

The Call of the Wild

Study Guide - Student Guide

CHAPTER 1

Vocabulary

Arbors- n. vines

Aristocrat- n. wealthy person

Array- n. an orderly arrangement

Artesian well- n. a well drilled through impermeable layer to reach water capable of rising to the surface by internal hydrostatic pressure

Calamity- n. disaster

Cayuses- n. small Western horses used by cowboys

Conciliated- v. made friends with

Conveyance- n. means of transportation

Culprit- n. a person guilty of a crime

Demesne- n. lands of an estate

Docilely- adv. Yieldingly to treatment or handling

Dominion- n. the exercise of control

Genial- adj. friendly

Impending- v. likely or due to happen

Imperiously- adv. urgently

Incurious- adj. not curious

Insular- adj. Isolated; detached

Kindred- n. family

Latent- adj. present or potential

Legion- n. a large number

Metamorphosed- v. changed or transformed

Paddocks- n. enclosed fields in which horses are exercised

Populous- adj. many people

Primitive- adj. very basic

Progeny- n. children

Prowess- n. superior ability

Revelation- n. something revealed or learned

Ruption- n. quarrel or noisy disturbance

Sated- adj. fully satisfied

Slaver- n. saliva

Soliloquized- v. talked to one's self

Square-head- n. *slang* a Scandinavian or a German

Tidewater- n. seacoast

Treachery- n. betrayal

Uncowed- adj. not frightened

Unwonted- adj. unusual

Weazened- adj. wizened; shriveled; withered

Wheedlingly- adv. attempting to persuade

Questions

1. How did Buck rule? *hunted, carried children, guarded*
2. Describe Buck. *140 lbs, half St. Bernard, half Scotch shepherd*
3. Why did Manuel, the gardener, kidnap Buck? *pay gambling debt*
4. How did Buck react to the stranger's rope? *Buck fought, but lost*
5. Why was Buck going to Frisco? *dog-doctor*
6. Why did the strange men want Buck? *sled dog*
7. How did the four men treat Buck? *laughed at him*
8. How did the man in the red sweater in Seattle train Buck? Do you think that is the way to train an animal? *clubbed him; answers will vary*
9. Explain this sentence, "He was beaten, but not broken." *Physically, he had been beaten, but his spirit was not broken.*

10. What happened to the one dog who didn't obey? *killed*
11. How much did Perrault pay for Buck? *\$300*
12. How did Buck and Curly, the Newfoundland get to Alaska? *Narwhal=boat*
13. How did Buck act in his first snow? *sniffed, licked it*
14. Why is this chapter called "Into the Primitive"? *answers will vary*

CHAPTER 2

Vocabulary

Appeasingly /appeasement- adv./n. trying to please

Cadence- n. beat or rhythm of movement

Disconsolate- adj. hopelessly sad

Draft animal- adj./n. an animal used for hauling heavy loads

Fastidiousness- n. carefulness in all details

Gaunt- adj. haggard and emaciated

Ignominiously- adv. shamefully

Introspective- adj. given to private thought

Malignant- adj. actively evil in nature

Malingerer- n. one who pretends to be ill in order to escape work

Placatingly- adv. appeasingly giving in easily

Primordial- adj. primitive

Reproof- n. scold

Retrogression- n. the act of deteriorating

Vicarious- adj. substituted from one thing for another

1. Why was Buck's first day in Alaska like a nightmare? *confusion, lawless*
2. How did Curly die? *attacked and killed by another dog*
3. Why did Buck hate Spitz? *leader*
4. How did Francois and Perrault work Buck? *sled dog*
5. How were the dogs Dave and Sol-leks alike? *both wanted to be left alone*
6. How did Buck sleep in the snow? *curled under the snow*
7. What was Perrault's job? *deliver dispatches*
8. Why was Buck hitched between Dave and Sol-leks on the sled-dog team? *to learn*
9. When Francois guided the sled, how did Perrault help? *webbed snowshoes*
10. Why was Buck always hungry, even though he received a daily ration of 1-1/2 lbs. of salmon? *bigger*
11. Why was it okay to steal in "The Law of Club and Fang"? *survival*
12. Besides experience, how did Buck learn? *instinct*
13. Give examples of experience and instinct learning. *experience=checking wind, instinct=fighting*

14. Essay: Imagine and describe how Buck's life would have been if he would have stayed at Judge Miller's place. *Answers will vary*

CHAPTER 3

Vocabulary

Adversary- n. enemy; opponent

Apex- n. the highest point of something

Climes- n. poetic for climate

Covert- adj. concealed; hidden; disguised

Daunted- adj. made afraid or discouraged

Dubiously- adv. doubtfully

Inexorable- adj. unwilling to give in

Insidious- adj. sly; crafty

Insubordination- n. disobedience

Paradox- n. a situation that seems to have contradictory or inconsistent qualities

Pre-eminently- adv. dominantly

Wraith- n. ghost

Questions

1. How did Spitz treat Buck? *enemy*

2. Why was the fight between Spitz and Buck interrupted? *starving huskies*

3. How did the nine dogs from the team spend the night after the husky attack? *in woods*

4. Why was Perrault worried about making the 400 mile run to Dawson? *dogs wounded, 2 rations gone*

5. Why did Perrault build a fire a dozen times a day? *50 below, freezing water*

6. Why wouldn't Buck get his ration of fish? *dog tired, sore feet*

7. Why did Buck refuse to rise and lay on his back with four feet in the air? *wanted foot gear*

8. How did Francois save Buck from mad Dolly? *axed her*

9. Why did Francois whip Spitz? *attacked Buck*

10. Why was there war between Spitz and Buck? *Leader threatened*

11. Why did Francois whip Buck? *defending Pike*

12. Why did Buck howl in Dawson? *primordial*

13. Give examples of the rebellion against Spitz? *rob fish, Dub and Joe fought Spitz*

14. When was Buck joyful? *chasing rabbit*

15. How did Buck and Spitz's fight to the death happen? *Spitz killed the rabbit*

16. Why did Buck win the fight with Spitz? *imagination*

CHAPTER 4

Vocabulary

Lugubriously- adv. very sadly or mournfully

Obdurate- adj. unyielding; stubborn

Questions

1. Why wouldn't Buck get into his old sled harness? *wanted leadership*
2. How did Buck behave as lead dog? *superior*
3. Why did Francois say that Buck was worth \$1,000? *broke two sled dogs in*
4. Why was the 14-day trip a record run? *40 miles per day*
5. Who took over the team after Perrault and Francois? *Scott half-breedmail runner*
6. Why didn't Buck like the mail run? *monotonous*
7. Why did Buck like laying by the fire? *dreaming*
8. Who was the hairy man in another world? *Neanderthal*
9. Why did snow slow the trip? *heavier pulling*
10. Why did Dave suffer most from the 1,800 mile run? *sick*
11. How did Dave die? *shot*

CHAPTER 5

Vocabulary

Amenities- n. pleasant qualities

Averred- v. declared

Callous- adj. unfeeling

Chaffering- v. haggling over terms or price

Callowness- n. youth and inexperience;

immaturity

Copiously- adv. abundantly

Evinced- v. showed clearly

Fissures- n. narrow cracks

Fraught- adj. accompanied

Innocuously- adv. harmlessly

Irresolutely- adv. lacking a solution

Jaded- adj. worn-out

Manifestly- adv. obviously; revealingly

Perambulating- v. walking

Remonstrance- n. a gesture of protest or scold

Rending- v. violently tearing apart into pieces

Repugnance- n. extreme dislike

Rouse- v. to excite into anger or action

Salient- adj. noticeable; prominent

Slipshod- adj. poorly made; shabby

Slovenly- adv. carelessly

Superfluous- more than is necessary

Wayfarers- n. those who travel

Questions

1. In what ways was the team in a "wretched state" when it reached Skagway? *limping, weight loss, tired*
2. If they'd travelled 2,500 miles in 5 months, how many miles did they average per month, per week, and per day? *500, 125, 18*

3. Why didn't Buck get a rest after the run? *sold*
4. Describe Hal and Charles? *Hal=19 year old brother, Charles=moustached husband*
5. Describe Charle's wife Mercedes? *weak, lady, foolish*
6. How were Hal, Charles and Mercedes unfit for the North? *disorganized, unprepared*
7. Why shouldn't they take the tent on the trip? *overloaded sled*
8. Why couldn't the dogs pull the load? *tired, frozen*
9. How did the family take the advice, "Half the load, twice the dogs"? *discarded essentials*
10. Why was 14 dogs too many? *not enough rations*
11. Why was this family doomed from the start of the trip? *no order or discipline*
12. Why did Hal go from overfeeding to underfeeding the dogs? *1/4 trip food half gone*
13. How did Mercedes, Charles, and Hal treat each other? *quarreled*
14. Why did Mercedes ride on the sled? *lady*
15. Why did Hal trade his gun for horsehide? *dog food*
16. Why were the seven remaining dogs describe as a "bag of bones"? *starving*
17. Why did John Thornton advise them not to go on to Dawson? *ice unsafe*
19. What does the saying mean, "It was idle to get between a fool and his folly"? How did the family fit that description? *can't tell foolish people anything, because won't take advise*
20. Why didn't Buck get up no matter how much Hal beat him? *impending doom*
21. Why didn't Buck lead the family's dog sled? *Thornton intervened*
22. What finally happened to the family? *bottom dropped out of the trail*

CHAPTER 6

Vocabulary

Conjuration- n. making a magic spell

Contagion- n. a disease that can be transmitted

Convalescence- n. gradual return to good health

Extremity- n. dying stage

Grubstaked- v. bought supplies for

Millrace- n. the current of water that drives a mill wheel

Peremptorily- adv. absolutely; without question

Plethoric- adj. too full

Wiliness- n. trickiness

1. Why did Jim Thornton's friends leave him beside the river? *feet froze*
2. How did Skeet, the Irish setter, care for Buck? *licked wounds*

3. What did Jim Thornton arouse in Buck? *love*
4. How did the man and Buck express their love for each other? *man=roughed him, Buck=bit*
5. Why did Buck follow Thornton everywhere? *feared losing him*
6. Why was Buck called more often into the forest? *call of the wild*
7. How did Buck react to Thornton's command to jump? *jumped*
8. What happened when Burton struck Thornton? *Buck tore his throat*
9. How did Buck save Thornton from the river? *swam to him on a rope*
10. How did Buck prove Thornton's boast was true? *pulled 1,000 pound sled*
11. Why did the odds go from two-to-one to three-to-one against Buck? *sled frozen*
12. What words did Thornton use to command Buck to pull? *Gee! Haw! Mush!*
13. Why did an onlooker offer Thornton \$1,200 for Buck? *Buck pulled the 1,000 lb. sled 100 yards*

CHAPTER 7

Vocabulary

Ambuscade- n. place of surprise attack

Belie- v. to tell lies about

Certitude- n. certainty

Cessation- v. ceasing or stopping

Chaff- n. husks of grain that are separated when the grain is beaten during threshing

Commingled- v. mixed together

Excrescence- n. natural outgrowth

Imperiously- adv. overbearing; arrogant; domineering

Multitudinous- adj. crowded, great numbers

Obliterated- v. wiped out

Palmated- adj. shaped like a hand with the fingers spread

Palpitate- adj. quivering; trembling

Paroxysms- n. outbursts or convulsions

Pell-mell- adv. jumbled or confused

Pertinacity- n. stubbornness; perseverance

Placer- n. a deposit of sand mixed with gold

Ptarmigan- n. a northern or alpine game bird

Rampant- adj. unrestrained; spreading unchecked

Slake- v. to satisfy

Sluice boxes- n. long channels through which water is run, leaving the gold

Usurp- v. takes control over

Vigor- n. active physical or mental strength

Virility- n. masculine mental or physical strength

Wantonness- n. lack of discipline

Questions

1. How did Thornton spend the \$1,600? *lost mine*
2. How did Thornton, Pete, and Hans get to the lost mine? *travelled by land*
3. In spring, what did they find instead of the lost mine? *found a broad valley*
4. What dreams did Buck have of the hairy man? *following him*

5. How did Buck respond to these strange desires? *ran free*
6. Who was making the night call? *timber wolf*
7. How was Buck rewarded by the wolf? *wolf wanted him to follow*
8. Why was Buck happy running with the wolf? *answering the call*
9. Why did Buck leave the wolf? *return to Thornton*
10. How did Buck survive for weeks while looking for the wolf? *hunted*
11. How was Buck transformed when he was in the wild? *killer*
12. Why was Buck successful in killing the bull moose? *persistence*
13. Why did the Yeehats flee the camp? *Buck attacked him*
14. How had John Thornton died? *Yeehat arrows*
15. Why was Buck ready to obey the calls from the wild? *John Thornton was dead*
16. When did Buck join the wolf pack? *after killing leaders*