

Jack london questions

Sociology



1. What does "survival of the fittest" mean, and where does the phrase come from? Survival of the fittest means that individuals, species, or races with the best acquired characteristics would survive best. The phrase comes from Herbert Spencer when he used it in "The Principles of Biology."

2. What is socialism? Why was London attracted to it? Socialism is the stage between the age of capitalism and communism, but many Americans saw it as the cure to economic, social, and political problems. London was attracted to it because it related to individualism and he had a deep concern for the social welfare of others.

3. What is social Darwinism? What were its origins and how did London interpret this philosophy? Social Darwinism was a sociological theory that branched off of Herbert Spencer's "Survival of the Fittest" and originated from Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. London interpreted this philosophy by writing novels that portray his belief in superiority of the white man.

Part 2: 1. What is the setting of the story? The setting of the story takes place in the Klondike. Tom Vincent leaves Calumet Camp to travel to the Cherry Creek Divide.

2. What is the central conflict of the story? What is the source of the struggle? The central conflict of the story is that it is too cold to function. The source of the struggle is that Tom didn't follow the precepts from the North.

3. What happens to Tom Vincent at the end of the story? What does he learn? At the end of the story, Tom Vincent finally makes it to the Cherry Creek divide but not before having to struggle. He learns to follow the precepts of the North, especially never traveling alone.

Part 3: 1. What happens to the central character at the end of the second version? At the end of the second version, the central character loses his battle with the cold and ends up freezing to death.

2. Which one of these endings do you think more clearly meets the conventions of naturalism? Be

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sure to consider the concept of determinism as you list your reasons. The ending that more clearly meets the conventions of naturalism is the modern version of the story because the original is typical of a fiction story; obviously its going to have a happy ending (especially after burning his hands!) The original Tom Vincent seems superhuman because I don't think any human can fight that hard and still survive. Part 4: