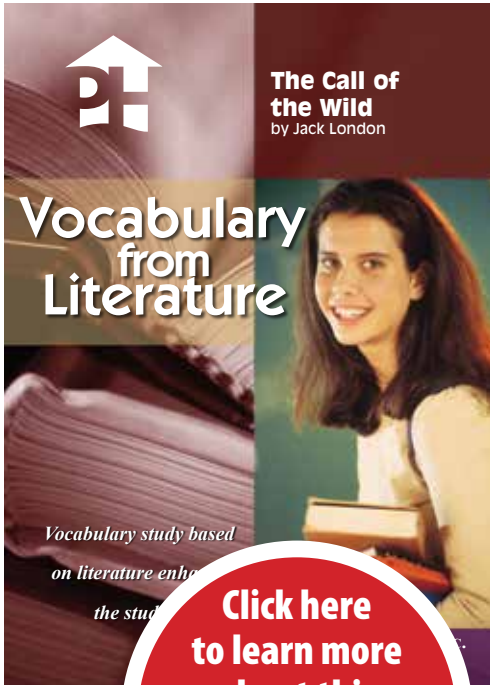




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Vocabulary From Literature for...

The Call of the Wild

by Jack London

Written by Lisa Burris
Edited by Lisa M. Miller

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Vocabulary From Literature

Information for Instructors

The activities in this Unit are designed to help students increase their vocabulary by studying the meanings of words selected from Jack London's novel *The Call of the Wild*. All definitions provided in these activities are based on the contexts in which the vocabulary words appear, which may not always convey the words' conventional usage.

It is the goal of this Unit to familiarize students with vocabulary words that they will re-encounter in life and in other readings. The words are carefully selected to meet this goal. Many unfamiliar words not covered by the Unit are defined in a Glossary following the Activities section; the Glossary may also contain slang expressions and proper nouns.

Rather than matching *The Call of the Wild* chapter-for-chapter, we have divided the book into segments depending on the number of vocabulary words from each chapter. While all of the activities may be completed by students individually, we have had the best results when students worked on them in pairs or small groups. The following activities are provided for each segment.

While the words in this reproducible do represent those necessary for a better understanding of the text, our primary concern is that we select words not only pertinent to the literature, but also useful in other aspects of the students' lives.

In addition, activities may vary slightly among the various chapters.

All page references come from the Prestwick House Literary Touchstone Press edition of *The Call of the Wild*, published 2005. Other editions may have different pagination.

Activity I

Objective: Using a dictionary to find definitions and interpret them

Activity II

Objective: Deciphering the meaning of vocabulary words using context clues
Replacing the vocabulary word with appropriate definition or synonym(s)

Activity III

Objective: Writing definitions, synonyms, and/or sentences based on context clues

Vocabulary From Literature

Activity I
Matching Definitions
Chapters I-III

Directions: Match each of the words below with its definition based on the context in which the word appears in the book. Use the page numbers in parentheses to locate the word. Then, look up the word in the dictionary, and change any answers that are not correct.

groping (11)
nocturnal (32)
retaliated (14)
eloquently (13)

conveyance (13)
plaint (33)
culprit (17)
dreary (32)

din (28)
draught (20)
trifle (12)
inexorable (36)

1. _____ relentless, unyielding
2. _____ a complaint or call of grief and sorrow
3. _____ searching blindly or uncertainly
4. _____ a loud confused mixture of noises
5. _____ a vehicle
6. _____ clearly speaking or expressing
7. _____ an animal used for pulling loads
8. _____ a suspect
9. _____ avenged; reciprocated
10. _____ of, relating to, or occurring at night
11. _____ a little bit; an insignificant amount
12. _____ dismal, gloomy

The Call of the Wild

Activity III
Writing Definitions and Sentences
from Context Clues
Chapters I-III

Directions: For each highlighted word, write a definition that fits the context of the passage. Then, check your answers by looking the words up in the dictionary. Finally, write a sentence using each word.

1. Buck had accepted the rope with quiet dignity. To be sure, it was an **unwonted** performance: but he had learned to trust in men he knew, and to give them credit for a wisdom that outreached his own. But when the ends of the rope were placed in the stranger's hands, he growled **menacingly**. He had merely **intimated** his displeasure, in his pride believing that to intimate was to command. But to his surprise the rope tightened around his neck, shutting off his breath. In quick rage he sprang at the man, who met him halfway, grappled him close by the throat, and with a **deft** twist threw him over on his back. Then the rope tightened **mercilessly**, while Buck struggled in a fury, his tongue lolling out of his mouth and his great chest panting **futilely**. Never in all his life had he been so **vilely** treated, and never in all his life had he been so angry. But his strength **ebbed**, his eyes glazed, and he knew nothing when the train was flagged and the two men threw him into the baggage car. (Pg. 13)

unwonted: _____

menacingly: _____

intimated: _____

deft: _____

Vocabulary From Literature

Activity V
Roots and Prefixes
Chapters I-III

- I. The word *precipitate* is made up of two main parts, the prefix *pre*, meaning “before, first,” and the root *cip*, which comes from the Latin *caput*, meaning “head.” The word *precipitous* literally means “in danger of falling headfirst,” and to *precipitate* is to cause something to fall in this way. Below are some other words derived from *caput*. Based on the information given, try to guess how each relates to “head.” Then check your answers in a dictionary. The first is done for you.

word	definition	relation
1. capital	<u>the central city</u> <u>in a state or country</u>	<u>the capital is the most</u> <u>important city, just as the head is the</u> <u>most important part of the body.</u>
2. biceps	a muscle with two points of origin	_____ _____ _____
3. chapter	division of a long work of writing	_____ _____ _____
4. corporal	a military leader	_____ _____ _____
5. cape	land that juts into the water	_____ _____ _____

Vocabulary From Literature

Activity II
Definitions
from Context Clues
Chapters IV-VI

Directions: For each excerpt from these chapters, select the correct definition from the choices provided for each vocabulary word. As a last resort, you may use the dictionary, but the definition you select for each word must make sense in the context it is being used in the passage.

1. And so it went, the inexorable **elimination** of the **superfluous**. Mercedes cried when her clothes-bags were dumped on the ground and article after article was thrown out. She cried in general, and she cried in particular over each **discarded** thing. She clasped hands about knees, rocking back and forth broken-heartedly. She **averred** she would not go an inch, not for a dozen Charleses. She appealed to everybody and to everything, finally wiping her eyes and **proceeding** to cast out even articles of apparel that were **imperative** necessities. And in her **zeal**, when she had finished with her own, she attacked the belongings of her men and went through them like a tornado. (Pg. 48)

Definition for **elimination**:

- A. removal
- B. deterioration
- C. arrangement
- D. safety
- E. destruction

Definition for **superfluous**:

- A. strange
- B. heavy
- C. extra
- D. smelly
- E. dirty