as a result of the noise Ralph makes by blowing into a sea shell. Piggy explains to Ralph that such a shell is actually called a conch and the boys eventually decide to use the conch as a symbol of authority and attention. Whenever a boy has the conch in his hand, he is able to speak to the rest of the group without interruptions. Although it is only a small tangible item, the shell may become a very important aspect of the boys’ survival on the island.

2. What is Ralph’s attitude toward Piggy in the first chapter?

Ralph sees Piggy as a nuisance, but also realizes his usefulness. When Piggy first appears, Ralph constantly tries to walk away from him and does not answer his questions. Ralph is obviously a very independent boy and spends most of his time in a world of solitude. However, the boys have a “bonding” moment when they discover the noises they can make with the conch and even though Ralph is never overtly kind to him, Piggy is dedicated to Ralph.

3. What is the significance of Piggy’s plea to join the expedition?

Piggy’s plea to join the expedition represents his desperation to “fit in” with the rest of the boys. This is presumably an issue that Piggy has dealt with back home, for his nickname suggests that he is often excluded from groups. He would love to walk by Ralph’s side and feel like a member of authority, but once again, his peers have stereotyped him as an outcast and left him behind.

4. Why is Ralph elected chief?

Ralph is elected chief because he was the first boy to call all of the others together. Although he may not have any more survival experience than the rest, all of the boys feel an instinctive comfort with this person who sounded the conch. There seems to be a quiet appeal about Ralph that makes others contented.

5. What is the “scar” that is repeatedly mentioned?

The scar mentioned in this story is mark on the island that the plane made when it landed or crashed. It is referred to as a scar perhaps because it is man-made rather than an act of nature. Later, but still in the first chapters of the novel, the man-made scar includes the burning of the mountainside from their first fire, and the destruction from there first boulder.

6. Why is Jack unable to kill the pig?

Although Jack is one of the oldest characters in the story, he is still only a child. Ending the life of an animal can be traumatic for any human being, let alone one who has not yet experienced life. The thought of having a pig to eat may be initially appealing to someone on an island, but the moment at which the animal is breathing in front of the hunter causes one’s morals to overtake their instincts. Jack may be a strong boy, but he can not bring himself to end a life.
7. What do Piggy, Simon, and the littlun with the birthmark have in common?

Piggy, Simon and the boy with a birthmark are all outcasts for their own reasons. Piggy is immediately excluded from important events because of his hilarious name and “nerdy” nature. Simon becomes the laughing-stock of the group when he faints in front of everyone and, according to Jack, he is “always throwing a faint”. The little boy with a large birthmark is obviously different from the rest of the boys in a physical way, but more importantly he is also a reclusive person. All three of these boys are estranged from the rest of the group in some form.

8. How is Jack presented to the reader?

Jack enters the story leading a pack of boys in black cloaks in a disciplinary manner. The reader instantly thinks of him as the antagonist, for this dark image sweeps the tropical island with its presumed negativity. Jack shows some vulnerability when he accepts his loss to Ralph, but retains his stern authority by continuing to lead the choirboys. In the beginning, the reader is confused as to what kind of person Jack truly is, but Golding has certainly written a negative undertone to this character, perhaps foreshadowing events that are about to occur.

9. Why did Golding use British schoolboys?

William Golding probably chose British schoolboys as his subject for a few reasons. Firstly, he had a lot of experience in dealing with schoolboys, for he was a teacher in Britain for many years. He must have witnessed many real-life situations that he was able to adapt within this story. Perhaps more importantly, Golding probably used young boys in his book because they represent innocence. Placing people who have yet to be shaped by the adult world in a serious survival situation creates a very interesting look at pure human psychology. The acts of these children are committed purely out of instinct, for they do not have adult knowledge to base decisions on.

10. How is Piggy revealed as most clearly tied to the world of adults?

Piggy is most tied to the world of adults, for his Aunt has obviously led him through a very sheltered life. When Piggy reveals that his parents have died and he is left with a relative at home, the reader feels very sorry for him and begins to understand why he does not fit in with the other children. The way he describes his upbringing is also disturbing, for it seems that his aunt will not allow him to do anything remotely fun – including swimming. As a result of his sheltering guardian and his exposure to difficult adult situations, Piggy is very closely tied to the world of adults.

11. How is Piggy indirectly responsible for the blowing of the conch?

Piggy is indirectly responsible for the blowing of the conch because he told Ralph how to blow it. Apparently, Piggy had a friend who knew how to make a noise out of a seashell and Piggy was more than happy to share the information with his new pal. Of course, Piggy does not blow the conch himself, for he is a timid, reclusive boy who would rather be the sidekick of a stronger, more popular person.
CHAPTER TWO

1. What question does the littlun with the birthmark raise?

During one of the first meetings with all of the boys together, the littlun with a birthmark asks Ralph what he is going to do about the large beastie within the jungle. He claims that this creature lurks in the dark and is clearly frightened of it ever appearing again. Although the other boys laugh at this seemingly ludicrous comment, the little boy remains serious about his claim. His intense sensitivity about the subject makes the rest of the boys wonder if there is actually a large, deadly beast on the island.

2. How do Ralph and Jack answer the question about the beast?

Ralph immediately tells the boys that there is no beast on the island and that there is nothing to worry about. Jack, however, is slightly more curious – claiming that he will make sure that there is no deadly creature while he is hunting. Ralph becomes annoyed with such childish thoughts and, like a good leader, stands firm in his belief that there is no beast, making the rest of the boys feel slightly better about the situation.

3. What is the significance of the chapter's title, “Fire on The Mountain”?

This chapter is titled “Fire on The Mountain”, for the boys embark on their most important job since they have been stranded on the island: building a fire in order to catch the attention of rescuers. Most of the chapter revolves around the process of creating the fire and attempting to maintain it. Unfortunately, the fire gets out of control and spreads down the mountain into the jungle. The boys do not take this issue very seriously until Piggy brings up the fact that there may be littluns still in the jungle, presumably killed by the fire. The boy with the birth-mark is nowhere to be seen and, sadly, all of the boys realize that their fire has killed the poor child. The “Fire on The Mountain” has been one of the first troublesome issues on the island.

4. How do they start the fire?

The boys are very quick to form a massive pile of wood and leaves as a first step in building the fire, but they soon realize that they do not actually know how to start a flame. To Piggy's dismay, Jack grabs his thick glasses and uses them to reflect the sun's rays, successfully creating a fire.

CHAPTER THREE

1. What is the significance of the title “Huts on The Beach”?

This chapter is called “Huts on the Beach”, for Ralph is beginning to realize that shelter is one of the most important issues on the island. The children are having difficulty creating sufficient huts and this is causing their leader quite a bit of grief. It seems that the boys on the island are not focused enough to complete the fairly tedious job of building shelter.

2. Why does Ralph reproach Jack?

Ralph criticizes Jack because the “hunters” are clearly not helping in the building of shelters in any way. Jack is spending all of his time attempting to catch a pig and, even though he has yet to be successful, he continues to commit his days to this job. Ralph has noticed that the hunting is not resulting in any food, so he has become quite upset that Jack has not helped in the shelter building process. Part of Ralph's frustration comes from the fact that even the boys who begin to help him build have very short attention spans. It is a nearly impossible feat to make any of the children concentrate on a serious job for more than an hour.
3. What two groups with different goals are emerging?

There are two groups of older children within this book, one of which is led by Ralph and one that is led by Jack. Ralph leads a group that includes Piggy and Simon, who are truly dedicated to the well-being of everyone on the island and are trying desperately to make proper decisions on behalf of all of the boys. Jack’s group has become obsessed with the act of hunting. All of the time they spend hunting – without any success – could be spent helping the rest of the boys by building shelters or thinking of ways to be rescued. It seems that, while Ralph and his group's goals are focused on group survival, Jack’s goals are very short-term and are specifically about the gratification that would come from capturing an animal.

4. Why does Simon go to the bower?

Simon’s reason for traveling into the jungle alone is unclear, but it can be presumed that he is creating a personal agenda on the island. Jack and Ralph agree that Simon has been acting “queer” lately, and, although it is not certain, the boy could be planning his own escape from the island. This is an example of human instinct, for Simon is most likely thinking of a way that he can prevail over everyone.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. What is the significance of the title “Painted Faces and Long Hair”?

This title describes the state of the children after quite a long while of surviving on the strange island. The words “long hair” is a hint to the reader that the time gap between the third and fourth chapter is quite significant, for the length of hair signifies the passing of time. The “painted faces” half of the title reveals its meaning in a scene in which Jack uses natural colors from charcoal and clay to camouflage himself in order to hunt a pig. Not only does this signify his growing obsession with hunting, but it shows how the boys are getting used to the nature and using it in their own unique ways. It is as if the children have now formed their own culture on the island.

2. Why does Roger, throwing stones at the littluns, aim just to miss?

Roger is throwing stones at his friends as a joke, for he enjoys bugging the other children, especially the littluns. The fact that he makes sure that he does not hit anyone else is quite intriguing, for there are no adults on the island who would condemn him for such an act. If he wished to, Roger could seriously injure anyone he wanted to, but the lasting effect of human morals and society’s rules are still implanted in his brain. Although he is on an island with all of the independence he can imagine, Roger – and the rest of the boys – maintain some of the rules they learned in a land that no longer exists. As Golding says, “Roger’s arm was conditioned by a civilization that knew nothing of him and was in ruins”.

3. What definite stand does Ralph make?

Ralph makes a definite stand to Jack, by reminding him that he is chief and that everyone should do as he says. He is very upset by the fact that Jack let the fire out during an opportunity to be saved and, in an outburst of emotions, says, “I was chief; and you were going to do what I said.” While the boys are all eating, Ralph also makes a definite stand by saying that he is about to call an assembly and that all of the boys must attend it when he blows the conch. Presumably, he is going to straighten out the issues that have been bothering him for a while.

4. Why does Jack refuse to give Piggy meat?
Jack refuses to give Piggy meat because he resents his relationship with Ralph and because he sees Piggy as an outcast. By treating Piggy poorly, Jack feels a sense of power within the group of boys, for everyone seems to enjoy watching the poor boy suffer. Unfortunately, there is something fragile about Piggy's personality that makes children want to pick on him.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. What is the significance of the title “Beast From Water”?

This chapter is titled “Beast From Water”, for the children are continuing their discussions about a beast that possibly lives on the island. In this chapter, the discussion becomes more serious than before, for there are now many children who claim to have witnessed a beast. Percival, the littlun who stands in front of the boys to tell his account of the monster, claims that it lives in the water. Even though such a statement is most likely ridiculous, the amount of fear that fills the young children nearly convinces the older boys that such a creature may exist. The “Beast From Water” is an important aspect of the story, for it is revealing the vulnerability of everyone’s mind.

2. What is the paradox of the boy’s attitude toward the beast?

Percival, the little boy who claims to have seen a beast, shows a paradox in his attitude toward the creature, for, at one moment, he is crying with vindication about the beast, and soon after, he is fast asleep. It seems as though the little boys talk about the beast because it gives them a reason to cry about their sorrowful situation, but they forget about the monster once they are done feeling upset. There are truly no clear answers within this aspect of the story as to what is fact and fiction, but, at this point, it seems that the little boys are only imagining the creature they claim to see.

3. Why does Ralph call a meeting?

Ralph calls a meeting because he is extremely angered by the fact that Jack and his hunters let the fire out at a time when all of the boys could have potentially been saved by a passing ship. The meeting eventually has a very different meaning and significance when all of the boys begin speaking out of turn and questioning Ralph’s authority. In the end, most of the boys run off, forming their own group of rebels. What began as a concise meeting planned by Ralph turned into chaos.

4. Why does Piggy dissuade Ralph from giving up his position as chief?

Piggy dissuades Ralph from giving up his position as chief because Ralph is Piggy’s closest tie to authority on the island. Everyone seems to dislike Piggy and, if he wasn’t friends with the chief of the island, boys would have even more reason to pick on him and to never consider his opinions. Piggy definitely understands the fact that the only reason he is even slightly respected on the island is because of his somewhat close relationship with Ralph.
CHAPTER SIX:

1. What is the irony of the dead parachutist landing on the mountain?

The dead parachutist landing on the mountain is an ironic situation, for all of the boys have been recently frightened of a “beast” that roams the island. Although it is obviously not a beast, the sound and skewed view of the parachutist makes the boys feel like there is definitely a deadly creature on their land. The ironic relation is that the boys are assuming that the parachutist is the “beast” that has been engraved in their mind.

2. Why is Simon the only one to doubt the existence of a beast?

Simon doubts the existence of a beast because he is a “realist”. He is very skeptical that a beast could live on a mountain and leave no tracks, but he keeps most of his thoughts inside, for he is a very introverted person and perhaps intimidated by the presence of Ralph and Jack.

3. Why do Ralph and Jack both insist on going after the beast?

Ralph insists on going after the beast because he wishes to keep the rest of the boys safe. As a good leader, he wants to defeat the creature that has caused so many problems already. Jack may be concerned about safety as well, but he is probably more excited about the beast because it provides him with another creature to kill. From his recent success as a hunter, he has gained an even stronger obsession for hunting and, as a result, he would like to investigate the beast.

4. Why does Jack say that they don’t need the conch any longer?

Jack doesn’t believe that they need the conch any longer, for the boys are facing their most crucial battle yet – encountering the beast. In such a vital situation, Jack believes that rules are useless. However, his reason for Jack’s statement goes deeper, for he has always resented the conch. He wishes to have control and to be able to state his opinions whenever he wishes. The conch is holding Jack back in his attempt to be the most powerful person on the island.