

Let's Focus: Excerpt from *White Fang***Content Focus**

survival; conditioning

Type of Text

literature—novel

Author's Name _____**Author's Purpose** _____**Big Ideas**

Consider the following Big Idea questions. Write your answer for each question.

Can good and evil be conditioned, or are people born that way?

Can a vicious beast be tamed in an environment of love and support?

Narrative Preview Checklist: The excerpt from *White Fang* on pages 5–9.

- Title: What clue does it provide about the passage?
- Pictures: What additional information is added here?
- Margin Information: What vocabulary is important to understand this story?

Enduring Understandings

After reading the text . . .

Plot Summary Outline

Story Title: _____

Part 2—Born of the Wild

1. Kiche, a tame wolf, mates with a wild wolf and gives birth to five pups.
2. All pups die of famine except one.
3. Surviving pup more closely resembles a wild wolf than a tame wolf.
4. Kiche's pup learns the law of the wild: EAT OR BE EATEN.

Part 3—The Gods of the Wild

1. Kiche and her pup learn to live in civilization at an Indian camp with Gray Beaver as their master.
2. Pup is named White Fang due to his extremely white fangs.
3. Gray Beaver trades Kiche (the mom) to settle a debt.
4. White Fang is mistreated by other dogs. Because he fights back, he is hated by all people but Gray Beaver.
5. White Fang learns to become a ferocious fighter because of his environment.
6. White Fang becomes dog-like when he escapes but realizes that he prefers the camp to the wild and returns.
7. White Fang has loyalty and respect for Gray Beaver, but no love.

Plot Summary Outline (*cont.*)

Part 4—The Superior Gods

1. White Fang becomes violent toward all other dogs.
2. Gray°Beaver settles a debt by giving White Fang to Beauty Smith, a cruel, evil, and ugly man.
3. Beauty Smith attempts to tame White Fang with beatings and force.
4. White Fang learns to take out his hostility and hatred for Smith on other dogs when he is entered in dogfights. He becomes known as “the°Fighting Wolf.”
5. Weedon Scott saves White Fang from near death during a fight with a dog.
6. Weedon Scott becomes White Fang’s new master and tries to teach White Fang how to°experience love.

Part 5—The Tame

1. Weedon Scott returns to California with White Fang to live on his ranch with his family (wife: Alice, mom, and dad: Judge Scott).

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Key Passage Vocabulary: Excerpt from *White Fang*

Read each word. Write the word in column 3. Then, circle a number to rate your knowledge of the word.

Vocabulary	Part of Speech	Write the Word	Knowledge Rating
restrain	(v)		0 1 2 3
encounter	(v)		0 1 2 3
pursue	(v)		0 1 2 3
vainly	(adv)		0 1 2 3
compel	(v)		0 1 2 3
vengeance	(n)		0 1 2 3
ignorant	(adj)		0 1 2 3
promotion	(n)		0 1 2 3
advantage	(n)		0 1 2 3
ascent	(n)		0 1 2 3



from

WHITE FANG

by Jack London

It was about this time that the newspapers were full of the daring escape of a convict from San Quentin prison. He was a ferocious man. He had been ill-made in the making. He had not been born right, and he had not been helped any by the molding he had received at the hands of society. The hands of society are harsh, and this man was a striking sample of its handiwork. He was a beast—a human beast, it is true, but nevertheless so terrible a beast that he can best be characterized as carnivorous. **1**

In San Quentin prison he had proved incorrigible. Punishment failed to break his spirit. He could die dumb-mad and fighting to the last, but he could not live and be beaten. The more fiercely he fought, the more harshly society handled him, and the only effect of harshness was to make him fiercer. Straight-jackets to **restrain** him, starvation, and beatings and clubbings were the wrong treatment for Jim Hall; but it was the treatment he received. It was the treatment he had received from the time he was a little pulpy, shapeable boy in a San Francisco slum—soft clay in the hands of society and ready to be formed into something. **2**

It was during Jim Hall's third term in prison that he **encountered** a guard that was almost as great a beast as he. The guard treated him unfairly, lied about him to the warden, lost his credits, and persecuted him. The difference between them was that the guard carried a bunch of keys and a gun. Jim Hall had only his naked hands and his teeth. But he sprang upon the guard one day and used his teeth on the other's throat just like any jungle animal.

restrain

to hold back

encounter

to meet; to come in contact with

1 What animal-like qualities does the prisoner have?

2 What kind of punishment did Jim Hall receive that did not lead to reform?

pursue

to chase; to go after

3 What was life like for Jim Hall before his attack on the prison guard and after his attack on the prison guard?

4 Where did Jim Hall get his weapons?

After this, Jim Hall went to live in the incorrigible cell. He lived there three years. The cell was of iron, the floor, the walls, the roof. He never left this cell. He never saw the sky nor the sunshine. Day was a barely noticeable twilight and night was a black silence. He was in an iron tomb, buried alive. He saw no human face, spoke to no human thing. When his food was shoved in to him, he growled like a wild animal. He hated all things. For days and nights he bellowed his rage loudly at the universe. Then, for weeks and months he never made a sound, in the black silence eating his very soul. He was a man and a monstrosity, as fearful a thing of fear as ever imagined in the visions of a maddened brain. 3

And then, one night, he escaped. The warders said it was impossible, but nevertheless the cell was empty, and half in half out of it lay the body of a slain guard. Two other dead guards marked his trail through the prison to the outer walls, and he had killed with his hands to avoid noise. 50

He was armed with the weapons of the slain guards—a live arsenal that fled through the hills pursued by the organized might of society. A heavy price of gold was upon his head. Greedy farmers hunted him with shotguns. His blood might pay off a loan or send a son to college. Public-spirited citizens took down their rifles and went out after him. A pack of bloodhounds followed the way of his bleeding feet. And the sleuth-hounds of the law, the paid fighting animals of society, with telephone, and telegraph, and special train, clung to his trail night and day. 4

Sometimes they came upon him, and men faced him like heroes, or stampeded through barbed-wire fences to the delight of the people reading the account at the breakfast table. It was after such encounters that the dead and wounded were carted back to the towns, and their places filled by men eager for the manhunt. 65 70

And then Jim Hall disappeared. The bloodhounds **vainly** quested for him on the lost trail. In offensive, ordinary ranchers in remote valleys were held up by armed men and **compelled** to identify themselves. While the remains of Jim Hall were discovered on a dozen mountainsides by greedy claimants for blood-money. **5**

In the meantime the newspapers were read at Sierra Vista, not so much with interest as with anxiety, or worry. The women were afraid. Judge Scott pook-pooked and laughed, but not with reason, for it was in his last days on the bench that Jim Hall had stood before him and received sentence. And in open courtroom, before all men, Jim Hall had proclaimed that the day would come when he would wreak **vengeance** on the Judge that sentenced him.

For once, Jim Hall was right. He was innocent of the crime for which he was sentenced. It was a case, in the language of thieves and police, of “railroading.” Jim Hall was being “railroaded” to prison for a crime he had not committed. Because of the two prior convictions against him, Judge Scott imposed upon him a sentence of fifty years. **6**

Judge Scott did not know all things, and he did not know that he was party to a police conspiracy, that the evidence was hatched and falsified, that Jim Hall was guiltless of the crime charged. And Jim Hall, on the other hand, did not know that Judge Scott was merely **ignorant**. Jim Hall believed that the judge knew all about it and was hand in glove with the police in the **promotion** of the monstrous injustice. So it was, when the doom of fifty years of living death was uttered by Judge Scott, that Jim Hall, hating all things in the society that misused him, rose up and raged in the courtroom until dragged down by half a dozen of his blue-coated enemies. To him, Judge Scott was the keystone in the arch of injustice, and upon Judge Scott he emptied the vials of his wrath and hurled the angry threats of his revenge yet to come. When Jim Hall went to his living death . . . and escaped. **7**

vainly

without success; not achieving what one hoped to

compel

to make someone take a certain action

vengeance

the act of repaying one hurtful deed with another

ignorant

not knowing or having important information

promotion

an attempt to convince others that they should do, believe, or buy something

5 Why did so many men want to find Jim Hall?

6 What is Jim Hall’s connection to Judge Scott?

7 In what ways are Jim Hall and Judge Scott both “falsely accused”?

advantage

something that puts you in a better position than others

ascent

an upward journey

8 Why do you think you think White Fang is introduced at this time?

9 Who are the strange god and the lovemaster?

Of all this White Fang knew nothing. But between him and Alice, the master's wife, there existed a
115 secret. Each night, after Sierra Vista had gone to bed, she rose and let in White Fang to sleep in the big hall. Now White Fang was not a house dog, nor was he permitted to sleep in the house; so each morning, early, she slipped down and let him out
120 before the family was awake. **8**

On one such night, while all the house slept, White Fang awoke and lay very quietly. And very quietly he smelled the air and read the message it bore of a strange god's presence. And to his ears came
125 sounds of the strange god's movements. White Fang burst into no furious outcry. It was not his way. The strange god walked softly, but more softly walked White Fang, for he had no clothes to rub against the flesh of his body. He followed silently. In the Wild
130 he had hunted live meat that was infinitely timid, and he knew the **advantage** of surprise.

The strange god paused at the foot of the great staircase and listened, and White Fang was as dead, so without movement was he as he watched and waited.
135 Up that staircase the way led to the lovemaster and to the lovemaster's dearest possessions. White Fang bristled, but waited. The strange god's foot lifted. He was beginning the **ascent**. **9**



When it was that White Fang struck. He gave no warning, with no snarl anticipated his own action. Into the air he lifted his body in the spring that landed him on the strange god's back. White Fang clung with his forepaws to the man's shoulders, at the same time burying his fangs into the back of the man's neck. He clung on for a moment, long enough to drag the god over backward. Together they crashed to the floor. White Fang leaped clear, and, as the man struggled to rise, was in again with the slashing fangs. 10

10 How did White Fang fulfill his duty Alice had given him?

Jack London

Jack London, born in 1876, was one of the first famous fiction writers known worldwide for his work. Early in his career, London wrote the groundbreaking novel *The Call of the Wild*, which featured a domesticated dog forced to revert back to his wild instincts. Because of its success, London felt it was necessary to write a companion novel, *White Fang*, but he wanted to add a twist. "I'm going to reverse the process. Instead of the devolution or de-civilization of a dog, I'm going to give the evolution, the civilization of a dog—development of domesticity, faithfulness, love, morality, and all of the amenities and virtues." This allows the readers to see their society through the eyes of a being who has never experienced it, all of the good qualities but also the bad ones. In both of these novels, London's exploration of the violent natures of man and beast gives the audience a new insight into themselves. London was heavily involved in the creative writing world of his time and even helped jump-start commercial magazine fiction.

Wolf fang



Phrase vs. Clause

Read the following groups of words and place an X in the proper column to identify each one as a phrase or a clause.

	Phrase	Clause
Ex: of the daring escape	X	
Ex: he was a ferocious man		X
1. had been helped		
2. punishment failed to break his spirit		
3. in the hands of society		
4. during Jim Hall's third term in prison		
5. the cell was of iron		
6. he saw no human face		
7. for weeks and months		
8. in the visions of a maddened brain		
9. he escaped		
10. Jim Hall disappeared		

Subordinating Conjunctions and Dependent Clauses

Subordinating Conjunctions				
• although	• as	• because	• how	• if
• since	• unless	• until	• while	• after
• when	• where	• why	• as if	• before
• than	• regardless			

Two jobs of a subordinating conjunction:

- Joins a dependent clause to a main clause
- Establishes a relationship between the two clauses

Read the sentences below. Circle the subordinating conjunctions and underline the dependent clauses.

Examples:

As the stranger crept through the house, White Fang watched his every move.

The guards patrolled the area carefully because Jim Hall threatened to escape.

1. When his food was shoved in to him, he growled like a wild animal.
2. Each night, after Sierra Vista had gone to bed, she rose and let in White Fang to sleep in the big hall.
3. She slipped down and let him out before the family was awake.
4. On one such night, while all the house slept, White Fang awoke and lay very quietly.
5. White Fang leaped clear, and, as the man struggled to rise, was in again with the slashing fangs.

Sentences with Subordinating Conjunctions

Part A

Finish each sentence by completing the dependent clause.

Example:

While he was held in the incorrigible cell,
Jim Hall spoke to no human being.

1. Jim Hall was considered incorrigible because _____
_____.
2. Until _____,
Jim Hall lived in darkness.
3. Since _____,
the judge's wife was frightened by Jim Hall's escape.
4. Although _____,
Jim Hall was imprisoned for a crime he did not commit.
5. White Fang attacked the stranger when _____
_____.

Part B

Reread the sentences above. Circle the commas and deduce the rule for when commas are needed with dependent clauses.

Critical Understandings: Direction Words

Prompt	How to Respond	Model
If the prompt asks you to . . .	The response requires you to . . .	For example . . .
Analyze	break down and evaluate or draw conclusions about the information	Analyze the development of the text's central idea.
Assess	decide on the value, impact, or accuracy	Assess how the author's point of view affects the story.
Cite Evidence	support your answer by paraphrasing or using a direct quote	Cite evidence that supports your argument.
Clarify	explain it so that it is easy to understand	Clarify the events leading up to the marriage.
Compare	state the similarities between two or more things	Compare Indian and Chinese marriage arrangements.
Connect	tie ideas together, relate	Connect each storm with its safety plan.
Contrast	state the differences between two or more things	Contrast Indian and Chinese marriage arrangements.
Demonstrate	show how to do it	Demonstrate your knowledge of wolves through poetry.
Develop an Argument	work on a case over a period of time, during which it grows or changes	Use evidence from both stories to develop an argument against arranged marriages.
Differentiate	tell apart or tell the difference between	Differentiate between the protagonist and the antagonist.
Distinguish	recognize something or explain the difference	Distinguish your claim from the opposing view by telling how it is different.

Critical Understandings: Direction Words (*cont.*)

Prompt	How to Respond	Model
If the prompt asks you to . . .	The response requires you to . . .	For example . . .
Evaluate	think carefully to make a judgment; form a critical opinion of	Evaluate the impact of the character's personality traits.
Illustrate	use examples to demonstrate or prove	Illustrate the internal battle between good and evil through Dr. Jekyll's research and explanations.
Integrate	combine different kinds of information to form a complete whole	Integrate information from several sources to write a report.
Present	deliver information	Present the benefits of wolf reintroduction.
Prove	give evidence to show that it is true	Prove that arranged marriages can work.
Relate	explain the connection between ideas or concepts	Relate Mr. Hyde to Jim Hall.
Summarize	tell the most important ideas or concepts	Summarize the passage.
Support	help it succeed	Support the statement that people have two selves.
Synthesize	combine information in a logical way	Synthesize information from both texts to explain the impact of anger.
Trace	follow information closely	Trace the boy's bad decisions.