Call of the Wild

By Jack London



Active Reading Study Guide

Directions: Fill in the empty boxes

Call of the Wild

Chapter 1: Into The Primitive

[Click Here for Chapter 1 Full Text](http://london.sonoma.edu/Writings/CallOfTheWild/chapter1.html)

[Click Here for Audiobook Version of Chapter 1 (On Youtube)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T9PrngqNVPk&list=SPEE62937F1C342E0D&index=1)

**Vocabulary**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Word** | **Part of Speech** | **Definition or synonym** | **Sentence from the novel** | **Describe what images come to mind when you think of this word.** |
| 1. Demesne | N | Domain | “And over this great demesne Buck ruled.” (4) | A huge house and the surrounding property. |
| 1. Obscurely |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Recesses |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Enabled |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Sated |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Egotistical |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Tonic |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Acquaintance |  |  |  |  |
| 10. Besetting |  |  |  |  |
| 11. Progeny |  |  |  |  |
| 12. Affirmative |  |  |  |  |
| 13. Unwonted |  |  |  |  |
| 14. Menacingly |  |  |  |  |
| 15. Intimated |  |  |  |  |
| 16. Grappled |  |  |  |  |
| 17. Deft |  |  |  |  |
| 18. Lolling |  |  |  |  |
| 19. Futilely |  |  |  |  |
| 20. Vilely |  |  |  |  |
| 21. Ebbed |  |  |  |  |
| 22. Unbridled |  |  |  |  |
| 23. Mangled |  |  |  |  |
| 24. Eloquently |  |  |  |  |
| 25. Lacerated |  |  |  |  |
| 26. Throttled |  |  |  |  |
| 27. Wrath |  |  |  |  |
| 28. Retaliated |  |  |  |  |
| 29. Metamorphosed |  |  |  |  |
| 30. Conciliated |  |  |  |  |
| 31. Impartial |  |  |  |  |
| 32. Treacherous |  |  |  |  |

**Reading Comprehension & Analysis**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Compare and contrast Buck’s life in Santa Clara to his life after Manuel sells him. | **Santa Clara** | **After He is Sold** |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2. a. How does the man in the red sweater treat Buck? | a. |
| b. What is his goal? | b. |
| c. What does Buck learn from him? | c. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 3. Jack London writes, “That club was a revelation. It was his introduction to the reign of primitive law, and he met the introduction halfway.” | |
| A. What does “primitive law” mean? | A. |
| B. What does it mean when London says Buck “met the introduction halfway”? | B. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 4. Jack London writes, “A man with a club was a lawgiver, a master to be obeyed, though not necessarily conciliated. Of this last Buck was never guilty…” | |
| A. What does this quote mean? | A. |
| B. What does this show about Buck? How will his attitude affect him throughout the story? | B. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 4. At the end of the chapter, Buck sees snow for the first time. Write about one of your first times experiencing something new. Try to use descriptive language, like Jack London does, to bring the experience to life. |  |

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Chapter 2: The Law of Club and Fang

[Click Here for Chapter 2 Full Text](http://london.sonoma.edu/Writings/CallOfTheWild/chapter2.html)

[Click Here for Audiobook Version of Chapter 2 (On Youtube)](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEE62937F1C342E0D)

**Vocabulary**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Word** | **Part of Speech** | **Definition or synonym** | **Sentence from the novel** | **Describe what images come to mind when you think of this word.** |
| 1. Primordial | adj. | Primitive, something from the beginning of time | He had been suddenly jerked from the heart of civilization and flung into the heart of things primordial. (p. 25) | I think about the first life forms on Earth, like protists, algae, and moss, and everything the evolved from that. |
| 1. Loaf | v. |  |  |  |
| 1. Imperative |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Vicarious |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Ignominiously |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Disconsolate |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Placatingly |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Forbears |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Apt |  |  |  |  |
| 10. Malingerer |  |  |  |  |
| 11. Retrogression |  |  |  |  |

**Reading Comprehension & Analysis**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. The image of all the huskies that surrounded Curly when she was hurt is really graphic. Describe what happened in the scene, and explain why Jack London would include such a disturbing image. |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2. The chapter title is “The Law of Club and Fang”--What *is* the law of club and fang? Why is this the chapter title? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 3. What does the author mean when he describes **Buck’s moral nature** as “a vain thing and a handicap in the ruthless struggle for existence,”? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 4. Describe what Buck will need to do in order to thrive in this new situation. |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 5. What is Jack London referring to when he says “he came because men had found a yellow metal...” and why does he refer to this material using those w  rds, instead of using its actual name? (pg 40) |  |

**Characterization**

**(How the author shows, rather than tells,**

**what the characters are like)**

|  |
| --- |
| 6. Which dogs are we supposed to like? Which dogs are we supposed to hate? How does Jack London shape our opinions of the dogs? Point out specific descriptions that affect our emotions. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Dog** | **Your Opinion** | **Author’s Description**  **(with page #’s)** |
| Buck |  |  |
| Curly |  |  |
| Spitz |  |  |
| So-leks |  |  |
| Billee |  |  |
| Joe |  |  |
| Dave |  |  |
| Pike |  |  |

**Call of the Wild**

**Chapter 3: The Dominant Primordial Beast**

[Click Here for Chapter 3 Full Text](http://classiclit.about.com/od/callofthewild/a/The-Call-Of-The-Wild-Ch-3.htm)

Click here for Call of the Wild Ch 3 Audiobook (on Youtube)

**Vocabulary**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Word** | **Part of Speech** | **Definition or synonym** | **Sentence from the novel** | **Describe what images come to mind when you think of this word.** |
| 1. Precipitate |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Rival |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Unwonted |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Pandemonium |  |  |  |  |
| 5. Skulking |  |  |  |  |
| 6. Gaunt |  |  |  |  |
| 7. Courier |  |  |  |  |
| 8. Dubiously |  |  |  |  |
| 9. Pre-eminently |  |  |  |  |
| 10. Inevitable |  |  |  |  |
| 11. Shirks |  |  |  |  |
| 12. Prostrate |  |  |  |  |
| 13. mutiny |  |  |  |  |
| 14. Insubordination |  |  |  |  |
| 15. Insidious |  |  |  |  |

**Pre-reading:**

**Fill in the boxes using only information from chapters 1 and 2.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Situation** | **What Buck Learns/How he Adapts** |
| a. Manuel Sells Buck to the Man in the Red Sweater. | Bucks begins mistrusting men. |
| b. |  |
| c. |  |
| d. |  |
| e. |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2. **Predict:**  Before reading the chapter, guess what it will be about based on the title. | 2. |

**During Reading:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **3**. **a.** Describe how Buck moves up in rank. What is his strategy? | **3. a.** |
| **3. b.** Can you think of an example of something similar that a human would to do improve his or her social status? | **3. b.** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 4. Buck has said, several times, that having morals is foolish when trying to survive in the wilderness. Below are some things that are considered good manners or the right thing to do. **In the boxes below, and to the right, explain how each “good” quality on the left could harm Buck if he tried to stick to it in the wild.** | |
| a. Share what you have | a. |
| b. Don’t just sit by and let someone bully another individual | b. |
| c. Don’t fight | c. |
| d. Don’t steal | d. |
| e. Always treat others as you’d like to be treated | e. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 5. When you really think about it, Buck does a lot of things that are deceitful, manipulative, and even cruel. List 3 things he does that are “bad” outside of the wilderness. | a. |
| b. |
| c. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 6. Think about your answers to #5. Jack London is honest about the terrible things the dogs do to thrive, and yet, the reader still relates to (and roots for) Buck. How does London maintain our loyalty, and keep us from hating Buck for the “bad” things he does? | 6. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 7. **Reflect:** Buck consistently reflects on the idea that he is regressing to the true nature of his ancestors. His instincts are their instincts. It seems that this side was always in him, but when he was “civilized” he suppressed that side of himself. Now answer these questions: | |
| a. What types of instincts do humans have to suppress in order to have a functioning civilization? Give a couple examples (think about how you (or people you know) would act if you didn’t have to follow any rules at all). | a. |
| b. Why do people try to overcome these instincts? | b. |
| c. What are some situations that bring out more humans’ primitive instincts? | c. |

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**Chapter 4: Who Has Won to Mastership**

[Click Here for Chapter 4 Full Text](http://london.sonoma.edu/Writings/CallOfTheWild/chapter4.html)

[Click here for the Audiobook Version of Chapter 4 (on Youtube)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26xE_zQ5H4A&list=SPEE62937F1C342E0D)

**Vocabulary**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Word** | **Part of Speech** | **Definition or synonym** | **Sentence from the novel** | **Describe what images come to mind when you think of this word.** |
| 1. Coveted |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Obdurate |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Displaced |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Revolt |  |  |  |  |
| 5. Forevalued |  |  |  |  |
| 6. Toil |  |  |  |  |
| 7. Resented |  |  |  |  |
| 8. Floundered |  |  |  |  |
| 9. Lugubriously |  |  |  |  |
| 10. Exertion |  |  |  |  |
| 11. Convulsive |  |  |  |  |

**Deep Level Questioning**

write four discussion questions, and answer them in the form of a paragraph, using specific and clear language, and correct punctuation, spelling and capitalization. In addition, evaluate the question you’ve asked and explain why this is a good question to include in discussion.

**Rules for discussion questions:**

* They cannot be ‘yes or no’ questions, unless you have a follow up asking why the reader answered that way.
* They cannot have right or wrong answers (no reading check questions).
* They should inspire different answers from different readers.
* They should require knowledge of the reading, but connect to ideas beyond the words on the page. In order to answer well, the reader should have to point out a specific moment (or even better: 2-3 places in the book) to support his or her answer.
* Please avoid asking for predictions unless that is a 5th question (extra).

**Complete your work in the table below:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Question** | **Why is this a good discussion question?** | **Your Answer** |
| **1.** | **1.** | **1.** |
| **2.** | **2.** | **2.** |
| **3.** | **3.** | **3.** |
| **4.** | **4.** | **4.** |

**Suggestions for question topics:**

* **The effects of Buck’s fight with Spitz**
* **Buck’s role in the sled team**
* **The hairy man in Buck’s dreams**
* **Dave’s deteriorating health, and the response of the team**

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**Chapter 5: The Toil of Trace and Trail**

[Click here for Chapter 5 Full Text](http://london.sonoma.edu/Writings/CallOfTheWild/chapter5.html)

[Click Here for Audiobook Version of Chapters 5 & 6 (On Youtube)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDr9igCrmGQ&list=SPEE62937F1C342E0D&index=5)

**Vocabulary**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Word** | **Part of Speech** | **Definition or synonym** | **Sentence from the novel** | **Describe what images come to mind when you think of this word.** |
| 1. Salient |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Callowness |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Slipshod |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Slovenly |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Apprehensively |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Remonstrance |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Imploringly |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Repugnance |  |  |  |  |

**Characterization**

**(How the author reveals character by showing, not telling).**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Observations:**  **Things they do or say (with page #s). You can paraphrase or use direct quotations here.** | **Inferences:**  **Draw conclusions about the characters based on your observations.** |
| Charles | 1. (Pg # )  2. (Pg # )  3. (Pg # ) | 1.  2.  3. |
| Hal | 1. (Pg # )  2. (Pg # )  3. (Pg # ) | 1.  2.  3. |
| Mercedes | 1. (Pg # )  2. (Pg # )  3. (Pg # ) | 1.  2.  3. |

**Analysis & Critical Thinking**

**Deeper Level Questioning:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Your own deep level question: |  |
| Why is this a good question for discussion? |  |
| Your Answer: |  |

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**Chapter 6: For The Love of a Man**

[Click here for Chapter 6 Full Text](http://london.sonoma.edu/Writings/CallOfTheWild/chapter6.html)

[Click Here for Audiobook Version of Chapters 5 & 6 (On Youtube)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDr9igCrmGQ&list=SPEE62937F1C342E0D&index=5)

**Vocabulary:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Word** | **Part of Speech** | **Definition or synonym** | **Sentence from the novel** | **Describe what images come to mind when you think of this word.** |
| 1. Resent |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Ministrations |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Demonstrative |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Convalescence |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Pompous |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Transient |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Imperiously |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Apprehensions |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Incoherent |  |  |  |  |

**Comprehension and Evaluation:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Quote: | Explain, in your own words, what this means and why it is important: |
| “He had lessoned from Spitz, and from the chief fighting dogs of the police and mail, and knew there was no middle course. He must master or be mastered; while to show mercy was a weakness. Mercy did not exist in the primordial life. It was misunderstood for fear, and such misunderstandings made for death. Kill or be killed, eat or be eaten, was the law; and this mandate, down out of the depths of Time, he obeyed.” |  |

**Analysis:**

Buck is being pulled in two very different directions. Identify and explain the two forces that are motivating him right now, and what internal conflict Buck experiences as a result.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Force #1: |  |
| Force #2: |  |
| Conflict: |  |

**Analysis & Critical Thinking**

**Deeper Level Questioning:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Your own deep level question: |  |
| Why is this a good question for discussion? |  |
| Your Answer: |  |

**Call of the Wild**

**Chapter 7: The Sounding of the Call**

[**Click here for Chapter 7 Full Text**](http://london.sonoma.edu/Writings/CallOfTheWild/chapter7.html)

[**Click Here for Audiobook Version of Chapter 7 (On Youtube)**](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0hSoQRWHr0&list=SPEE62937F1C342E0D&index=6)

**Vocabulary**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Word** | **Part of Speech** | **Definition or synonym** | **Sentence from the novel** | **Describe what images come to mind when you think of this word.** |
| 1. Steeped |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Ramshackle |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Indefinite |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Ascended |  |  |  |  |
| 5. Obliterated |  |  |  |  |
| 6. Vigilant |  |  |  |  |
| 7. Impelled |  |  |  |  |
| 8. Pertinacity |  |  |  |  |
| 9. Latent |  |  |  |  |
| 10. Formidable |  |  |  |  |
| 11. Usurp |  |  |  |  |
| 12. Compellingly |  |  |  |  |
| 13. Abiding |  |  |  |  |
| 14. Borealis |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What do you think the title “The Sounding of the Call” means? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2. When Buck is with John Thornton, he starts having dreams and “memories” of a hairy man who could use his arms to swing among the treetops and survive in the wild. Who or what does this man represent and why would John Thornton inspire such “memories”? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 3. What do you think would have happened to Buck if the event with the Yeehat Indians never occurred?  Provide two observations from the book that support your theory. | |
| a. Evidence: | (pg. ) |
| b. Evidence: | (pg. ) |

Call of the Wild

After Finishing the Novel…

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. This book is considered a classic. Why do you think that is? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2. Because this is such a famous book, there are abridged versions of it. Do you think that a person who read an abridged version of the novel could honestly say he or she read Call of the Wild? Why or why not? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 3. Identify a theme (lesson or moral) of the story: | Example/Evidence from the book |
| 3. a. | 3. a. |
| 3. b. | 3. b. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 4. What was your opinion of the book? Write a paragraph on your reaction to it, and explain why you feel the way you do. |  |