



CEC READING LIBRARY • GRADE 6 • R3 CHALLENGE

The Jungle Book

12 Chapters

Day 1—

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 1: A Boy of the Pack

VOCABULARY Mowgli, wolves, jungle, rules

Mowgli was a small boy who had grown up deep in the Indian jungle. Mother Wolf had found him as a baby, and the wolves had agreed to let him stay. He grew up beside the wolf cubs, learning to run, to listen, and to sleep under the stars. Baloo, a big brown bear, taught him the Law of the Jungle. Visitors might think the jungle was a wild place without order. In truth, every animal knew exactly what was allowed and what was forbidden. A hungry tiger could not take food from a weak deer whenever he wished. At the water hole, even enemies had to keep a truce and drink side by side. Mowgli learned these rules even before he learned to read the tracks on the forest floor. ★

The jungle has its own law.

THINK Who found Mowgli as a baby?

Chapter 2: Baloo's Lessons

VOCABULARY Baloo, Law, taught, jungle

Baloo was a big brown bear with a deep voice and a slow, rolling walk. He was also the most patient teacher in the whole jungle. Each morning, Mowgli sat in the shade, and Baloo recited the Law of the Jungle, word by word. The Law covered every situation an animal might face. It said when to hunt, how to greet a stranger, and how to share the water at the pool. Mowgli repeated each line until he knew it by heart. Sometimes he got it wrong, and Baloo gently bumped his head with a heavy paw. Baloo said the Law was older than any animal alive. No wolf or tiger or elephant had written it, yet everyone obeyed it without question. He taught Mowgli that the Law protected the weak as well as the strong. Breaking it brought a real punishment. ★ **The jungle operates by its own ancient and absolute law.**

THINK What did Baloo's paw do?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 3: The Tiger Who Broke the Law

VOCABULARY Shere Khan, Law, pack, Akela

Shere Khan was a huge tiger with a limp and a very large opinion of himself. He believed that he was above the Law of the Jungle. He hunted wherever he pleased, and he even threatened animals that the pack had promised to protect. The wolf pack grew angrier each week. At the Council Rock, Akela, the old gray leader, stood up and spoke. He told the tiger that the Law applied to every creature, strong or weak. Shere Khan only yawned and showed his teeth. Slowly, the wolves, one by one, turned their backs on him, and the young cubs hid behind their mothers when his shadow passed. Even the monkeys in the trees whispered about it. A community, Akela said, cannot survive when its strongest members refuse to follow its shared rules. ★ **The jungle's law is absolute — those who break it are cast out from the community.**

THINK What did Shere Khan do when warned?

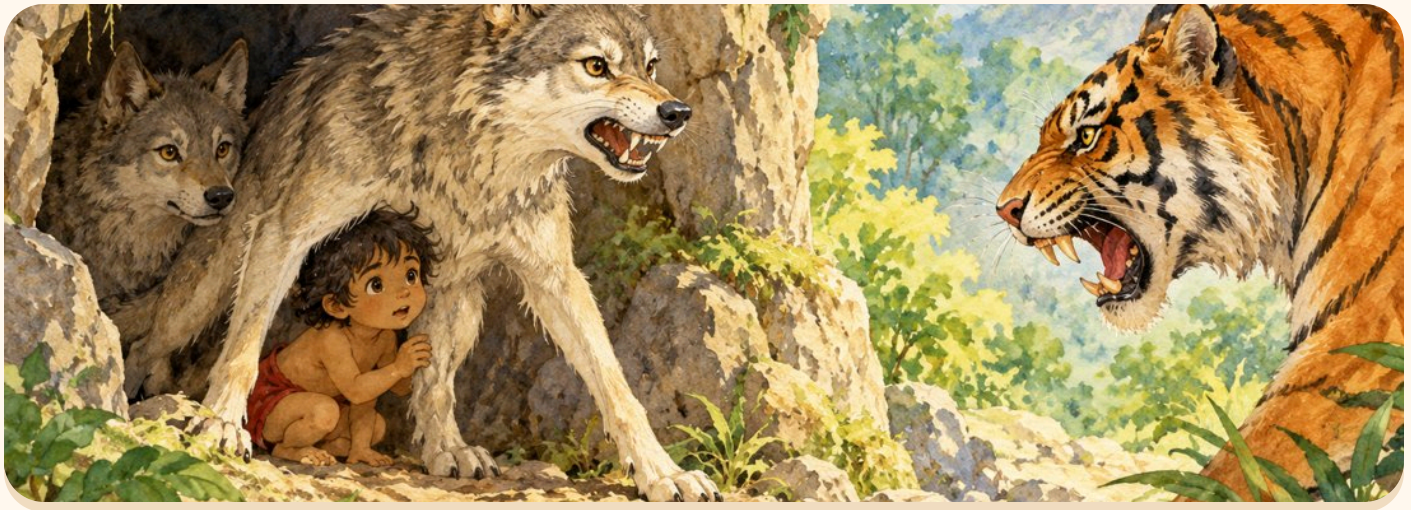
Chapter 4: Different but Welcome

VOCABULARY Mowgli, pack, Law, different

Mowgli was different from every wolf in the pack. He had no fur, he walked on two legs, and when he tried to howl at the moon, it came out as a funny squeak. The cubs giggled, and Mowgli laughed with them. Yet no wolf ever asked him to leave. The pack accepted him because he lived by their Law. He respected the same elders, guarded the same hills, and shared his food with the hungry. Once, when a young cub fell sick, Mowgli stayed awake all night and brought water from the river in a big leaf. The wolves never forgot it. The Law did not ask every animal to look the same. It only asked them to share the same standards. Because Mowgli kept those standards, he was a true member of the pack. ★ **Law creates belonging.**

THINK What did Mowgli's howl sound like?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 5: Coming Home

VOCABULARY Mowgli, village, Baloo, Bagheera

The human village had pushed Mowgli away because he seemed strange. The people there looked at him with fear and whispered about the boy who spoke to animals. Mowgli left slowly, and the road back to the jungle felt very long. His heart was heavy, and his feet dragged in the dust. At the edge of the trees, Baloo and Bagheera were waiting for him. The panther's black coat shone in the evening light. Neither of them asked where he had been or what had happened. They asked only one question: did he still remember the Law of the Jungle? Mowgli took a breath and recited it perfectly, line by line. The two animals nodded and led him home without another word. It was not blood or looks that made him one of them. It was the values they shared. ★ **Shared laws and values create genuine belonging.**

THINK How did Mowgli feel on the road back?

Chapter 6: The Monkey People

VOCABULARY Bandar-log, Law, monkey, rules

High in the treetops lived the Bandar-log, the monkey people of the jungle. They chattered all day, swung from branch to branch, and boasted that they were the cleverest animals alive. But they had no Law and no leader. They made promises at breakfast and forgot them by noon. If something shiny caught their eye, they grabbed it and dropped whatever they had in their hands. The other animals avoided them, not because the monkeys were dangerous, but because they were unreliable. You could never trust a Bandar-log to keep a promise, even a tiny one, such as saving you a banana. The wolf pack and the elephant herds were different, because they held themselves to a standard. Baloo told Mowgli that rules are not chains. They are the invisible frame that holds a community together from the inside. ★ **Shared laws transform individuals into a true community — without them there is only chaos.**

THINK When did monkeys forget promises?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 7: Between Two Worlds

VOCABULARY Mowgli, worlds, village, jungle

Mowgli had lived his whole life between two very different worlds. In the jungle, he was the only creature who walked on two legs and used fire. In the human village, he was the boy who had been raised by wolves and could speak to animals. Neither world accepted him completely. The jungle animals sometimes wrinkled their noses at the human smell that clung to him, even after years. The village children called him strange and kept a careful distance. At night, Mowgli sat by the river and looked at his own reflection. He saw a boy with two arms and two legs, and he wondered where such a boy truly belonged. He felt at home everywhere and truly at home nowhere. It was a lonely feeling, but he did not give up. ★ **Mowgli belonged nowhere.**

THINK Where did Mowgli sit at night?

Chapter 8: A Strange New Place

VOCABULARY Mowgli, village, wolf, home

When Mowgli entered the human village for the first time, he hoped to feel at home. These were his own people, the same kind of creature as he was in shape and size. But their language felt strange in his mouth, and their customs made little sense. They cooked their food over fire, and they slept inside houses with walls and roofs. They also avoided the forest after dark, which seemed very odd to a boy who had slept in the trees. A kind woman gave him a bowl of warm rice, and Mowgli did not know how to sit politely at a table. On the first night, he lay awake on a mat and listened to the strange silence of the roof above him. He missed the wolf pack, the smell of the river, and the feel of bark under his feet. He was human by birth, yet the jungle had made him into someone who fitted nowhere completely. ★ **Mowgli belonged fully to neither world he knew.**

THINK What did the kind woman give him?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 9: A Border Life

VOCABULARY Mowgli, worlds, jungle, between

Mowgli's story is really about growing up between two worlds. He had the instincts of a jungle animal and the mind and body of a human. Each world gave him something real, and each world also kept something back. The jungle gave him freedom and a family, but it could not give him his full humanity. The village gave him his humanity, but it could not give him the wildness that made him who he was. Mowgli spent much of his life walking along the line between them without ever crossing it. Sometimes this felt like a heavy backpack. At other times, it felt like a bridge. Bagheera told him that few creatures were ever given such a view of both sides. He could hear the jungle's songs and the village's drums, and he understood both. This is not entirely a sad story. It is also a story about the richness of living at the border. ★ **Mowgli existed between two worlds — belonging fully to neither the jungle nor the village.**

THINK What did the border feel like at times?

Chapter 10: Two Roads

VOCABULARY Mowgli, worlds, jungle, belong

For a long time, Mowgli tried to live in both worlds at once. By day he went to the village and helped with small jobs. At night he slipped back to the jungle and ran with the wolves. He thought he could belong to both if he tried hard enough. But the jungle animals began to feel his divided loyalty, and they trusted him a little less. The villagers also noticed his strange habits and his nighttime disappearances, and they watched him with suspicion. Mowgli was tired all the time. He often fell asleep in the middle of a task and woke up not knowing where he was. Standing between two worlds, he found, was far more exhausting than choosing one. Slowly, he began to understand that nobody can belong everywhere and also belong anywhere. ★ **Identity requires a choice.**

THINK How did Mowgli feel all the time?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 11: The Burning Branch

VOCABULARY Mowgli, Shere Khan, village, branch

One evening, the villagers heard a low growl at the edge of the fields. Shere Khan had come down from the hills, and the village cattle shook with fear. Mowgli could have stayed hidden in the jungle. He could have warned the people and run away before the danger arrived. Instead, he picked up a burning branch from a cooking fire and walked straight toward the tiger. Sparks flew in the dark, and his hand was steady. The tiger had never seen a boy walk toward him with fire. Behind Mowgli, the wolf pack and the elephants gathered, because the Law said to protect the weak. Shere Khan stared, snarled, and at last turned and slunk back into the night. Mowgli had chosen to protect the village, even though they had not fully accepted him. We learn who we are by the choices we make when they matter. ★ **True identity requires a conscious and definitive choice.**

THINK Who stood behind Mowgli?

Chapter 12: Into the Jungle

VOCABULARY Mowgli, village, jungle, Baloo

After the tiger had fled, Mowgli stood at the edge of the jungle for a very long time. Behind him were the village with its fires, its people, and its promise of a human life. Before him lay the dark, living forest with its Law, its animals, and its freedom. He felt both worlds pulling him with an almost unbearable strength. But he understood at last that the feeling of being pulled in two directions never goes away on its own. It ends only when a person gathers courage and steps firmly one way. A soft breeze moved the leaves, and he could hear Baloo humming somewhere in the dark. He thought of the villagers who had been kind to him and promised to visit them often. Then Mowgli took one long breath and walked into the jungle, where Baloo and Bagheera were waiting. ★ **True identity requires a choice — we cannot belong everywhere without belonging nowhere at all.**

THINK What did Mowgli hear in the dark?