

The Call of the Wild

Chapters 6–7

by Jack London

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: calamity, expediency, jubilant, latent, melancholy, momentum, obliterated, prowess, tangible, usurp

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Vocabulary Preview 2

Answer Key — Preview 3

Caution: share only if self-checking

OPTIONAL POST-READING QUIZ

Vocabulary in Context 4

Answer Key — In Context 5

Caution: do not share with students

About the Pre-Reading Activity (open-dictionary; ungraded or completion grade):

Students preview 10 words from the upcoming reading, each in a sentence that supports understanding. They choose the best meaning from 3 choices.

About the Optional Post-Reading Quiz (use after reading, or skip):

Same words, now in real excerpts from the text, with questions that build reading and analytical skills.

Vocabulary Sections for this Book:

Section 1 · Chapters 1–3 · Buck's comfortable life in California

Section 2 · Chapters 4–5 · Buck and the sled team

Section 3 · Chapters 6–7 · Buck and John Thornton

Bold = this section. Other sections are available at verbalworkout.com.



verbalworkout.com

(all resources free)

Vocabulary Preview

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Read each prompt. Then choose the best meaning for the bold word.

1. The earthquake was a **calamity** that left thousands without homes.

- A. a sudden surprise
- B. a strange mystery
- C. a terrible disaster

2. For sheer **expediency**, the company hid the bad news until after the sale.

- A. cautious good sense
- B. stubborn pride
- C. self-serving advantage

3. The **jubilant** fans poured onto the field after the final goal.

- A. joyful and triumphant
- B. tired but relieved
- C. nervous and tense

4. The disease can stay **latent** for years before any symptoms appear.

- A. hidden and not yet active
- B. mild and harmless
- C. slow but spreading

5. A deep **melancholy** settled over her as the gray rain fell.

- A. thoughtful sadness
- B. uneasy boredom
- C. quiet dread

6. The runner built up **momentum** and shot past the others.

- A. a feeling of confidence
- B. the force of a moving body
- C. a steady, even rhythm

7. The flood **obliterated** the small village in a single night.

- A. emptied of its people
- B. surrounded and cut off
- C. wiped out completely

8. The knight's **pro prowess** in battle was famous throughout the land.

- A. great courage
- B. outstanding skill
- C. good luck

9. After months of vague promises, she wanted something **tangible** she could rely on.

- A. real and physical
- B. simple and clear
- C. fair and honest

10. The ambitious general tried to **usurp** the throne while the king was away.

- A. to loyally serve
- B. to seize wrongfully
- C. to rightfully inherit

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

imperiously — with the force of a command that must be obeyed

aurora borealis — also called the northern lights, the shimmering bands of color that sometimes move across the night sky in far northern regions

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY
1	C
2	C
3	A
4	A
5	A
6	B
7	C
8	B
9	A
10	B

Vocabulary in Context

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 10

Read each excerpt carefully. Then choose the best answer to each question.

1 "Other men saw to the welfare of their dogs from a sense of duty and business expediency; he saw to the welfare of his as if they were his own children, because he could not help it."

As used in the passage, the word 'expediency' suggests the other men cared for their dogs out of...

- A. deep personal affection
- B. a sense of moral duty
- C. practical self-interest

2 "Matthewson waxed jubilant. 'Three to one!' he proclaimed."

The passage most strongly suggests that Matthewson believes Buck will...

- A. refuse to obey Thornton
- B. fail to move the sled
- C. pull the sled with ease

3 "The jerks perceptibly diminished; as the sled gained momentum, he caught them up, till it was moving steadily along."

According to the passage, what happens to the sled as it gains momentum?

- A. it begins to move steadily
- B. it grinds to a halt
- C. it jerks more and more

4 "...only the blowing of chill winds, the forming of ice in sheltered places, and the melancholy rippling of waves on lonely beaches."

In context, the word 'melancholy' emphasizes the...

- A. hidden menace of the scene
- B. sorrowful mood of the scene
- C. calm stillness of the scene

5 "And through another winter they wandered on the obliterated trails of men who had gone before."

According to the passage, the trails the men once traveled are now...

- A. worn away and hard to follow
- B. crowded with new travelers
- C. clearly marked and easy to see

6 "Sometimes he pursued the call into the forest, looking for it as though it were a tangible thing ..."

It can reasonably be inferred that Buck pursues the call as if it were...

- A. a solid object he could touch
- B. a danger he had to escape
- C. a faint and distant sound

7 "Even so, it was a hard fight, and it aroused the last latent remnants of Buck's ferocity."

According to the passage, the ferocity the fight arouses in Buck had been...

- A. openly raging all along
- B. lost and gone for good
- C. hidden and not yet active

8 "He was a killer, a thing that preyed, living on the things that lived, unaided, alone, by virtue of his own strength and prowess, surviving triumphantly in a hostile environment where only the strong survived."

The passage most strongly suggests that Buck survives in the wild through his...

- A. trust in his human masters
- B. strength and fighting skill
- C. caution and quiet patience

9 "He was oppressed with a sense of calamity happening, if it were not calamity already happened ..."

According to the passage, Buck is oppressed by a sense that...

- A. he has lost the trail
- B. a hard task lies ahead
- C. a disaster has taken place

10 "For the last time in his life he allowed passion to usurp cunning and reason, and it was because of his great love for John Thornton that he lost his head."

It can reasonably be inferred that letting passion 'usurp' his reason makes Buck act...

- A. rashly, against his own cunning
- B. exactly as he always does
- C. with even sharper cunning

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	C	
2	B	Event comprehension. Matthewson has bet against Buck and grows bolder, raising the odds to three to one.
3	A	
4	B	
5	A	
6	A	
7	C	
8	B	
9	C	
10	A	Character comprehension. Buck is normally the cool, calculating fighter; here passion overrides reason for the only time.

Teacher Context: Chapters 6-7

John Thornton nurses Buck back to health and wins his deep devotion, and Buck performs extraordinary feats out of love for him. After Thornton's death severs his last tie to humanity, Buck answers the wild's call and joins a wolf pack. Section runs to the end of the novel.