NOVELUNITS

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

White Fang

Jack London

JACK LONDON

WHITE FANG

Puffin Classics

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Table of Contents

Chapters contain: Vocabulary Words,
Discussion Questions, Predictions,
Supplementary Activities

Skills and Strategies

Thinking
Brainstorming, classifying
and categorizing, evaluating,
analyzing details, comparing
and contrasting

Writing
Narrative, argument, letter,
persuasive

Listening/Speaking
Participation in discussion
group

Vocabulary
Antonyms/synonyms, context

Comprehension
Predicting, sequencing,
cause/effect, inference,
comparing information from
more than one source

Literary Elements
Character, setting, plot,
allegory

Summary of White Fang:

White Fang is part dog and part wolf. Trained as a sled dog, his life is fashioned by his three owners—Gray Beaver, an Indian trapper and trader; Beauty Smith, a cruel bully who trains White Fang as a killer dog; and Weedon Scott, a mining engineer, who taught White Fang about kindness. The book is delivered in third person narrative with a great deal of prose from White Fang's viewpoint. White Fang learns various laws of survival in the wild and with his different owners.

Background on the Author and the Book:

Jack London lived from 1876-1916. Jack's parents were a spiritualist and her common-law husband, an itinerant astrologer. He was adopted by John London whom his mother married when he was an infant. The family moved frequently, probably because of his mother's many get-rich-quick schemes. At age sixteen he had bought a sloop which he sailed on San Francisco Bay. He also spent time as a hand on a sailing schooner in the North Pacific, shovelled coal in a power station, rode the rails as a hobo, and joined the Klondike gold rush in the Yukon. His exploits netted him little money, but a wealth of experiences from which he wrote.

White Fang was initially thought to be a companion piece of *The Call of the Wild*, but the book turned out to be rather opposite because the main character is tamed and resists the call of the wild. The power of environment is evident throughout *White Fang*. The dog is progressively impacted by the circumstances of his existence and his current master.
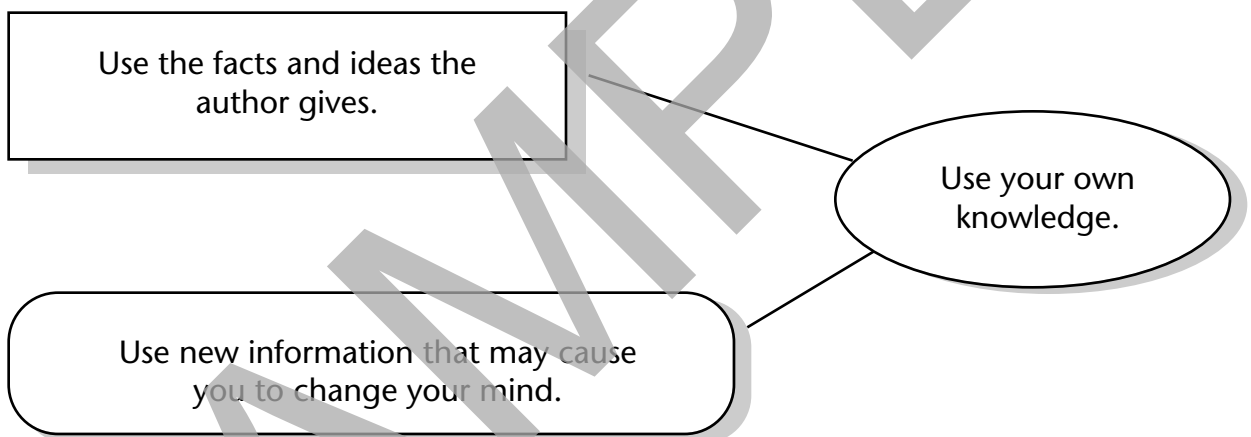
Initiating Activities:

(Several possibilities are included so the teacher can choose for the particular students involved.)

1. Provide information on the author, either from individual student reports, group work, or delivered by the teacher.

2. Investigate the main setting of the novel—the Yukon in the early twentieth century. Record some predictions about the book.

3. Look at the cover. What do you expect from this book?

4. Read Chapter I aloud. Ask students to close their eyes to visualize the setting. Draw a picture to record your ideas.

Using Predictions in the Novel Unit Approach

We all make predictions as we read—little guesses about what will happen next, how the conflict will be resolved, which details given by the author will be important to the plot, which details will help to fill in our sense of a character. Students should be encouraged to predict, to make sensible guesses. As students work on predictions, these discussion questions can be used to guide them: What are some of the ways to predict? What is the process of a sophisticated reader's thinking and predicting? What clues does an author give us to help us in making our predictions? Why are some predictions more likely than others?

A predicting chart is for students to record their predictions. As each subsequent chapter is discussed, you can review and correct previous predictions. This procedure serves to focus on predictions and to review the stories.

Use the facts and ideas the author gives.

Use your own knowledge.

Use new information that may cause you to change your mind.

Predictions:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Chapter I: "The Trail of the Meat"—Pages 1-10

Vocabulary:

*ominous 1	desolation 1	infallibility 1
offence 2	*indomitable 2	carcasses 6
stampeded 7	menacingly 8	epitaph 10

Discussion Questions:

1. In a sentence or two explain the personification in paragraph one. *(Personification is giving human characteristics to inanimate objects or non-humans. The author refers to the wild northland as cold, ominous, and sphinx-like. It is like an overwhelming, ever present mood and environment.)*

2. What is the "long and narrow oblong box" on the sled? *(a coffin)*

3. Who are Bill and Henry? Describe in a sentence or two. *(Bill and Henry are driving a dog sled. They are quiet but hard-working, experienced, methodical, but afraid on this current journey.)*

4. Who or what is pursuing the dog sled? *(a wolf pack)*

5. How do the dogs communicate their fears? *(stampeded to the near side of the fire, didn't attack the intruder who stole a fish)*

6. What happened to Fatty? *(He ran off into the cold alone, committed suicide.)*

Supplementary Activities:

1. Begin a class mural to reflect the scenery of the novel.

2. While reading the novel, keep watch for information about current day life in the Yukon. Keep newspaper clippings, etc. on one side of a comparison T.

3. Art of the Novel: Look at paragraph one, page 3. What is "It"? Look for similes in the novel to share with classmates.

Chapter II: "The She-Wolf"—Pages 10-22

Vocabulary:

intonation 11	fervid 12	blasphemy 12
objurgation 12	desisting 14	commingled 14
lambasted 14	quinine 17	scrutiny 19
accession 20	*replenish 21	marauders 21