



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

The Call of the Wild

based on the book by
Jack London

Written by
Mary B. Collins

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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR
JACK LONDON

LONDON, Jack (1876-1916). The novelist and short-story writer Jack London was, in his lifetime, one of the most popular authors in the world. After World War I his fame was eclipsed in the United States by a new generation of writers, but he remained popular in many other countries, especially in the Soviet Union, for his romantic tales of adventure and survival.

John Griffith London was born in San Francisco on Jan. 12, 1876. His family was poor, and he was forced to go to work early in life to support himself. At 17 he sailed to Japan and Siberia on a seal-hunting voyage. He was largely self-taught, reading voluminously in libraries and spending a year at the University of California. In the late 1890s he joined the gold rush to the Klondike. This experience gave him material for his first book, 'The Son of Wolf', published in 1900, and for 'Call of the Wild' (1903), one of his most popular stories.

In his writing career of 17 years, London produced 50 books and many short stories. He wrote mostly for money, to meet ever-increasing expenses. His fame as a writer gave him a ready audience as a spokesman for a peculiar and inconsistent blend of socialism and racial superiority.

London's works, all hastily written, are of uneven quality. The best books are the Klondike tales, which also include 'White Fang' (1906) and 'Burning Daylight' (1910). His most enduring novel is probably the autobiographical 'Martin Eden' (1909), but the exciting 'Sea Wolf' (1904) continues to have great appeal for young readers.

In 1910 London settled near Glen Ellen, Calif., where he intended to build his dream home, "Wolf House." After the house burned down before completion in 1913, he was a broken and sick man. His death on Nov. 22, 1916, from an overdose of drugs, was probably a suicide.

--- Courtesy of Compton's Learning Company

INTRODUCTION

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London. It includes eighteen lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to one main theme of the novel by having a guest speaker come in to speak to the class about the role of wild animals in our world. Students are also given the materials they will be using during the unit. At the end of the lesson, students begin the pre-reading work for the first reading assignment.

The **reading assignments** are approximately thirty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 minutes of pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for 8 to 10 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer or multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes. If your school has the appropriate machinery, it might be a good idea to make transparencies of your answer keys for the overhead projector.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately 8 to 10 vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II nails down the definitions of the words by giving students dictionary definitions of the words and having students match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After the reading assignments, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

After students have read the novel and have an understanding of the literal level, a lesson is devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the novel.

There is also a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the fragmented vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first assignment is for personal opinions: students write their opinions about the relationship(s) between people and animals on our planet. The second assignment is to inform: students choose an animal on the endangered species list, do background research, and write a report explaining the background, giving the current status of the animal, and making recommendations for appropriate actions that can be taken to help the animal. The third assignment is to persuade and to give students a chance to be creative: students create a mail-out piece for the National Wildlife Foundation (or any wilderness/conservation association) to persuade people to make a contribution.

There is a **nonfiction reading assignment** related to Writing Assignment 2 mentioned above. During one class period, students also make **oral presentations** about the nonfiction pieces they have read. This not only exposes all students to a wealth of information, it also gives students the opportunity to practice **public speaking**.

One class period is devoted to discussion of survival and camping techniques. The **group activity** which follows the discussion has students working in small groups to actually plan a camping trip.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: multiple choice-matching-true/false or short answer. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included. In addition there is an Advanced Short Answer Unit Test for students who need more of a challenge.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **extra activities section** includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the novel, and extra vocabulary worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. The **teacher's manual** has the answer keys for the worksheets, tests, puzzles, etc. The **student packet** has worksheets, tests, puzzles, etc. left blank for students to fill-in. Materials in the student packet may be reproduced for use in the teacher's classroom without infringement of copyrights. Teachers' manuals may not be reproduced without the written consent of Teacher's Pet Publications, Inc.

UNIT OBJECTIVES - *The Call of the Wild*

1. Through reading London's *Call of the Wild*, students will study the importance of adapting to the changes in one's life and environment.
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical and personal.
3. Students will discuss the theme of survival of the fittest.
4. Students will discuss the importance of wilderness and animals in our world.
5. Students will discuss survival skills and actually plan a camping trip.
6. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
7. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *The Call of the Wild* as they relate to the author's theme development.
8. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.
9. The writing assignments in this unit are geared to several purposes:
 - a. To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, to persuade, or to express their own personal ideas
Note: Students will demonstrate ability to write effectively to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to persuade by selecting and organizing relevant information, establishing an argumentative purpose, and by designing an appropriate strategy for an identified audience. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to express personal ideas by selecting a form and its appropriate elements.
 - b. To check the students' reading comprehension
 - c. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
 - d. To encourage logical thinking
 - e. To provide an opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.
10. Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *The Call of the Wild*

| Date Assigned | Reading Assignment | Completion Date |
|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| | Part I | |
| | Part II | |
| | Part III | |
| | Part IV | |
| | Part V | |
| | Part VI | |
| | Part VII | |

UNIT OUTLINE - *The Call of the Wild*

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Introduction PV Part I | Read Part I | PVR Parts II-IV | Quiz/?s I-IV PVR Part V | PVR Parts VI-VII |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Study ?s V-VII Assign Extra ?s | Discussion | Writing Assignment 1 | Vocabulary | Library Nonfiction Assignment |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| Writing Assignment 2 | Nonfiction Reports | Speaker | Trip Plans | Trip Plans |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | | |
| Writing Assignment 3 | Review | Test | | |

Key: P = Preview Study Questions V = Vocabulary Work R = Read

LESSON ONE

Objectives

1. To introduce the unit
2. To distribute books and other related materials
3. To heighten students' awareness of the status of wildlife in our world

Activity #1

Invite a guest speaker from your local wildlife preservation society to speak to your class about the role of wild animals in our world. If no speaker is available, I am sure your local society could recommend (or perhaps even lend you) a good film on this topic.

Spend the majority of this class period showing the film or listening to and interacting with the speaker.

Activity #2

Distribute the materials for the unit: books, study guides, reading assignment sheets, etc. Explain to students how they should use these materials.

Study Guides Students should read the study guide questions for each reading assignment prior to beginning the reading assignment to get a feeling for what events and ideas are important in the section they are about to read. After reading the section, students will (as a class or individually) answer the questions to review the important events and ideas from that section of the book. Students should keep the study guides as study materials for the unit test.

Vocabulary Prior to reading a reading assignment, students will do vocabulary work related to the section of the book they are about to read. Following the completion of the reading of the book, there will be a vocabulary review of all the words used in the vocabulary assignments. Students should keep their vocabulary work as study materials for the unit test.

Reading Assignment Sheet You need to fill in the reading assignment sheet to let students know by when their reading has to be completed. You can either write the assignment sheet up on a side blackboard or bulletin board and leave it there for students to see each day, or you can "ditto" copies for each student to have. In either case, you should advise students to become very familiar with the reading assignments so they know what is expected of them.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 - *The Call of the Wild*

PROMPT

The theme of “survival of the fittest” runs throughout this book. The strong and quick survive; the weak and slow die. Darwin suggested that this process of natural selection is one means by which evolution takes place.

In our times, man--civilization--seems to be killing off animals at an astonishing rate by pollution and habitat destruction.

One question that arises is this: By being the dominant animals on this planet, are people simply contributing to the process of natural selection, or are we overstepping our boundaries and destroying our world? Civilizations live and act within their own laws and rules. Are there "natural laws" which we ignore?

Your assignment is to write a composition in which you give your opinion as an answer to the first question in the paragraph above. Be sure to explain your opinion in detail and support your statements with facts and examples.

PREWRITING

One way to start is to jot down your ideas relevant to your topic. Then, on your scratch paper, pick out your three best points. Organize any other thoughts you've put down to see if they can be used as supporting examples or statements for any of your three main points. Scratch out anything that's left. Now go back and jot down any more ideas you have which will support your three ideas.

DRAFTING

A diagram of a basic, five-paragraph essay might look like this:

- ¶1. Introduce essay topic
- ¶2. Main Idea (topic sentence) followed by examples or details supporting main idea
- ¶3. Main idea (topic sentence) followed by examples or details supporting main idea
- ¶4. Main idea (topic sentence) followed by examples or details supporting main idea
- ¶5. Summary/Closing

PROMPT

When you finish the rough draft of your paper, ask a student who sits near you to read it. After reading your rough draft, he/she should tell you what he/she liked best about your work, which parts were difficult to understand, and ways in which your work could be improved. Reread your paper considering your critic's comments and make the corrections you think are necessary.

PROOFREADING

Do a final proofreading of your paper double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.