



CEC READING LIBRARY · MIDDLE 1 · R3 CHALLENGE

White Fang

18 Chapters

Day 1-18

W31-W36

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 1: Born in the Wild

Far in the north, where the snow lies deep and the pine trees stand silent, a mother wolf named Kiche gave birth to a litter of pups in a hidden cave. Only one of them survived the first cold weeks. He was small, gray, and fierce, with sharp little teeth and bright eyes. He did not yet have a name. His father, a large one-eyed wolf, hunted for the family, and Kiche kept the pup warm in the shelter of her body. The world outside the cave was white and wide. Winter winds howled over the hills, and the food was often scarce. Although the forest was beautiful, it was a hard place, where only the strong and the clever lived to see the next spring. The pup learned his first lessons by instinct. He learned to stay close to his mother, to be quiet, and to sleep in the warmest corner. Before long, his curiosity grew stronger than his fear. The cave smelled of earth and fur, and the sound of dripping water echoed softly. When the wind quieted, the pup could hear the far-off howl of the pack, a sound that made his small body shiver with something between fear and longing. He pressed closer to his mother and closed his eyes. ★ **A wolf pup was born in the cold wild.** He tumbled in the cave mouth, sniffed at the air, and watched the snowflakes dance. And though he was only a few weeks old, something in him already knew that the world was both wonderful and dangerous.

THINK What was the mother wolf's name?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 2: Mother and Pup

Kiche loved her pup, and she taught him everything she knew. She showed him how to find food in the snow, how to listen for danger, and how to move without a sound. When he strayed too far, she nudged him back with her nose. She warned him with a low growl whenever a dangerous animal was near. The pup watched her carefully and tried to copy her every move. At night, he curled up against her side, warm and safe in the dark. The father wolf came and went, bringing meat when he could. But the winter was long, and one day he did not return. The cub did not understand why, but he saw the quiet sadness in his mother's eyes. They moved on together. They crossed frozen streams, passed under heavy trees, and slept in hollows under the roots. Hunger followed them, yet Kiche always found something for her cub. On bright mornings, Kiche led him to a sunny rock and let him roll in the warm moss. He chased his own tail, tumbled down a hill of pine needles, and bit at the fluttering wings of butterflies. Play, she seemed to say, is also a way of learning. ★ A wolf pup was born deep in the cold wild. From his mother he learned the first lesson of the wild: that care and protection are the greatest strengths, and that a family, even a small one, is a shelter in the storm.

THINK What did Kiche show the pup?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 3: Only the Strongest Survive

As spring melted the snow, the cub grew bigger and bolder. The forest came alive with birds and the sound of running water. But the wild had many dangers. Hawks circled overhead, and he had to learn to stay under bushes. Lynxes crept at night, and he had to learn to be silent. One day, he chased a ptarmigan chick into some tall grass. The mother bird flew at him, flapping her wings, and he ran away yelping. It was his first lesson in the cost of being careless. Kiche watched with calm eyes. She did not rescue him; she let him learn. He learned that even small creatures can defend their young. The summer brought fish to the streams, and Kiche led him to the water to hunt. He splashed, he slipped, and he finally caught a trout in his small jaws. It was a victory. In all these days, he did not think about hunger as a punishment but as a teacher. There were days when no food came at all, and the cub's stomach ached. He learned to lick the snow, to chew bark, and to sleep through the worst of the hunger. When at last Kiche brought a rabbit, he ate every scrap and sat very still, understanding what a gift it was. ★ A wolf pup was born in the cold wild, where only the strongest animals could possibly survive each day. And the wolf cub, little by little, was becoming one of them.

THINK What did the cub chase?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 4: Step by Step into the World

One bright morning, the cub noticed something he had never seen before: a wall of white light at the end of the cave. It was the opening to the outside. His mother slept, and he crept toward the brightness. As he came closer, the wall seemed to melt away, and he found himself standing at the mouth of the cave, looking out. He saw trees, a stream, and a vast blue sky. He had never known there was so much space. His legs trembled, and he took one careful step on the grass. Then another. The ground was soft and the air was full of strange smells. A squirrel jumped across a branch, and the cub fell backward in surprise. He rolled over, got up, and tried again. He was not yet brave, but he was curious. Everything felt new, like a language he was just learning to read. Once, he stumbled on a hidden nest of eggs, and a startled mother bird shrieked and flew at him. He tumbled backward into a patch of ferns, shaking his head. Instead of running away, he lay and watched the bird settle back on the nest. That, too, was something worth knowing. ★ He explored the world

step by step carefully. Every small discovery made him bolder, and every fear made him wiser. By the end of that day he had gone a hundred paces from the cave and had learned that the world was larger than his mother's warmth.

THINK What did the cub see at the end of the cave?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 5: Fear and Curiosity

Over the next days, the cub went farther. He followed the stream and found a fallen tree where he could climb. He met a porcupine and sniffed it too closely, and got a sharp lesson about quills. He learned that the stream was cold, that the tall grass was full of insects, and that the forest was full of shadows. Each new experience brought a little fear, but fear was not his enemy. When the wind rustled the bushes, his ears pricked up. When a bird screamed, he froze and listened. He was learning to read the signs of the forest. Kiche watched from a distance and let him find his own way. When he came back, she licked his face and showed him how to clean his coat. That night, as the moon rose, he heard the cry of a faraway wolf pack and felt something stir in him, deep and ancient. He was a creature of the wild, and he belonged here. At dusk, when the woods turned blue, he sometimes stopped and simply listened. The leaves whispered, a cricket chirped, and far away a stream murmured. He did not yet know the names of these sounds, but he felt each one as part of a great and secret pattern, and he wished to understand it. ★ He explored the world around him step by step. The cub understood now that being afraid was not the same as being weak. It meant that he was paying attention, and in the wild, attention was the best protection.

THINK What did the cub meet?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 6: Learning by Curiosity

By midsummer, the cub knew his small corner of the forest well. He knew where the berries grew and where the lynx liked to sleep. But he also wanted to discover what lay beyond the next hill. One morning, he followed a stream farther than ever before and reached a wide, flat river. The water was loud and fast, and he stopped at the edge, hesitating. Something told him to step back. He watched as a log was carried away by the current. At that moment he understood why the river deserved respect. He did not jump in, and he did not run away. He sat down and observed the water for a long time, ears forward. Later he found a quiet pool and drank, carefully watching his reflection. Kiche appeared behind him, and together they walked home through the long evening light. He was proud of himself. On the way back, he found a smooth, white bone near the riverbank and carried it proudly in his mouth. He did not know whose bone it had been, only that it smelled of old stories. He buried it under a root, as a treasure for another day, and trotted on, tail high. **★ He explored the world around him step by step, slowly learning through both fear and deep curiosity.** Even as he slept, his mind kept working, shaping a picture of the wild in which both caution and courage had a place.

THINK What did the cub see in the river?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 7: Strange and Powerful Humans

One day, the cub and his mother came to a camp by a river. There he saw, for the first time, strange creatures that walked upright on two legs. They wore furs and carried long sticks. They had flat faces, and their voices were deep and loud. Beside them stood tents made of skins, and fires burned in front of them. Dogs lay around, tied with ropes. The cub trembled. Everything about these beings was unlike anything in the forest. He pressed himself against his mother's side. Kiche, however, seemed to know them. She walked forward slowly, as if returning home. One of the men, a tall man named Gray Beaver, called out a name, and Kiche lowered her head. She had once belonged to him. The cub realized that he was among a different kind of wild, a place of rules and smoke and tools. Gray Beaver bent down and offered his hand. The cub growled with all his courage. The man laughed. Smoke curled from the tents and drifted into the pale sky. Children in fur coats ran between the fires, shouting in a language of clicks and rolling syllables. Women scraped skins, and men repaired sleds. Everywhere the cub looked, there was movement, noise, and smell, and his tiny heart beat so fast that he thought it might burst. He had never seen so many living things in one place, and he did not know whether he wanted to run away or to look closer. For a long moment, he did neither. He only stood very still, with wide eyes, trying to take it all in, and slowly deciding what this new world would mean to him. ★ **He met strange and powerful humans for the first time.** Soon the cub would be given a name that fit him well: White Fang, for the pale fur and the sharp little teeth that marked him out from the others.

THINK *Who was the tall man?*

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 8: The First Meeting

White Fang stayed close to his mother as the Indians moved around the camp. Everything was new. There were boys with sticks, women carrying water, and old men sitting by the fire. And there were many dogs. Some barked at him, some sniffed, and a few growled. A lean gray dog named Lip-lip came forward with stiff legs and snapped at him. White Fang snapped back, and the two tumbled in the dust. The people laughed and watched. White Fang soon learned a hard lesson. In this camp, the humans were the gods. They could give food or take it away, and they carried a power that no wolf had. Gray Beaver's hand was heavy but not cruel. He tied Kiche to a stake and fed her. The cub watched from a distance, learning the rules of the camp: do not steal from the meat rack, do not fight in front of the tents, and obey the voice of the master. The wolf in him disliked these rules, but another part understood. Whenever a man raised his hand, he flinched. Later he would learn that a hand could mean food, a pat, or a blow, and that the difference lay in the one it belonged to. For now, he simply kept his eyes sharp and his ears forward, ready to read every motion. **★ He met humans for the very first time.** He did not yet know if they were friends or enemies, but he knew they were stronger than any creature he had ever seen.

THINK Who was the gray dog?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 9: A New Kind of Power

One evening, White Fang watched the Indians make a fire. A man struck two pieces of stone together, and sparks fell onto dry grass. A tiny flame grew and soon became a warm, bright fire that danced among the sticks. White Fang had always feared the cold, and here was a creature that could create light and warmth with its hands. He crept closer and felt the heat on his fur. He reached out to touch the glowing wood, and it burned his nose. He yelped and ran back, rubbing his face on the snow. The men laughed, and one tossed him a piece of meat. White Fang took it and ate with a mixture of shame and relief. He understood that fire was both a gift and a danger, and that humans controlled it. They built tents, carved tools, and rode on sleds pulled by dogs. They seemed greater than any wild animal in the forest. At night, the glow of the fire lit the faces of the men, and the shadows of the tents stretched across the snow. White Fang lay at the edge of the circle, between the warmth and the dark. He could not decide which world he belonged to, and for a long time he did not need to.

★ **He met humans for the very first time, and they seemed far more powerful than any other living animal.** He stayed at the camp, because the humans offered food and shelter. And with each day, he watched them closely, as if trying to read a book written in a language he could not yet understand.

THINK *What burned White Fang's nose?*

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 10: A Hard Life

Life in the camp was not easy for White Fang. The dogs, led by Lip-lip, attacked him whenever they could, and he learned to fight back hard. He grew sharp, quick, and suspicious. The Indian boys threw stones at him, and sometimes he could not find enough to eat. During the long winter, hunger came again. Gray Beaver took him on trips through the snow, and White Fang learned to pull the sled, with a harness around his chest. The work was tiring, but he did it. He was patient, and he waited for each day to end. At night, he curled up in the snow, thinking about the warm cave and the smell of his mother. Kiche had been given to another man, and she no longer lived nearby. He missed her, but he never cried out. In the wild, one could not complain; one could only go on. The other dogs feared him because of his bite. The humans trusted him to work. Sometimes, in the middle of a hard day, a child would toss him a scrap of fish. He ate it quickly, but he remembered that small act. He did not understand why a creature that hurt him in some ways would help him in others, but he stored the question away to think about later. ★ **Life was very hard, but he never gave up hope.** In his heart, something small and stubborn continued to burn: a feeling that someday, somewhere, the world might be kinder.

THINK What was around White Fang's chest?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 11: Hope in Hard Times

Winter turned the world into iron. The rivers froze, the wind sliced through the camp, and the food shrank. Gray Beaver's family went hungry, and some of the dogs ran away. White Fang kept working, sleeping in the snow beside the sled. At times he caught a rabbit by himself, and he ate it quickly, so that no dog could steal it. He grew lean and strong. When the days were short, he sometimes looked up at the northern lights, a green and silver curtain dancing across the sky. It reminded him of a world beyond the camp, bright and wide. One afternoon, he found a small bird with a broken wing. For a moment he almost attacked it, but something in him hesitated. He sniffed and left it alone. It was the first time he chose not to hurt. The new feeling puzzled him, but it stayed. Perhaps the world still had some softness in it. In the dark, he sometimes dreamed of the cave. He dreamed that his mother was licking his face and that the sun was warm on the stones. He woke to the cold wind and the smell of ashes, but a little of the dream stayed with him, like a coal that would not die. ★ **Life was hard, but he never gave up his hope.** He learned new skills from the elders of the camp and from the land itself, and he stored them up like small fires against the cold, to be used on some future day.

THINK What did White Fang look at in the sky?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 12: Waiting for a Kinder World

One day, a new man named Beauty Smith came to the camp. He was thin and sly, with a smile that never reached his eyes. He traded whiskey to Gray Beaver for White Fang, and the white cub was taken to a fort by the river. There he was kept in a small cage and fed little. Beauty Smith poked him with a stick to make him angry. He wanted to use White Fang's strength to make money, by forcing him to fight other dogs for people to watch. White Fang hated the cage and hated the man, and he snarled at everyone who came near. The cruelty made him fierce, and he lost much of his trust. Still, he never forgot his mother, or the quiet forest, or the northern lights. He lay in the dark of his cage and listened to the sounds outside. He told himself, in the way that animals do, that the world could not always be like this. Each night he gathered his strength quietly, and each morning he waited. Outside the cage, he could hear laughter and the clink of cups. Inside, the straw was damp, and the walls smelled of old fear. He kept his body still and his mind awake, because he sensed that somewhere beyond this hard place was another life, and he meant to find it. ★ Life was terribly hard, but he never once gave up hope, always waiting quietly for a much kinder world. And then, one day, a stranger arrived whose face was not like any he had seen before.

THINK Who bought White Fang?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 13: A Kind Man Arrives

The stranger was a young mining engineer from California named Weedon Scott. He had come to the fort on business, and he heard the commotion in the yard. A crowd had gathered around Beauty Smith, who was forcing White Fang into the ring. Scott saw the wolf-dog, bruised and tired, still standing with his teeth bared. He felt a rush of pity and anger. He stepped forward and said that the match must stop. Beauty Smith laughed and said that he could do what he liked with his dog. But Scott had friends, and the crowd turned against Beauty Smith. At last, Scott offered money to buy White Fang. After some argument, the sale was made. White Fang was led away on a rope. He did not trust the new man, and he growled whenever Scott came near. But Scott was patient. He spoke softly and kept his hands low. He sat nearby for hours without moving. He did not hit, did not shout, and did not punish. The wolf watched him. The winter sun slanted through the open door, and a piece of meat lay between them. Scott did not move. White Fang stared at him, trembling. Neither one blinked. It was the first quiet moment of understanding between a man and a wolf, and it was the most important one of all. ★ A kind man came and slowly earned his deep trust. It was a slow beginning, and neither knew how far it would lead them.

THINK What was Weedon Scott's job?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 14: Earning Trust Slowly

Day after day, Scott stayed near White Fang and tried to win his trust. He held out pieces of meat, and when the wolf was too wary to take them, he put them down and stepped back. At first White Fang ignored him. But hunger and curiosity slowly worked on him. One morning, he took the meat from the ground. A few days later, he took it from Scott's open palm. Scott spoke in a gentle, low voice. He scratched White Fang behind the ear, softly at first, then more firmly. White Fang trembled, for he had never been touched kindly before. He did not know what to do with this strange pleasure. He wanted to growl, but a new feeling rose in his throat, almost like a purr. For a moment, the old wolf and the new friend looked at each other. The wolf was patient too, and he waited to see if the kindness would last. It did. Week after week, Scott worked with him. He taught him to walk on a lead and to sleep without fear. In the evenings, Scott read aloud from a book beside the stove, not because the wolf could understand, but because the sound of his voice was calm. White Fang lay with his chin on his paws and listened, his ears moving gently with every word, and the fear drained a little further out of his body each night. ★ A kind man came and slowly earned his trust. In the heart of the wild creature, a new kind of bond began to grow, firm and warm.

THINK What did Scott put down?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 15: Love Is Stronger Than Fear

As the months passed, White Fang changed. He learned to follow Scott through the fort, to wait by the door, and to be glad when his master came home. He still growled at strangers, and he still fought when he had to. But when Scott was near, he was gentle. One day, Scott had to leave on a steamer going south. White Fang waited by the shore, and when the boat began to move away, he howled with grief, a sound that surprised everyone. Scott turned back at once. He could not bear to leave the dog behind. He lifted White Fang into his arms and carried him on board. It was then that White Fang understood: he was loved, and he loved in return. For him, this was a greater miracle than fire or meat. He had known fear and hunger for so long that kindness seemed like another world. As the ship rolled over the water, the wolf lay curled at his master's feet, his eyes half closed. On the long voyage south, the wolf stood on the deck and smelled the sea for the first time. The wind was warm. Seagulls wheeled overhead, and the water glittered like silver. Scott stood beside him, one hand resting on his head, and neither of them said a word, because nothing was needed. ★ **A kind man came and slowly earned his full trust, clearly showing him that love is stronger than fear.** The wild wolf was now ready for a very different life in a very different country.

THINK *Where was the steamer going?*

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 16: A Real Home in California

The steamer carried them to San Francisco, and from there a train took them to Sierra Vista, the sunny estate of Weedon Scott's father, Judge Scott. The house was large and white, with wide lawns and tall trees. White Fang had never seen so much green. The air smelled of flowers and ripe fruit. The Judge welcomed the strange visitor, and the family greeted him with soft voices. There were children who laughed, a gentle mother with silver hair, and many house dogs. White Fang was nervous. The collie, Collie, was an old shepherd dog who had never seen a wolf, and she barked at him angrily. At first he wanted to fight, but Scott told him calmly to stay. Over days, White Fang learned to accept the rules of the house: not to chase chickens, not to bite, not to fight. It was hard, but he did it for Scott. He learned to lie quietly on the porch in the sun. In the mornings, the Judge walked through the garden with a cup of coffee, and the wolf walked beside him, matching his steps. People who passed the gate said that they had never seen such an odd pair, an old gentleman and a great gray wolf, but they smiled all the same. ★

He found a real home with a loving and caring family. The wolf who had once slept in the snow now slept on a soft rug, and he dreamed of nothing but warmth.

THINK What was the estate called?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 17: A Caring Family

Slowly, White Fang became a part of the family. He learned the children's names and followed them across the lawn. He let the youngest one, a small boy named Weedon, pull his ears and ride on his back. In the evenings, he lay beside the fireplace and watched the family laugh. The old collie, Collie, grew to like him, and one day she licked his face, which surprised him so much that he fell silent. Judge Scott often petted his thick fur and said that a dog like that was a treasure. White Fang no longer fought every dog he met. He learned to patrol the garden, to guard the porch, and to wait for his master. He still showed his teeth to strangers, but his heart was no longer a stone. The days were warm, and the nights were full of crickets. The wolf from the Yukon had found a place where no one would hurt him. On Sundays, the whole family sat on the porch, sharing stories and fruit. White Fang lay at their feet, and when someone laughed, his tail beat the boards. He did not know the words, but he understood the joy, and he wished it could go on for the rest of his life. ★ **He found a loving home with a caring family.** He understood that love, once given, makes a place a home, and that no wall, no cage, and no storm could take it away.

THINK Who rode on White Fang's back?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 18: What Love Truly Meant

One night, a stranger crept into the Judge's house. He was Jim Hall, a man who had once been sent away for a crime and who had sworn to take revenge. He climbed in through a window, thinking everyone slept. But White Fang, sleeping on the porch, heard the footsteps and slipped silently into the dark hall. When the man reached the stairs, White Fang sprang. There was a struggle, a crash, and a loud cry. The household woke. Weedon Scott, the Judge, and the family ran down the stairs with lamps in their hands. They found Jim Hall frightened and held by the dog. White Fang was hurt, and he lay on the floor, panting. The doctor came at once and bandaged him. For weeks, the whole family nursed him with great care. Children read to him, the Judge spoke to him, and Scott never left his side. When White Fang finally stood up again, wagging his tail, the family cheered. The newspapers wrote about the brave wolf-dog of Sierra Vista, and neighbors came to visit him. He accepted their pats with a calm dignity. But the one place he truly loved was the sunny spot by Weedon Scott's feet, where he had come, after a long and difficult road, to find his home at last. ★ He found a real and loving home with a caring family, and the wild wolf finally understood what love truly meant. Weeks later, he lay in the sunshine with Collie and her puppies, and the happy sound of children floated across the garden.

THINK Who crept into the house?