

White fang: "the call of the wild and white fang" by jack london essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Jack London has been touted as one of the best writers of his time with an instinctive artistic ability of high order and an extraordinary set of skills with words. It should be noted that this book complements the themes advanced in his earlier publication "The Call of the Wild", by showing how a naturally domesticated animal may revert to freedom present in nature and the wilderness. In view of this, this paper focuses on the attributes of the characters and their adaptability to different circumstances.

White Fang is the main character of the story. This fact is emphasized by London's decision to name the story after him. He was born of a mixed heritage, to a wolf paternity and a mother bearing a mixed heritage of wolf and dog. He shows unique attributes, which prompt his mother to care for him. He is naturally agile and strong, attributes which he transforms into fighting skills after other dogs become mean to him (The New York Times).

His conquests in the battle field underline his fierceness. He is an intelligent animal, a fact which helped him survive the challenges in the forest. Losing all his siblings to the drought helps him sharpen his natural instincts. He is adventurous, a trait which enables him to learn the invaluable lesson of survival for the fittest. This helps him in the later stages of his life when he is handled by different masters.

His loyalty is portrayed when he opts to stick to his masters in spite of the misery he underwent on their account. This is as a consequence of fear instilled into him during his beatings and, he subsequently He toes the line in order to avoid retribution. This implies that his heart had not warmed to his master hence love was constituent in their relationship (London 172). Fang

shows his obedient nature by staying within all boundaries established by his different masters (The New York Times).

White Fang's resilience is portrayed by the attitude he adopts since his childhood. He is constantly teased by other puppies when they move into the human camp. After losing several fights, he adapts to the situation and fights his battles with the resolve to win. Life in this camp also reveals his aggression.

He beats all his opponents before doing all it takes to beat his main tormentor, Lip-Lip. In the latter years of his life, he gains from this experience to fight when unleashed on other aggressive dogs. His last master, Weedon Scott reveals a sentimental aspect to his character. By showering him with affection continuously, White Fang becomes affectionate towards his boss. This fondness is genuine due to the love that is existent between them.

This transformation is shown by numerous instances in the book where he responds to the master's word as opposed to sadism which he was accustomed. He develops affection for Scott, to the extent that he howls in pain and refuses to eat when the master leaves him behind. This attachment signifies loyalty that stems from love, in contrast to intimidation, as it was from his previous masters.

Weedon Scott bought White Fang when he faced imminent death while fighting. The difference in management styles between Beaver and Scott is evident. He is kind to the animal, and hence refrains from employing violent forms of retribution. Instead, he nurtures Fang into an obedient beast by showering him with endless affection.

<https://assignbuster.com/white-fang-the-call-of-the-wild-and-white-fang-by-jack-london-essay/>

He shows he is caring after he assumes liability of white fang by instructing his assistant to take care of the dog throughout the recuperation period. He exhibits perseverance every time the dog does not respond to his overtures. The dog gives him cold treatment time and again, barking viciously at him and declining to take meals, but he does not give up on him.

After much coaxing, he finally reached out to the animal using meat. He then decided to train the animal with the aim of domesticating it. After much work, the dog resonated with his voice, by developing the ability to decipher the different tones in his voice.

Scott is responsible since he agrees to travel with White Fang back to his home instead of leaving him behind with the servant. This also brings to light his compassionate attribute, because he only gives in after hearing the beast's painful howls and seeing the magnitude of injuries he incurred as he tried to break free. It is noteworthy that Scott loves White Fang genuinely.

This is recorded as one of the main reasons why the beast finally warmed up to him. This trait facilitates their forming of a strong bond which made the dog guard him and his property.

The she wolf Kiche is White Fang's mother. She acts as the leader of the wolf pack despite the fact that she is a domestic dog. Her intelligence comes out clearly from the onset as she lures the sled driving dogs from Bill and Harry their masters into the woods (London165). She shows her dexterity and adaptability when she leads her cub into the Indian settlement, where "man is god" furthermore.

Kiche is also protective of her cubs and hunts in order to feed them. It is also on record that she fought a wolverine and a weasel in order to protect her only remaining cub. She is affectionate, an attribute which draws White Fang to her. It makes him look up to her as a teacher, guide and a source of protection. It is worth mentioning that Kiche's attributes are seen when "the cub felt his mother soften at the sound.

When she is taken away by an Indian for a debt owed, White Fang unsuccessfully attempts to pursue her before he is captured by beaver.

When the fully grown White Fang meets her later in the book, she refuses to acknowledge him. In spite of this, respect he had for her is evidenced by the fact that he accepted the present state of affairs and upheld his respect for her as a mother and teacher.

Gray Beaver, White Fang's initial owner is cruel to the wolf and tames him through beatings. Surprisingly, he treats him with fairness; in the same manner he does other dogs. The wolf considers him a god due to the extra chunks of meat he often receives from the Indian. It should be noted that Beaver was not a cruel man, but was socialized to believe that cruelty is synonymous with survival. Beaver's gullibility is exposed when he falls for a scheme by Beauty Smith which sees him lose ownership of the dog.

He is tricked into alcoholism and his subsequent addiction ensures he trades the dog for liquor. White Fang escapes Smith's home on several occasions and runs back to Beaver. He in turn returned him back due to his honesty. Despite all his shortcomings, Beaver remains loyal to the wolf as a master,

playing the most crucial of roles in developing his strength, independence and intelligence.

Beauty Smith was another of White Fang's owners. It is satirical for the author to name a man with such an appalling character beauty. His cruelty is evidenced promptly as he whips White Fang on several occasions. He kept the dog chained frequently and exposed him to many forms of maltreatment; this made the dog realize that it was subject to the master's prerogative (London 276).

Fang submitted to him out of fear, and ran away on more than a few instances, but was brought back by Beaver. His total disregard for the dog is shown when he opts to watch the dog die in a fighting arena, before selling him off to Scott despite all the injuries it had incurred. He is exploitative, since he channeled the dog's rage for his personal gain.

He unleashed him on other dogs with the hope of making a profit from bets placed during the fight. Beauty Smith employs treachery and gets Gray Beaver to sell him the dog. He is violent, since he exposes the dog to violence before unleashing him on other beasts for profit (London 183). He propagates the principle of gaining respect through fear and violence, with Smith being the main beneficiary of his exploits.

It is noteworthy that Mr. London brings out his best pieces when writing about the relationships between human beings and beasts. He aptly presents feral nature to be entirely distinct from human nature and lifestyle. This is illustrated by " London is condemned for espousing contradictory ideas and

causes, his judges are, unknowingly perhaps, charging him with no greater error than being the representative of the world in which he lived" (Ross 57).

This story reveals how the beasts submit to human authority readily, in addition, to the adaptability of domestic animals to a change in their environment. He brings to light the fact that while beasts may not reason like humans do; they learn from the discipline of experience and are propelled by instinct on what to shun and what to seek.

The cub does not envision life as a voracious appetite due to the difference in perception between himself and mankind. He leads a single purposed life, driven by survival and the need to see out one desire at a time. By dwelling on the savage nature of the experiences the beast goes through in a bid to emphasize their fitness. He intimates that beasts experience pain and pleasure out of life in similar quantities as illustrated when he cries (London 183).

In his earlier publication, ' Call of the Wild', London talks about a Buck, a dog born in the civilized world, who is sold to travelers in need of sledge pullers (Tabor-Hann). The tale recounts the challenges he goes through in the wild, that bring out his wild side. His killer instinct is polished due to the hardships he undergoes while changing masters at frequent intervals.

The same can be said of the lives people lead in the present times. While some adapt easily to difficulties, other persons experience difficulties in the course of transitions from their comfort zones. From the story, it is evident that remarkably few characters show the resilience and ability to adapt to new systems, and hence guarantee their survival. Those who refuse to
<https://assignbuster.com/white-fang-the-call-of-the-wild-and-white-fang-by-jack-london-essay/>

discard their areas of comfort are rendered irrelevant due to their inability to cope with changing situations.

London, Jack. *The call of the wild and White Fang*. London: Collector's library. 2004. Print.

London, Jack. *White Fang*. New York: Plain Label Books, 1968. Reprint.

Ross, Dale. "Jack London: An American Dilemma". *Journal of American Culture*. 1982. 5: 57 62.

Tabor-Hann, Kellie. *Investigating Jack London's White Fang: Nature and Culture Detectives*. Edsitement. 2010. Web.

The New York Times. *Jack London the Socialist—A Character Study; When and Why the Author of "The Call of the Wild" Became a Convert and Propagandist—His Literary Methods and Aims*. 1906. Web.