

# Worldviews in Literature

## NATURALISM

A worldview study guide for  
*White Fang* and *The Call of the Wild*

by Matt Whitling  
A Logos School Publication



# Worldviews in Literature

**In all its levels, programs, and teaching, Logos School seeks to teach all subjects as parts of an integrated whole with the Scriptures at the center.** As we grow in our understanding of classical Christian education, this school goal will naturally become more pronounced in everything that we do. This resource is a simple and intentional step toward teaching students in the grammar and dialectic stages to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

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Matt Whitling  
Moscow, Idaho

*F*or though we walk in the flesh,  
we do not war according to the flesh.

*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal  
but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,  
casting down arguments and every high thing  
that exalts itself against the knowledge of God,  
bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,  
and being ready to punish all disobedience  
when your obedience is fulfilled.*

*– 2 Corinthians 10:3-7*



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## Teacher's Note:

I use these materials each year with my sixth grade students at Logos School in Moscow, Idaho. The sixth graders are ready to discuss worldview issues in literature at a deeper level, and these two books written by Jack London are a good place to start. Our lesson plans for this unit roughly follow the pattern below:

- Week 1**
- Read *White Fang* chapters 1-13.
  - Students use guided reading questions to guide them as they read.
  - Vocabulary words are defined and discussed together in class.
  - Friday the students are given Quiz 1.
- Week 2**
- Read *White Fang* chapters 14-25.
  - Students use guided reading questions to guide them as they read.
  - Vocabulary words are defined and discussed together in class.
  - Wednesday assign one writing assignment from the section at the back of this resource.
  - Friday the students are given Quiz 2.
- Week 3**
- Read *The Call of the Wild* chapters 1-4.
  - Students use guided reading questions to guide them as they read.
  - Vocabulary words are defined and discussed together in class.
  - Friday the students are given Quiz 1.
- Week 4**
- Read *The Call of the Wild* chapters 5-7.
  - Students use guided reading questions to guide them as they read.
  - Vocabulary words are defined and discussed together in class.
  - Wednesday assign one writing assignment from the section at the back of this resource.
  - Thursday the students are given Quiz 2.
  - Friday the students watch *The Death of Evolution*. They take notes on the outline that is provided in this packet. The teacher should stop the DVD from time to time to clarify, review, and check for understanding. The students should be encouraged to listen for their vocabulary words during the movie. The primary value of this lecture is that it highlights the point that naturalistic evolution eliminates truth, goodness, and beauty. The students may not understand all of the details that are presented, but with guidance they will see what a corrosive impact this worldview has on understanding and enjoying life at a fundamental level.
- Week 5**
- Monday read through the Jack London biography and review for final exam.
  - Tuesday we typically begin reading through another book.
  - Wednesday the students take the Naturalism Final Exam.

### Notes:

- One hour per day of class time is devoted to literature. The first ~15 minutes of this time are spent discussing the book. The remainder of the time is given to the students to diligently read.
- Students are given a copy of the guided reading questions, and they are encouraged but not required to write the answers to each question down as they read.
- Writing assignments are given on Wednesday and due on the following Wednesday.

## Jack London (1876-1916)

- 1. Jack London was a pirate.** At 16 years of age London was known as “The Prince of the Oyster Beds.” He used his sloop, the *Razzele Dazzele*, to steal oysters from large companies in the San Francisco Bay.
- 2. Jack London was a hobo.** At 18 years of age London wandered around the United States without a job or a home, begging for food and eventually spending 30 days in jail for vagrancy. *“I became a tramp, begging my way from door to door, wandering over the United States and sweating the bloody sweats of slums and prisons.”* – London
- 3. Jack London was a prolific writer.** At times London wrote for 15 hours a day completing 50 works in 17 years and becoming the highest paid writer in the United States. *“Don’t loaf and invite inspiration; light out after it with a club, and if you don’t get it you will nonetheless get something that looks remarkably like it . . . WORK all the time.”* – London
- 4. Jack London was a materialist.** *“I am a hopeless materialist. I see the soul as nothing else than the sum of the activities of the organism plus the personal habits, memories, and experiences of that organism. I believe that when I am dead, I am dead. I believe that with my death I am just as much obliterated as the last mosquito you or I smashed.”* – London
- 5. Jack London was an evolutionist.** *“The cub had never seen man, yet the instinct concerning man was his. In dim ways he recognized in man the animal that had fought itself to primacy over the other animals of the Wild.”* – London
- 6. Jack London was a racist.** He believed that certain favored races were destined for survival. In particular he believed that white men were superior to other races – coincidentally, Jack was a white man. *“It was at Fort Yukon that White Fang saw his first white men. As compared with the Indians he had known, they were to him another race of being, a race of superior gods.”* – London
- 7. Jack London was a husband and father.** In 1900 Jack married Bess Maddern. In marrying Bess he was following his own advice that, “Mates should be selected for good breeding, not love.” Bess agreed with him on this little kernel of wisdom. They had two girls, Joan and Bess. After a short time Jack divorced Bess and married a lady he affectionately called “Mate Woman.” Her real name was Chairmian Kittredge and she bore Jack another daughter, Joy.
- 8. Jack London was an alcoholic.** London was well known for his excessive drinking and riotous living. He died at age 40. Some believe that he committed suicide by taking a lethal overdose of morphine, while others believe that his early death was the result of years of bacchanalian living.
- 9. Jack London wasn’t named Jack, and his last name wasn’t London.** On January 12, 1876 John Griffith Chaney was born in San Francisco. Eight months later his mother married John London, from whom he received his name. He was called Jack to distinguish between him and his step-father.

### Reader’s Note:

As you read Jack London’s works carefully, his ideas about life and the world will become clear. He does not only seek to entertain his readers by writing exciting adventure stories about wolves and dogs. Instead, he is actively teaching his readers what the world is like. He has ideas that he wants you to believe and accept . . . beware. Many students, and adults for that matter, read stories for enjoyment without thinking about the lessons that are hidden in those stories. Keep a sharp eye out for London’s lessons about life; you’d hate to bite too hard into a carameled apple if someone had hidden a razor blade inside.







WHITE FANG



# EAT OR BE EATEN

Part 1 (Chapters 1-13)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## GUIDED READING

*Read carefully through the following chapters and be prepared to answer these questions.*

### Chapter 1

1. Jack London capitalizes words that are not usually capitalized. What words does he do this to? What is he trying to say by doing this?
2. What is it that Bill and Henry are transporting in the box?
3. Which of the two friends could be called the optimist?

### Chapter 2

1. How many dogs did the men start with? List the order in which the dogs were eaten. How many of the dogs survived?
2. What do you learn about the she-wolf in this chapter?
3. What role does the she-wolf play in killing the dogs?

### Chapter 3

1. Which of the partners was consumed by the wolves?
2. One evening as Henry was seeking to escape from the wolves he sat by the fire and looked at his fingers. He thought about his body and realized that it "... was no more than so much \_\_\_\_\_, a quest of ravenous animals, to be torn and slashed by their hungry fangs...". Was he right about this?
3. Describe Henry's dream. Did it come true?

### Chapter 4

1. Describe the relationship between the three-year-old, One Eye, the young leader and the she-wolf.
2. Who won the fight between the three year old, One Eye, and the young leader?
3. What were they fighting over? Should people act the same way?
4. One Eye was chasing a rabbit when it strangely flew up into the air. What had happened?
5. Who or what does Jack London think is truly God? How can you tell?

### Chapter 5

1. How many pups did the she-wolf have?
2. Describe the situation with the porcupine, the lynx and One Eye.

### Chapter 6

1. Describe the gray cub.
2. How many of the gray cub's siblings survived?

### Chapter 7

1. What does the gray cub learn in this chapter?

### Chapter 8

1. What is the Law of Meat?



# EAT OR BE EATEN

Part 1 (Chapters 1-13)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUIZ 1

*Think carefully & answer completely.*

1. What is it that Bill and Henry are transporting at the beginning of the book?

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2. Who won the fight between the three year old, One Eye, and the young leader?

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3. What were they fighting over? Do people act the same way? Explain.

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4. One Eye was chasing a rabbit when it strangely flew up into the air. What had happened?

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5. Who or what does Jack London think is truly God? How can you tell?

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6. Who or what killed One Eye?

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7. London describes all of life as being governed by the law of meat: EAT OR BE EATEN. Give two examples from real life that do not comport with this law. Explain how they don't comport.

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8. *"The cub had never seen man, yet the instinct concerning man was his. In dim ways he recognized in man the animal that had fought itself to primacy over the other animals of the Wild."*

-Is man an animal? Prove your answer from the Scriptures.

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