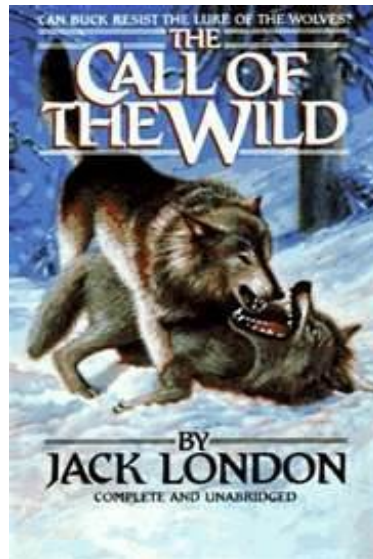


# The Call of The Wild



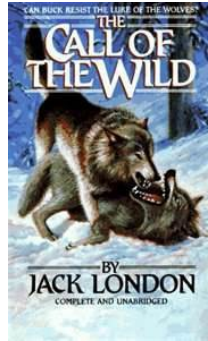
By

Jack London

A Novel Study  
by Nat Reed

# The Call of the Wild

By Jack London



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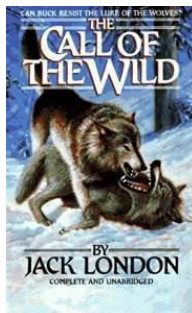
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**About the author:** Nat Reed has been a member of the teaching profession for more than 30 years. He is presently a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program. For more information on his work and literature, please visit the websites [www.reedpublications.org](http://www.reedpublications.org) and [www.novelstudies.org](http://www.novelstudies.org).

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# The Call of the Wild

By Jack London



## Suggestions and Expectations

This 54 page curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on one chapter of *The Call of the Wild* and is comprised of four sections:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language and Extension Activities

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking.

### Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters . . . respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

Students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included as well as a **Student Checklist**.

**Themes** which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include survival (in the far north), perseverance, overcoming difficulty, courage, loyalty and friendship, pride, personal growth.

Additional icons provided by <http://www.iconka.com>

# The Call of the Wild

By Jack London

## List of Skills

### Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words / phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying / creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *anagrams*
7. Identify *personification*
8. Use of singular / plural nouns
9. Listing compound words
10. Identifying parts of speech
11. Determining alphabetical order
12. Identification of root words
13. Identify/create *similes*
14. Identification of a *cliffhanger*

### Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

### Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Identify the climax of the novel
4. Five W's Chart

### Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Protagonists and antagonists
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Comparing two Characters

### Creative and Critical Thinking

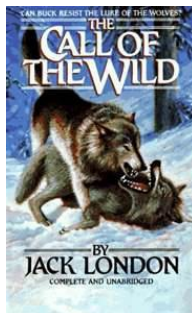
1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Write a letter to a friend
4. Complete an Observation Chart
5. Conduct an interview
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete a KWS Chart

### Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Design an Information Card

# The Call of the Wild

By Jack London



## Synopsis

First published in 1903, *The Call of the Wild* is regarded as Jack London's masterpiece. Based on London's experiences as a gold prospector in the Canadian wilderness and his ideas about nature and the struggle for existence, *The Call of the Wild* is a tale about unbreakable spirit and the fight for survival in the frozen Alaskan Klondike. (The Publisher)

## Author Biography

*Jack London*

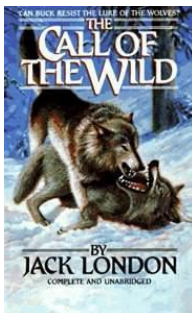
Jack London, whose life symbolized the power of will, was one of the most successful American writers of the early 20th Century. His stories of men and animals against the environment, and survival against hardships were drawn mainly from his own experience. London grew up in poverty in the slums of Oakland, California. At the age of 17, he ventured to sea on a sealing ship. The turning point of his life was a thirty-day imprisonment that was so degrading it made him decide to turn to education and pursue a career in writing. His years in the Klondike searching for gold resonate in many of his stories and novels, among them, *The Call of the Wild*, and *White Fang*. Another of his novels, *The Sea-Wolf*, was based on his experiences at sea. He retired to his ranch near Sonoma, where he died at age 40. Robert Louis Stevenson has written a number of well known novels throughout the course of his lifetime, including *Kidnapped*, *The Black Arrow*, *Prince Otto*, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and *The Wrong Box*. He also wrote a number of short stories and fables, and was a talented poet and world traveler.



Adapted from: [www.jacklondon.com](http://www.jacklondon.com)

# The Call of the Wild

By Jack London

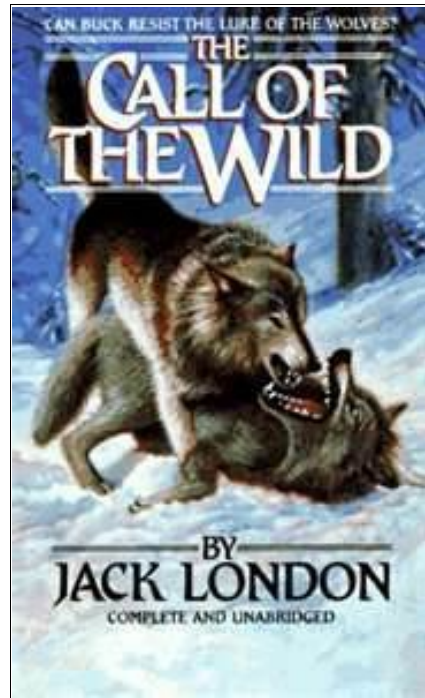


## Student Checklist

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

# The Call of the Wild

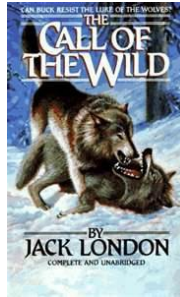


*By Jack London*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Call of the Wild

By Jack London



## Chapter 1



### Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The protagonist of **The Call of the Wild** is not a person, but a dog, Buck, whose life goes through some dramatic changes when he is kidnapped and taken far from his home and beloved master. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read or movies you’ve seen. What do you think makes for an especially interesting **protagonist**?




### Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

demesne	imperious	consignment	progeny	treachery	conveyance
eloquent	calamity	metamorphosed	pervaded	conciliated	impartial

1. During his stay in the kennel, the timid little terrier \_\_\_\_\_ into a savage dog who knew no fear.
2. The dog sled was the most convenient \_\_\_\_\_ for most travelers in the Yukon during winter.
3. It was unusual that so many of the cat's \_\_\_\_\_ were calico in color.



4. The conceited princess had quite an \_\_\_\_\_ attitude when dealing with her subjects.
5. Everyone in the audience recognized the prime minister to be a very \_\_\_\_\_ public speaker.
6. The mediator \_\_\_\_\_ the two opposing factions with her wise words of diplomacy.
7. It is most important that an umpire be \_\_\_\_\_, no matter which teams are playing.
8. Buck felt that he had the right to rule over his vast \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The public could scarcely believe the \_\_\_\_\_ of the two assassins.
10. He found the \_\_\_\_\_ of food stored in the boxcar barely enough to keep the villagers alive for more than a week.
11. An atmosphere of doom and gloom \_\_\_\_\_ the small company of explorers when their captain was killed.
12. The tragic \_\_\_\_\_ which befell the astronauts was more than they could ever have expected.

## Questions



1. What is the setting of the beginning of Chapter One?


2. How would you describe Buck's early life? What affect did this have on his personality?


3. Buck is \_\_\_\_\_ years old in this chapter and weighed \_\_\_\_\_ pounds. His father had been a huge \_\_\_\_\_.

### Good to Know

The **Klondike Gold Rush** of 1897 is mentioned in this chapter. Buck doesn't know it yet, but this event would prove to be a huge factor in his life. This gold rush took place in a region of Canada known as Yukon Territory. Over 100,000 prospectors rushed to this area of the world with the hope of striking it rich. The majority failed in their efforts while only about 4000 people actually were successful in their pursuit of riches. The equivalent of one billion dollars in gold was removed from this area around 1900.



4. How did the man that Manuel sold Buck to manage to control him?


5. Novels such as ***The Call of the Wild*** (which was written over one hundred years ago) tended to be less sensitive about the use of labels which were quite demeaning to different groups of people. Chapter One contains at least two ethnic slurs: **squarehead** (directed against German and Scandinavian people); and **half-breed** (a person of mixed racial heritage). How important do you think it is for writers to be sensitive in their portrayal of different groups of people? Defend your answer.


6. Buck learns many unfortunate lessons as this chapter unfolds. At one point the author says, *a man with a club was a lawgiver, a master to be **obeyed**, though not **conciliated***. What do you think is the difference between obedience and conciliation? How important do you think it is for a dog to have a conciliatory attitude toward his/her master?


7. How was the club a revelation to Buck?


8. If you were Buck, what attitude would you adopt in order to assure your survival?


9. Describe your impression of the man in the red sweater.




## Language Activities

**A.** Choose ten words from this chapter with two or more **syllables**. Indicate the syllables by drawing a line between each syllable. **Example:** good / bye.

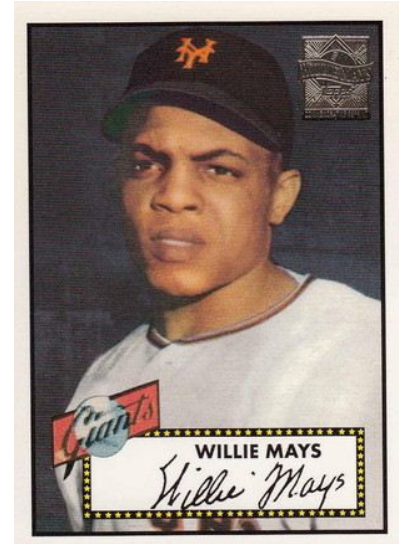


## B. Collector's Cards

Sports Cards have been a very popular collector's item for a number of years. A Willie Mays 1952 Topps rookie card is worth \$3000.00 today.

A number of breeds of dogs are mentioned in this chapter: **Japanese pug, Mexican hairless, fox terrier, Saint Bernard, Newfoundland and Scotch shepherd.**

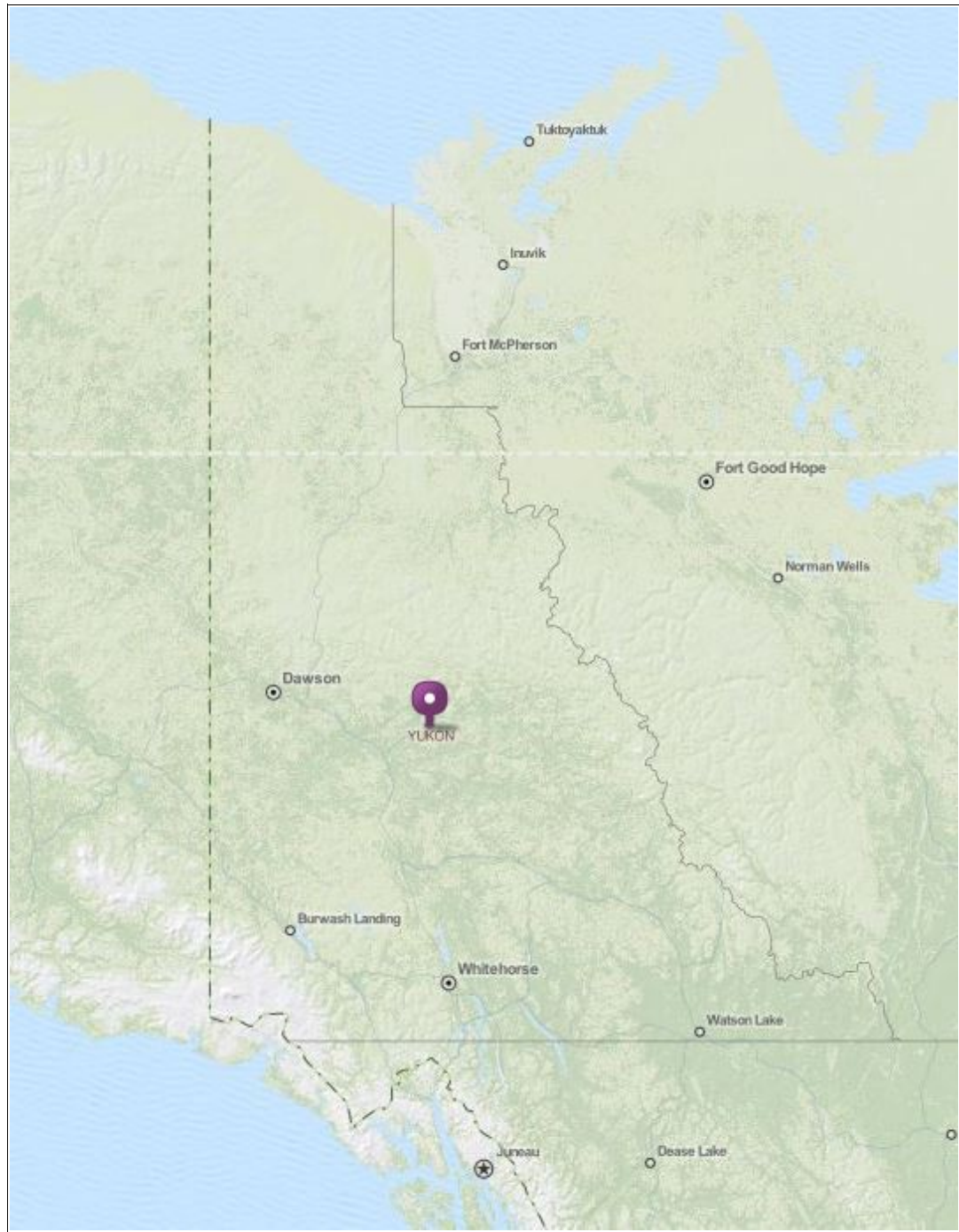
Design a card for the dog of your choice, either from the above list or another dog which would make a great sled dog. The front of the card should feature a picture of the dog, and the back should include at least four interesting facts about it, i.e. appearance, size, diet, important characteristics, etc.



**C. Personification** is giving human qualities to something that is not human. In Chapter One the author writes, ... *the Narwhal... rolled and pitched and bucked like a thing possessed. In this sentence the ship is compared to a bucking horse.*

a) Why do you think personification is a literary device used by many authors?


b) Create your own example of personification.

## Extension Activities

### Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene – or the entire novel.

Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first chapter of ***The Call of the Wild***. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.

1	2
3	4
5	6