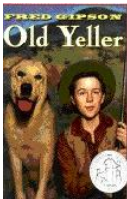


Passages

Reading Level 6



Title: Old Yeller

Author: Fred Gipson

Sample From The Book

We called him Old Yeller. The name had a sort of double meaning. One part meant that his short hair was a dingy yellow, a color that we called “yeller” in those days. The other meant that when he opened his head, the sound he let out came closer to being a yell than a bark.

I remember like yesterday how he strayed in out of nowhere to our log cabin on Birdsong Creek. He made me so mad at first that I wanted to kill him. Then, later, when I had to kill him, it was like having to shoot some of my own folks. That’s how much I’d come to think of the big yeller dog.

He came in the late 1860’s, the best I remember. Anyhow, it was the year that Papa and a bunch of other Salt Licks settlers formed a “pool herd” of their little separate bunches of steers and trailed them to the new cattle market at Abilene, Kansas.

This was to get “cash money,” a thing that all Texans were short of in those years right after the Civil War. We lived then in a new country and a good one. As Papa pointed out the day the men talked over making the drive, we had plenty of grass, wood, and water. We had wild game for the killing, fertile ground for growing bread corn, and the Indians had been put onto reservations with the return of U.S. soldiers to the Texas forts.



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