CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

The Jungle Book

Rudyard Kipling · *1894 · original English text*

A human child is raised by wolves of the Seeonee Pack, taught the Law of the Jungle, and hunted by the tiger Shere Khan. Kipling's volume is a collection: the Mowgli stories are one arc, and other tales (including "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi") stand beside them. The Law is not mere wildness; it is a rule the boy must keep and then outgrow.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

Can a man's cub live by the Law of the Jungle, and what does he owe the wolves, Bagheera, and Baloo when the time comes to leave the pack?

"I was born in the jungle. I have obeyed the Law of the Jungle, and there is no wolf of ours from whose paws I have not pulled a thorn. Surely they are my brothers!"

Mowgli · When the question of being a man, and not running with the Pack, is pressed on him

Mother and Father Wolf claim him; Akela's weakness and Shere Khan's hate push the pack toward exile. Baloo and Bagheera teach him the Law and the Master Words: "We be of one blood, ye and I." He is stolen by the Bandar-log, hunts Shere Khan, and cannot stay. The other stories in the book repeat the theme in other keys: courage, loyalty, and a law that holds a creature to its kind.

KEY CHARACTERS

Mowgli
The man's cub, taught by wolves and a bear, hunted by a tiger, belonging fully to neither jungle nor village.

Mother and Father Wolf
They claim him in the cave and stand against Shere Khan at the start.

Bagheera
The black panther who buys Mowgli's life and tells him hard truths.

Baloo
The sleepy brown bear, teacher of the Law and of the Master Words.

Akela
The Lone Wolf, leader of the Pack, whose aging opens the door to Shere Khan's intrigue.

Shere Khan
The lame tiger, a breaker of the Law, who hunts man and hates the cub.

Kaa
The rock-python whose help in "Kaa's Hunting" is decisive and frightening.

Rikki-Tikki-Tavi
The hero of a separate story in this volume: a mongoose who defends a bungalow against cobras.

ONE BLOOD, AND A LAW

> *"We be of one blood, ye and I"*
>
> **Mowgli** · The Master Words, in "Kaa's Hunting"

> *"I was born in the jungle. I have obeyed the Law of the Jungle, and there is no wolf of ours from whose paws I have not pulled a thorn. Surely they are my brothers!"*
>
> **Mowgli** · The Mowgli stories

Grades 3–5
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

Mowgli's Brothers

THE FIRST MOWGLI STORY

A toddler enters Father Wolf's cave. The Pack must accept or kill him; Bagheera buys his life, and Akela speaks. Shere Khan already claims the cub as his meat.

- The Law does not let a pack be ruled by a tiger's appetite.
- Mowgli is named "Mowgli the Frog" and is promised that he will one day hunt Shere Khan.
- The boy's stare and his lack of fear already mark him as something other than a wolf.

> *"Mowgli the Frog I will call thee--the time will come when thou wilt hunt Shere Khan as he has hunted thee."*
>
> **Mother Wolf** · Mowgli's Brothers

02

Kaa's Hunting

THE SECOND MOWGLI STORY

Mowgli, still learning the Master Words, is kidnapped by the Bandar-log, the monkey people who have no law. Baloo, Bagheera, and the python Kaa bring him back.

- The Master Words of the Jungle are "We be of one blood, ye and I," given with the proper accent for each people.
- The Bandar-log are chatter, vanity, and no memory—a picture of life without a law.
- Kaa's hunt is terrible; the monkeys are not a joke when the python dances.

> *"We be of one blood, ye and I"*
>
> **Mowgli** · Kaa's Hunting, when he gives the Master Words

03

Tiger! Tiger!

THE THIRD MOWGLI STORY

Cast out of the Pack, Mowgli goes to the man-village, becomes a herder, and kills Shere Khan with the buffalo. He will not stay among men either.

- Akela has fallen; the Pack's rejection is Shere Khan's work and their own fear.
- The village both shelters and misunderstands him; superstition gathers around the wolf-boy.
- He lays the hide on the Council Rock; his farewell to the wolves is costly.

04

The Law, and Leaving

THE CLOSE OF THE MOWGLI ARC IN THIS VOLUME

Mowgli has obeyed the Law and pulled thorns from the pack's paws. He is still a man, and the jungle cannot keep him as a cub forever.

- Bagheera had bought him with a bull and has always known this day would come.
- Brotherhood in the jungle was real; it does not cancel what he is.
- The boy's grief is not ingratitude.

> *"I was born in the jungle. I have obeyed the Law of the Jungle, and there is no wolf of ours from whose paws I have not pulled a thorn. Surely they are my brothers!"*
>
> **Mowgli** · Near the testing of his place in the Pack

05

Other Stories in the Book

THE REST OF THE VOLUME

The same book holds "The White Seal," "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi," "Toomai of the Elephants," and "Her Majesty's Servants." They are not chapters of Mowgli's life.

- Rikki-Tikki-Tavi is a mongoose's battle for a family and a garden, a complete tale of courage.
- "The White Seal" and "Toomai" turn to other creatures and other loyalties.
- Read them as companion stories of law, courage, and home, not as a single plot.

Law and Loyalty · Courage · Belonging and Exile · Teaching · Home

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 3–5

1. The hosted text is Project Gutenberg #236, the 1894 Jungle Book, a story collection. The Mowgli arc in this volume is mainly "Mowgli's Brothers," "Kaa's Hunting," and "Tiger! Tiger!" Other stories are separate. (The Second Jungle Book is another work.)
2. The Master Words appear as "We be of one blood, ye and I" and, once, "We be of one blood, thou and I," depending on the hearer. This map uses the "ye and I" form Mowgli is taught for the Hunting-People.
3. Mother Wolf's naming is: "Mowgli the Frog I will call thee--the time will come when thou wilt hunt Shere Khan as he has hunted thee."
4. Kipling's India and his idea of Law are of his time. Read the Law as the book presents it—a rule of self-command and loyalty—without turning the stories into a tract for empire.
5. Do not treat "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi" as a chapter of Mowgli's life.

Quotations are verbatim from the original English text, Project Gutenberg #236, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/the-jungle-book/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.