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SYNOPSIS

Chap. 1: The opening chapter suspensefully introduces the setting, which is a key ingredient of the novel: the Northland, "the Wild, the savage, frozen-hearted Northland Wild." In the semi-arctic Yukon or Northwest Territory of Canada two mushers named Henry and Bill are running with their dog sled through the wilderness, trying to reach a fort that is days away while being relentlessly pursued by a pack of starving wolves.

Chap. 2: The mushers' situation grows increasingly desperate. Each night, a reddish she-wolf lures one of the sled dogs away from camp, to be devoured by the waiting wolf pack. This she-wolf must be part dog, the mushers recognize, because she is familiar with human beings and human ways. Bill determines to kill her, but only when he has a sure shot at her; he and Henry have only three cartridges between them.

Chap. 3: Bill tries to retrieve One Ear, lured away by the she-wolf; the pack gets both of them. Henry spends three sleepless nights warding off the wolves with fire, but the pack picks off the remaining two sled dogs. On the final day of this ordeal, just as the wolves start to break through the circle of fire surrounding the sleep-deprived Henry, a group of men on sleds arrive and drive the pack away.

Chap. 4: The narrative leaves the mushers behind and focuses on the wolf pack, which finally arrives in the land of plentiful game. Starvation behind them, the wolves begin to split off into mating pairs. The she-wolf watches with satisfaction as old One Eye emerges as the survivor of three suitors. The pair now run together along the Mackenzie River and its environs. When they encounter an Indian camp, One Eye is apprehensive, but the she-wolf is very familiar with its sounds and smells and seems drawn to it, although both animals remain hidden observers.

Chap. 5: The she-wolf, on a quest, finds a dry and cozy cave. There, she gives birth to a litter of five cubs. Instinct prompts her to snarl at One Eye and keep him away from the cubs; another instinct prompts One Eye to hunt and bring meat back to the new family. In a keenly observed hunting scene, we learn about the predator-prey environment our protagonist has just been born into, including ferocious lynx, well-defended porcupine, and succulent ptarmigan.

Chap. 6: The one gray cub of the litter has "bred true to the straight wolf-stock"; he is the fiercest of the five cubs. He spends the early weeks of his life exploring the limited world of his cave, learning an important early life lesson: to obey the rules his mother sets down, in order to avoid hurt. A period of famine kills the gray cub's litter mates, and One Eye dies in a fierce battle with the female lynx.

Chap. 7: The gray cub discovers an important instinct: fear, especially fear of the unknown, and avoidance of things

that inspire fear in him. But while instinctive fear and obedience to his mother keep the cub away from the cave's entrance, the burgeoning life and growth in him finally compel him to step out of the cave one day. On this first adventure in the outside world, the cub learns about the properties of the physical world—water, for instance, and uneven terrain. A chance encounter with a mother ptarmigan and her nest of chicks introduces the cub to his biological destiny: "he was doing that for which he was made—killing meat and battling to kill it. He was justifying his existence." The gray cub also learns about the dangers posed to him by other creatures: the maddened mother ptarmigan, a hunting hawk, and a ferocious weasel. The cub is thrilled to be rescued by his mother at the end of his expedition.

Chap. 8: The cub begins to hunt with his mother and learns a vital life lesson, the law of meat, which rules him and his kind, meat-eaters. "The aim of life was meat. Life itself was meat. Life lived on life. There were the eaters and the eaten. The law was: EAT OR BE EATEN." Living the predatory life, with its toils and satisfactions, makes the cub feel "very much alive, very happy, and very proud of himself."

Chap. 9: The gray cub's life changes abruptly. The cub encounters an Indian hunting party. While his wild instinct urges the cub to flee, a stronger instinct fills him with a great awe, a sense of the mastery and power of these gods who long ago achieved primacy over the other animals of the Wild. The cub finds his instinct of submission to men confirmed when his mother arrives. The Indian Gray Beaver recognizes the she-wolf as the wolf-dog (half wolf and half dog) of his late brother. When Gray Beaver sharply addresses the she-wolf by name, "Kiche!" she crouches, whimpers, and submits immediately. Gray Beaver claims ownership of both wolf-dogs and names the cub White Fang. The two animals come to live at the camp the Indians establish along the Mackenzie River.

Chap. 10: White Fang learns the ways of the Indian camp, and he learns to give himself over completely to the control of the man-gods, giving up by degrees his wild heritage and his restless, unconscious yearnings for his former life. His domestication, though, is molded by an older, larger, and stronger puppy named Lip-Lip, a bully who chooses White Fang as his special object of persecution and sets all the other puppies in camp against the wolf-dog cub. Consequently, White Fang is denied a playful cubhood and learns the ways of a cunning loner. When Kiche's new owner takes her away from the village, White Fang tries to follow, ignoring Gray Beaver's command to stay. The result is a terrible beating, from which White Fang learns another lesson: He must give Gray Beaver "rigid, undeviating obedience," in return for which White Fang will escape beatings. Although Gray Beaver never pets or caresses, White Fang's willing submission to his master is forming "unbreakable shackles...of bondage."

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Chap. 11: The persistent persecution by Lip-Lip and the other puppies molds White Fang's character. He learns to be a ferocious and efficient fighter, attacking without warning, throwing his opponent off his feet and slashing at the exposed throat. Forced into a vicious and solitary life, White Fang becomes hated by both the dogs and the humans of the camp, except for Gray Beaver, who values the wolf-dog puppy's developing strength and size.

Chap. 12: When the Indians dismantle the summer camp and go off to fall hunting, White Fang chooses to hide in the woods and stay behind. But he has forgotten his wild ways. Alone in the wilderness, he is overwhelmed by loneliness and fear, seized by "an overpowering desire for the protection and companionship of man." He runs day and night to find the new Indian camp; when he arrives, he crawls in utter submission to Gray Beaver, who cements White Fang's voluntary bondage by feeding the ravenously hungry wolf-dog pup.

Chap. 13: Mit-sah, Gray Beaver's son, teaches White Fang, Lip-Lip, and other puppies how to pull a dog-sled. White Fang works hard and is obedient to Mit-sah and Gray Beaver; out of harness, he ferociously forces all the other young dogs to leave him strictly alone. White Fang's outlook on life has become bleak and harshly practical. His world is fierce and brutal, devoid of any warmth or affection or caresses that might stir to life any gentler aspects of White Fang's nature. He acknowledges Gray Beaver as his lord based on the man's superior intelligence and brute strength. He has no affection for Gray Beaver, who is a "savage god," but he exchanges his own liberty for the god's "food and fire, protection and companionship.... His allegiance to man seemed somehow a law of his being greater than the love of liberty, of kind and kin."

Chap. 14: In the summer of White Fang's third year, a terrible famine occurs. The Indians do not have enough food for themselves, let alone the camp dogs, some of whom become food themselves. White Fang flees into the forest to fend for himself, as do some of the other dogs. The wolf-dog uses his old hunting skills to survive; when he encounters a scrawny Lip-Lip one day, he finishes off his old enemy easily. When the famine ends, White Fang returns to Gray Beaver's teepee, where his master's wife, Kloo-kooch, welcomes him warmly.

Chap. 15: When White Fang is five years old, Gray Beaver takes him along on a great journey along the Mackenzie, across the Rockies, and down the Porcupine to the Yukon. They arrive at Fort Yukon in the summer of 1898, where scores of gold-hunters pass through every day on their way to the Klondike gold fields. Gray Beaver settles down here to trade his bales of furs and moccasins for tremendous profits. White Fang develops a delightful diversion to fill his otherwise idle days: He shows himself to the soft, unskilled Southland dogs that disembark from the daily steamers with their gold-seeking masters. Fearing him as the embodiment of the Wild, these dogs immediately attack, but they are hopelessly outmatched; White Fang knocks the victim off his feet, slashes his throat, and then drops back to let the waiting Indian dog pack finish him off, thus avoiding punishment for the deed himself.

Chap. 16: A small, malformed, cowardly resident of Fort Yukon known as Beauty Smith develops a great desire to possess White Fang. He maneuvers Gray Beaver into a deep craving for alcohol, drains the Indian of all his profits,

and finally buys White Fang for a few last bottles of liquor. White Fang deeply dislikes and distrusts Smith, and tries three times to return to Gray Beaver. Each time Smith beats the wolf-dog viciously and unmercifully. White Fang has passed from the control of a savage god to that of a mad god.

Chap. 17: White Fang's life becomes a living hell. Beauty Smith keeps the wolf-dog chained in a pen, and teases and tortures him until he becomes "a fiend," consumed with an unreasoning hatred of all things. Smith profits from this by setting up dog fights, all of which White Fang wins, becoming widely known as the Fighting Wolf.

Chap. 18: In Dawson, White Fang finally meets his match, a white bulldog named Cherokee. White Fang is unable to upend the short, stocky dog, which gains a grip on the wolf-dog's throat, gradually throttling him while relentlessly boring in on the jugular vein. As White Fang lies near death, with Beauty Smith savagely kicking him, a furious stranger breaks into the scene, strikes Smith, and pries the bulldog's jaws apart. The stranger is Weedon Scott, a mining expert, and he forces Smith to sell White Fang to him on the spot.

Chap. 19: Scott sets out to rehabilitate White Fang, emotionally and well as physically, helped by his camp assistant Matt. The men do this even though White Fang bites both of them, because they can see that he is highly intelligent.

Chap. 20: Scott manages to overcome White Fang's instinctive and learned fear of human touch. The subsequent petting and scratching and kind words arouse new feelings in White Fang: "He was aware of a certain strange satisfaction, as though some need were being gratified, as though some void in his being were being filled." Gradually, the hard knot of hate in White Fang softens and yields to love of this new master. The wolf-dog is too accustomed to being aloof to become very demonstrative, but he does manage to express his devotion with nudges and nose-snuggles and croon-growls.

Chap. 21: When it is time for Scott to return to his home in California, he hates to leave White Fang behind; the wolf-dog had nearly pined away when Scott had gone away on a trip earlier. White Fang makes the decision by escaping from the cabin and joining Scott on the steamer as it is leaving.

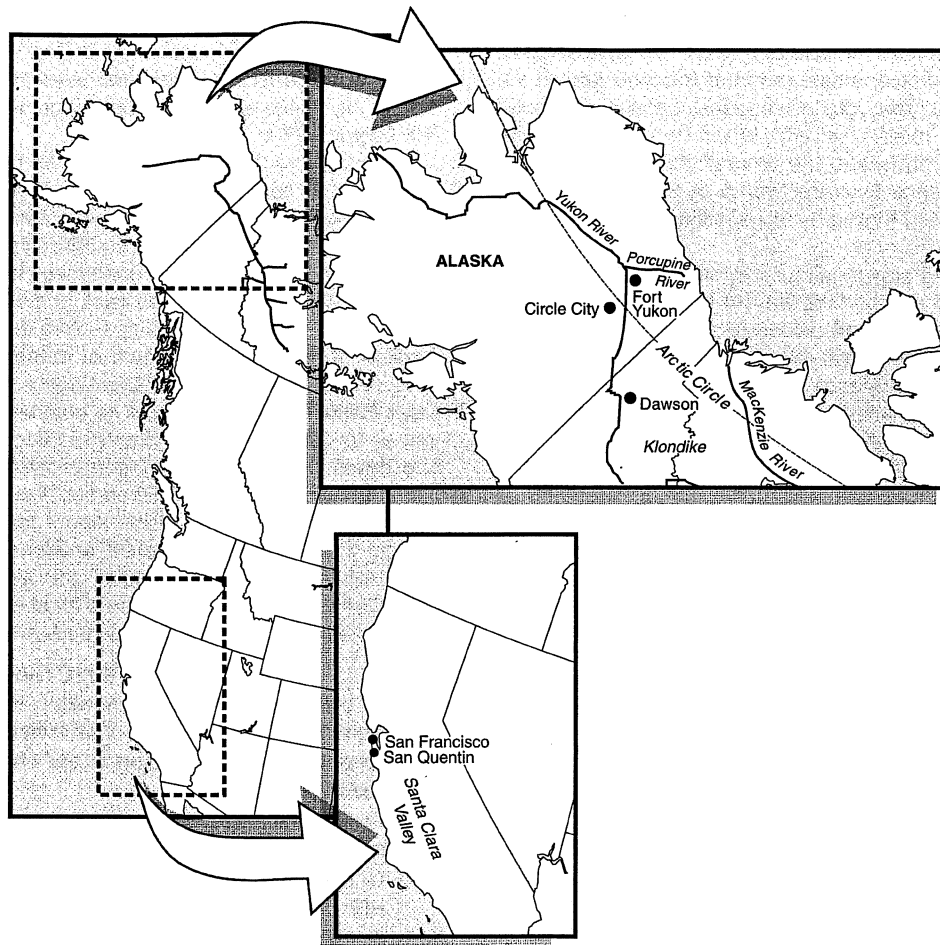
Chap. 22: White Fang is introduced to Scott's family and household on their Santa Clara Valley ranch. These new gods forbid any acting-out of the instant antipathy that springs up between the household dogs: Dick the hound and Collie the shepherd and White Fang, the wolf-dog.

Chap. 23: White Fang adapts to his new life of domesticity, learning not to kill the domestic animals and fowl, allowing the other members of the family to pet him, and generally learning the restraints required of him by civilization.

Chap. 24: White Fang endears himself to the Scott family by summoning them to help when the master lies in the field with a broken leg. His implacable tormentor, Collie, becomes playful and coy; the two run together as Kiche and One Eye had done.

Chap. 25: A vicious convict escapes from jail and arrives at the Scott estate in the middle of the night to wreak vengeance on Judge Scott. In a brief, ferocious fight, White Fang kills the convict but is nearly killed himself by gunshot wounds and stomping. White Fang's wild heritage and upbringing give him the vitality to pull back to life, as he is lovingly nursed by all members of the Scott family, who now

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call him "Blessed Wolf." When White Fang makes his first, wobbly excursion outdoors, he ends by lying contentedly in the warm sun, the young puppies from Collie's litter clambering and tumbling happily over him.

TIME LINE

- 1893** **spring** White Fang is born to Kiche and One Eye.
summer White Fang and Kiche accept Gray Beaver as their master and begin living with the Indians.
- 1893-94** **winter** White Fang learns to be a sled dog.
- 1895-96** Famine; White Fang lives on his own in the wild.
- 1896** **summer** Famine ends; White Fang returns to Gray Beaver and Indian camp. First claim staked in the Klondike gold fields.
- 1897-98** Klondike gold rush. White Fang and the other sled dogs travel with Gray Beaver from late winter to early summer from Mackenzie River vicinity to Fort Yukon.
- 1898** **summer** Gray Beaver trades furs at Fort Yukon, sells White Fang to Beauty Smith; White Fang becomes "The Fighting Wolf."
fall Smith takes White Fang to Dawson, earns money by exhibiting and arranging fights for "The Fighting Wolf."

1899

Gold is discovered in Nome; gold rush shifts from Klondike to Alaska.

spring Weedon Scott rescues White Fang from Smith.

summer White Fang goes with Scott to live in California at Scott family ranch.

1899-1900

White Fang gradually adapts to life in the Southland.

1900-01

winter Collie and White Fang become mates. White Fang kills Jim Hall and is grievously wounded himself.

1901

spring Collie has pups; White Fang recovers from his injuries.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jack London led a colorful, dynamic life. He was born out of wedlock in San Francisco in 1876 to Flora Wellman, whose common-law husband had abandoned her when he learned of her pregnancy. Soon after the baby's birth, Wellman married John London, a widowed Civil War veteran who gave his name to the child. Jack considered his childhood deprived. The family lived in poor financial conditions. Mrs. London, a spiritualist, was an unhappy woman and a detached mother. Jack had to turn to his older stepsister and his African-American wet nurse for maternal affection, and to books for companionship.

The family's economics forced young London to quit

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school at the age of fourteen, becoming a cannery worker, longshoreman, and nocturnal scavenger of commercial oyster beds—the “Prince of the Oyster Pirates.” He also shipped out as an able-bodied seaman and later tramped across the country as a hobo. Throughout his teens, London continued his education by reading widely. Ideas he absorbed then about rugged individualism, the amoral superman, and the struggle for existence from the works of Spencer, Darwin, Marx, Nietzsche, and Kipling he would reflect later in his writing.

London’s 30-day stay in jail for vagrancy ended his hobbing adventure and changed his life. He returned to California in 1894 as an accomplished raconteur and a socialist, determined to finish his formal education. In 1896 London attended both Oakland High School, where he was known as Oakland’s “Boy Socialist,” and then the University of California at Berkeley. Forced again to drop out of school for lack of money, London began writing prolifically but earned only rejection slips.

In 1897, London joined the Klondike gold rush, returning to San Francisco in 1898 penniless but with a wealth of raw material for his subsequent fiction. He broke into print in 1899 with his short stories about the struggles of men and animals to survive in the frozen, pitiless Yukon. The stories were tremendously popular and were collected in a series of books, starting with *The Son of the Wolf*, published in 1900. Altogether, London’s Northland Saga consists of seventy-eight stories, four novels, one play, and six nonfiction pieces. *White Fang*, published in 1906, is part of the Saga. Like London’s earlier novel, *The Call of the Wild*, *White Fang* was enormously popular.

With his success established, London decided he needed a stable, secure family life, and so he married a good friend, Bessie Maddern, in 1900. Unfortunately, the pair turned out to be incompatible, and London was deeply disappointed that the two children they had were both girls. By 1905, London had divorced Bessie and married Charmian Kittredge, with whom he lived on a sprawling ranch in the Sonoma Valley.

In addition to writing his popular fiction, London worked as a journalist, covering the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. He went into London’s East End slums in 1902 and depicted the hopeless plight of the slum inhabitants in *The People of the Abyss* in 1903. The Londons’ sadly failed attempt to sail their own yacht around the world (they only got as far as Hawaii) resulted in *The Cruise of the Snark* in 1911 and various South Seas stories. London’s interest, and success, in scientific agriculture on his 1,500-acre ranch was reflected in a series of agrarian novels.

Although London was by now the world’s highest-paid writer, and a very prolific one, he was plagued by financial problems and ill health. The building of the *Snark* and his dream house, which was destroyed by fire, drained him financially. South Seas illnesses, kidney disease, and overwork drained him physically. He died of uremia in 1916.

CRITIC’S CORNER

Jack London is one of the world’s most popular and widely translated authors. He is remembered, and read, today chiefly for his adventure stories, which both capture the imagination and express truths about human nature and the struggle for survival. In addition to being a pioneer of adventure and escape fiction, London also broke ground with his works of social protest. He is highly regarded for the vitality, natural-

ism, and terse forcefulness of his prose and for the foundation this laid for later writers such as Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, and Norman Mailer. While London’s works were generally considered beneath serious consideration in the 1940s and 1950s, critical opinion rose again in the 1960s and 1970s.

London conceived *White Fang* as both a “companion-book” and a “complete antithesis” to *The Call of the Wild*. As he explained in a 1904 letter to his publisher, *The Call of the Wild* traces the “devolution or decivilization of a dog,” the progression of Buck’s life from contented domestic dog in California to leader of a wild wolf pack in the Northland. In *White Fang*, London wrote, “I’m going to give the evolution, the civilization of a dog—development of domesticity, faithfulness, love, morality, and all the amenities and virtues.” London uses *White Fang* primarily (as he emphasizes throughout the novel) to demonstrate the powerful effect of environment on the development of his wolf-dog protagonist, as well as of some minor characters. Environment first molds *White Fang* into a ferocious enemy of his kind and enemy of all living things; then a radically different environment remolds *White Fang* into a faithful domesticated animal. Interestingly, while *The Call of the Wild* is London’s most popular novel in the United States, *White Fang* is the readers’ favorite in Europe.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To consider the effects of heredity, instinct, and environment on the development of an individual’s character
2. To gain an understanding of the challenges of life in a hostile environment
3. To identify the elements of different types of animal stories
4. To discuss the concept of “survival of the fittest” and the ethic of “oppress the weak, yield to the strong”
5. To analyze the power of love versus brute force and/or fear as a means of control
6. To consider the circumstances under which violence may become a way of life
7. To explore the causes and expressions of cowardice

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To become familiar with aspects of life in Canada’s Yukon and Northwest territories in the early 1900s
2. To learn about the characteristics (including instincts) of both wolves and various breeds of dogs, as well as various other animals native to the Northland
3. To analyze the ways in which the various environments in which *White Fang* lives mold his character, while also noting the contributions of instinct and heredity
4. To explain why Gray Beaver is the “savage god,” Beauty Smith is the “mad god,” and Weedon Scott is the “love master”
5. To understand the reasons why the Southland dogs fear, distrust, and attack *White Fang*
6. To identify the different qualities represented by the Northland and the Southland in the novel
7. To understand the literary purpose of the novel’s suspenseful opening chapters
8. To examine London’s use of anthropomorphism in the novel
9. To evaluate London’s characterizations of human beings

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in the novel

LITERARY TERMS AND APPLICATIONS

To enhance students' appreciation and understanding of the novel, present them with these terms.

animal story: a fictional account of events in the lives of animals. In an animal story, the animals may act like animals, they may act like animals but are able to talk to each other, or they may behave and talk like human beings. This novel is the first type, a realistic animal tale in which the animals behave and are motivated in ways consistent with their species and even, for some dogs such as Collie and Cherokee, consistent with their specific breeds. Of course, the novel is much more than just an animal tale about wolves and dogs, exploring as it does universal themes such as the effects of environment on an individual's development.

anthropomorphism: the technique of ascribing human characteristics to nonhuman things. In this novel, as noted above, the animals generally exhibit animal rather than human characteristics, with London revealing animals' character by describing what they do, for example, "[Kiche's] own ears, with a snuggling movement, laid their sharp points backward and down against the head for a moment, while her mouth opened and her tongue lolled peaceably out, and in this way she expressed that she was pleased and satisfied." Sometimes, though, London ascribes human characteristics or thoughts to his animals, as in, "[White Fang, the cub,] was very much alive, very happy, and very proud of himself" and "And all the while the she-wolf sat on her haunches and smiled."

climax: the point in a literary work at which a crisis reaches its most intense point and is resolved. In this novel, the climax occurs during White Fang's fight with Cherokee. When the fight begins, White Fang has reached the apex of his ferocity; he has become the enemy of all things. White Fang's defeat by Cherokee and rescue from near death by Weedon Scott abruptly break the wolf-dog's progression into a maddened beast. From here on in the novel, White Fang, molded by love, softens his character into that of a loyal, civilized domestic dog.

flat and round characters: a flat character in a literary work lacks complexity and embodies a single quality; a round character is more complex, showing a combination of traits and qualities. In this novel, the human characters are flat; only Beauty Smith is examined in any detail, and he remains flat because he exhibits only vicious, cowardly brutality. White Fang is round; he grows and develops, and his character evolves as the environment molds it.

naturalism: an extreme form of realism in literature, based on the concept that individuals' characters are shaped and their lives directed by natural forces and social environment, a concept that London illustrates in this novel through the various phases of White Fang's life.

SETTINGS

The most important setting in the novel is the Northland itself, "the Wild, the savage, frozen-hearted Northland Wild," which all of its inhabitants must struggle against in order to survive. The specific location of this Northland Wild is the Yukon and Northwest territories of Canada and the Fort Yukon area of Alaska. It is in this Wild that the wolf pack pursues the mushers and their dogs, and it is here that White Fang learns his first lessons about life for predators and prey. A safe haven in the Wild is the snug cave where White Fang

and his litter mates are born and first explore the physical world; this safety is shattered only once, when the lynx invades but is killed.

White Fang and his mother Kiche continue to live in the Wild when they accept Gray Beaver as their master and become inhabitants of the Indian village, which moves from place to place according to the season. As sled dog leader, White Fang accompanies Gray Beaver on a journey from the Mackenzie River country of the Northwest Territory to Fort Yukon, at the confluence of the Porcupine and Yukon rivers in Alaska. There, White Fang preys on the arriving Southland dogs, and Gray Beaver falls prey to alcohol and turns ownership of White Fang over to the vicious Beauty Smith. Both at Fort Yukon and then at Dawson in the Yukon Territory, Smith turns White Fang into the ultimately ferocious "Fighting Wolf." After Weedon Scott rescues White Fang, he brings the wolf-dog to the Scott family ranch, Sierra Vista, in the Santa Clara Valley of California, the warm, sunny Southland that, together with Scott's love, thaws White Fang's heart and awakens the animal's capacity for love and affection.

CROSS-CURRICULAR SOURCES

- Ralph K. Andrist, *California Gold Rush*
Pierre Burton, *The Klondike Fever: The Life and Death of the Last Great Gold Rush*
Rhoda Blumberg, *The Great American Gold Rush*
Michael Cooper, *Klondike Fever: The Famous Gold Rush of 1898 and Racing Sled Dogs*
Ruth Crisman, *Racing the Iditarod Trail*
Tim Fitzharris & John Livingston, *Canada: A Natural History*
Lynn Hall, *Careers for Dog Lovers*
Lyn Hancock, *Discover Canada: Northwest Territories*
Dayton O. Hyde, *Don Coyote*
R.D. Lawrence, *In Praise of Wolves, The North Runner, and Secret Go the Wolves*
Barry Lopez, *Of Wolves and Men*
Murray Morgan, *One Man's Gold Rush: A Klondike Album, with photographs by E.A. Hegg*
Farley Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf*
Claire Rudolph Murphy & Jane G. Haigh, *Gold Rush Women*
Gary Paulsen, *Woodsong*
Roger Peters, *Dance of the Wolves*
Laurence Pringle, *Wolfman: Exploring the World of Wolves*
Delia Ray, *Gold! The Klondike Adventure*
Alvin & Virginia Silverstein, *Dogs: All About Them*
Joshua Slocum, *Sailing Alone Around the World*
Anne Templeman-Kluit, *Discover Canada: Yukon*
Mark Twain, *Roughing It*

THEMES AND MOTIFS

A study of the central issues and situations in *White Fang* should include these aspects.

Themes

- influence of environment (environmental determinism)
- survival of the fittest
- power of love to transform
- effects of instinct and heredity
- hostility and harshness of Nature
- violence as an integral part of life
- submission of dogs to human beings

Motifs

- life in the northern frontier
- California ranch life

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- sled dogs and sledding
- cub/puppy development
- carnivore hunting and fighting techniques
- learning by experience

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, or sentences that have a particular meaning in the novel. Explain each as it relates to the book. Use the chapter and page numbers given in parentheses to reread the term in context if you wish.

1. Leather harness was on the dogs, and leather traces attached them to a sled. (Chap. 1, p. 1)
(Travel in the frozen Northland winter was mainly by dog sled. Each sled dog wears a harness, a combination of straps and bands, to which the traces are attached, lines that in turn attach each dog to the sled. Later in the novel, White Fang will become a sled dog for Gray Beaver and Mit-sah.)
2. On the sled, securely lashed, was a long and narrow oblong box....[I]n the box lay a third man whose toil was over—a man whom the Wild had conquered and beaten down. (Chap. 1, pp. 1-2)
(The oblong box is a coffin; inside it is a dead man whose body the experienced mushers Henry and Bill are transporting to a nearby fort, from where it will be sent to the man's home in Great Britain. Conditions in the frozen Northland, the Wild, have killed this unprepared man in some unmentioned way, dramatic proof in the novel's opening pages of the deadly power of the Wild. Henry and Bill cannot fathom why this wealthy man, a member of the British nobility, who had never had to worry about food and shelter in his life before, would have come to "the God-forsaken ends of the earth" where he would face death. "He might have lived to a ripe old age if he'd stayed to home," Henry agrees. But we soon learn that it is not just unprepared greenhorns whom the Wild conquers; Bill will succumb to the pursuing wolf pack, and Henry escapes alive by only the narrowest chance.)
3. "I always did think there was something wrong with Fatty, anyway." And this was the epitaph of a dead dog on the Northland trail—less scant than the epitaph of many another dog, of many a man. (Chap. 1, p. 8)
(Once again, the author underscores the impersonal, deadly nature of the Northland. Experienced inhabitants of this region expect death as a common occurrence, apt to grab anyone or any creature who is unprepared or who makes a mistake. Death is so common that it is unremarkable. Many dogs and many men are memorialized by an even briefer statement of commemoration—an epitaph—than Bill gives the dog Fatty in this declaration. In fact, such a brief and dismissive statement as this would scarcely be considered an "epitaph" in the civilized world outside the Northland.)
4. But to their nostrils came the myriad smells of an Indian camp, carrying a story that was largely incomprehensible to One Eye, but every detail of which the she-wolf knew. (Chap. 4, p. 35)
(This passage confirms what Henry and Bill had surmised earlier. The she-wolf is familiar with the smells because she once lived in an Indian camp. The fact that the she-wolf is "strangely stirred" and sniffs "with an increasing delight" foreshadows her immediate surrender to Gray Beaver when he recognizes her and calls her by name in Chap. 9 of the novel.)
5. Like most creatures of the Wild, the gray cub early experienced famine. (Chap. 6, p. 49)
(Famine is an extreme shortage of food, and times of famine occur regularly in the Wild. During this famine, the father and mother wolf cannot find and kill enough game to feed themselves and the cubs. By the time the famine ends, all of the gray cub's litter mates have died from lack of food. Later in the novel, we learn that the she-wolf left the Indian village she had lived in during a famine, when the Indians had no food for their dogs, which is why she is now living in the Wild. During a later famine, White Fang similarly leaves the Indian village where he comes to live, but he voluntarily returns when game reappears.)
6. Yet fear was in [the gray cub]. It had come down to him from a remote ancestry through a thousand thousand lives. (Chap. 7, p. 51)
(As the gray cub explores his world and learns more about it, various instincts come alive in him. These instincts developed in the cub's wolf ancestors many thousands of years ago; since these instincts are basic to wolf survival, they pass down through each succeeding generation of wolves. Fear is a key instinct for survival in the wild; it teaches fear of the unknown, caution in the face of anything not before experienced or known, which helps keep wild animals from unwittingly placing themselves in danger of death. Fear keeps the gray cub from venturing out of the cave when he is too young to survive outside; fear freezes the cub into immobility when a wolverine sniffs at the entrance to the cave.)
7. But when the stranger's walk became stiff-legged and his lips lifted clear of his teeth, White Fang stiffened, too, and answered with lifted lips. (Chap. 9, p. 75)
(The stiff-legged walk and lifted lips are a dog's signs of belligerence, a warning of unfriendly intentions, along with bristling and snarling. This is a new form of behavior in White Fang's experience, so he is surprised when Lip-Lip follows up with a sudden slashing attack. After he becomes the constant target of persecution by Lip-Lip and the puppy pack, White Fang learns to dispense with these dog preliminaries. He attacks without warning, taking his dog opponents off guard, slashing them before they are even aware of his intentions.)
8. Here stood the old Hudson's Bay Company fort....It was the summer of 1898, and thousands of gold-hunters were going up the Yukon to Dawson and the Klondike. (Chap. 15, p. 117)
(Gray Beaver has taken White Fang along on an extended hunting trip that ends at Fort Yukon, at the junction of the Porcupine and Yukon rivers. The Hudson's Bay Company had established the fort in 1847; it became United States territory in 1867 when the U.S. bought Alaska from Russia. The Hudson's Bay Company was organized in 1668 by English merchants and gentry to carry on a fur trade with the Native Americans of the Hudson's Bay region and, later, the Canadian Northwest. An 1897 gold strike on Klondike Creek in Canada's Yukon Territory triggered an immense rush of gold-seekers [including Jack London] into the area, many of whom passed through Fort Yukon on their way to the gold fields. Gray Beaver had heard about the gold rush and

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has come to Fort Yukon with bales of furs and moccasins to trade for great profit.)

9. Sour-doughs...chechaquos (Chap. 16, p. 121)
(Old-timers in the Northland proudly called themselves Sourdoughs, signifying their ability to make do with what was at hand, specifically by using fermented dough in place of store-bought baking powder to make their bread rise. The Sourdoughs felt immensely superior to the untried, inexperienced newcomers who arrived during the gold rush; the old-timers tagged the newcomers as chechaquos, a Chinook Indian term for "tenderfeet" or "greenhorns.")
10. In short, Beauty Smith was a monstrosity, and the blame of it lay elsewhere. He was not responsible. The clay of him had been so molded in the making. (Chap. 16, p. 123)
(This is an expression of one of London's main themes in the novel: the determining effect of environment on the development of a person's or animal's character. Beauty Smith has been cursed by nature with a malformed, uniquely unbeautiful, even repulsive physical appearance. Smith has spent his life experiencing people recoil from him or, at best, barely tolerate his presence. In response, Smith's character—his "clay"—has been molded by these reactions to him. Smith has developed into a mean-spirited coward, wishing to revenge himself on his unwelcoming fellow men but physically unable to do this. So, "cringing and snivelling himself before the blows or angry speech of a man," Smith unleashes his anger on White Fang, gloating as he inflicts pain on this helpless victim, trying to make the wolf-dog cringe and snivel before him.)

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important, and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Literal Level Questions 1-4

1. What lessons about life does White Fang learn during his cubhood in the Wild?
(One of his earliest lessons is that life includes restrictions—limitations and restraints that are laws. To accept these restrictions and obey them is to avoid things that hurt. For example, he stays away from the mouth of the cave in obedience to his mother's law and to the instinctive fear of the unknown that is also a law. He learns the differences between things that are alive and things that are not alive. He learns that live things are meat, and good to eat, and after he starts going with his mother on hunts, he also learns the law of meat, for meat-eating creatures: "The aim of life was meat. Life itself was meat. Life lived on life. There were the eaters and the eaten. The law was: Eat or be eaten.")
2. How does White Fang come to live with, successively, Gray Beaver, Beauty Smith, and Weedon Scott?
(White Fang joins Gray Beaver and his family when the Indian recognizes White Fang's mother, the "red she-wolf," as his late brother's wolf-dog, Kiche, who ran away a year ago during a famine when the Indian village had no meat for its dogs. When Gray Beaver sharply addresses her by name, Kiche immediately submits to

his control and becomes Gray Beaver's property. White Fang is still a cub/puppy with a strongly felt need to be with his mother, so he willingly joins Kiche as a resident of the Indian village. Later, Gray Beaver brings the fully grown White Fang with him to Fort Yukon, where the Indian trades his bales of furs and moccasins. The vicious coward Beauty Smith draws Gray Beaver into alcohol dependency; finally penniless, Gray Beaver trades White Fang to Smith for a last supply of liquor. White Fang leads a tormented life as the Fighting Wolf for Smith. Weedon Scott discovers White Fang on the brink of death in a dogfight with the bulldog Cherokee. Scott rescues the wolf-dog, forces Smith to sell him the nearly dead creature, and nurses White Fang back to health.)

3. Describe White Fang's very effective method of fighting.
(The hallmark of White Fang's fighting style is the sudden attack; he gives no warning, completely ignoring the usual dog preliminaries of snarling and bristling and growling. White Fang rushes in with lightning swiftness, then just as swiftly retreats, before his enemy has had a chance to slash back. White Fang also rushes in suddenly, either directly or with an unexpected swerve, trying to strike the opponent's shoulder and knock him down; as soon as an opponent is down, White Fang rushes in and delivers a fatal slash to the throat. On the other hand, opponents find it impossible to make White Fang lose his footing; he learned always to land on his feet during his days of persecution as a puppy.)
4. What instincts direct a wolf-dog's behavior, according to the novel?
(Basic behavioral instinct prompts a mother wolf-dog to keep her mate away from newborn pups, while a father instinctively goes out to hunt for the new family; instinct always drives a wolf-dog toward hunting. An overriding instinct is fear of the unknown, caution in the face of something beyond a particular wolf-dog's experience; fear of the unknown is the instinct of survival, for the essence of the unknown is death. When White Fang first encounters human beings, he is overwhelmed by another ancient instinct—fear and respect for the supremacy of humans over animals; this instinct prompts White Fang to submit to his various man-gods, yet instinct also keeps him wary of the unknown hurts that these man-gods may inflict.)

Interpretive Level Questions 5-8

5. How does the environment of the Indian camp and of White Fang's time with Beauty Smith mold the development of White Fang's character?
(This is one of the central points London makes in the novel. If Lip-Lip had not bullied White Fang mercilessly and turned the entire puppy pack against the wolf-dog, White Fang might have spent his puppyhood with his fellow puppies and grown up more doglike and more friendly toward dogs. If Gray Beaver had treated White Fang with some affection and love, the wolf-dog might have tapped into abilities within himself to be friendly, kindly, and loving. Instead, the puppy persecution and Gray Beaver's coldness mold White Fang into a morose and lonely adult, "unloving and ferocious, the enemy of all his kind." Beauty Smith tortures and torments White Fang in order to make him into an unbeatable ferocious

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fighting machine. Under Smith's merciless viciousness, White Fang "become a fiend....He now became the enemy of all things, and more ferocious than ever." This hateful environment makes White Fang more ferocious than even Nature had intended. The wolf-dog now hates all things, blindly, without reason. Any chance of bringing out White Fang's potential to be a companion to human beings seems to have been destroyed by now.)

6. Why do the domesticated Southland dogs instantly fear, distrust, and attack White Fang?
(To them, White Fang represents the Wild. Since dogs have been domesticated for so long, the Wild to them is "the unknown, the terrible, the ever menacing and ever warring." In White Fang, these Southland dogs sense the embodiment of the Wild. They immediately show their teeth to him, defending themselves against the powers of terror and destruction that they instinctively know lurk in the Wild, powers that they shielded themselves against generations ago when their ancestors became domesticated. Over these generations, too, the Southland dogs have had license from their masters to kill the things of the Wild, so when they see White Fang, they have an "irresistible impulse to rush upon him and destroy him." As for Collie, she has the instinctive shepherd hatred of the wolf, which has ravaged flocks for many generations; she embraces the ages-old feud between dog and wolf.)
7. What conflicting calls pull at White Fang?
(Two instincts are alive in White Fang. One is the instinct for freedom, for life in the Wild as a hunter roaming the wilderness, stalking and killing his own prey. The other instinct is that of domestication, the instinct to live with and submit to human beings as White Fang's ancestors first did many generations ago. These two instincts battle inside White Fang from the first moment he encounters, and submits to, human beings. The instinct to submit to the man-gods keeps winning out, with White Fang even returning to Gray Beaver's campfire after disappearing during the famine.)
8. How does White Fang change when he becomes a Southland dog? What important Jack London theme does this illustrate?
(White Fang suppresses most of his Wild instinct when he settles in at the novel's end as a contented, well-behaved Southland dog, a loyal pet. In London's own words, White Fang develops "domesticity, faithfulness, love, morality, and all the amenities and virtues" of a civilized pet. This is the exact opposite of the progression of Buck's life in *The Call of the Wild*, an opposite progression that was the aim of London in crafting White Fang's tale. In White Fang, London illustrates the theme of love as a major civilizing force in an otherwise wild, savage, uncaring world.)

Critical Level Questions 9-12

9. What is the purpose of the novel's opening chapters, describing the experience of two men who play no further part in the novel?
(The opening is highly suspenseful; we readers are instantly drawn in, turning each page to find out the outcome of the life-and-death struggle of the men against the wolves and frozen environment. But the purpose is more than to draw us in with suspense. This opening

episode serves to introduce us to both wolves and the harsh semi-arctic environment that provides the setting for the novel. We learn about the nature of wolves and we learn how deadly the environment is, both of which are important in understanding the wolf heritage of White Fang and the setting in which he learns his early lessons about life. The men in these opening chapters play no further part in the novel, but the red she-wolf who cunningly serves as the wolf pack's decoy and has apparently lived among humans will soon become the mother of White Fang and an important character in the novel.)

10. What qualities does the Northland represent? What qualities does the Southland represent?
(The Northland is the Wild: the untamed, primitive, eat-or-be-eaten, harsh, and unyielding northern wilderness. Only those who are fit, alert, and aware can successfully meet the challenge of the cold, implacable laws of the Northland's frozen whiteness. The Southland, on the other hand, is civilization: in this London novel, the Southland embodies the qualities of love, loyalty, human kindness, morality, and domesticity which envelop White Fang like the warm Southland sun.)
11. Give some examples of anthropomorphism that you find in this novel. [Teacher note: Follow up with Language Arts activity #8 in the "Across the Curriculum" section of this guide.]
(Examples abound, so student answers will vary.)
12. Evaluate Jack London's overall characterizations of human beings in this novel.
(London paints his human characters with a broad brush. We know few details about the humans who people the novel. Bill and Henry of the opening chapters, for example, are experienced mushers, but that's all we know of them. Gray Beaver is a stolid, capable wilderness-dwelling Indian and a stern master to White Fang; we know little about his thoughts or feelings or life. Weedon Scott is a kind, firm, morally upright person, but London does not develop his character beyond this outline. Only Beauty Smith is a more fully developed character; we get more details about his physical appearance, his inner demons, his background—yet in his single-minded viciousness and cowardice, he is not really a three-dimensional character either.)

Creative Level Questions 12-14

12. Write a series of diary entries for Beauty Smith or Weedon Scott or Scott's assistant Mike about his experiences with White Fang.
13. Write some dialogue among the dogs, wolves, and wolf-dogs for one of the scenes from the novel. You could act out the scene and dialogue with classmates.
14. Write an outline for a different version of the novel in which alternate environments cause White Fang to develop in a different way.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Language Arts

1. Read some of Jack London's short stories about the Yukon/Northwest/Alaska. In a small group, summarize aloud the stories you have read. Discuss similarities between the stories and *White Fang*.
2. Read *The Call of the Wild* and compare the progression

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of Buck's life in that novel with the progression of White Fang's life in this novel.

3. Read about Jack London's interesting life. What elements of his life experiences influenced his writing of *White Fang*?
4. As you read, create a list of vocabulary words you're not familiar with. Then look up and write a definition of each word; also note its part of speech. When you're done, alphabetize your list to create a glossary that other readers of this novel could use.
5. With classmates, perform a choral reading of one or more of the "Northland" poems of Robert Service, such as "The Cremation of Sam McGee."
6. Explain why the name Beauty Smith is ironic.
7. Share with classmates examples of anthropomorphism you have found in the novel and also examples of animals revealing their intentions or emotions through their behavior. Then discuss the validity and believability of ascribing human characteristics (especially thoughts and feelings) to animals.

Science

1. Create an illustrated field guide to wolves, including information on their habitat and their behavioral characteristics. You could expand this field guide to include information on various other Northland animals mentioned in the novel, such as the weasel, the ptarmigan, and the lynx.
2. Find some recordings of husky and wolf wails and play them for the class. Explain why and under what conditions these animals howl.
3. Research and report on the role instinct plays in the lives of animals, including human beings, and how instinct is transmitted from generation to generation.
4. Prepare a report on arctic days and nights, explaining what causes the "midnight sun" and twilight nights. You could also show pictures and explain the causes of the phenomenon known as aurora borealis.

Mathematics

1. Enhance your report on arctic days and nights with a chart or graph showing length of days and nights through the arctic year.
2. Create a balance sheet for Gray Beaver's trading activities at Fort Yukon, when he makes a thousand per cent profit—and then loses it all.
3. Calculate the total mileage of White Fang and Gray Beaver's journey from the Mackenzie River to Fort Yukon.

Social Studies and Geography

1. Trace on a map White Fang and Gray Beaver's journey from the Mackenzie River area across the Rockies and down the Porcupine River to the Yukon River and Fort Yukon. Describe the geographical characteristics of these places.
2. Report orally or in writing on the Klondike gold rush. Illustrate your report with a time line.
3. Find out how and when the dog was domesticated, and how dogs and human beings have coexisted over the years.
4. Report on the climate and geography of the Santa Clara Valley of California, explaining why (or if) it is well adapt-

ed for ranching or farming.

5. Research and report on the Native American peoples of Canada's Northwest and Yukon territories, historically and today.

Art

1. Create a class display of dramatic and interesting photographs of the Klondike gold rush, including photographs showing the very difficult ascent of the Chilkoot Pass.
2. Create a poster illustrating the types of clothing that dog-sledders in the Yukon need to keep themselves from freezing. Explain the protective function of each item, and what it is made of.
3. Illustrate a dramatic scene from the novel.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Create an illustrated guide to the types of dogs mentioned in the novel. Show each dog, tell what the breed's characteristics are, and explain how the breed was developed.
2. Find out what regulations, if any, exist in your locality regarding ownership of wolf-dogs as pets.
3. Find out what the laws against animal cruelty are in your state. What instances of animal treatment in the novel would be illegal today where you live?
4. With classmates, act out a scene from the novel—for example, the circling wolf pack threatening Bill and Henry's camp.
5. Show video clips or film of portions of the Iditarod, Alaska's famous dog-sledding race. If you live in a region where this is possible, see if you can arrange for a demonstration of dog-sledding equipment, dogs, and techniques for the class.
6. If you live in or visit northern California, visit the Jack London Historical Park in Glen Ellen, which includes 800 remaining acres of his ranch, the ruins of Wolf House, London's grave site, and other buildings and interesting London artifacts. Or make a virtual visit to the park at the "Jack London State Historic Park" Web site: <http://www.parks.sonoma.net/JLPark.html>.
7. View the video *Never Cry Wolf* and discuss with classmates what you learn from it about wolf behavior. Is it what you expected?
8. View one of the film versions of *White Fang* and discuss with classmates how the film's plot, settings, and characterizations compare with those in the novel.
9. Observe a young puppy (or a human toddler) for several weeks and record what lessons he or she seems to learn from experience about the physical world during this time.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. Summarize each of the four major phases of White Fang's life: his cubhood in the Wild, his life with Gray Beaver, his life with Beauty Smith, and his life with Weedon Scott. Be sure to explain how the environment of each phase molds White Fang's character.
2. Discuss the roles heredity, instinct, and the environment play in the formation of White Fang's character.
3. Compare the Northland and the Southland, and explain which qualities of character each environment promotes.

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4. Draw up two lists of typical behavioral characteristics, one for wolves and one for dogs. Check off each characteristic that White Fang exhibits.

SELECTED OTHER WORKS BY JACK LONDON

The Son of the Wolf: Tales of the Far North (1900)
The God of His Fathers & Other Stories (1901)
Children of the Frost (stories, 1902)
A Daughter of the Snows (novel, 1902)
The Call of the Wild (novel, 1903)
The People of the Abyss (nonfiction, 1903)
The Faith of Men & Other Stories (1904)
The Sea-Wolf (novel, 1904)
The Game (novel, 1905)
War of the Classes (nonfiction, 1905)
Scorn of Women (play, 1906)
Before Adam (novel, 1907)
Love of Life & Other Stories (1907)
The Road (nonfiction, 1907)
The Iron Heel (novel, 1908)
Martin Eden (novel, 1909)
Lost Face (stories, 1910)
Revolution and Other Essays (nonfiction, 1910)
Burning Daylight (novel, 1910)
The Cruise of the Snark (nonfiction, 1911)
South Sea Tales (stories, 1911)
John Barleycorn (autobiography, 1913)
The Valley of the Moon (novel, 1913)
Mutiny on the Elsinore (novel, 1914)
The Strength of the Strong (stories, 1914)
The Scarlet Plague (novella, 1915)
The Star Rover (novel, 1915)
The Little Lady of the Big House (novel, 1916)
The Turtles of Tasman (stories & drama, 1916)
The Red One (short stories, 1918)
Island Tales (stories, 1920)
Letters from Jack London (letters, 1965)
The Letters of Jack London (letters, 3 volumes, 1988)

RELATED READING

Fiction

Patricia Beatty, *The Staffordshire Terrier*
Michael Blake, *Dances with Wolves*
Sheila Burnford, *The Incredible Journey*
Patricia Calvert, *Hour of the Wolf*
Roger Caras, *Roger Caras's Treasury of Great Dog Stories*
Jean Craighead George, *Julie of the Wolves*
Fred Gipson, *Old Yeller*
Zane Grey, *The Wolf Tracker & Other Animal Tales*
Marie Herbert, *Winter of the White Seal*
James Houston, *Running West*
Jim Kjelgaard, *Big Red*
R.D. Lawrence, *The White Puma*
William Mayne, *Drift*
Frank McLaughlin, *Yukon Journey*
Walt Morey, *Canyon Winter*
Farley Mowat, *The Dog That Wouldn't Be*
Scott O'Dell, *Black Star, Bright Dawn*
Alfred Olivant, *Bob, Son of Battle*
Gary Paulsen, *Dogsong and Hatchet and The River*
Jeanne Schinto, ed., *The Literary Dog: Great Contemporary Dog Stories*

John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*
Whitley Streiber, *Wolf of Shadows*

Poetry

Robert Service, *The Spell of the Yukon and Ballads of a Cheechako*

Nonfiction

Arthur Calder-Marshall, *Lone Wolf: The Story of Jack London* (for young readers)
Day, A. Grove, *Jack London in the South Seas* (for young readers)
Dyer, Daniel, *Jack London: A Biography* (for young readers)

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WHITE FANG

VOCABULARY TEST

Match each underlined word with its meaning listed below. Write the letter of the meaning in the space next to the sentence number.

- | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| a. without doubt | f. enormous | k. without humor | p. stealthy |
| b. extremely hungry | g. disturbances | l. worked hard | q. loyalty |
| c. soothe, appease | h. surrender | m. evil | r. gloomy |
| d. stubborn strength | i. uselessness | n. without concern | s. offered |
| e. shocked, dismayed | j. threatening | o. hatred, ill will | t. thought |

- _____ 1. There was a hint in the land of laughter, but of a laughter more terrible than any sadness – a laughter that was mirthless and cold.
- _____ 2. It was the masterful and incommunicable wisdom of eternity laughing at the futility of life and the effort of life.
- _____ 3. In advance of the dogs, on wide snowshoes, toiled a man.
- _____ 4. "Ol' Villan had a dog once that run away with the wolves," Bill cogitated aloud.
- _____ 5. Without haste, with the air of one resigned to misfortune, Bill counted the dogs. "How'd it happen?" he asked apathetically.
- _____ 6. Like a blow the realization struck Henry that this wonderful body of his, this living flesh, was no more than so much meat, a quest of ravenous animals.
- _____ 7. The male wolves turned their shoulders to her most savage slashes, and with wagging tails and mincing steps strove to placate her wrath.
- _____ 8. The cub was sprawling along when he heard a sharp, intimidating cry.
- _____ 9. Already the cub was developing the gait of his mother, slinking and furtive.
- _____ 10. The cub saw his mother, the fearless one, crouching down, whimpering, wagging her tail, making peace signs. She, too, rendered submission to the man-animal.
- _____ 11. The cub did not understand. He was appalled.
- _____ 12. The cub gave the man-animals the trail as a privilege indubitably theirs.
- _____ 13. Perhaps the young dogs sensed White Fang's wild-wood breed, and instinctively felt for him the enmity that the domestic dog feels for the wolf.
- _____ 14. White Fang could have become leader of the pack. But he was too morose and solitary for that.
- _____ 15. Nothing remained to Gray Beaver but his thirst, a prodigious possession in itself that grew more prodigious with every sober breath he drew.
- _____ 16. White Fang crouched down and backed away, bristling, showing his fangs, his eyes malignant with menace.
- _____ 17. The time came when the god refused to toss the piece of meat. He kept it in his hand and steadfastly proffered it to White Fang.
- _____ 18. There were comings and goings, and the erstwhile placid atmosphere of the cabin was vexed with strange perturbations and unrest.
- _____ 19. In the Northland White Fang had evidenced his fealty by toiling in the harness. In the Southland he rendered fealty in the new way, by running with the master's horse.
- _____ 20. White Fang clung to life, the whole of him and every part of him, in spirit and in flesh, with the tenacity that of old belonged to all creatures.

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COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (30 points)

Briefly describe each of the following characters

1. One Eye
2. Kiche
3. Henry
4. Gray Beaver
5. Lip-Lip
6. Mit-sah
7. Beauty Smith
8. Cherokee
9. Weedon Scott
10. Collie
11. Dick
12. Bill
13. Judge Scott
14. Kloo-kooch
15. Matt

Part II: Fill-In (20 points)

Write one or two words in each blank to make each statement true.

1. The author often refers to the harsh, frozen, untamed Northland as the _____.
2. Henry uses _____ to keep the wolves away from him and his camp.
3. White Fang is three-quarters _____ and one-quarter _____.
4. White Fang goes back to live alone in the forests during a period of _____.
5. White Fang's first home, where he is born is a(n) _____.
6. "Eat or be eaten" is the law of _____.
7. White Fang lures the soft, domestic dogs into fights as they trot off of the daily _____ when it arrives.
8. Gray Beaver and White Fang spend many months at Fort _____.
9. A very young wolf is called a(n) _____.
10. The _____ is the sunny, warm country that is the opposite of the cold, harsh north country.

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Part III: Cause and Effect (20 points)

Finish each of these statements.

1. White Fang returns to the Indian camp twice after leaving it because _____

2. White Fang becomes solitary, hostile, and fierce because _____

3. Beauty Smith wants to possess White Fang because _____

4. Collie deeply distrusts White for quite a while because _____

5. White Fang escapes his bondage with Beauty Smith because _____

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Who are the savage god, the mad god, and the love master, and why do they deserve these names?
2. What early lessons about life does White Fang learn in his cubhood, growing up away from humans in the Wild?
3. Why do White Fang and Kiche come to live at the Indian camp, and what effect does this experience have on White Fang?
4. Why are so many people from the south coming to the north? Why does Gray Beaver settle in at the fort for an extended period of trading?

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COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (30 points)

Read each character description. In the list below, find the character who matches the description. Write the letter of the character in the space next to the description number. Use each name only once.

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| _____ 1. White Fang's mother, she lives as both a wild and a domesticated animal. | a. Beauty Smith |
| _____ 2. The wife of Gray Beaver. | b. Cherokee |
| _____ 3. The mother of White Fang's litter of pups. | c. Collie |
| _____ 4. A fierce fighter who later becomes known as Blessed Wolf. | d. Gray Beaver |
| _____ 5. He escapes from prison and tries to kill Judge Scott. | e. Henry |
| _____ 6. A gaunt old wolf, grizzled and scarred from many battles. | f. Jim Hall |
| _____ 7. White Fang's "love-master." | g. Kiche |
| _____ 8. White Fang's young enemy, who makes White Fang's puppyhood miserable. | h. Kloo-kooch |
| _____ 9. His method of fighting is to get a grip and hang on, no matter what. | i. Lip-Lip |
| _____ 10. He loses all his profits because of his thirst for alcohol. | j. Mit-sah |
| _____ 11. The son of Gray Beaver who teaches White Fang to be a sled dog. | k. One Ear |
| _____ 12. The owner of the bulldog that almost kills White Fang. | l. One Eye |
| _____ 13. He tries to ward off wolves with fire. | m. Tim Keenan |
| _____ 14. A sled dog lured away by the she-wolf. | n. Weedon Scott |
| _____ 15. He makes money by viciously mistreating White Fang. | o. White Fang |

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

Write a one- or two-word answer to each of the following questions.

1. What term does the author use to describe the cold, harsh country that is the opposite of the sunny, warm country? _____
2. In the novel's opening chapters, a wolf pack pursues two men and their _____ for food.
3. What color besides gray describes the she-wolf? _____
4. What ferocious animal kills White Fang's father and attacks White Fang's mother in her cave-den?

5. Mackenzie is the name of what type of geographic feature in White Fang's wilderness world?

6. By what name is White Fang known during the time he belongs to Beauty Smith?

7. What breed of dog is Cherokee, who nearly kills White Fang? _____
8. What type of creatures does White Fang think human beings are? _____
9. Who is the author of this novel? _____
10. This novel is set in two countries. One is the United States; what is the other one?

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Part III: Settings (20 points)

Describe the main events that happen at each of the settings named below.

1. the frozen sled-dog trail before White Fang's birth
2. the cave in the Wild
3. the Indian village
4. Fort Yukon
5. Sierra Vista, in the Santa Clara Valley

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Why are Bill and Henry traveling by dog sled through the wilderness to a fort? Why is this so hazardous?
2. Why does White Fang become the possession of Beauty Smith, and what effect does this experience have on the wolf-dog?
3. Describe White Fang's life with Weedon Scott at the Scott family ranch and its effect on White Fang.

ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. k | 6. b | 11. e | 16. m |
| 2. i | 7. c | 12. a | 17. s |
| 3. l | 8. j | 13. o | 18. g |
| 4. t | 9. p | 14. r | 19. q |
| 5. n | 10. h | 15. f | 20. d |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Answers will vary.

Part II: Fill-In (20 points)

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. Wild | 6. meat |
| 2. fire | 7. steamer |
| 3. wolf, dog | 8. Yukon |
| 4. famine | 9. cub |
| 5. cave | 10. Southland |

Part III: Cause and Effect (30 points)

- the pull of his ancestral instinct to submit to and live with human beings is much stronger than his instinct to live as a carnivore alone in the wild.
- Lip-Lip and the other young dogs relentlessly persecute him when he is young, and Gray Beaver gives him no caresses or affection; consequently, White Fang has no chance to develop any kind, affectionate, or friendly aspects of his character.
- he has seen what a ferocious and efficient fighter the wolf-dog is, and has figured out that he can make a lot of money if he owns the animal by exhibiting him and setting him up in fights.
- of the ancestral hatred sheep-dogs have for wolves, which for all generations have attacked the sheep that it is the sheep-dogs' job to protect at all costs.
- Weedon Scott is outraged when he sees Cherokee throttling White Fang, Beauty Smith kicking the nearly dead dog, and the crowd of men enjoying the spectacle; Scott is so outraged, he forces Smith to sell White Fang to him so he can save the wolf-dog.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (20 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. g | 6. l | 11. j |
| 2. h | 7. n | 12. m |
| 3. c | 8. i | 13. e |
| 4. o | 9. b | 14. k |
| 5. f | 10. d | 15. a |

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1. Northland | 6. Fighting Wolf |
| 2. food | 7. bulldog |
| 3. reddish | 8. gods |
| 4. lynx | 9. Jack London |
| 5. river | 10. Canada |

Part III: Settings (30 points)

- The starving wolves pursue the mushers, Henry and Bill, and their sled dogs; the wolves kill and eat all six dogs, plus Bill; Henry wards them off with fire, and is rescued just as the wolves are about to close in when the fire finally dies down.
- White Fang is born here, along with four litter mates; together, the cubs explore the boundaries of this little world of theirs; during the famine, all the cubs but White Fang die here; the lynx invades and fights to the death with Kiche; White Fang encounters his mother here for the last time during the famine.
- White Fang and Kiche come to live here when they accept Gray Beaver as their master; as White Fang grows to adulthood in the village, Lip-Lip and the other young dogs persecute him relentlessly and Gray Beaver fails to give any affection to the wolf-dog, so he is molded into a solitary, morose, fierce animal.
- Gray Beaver trades furs and moccasins to gold-seekers here while White Fang amuses himself with attacks on the arriving Southland dogs; Beauty Smith gets Gray Beaver dependent on alcohol, trades liquor for possession of White Fang, and launches White Fang's career as "The Fighting Wolf" here before moving on with the wolf-dog to Dawson.
- Sierra Vista is the Scott family ranch in California. Here, White Fang learns how to be a Southland dog, loyal, domesticated, allowing himself to be petted and refraining from attacking the domestic animals on the ranch. White Fang also mates with Collie here, producing a litter of pups; attacks and kills the invading convict; and recovers from his injuries with the help of nursing by the Scott family.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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