

Dear Educator,

Ready, set, action! The classic tale — *The Call of the Wild* — is making the leap from the page to the big screen in an exciting adventure that is sure to captivate your students and their families.

This free program from 20th Century Studios and the curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired (YMI) complements your language arts lessons by sparking your students' creativity and helping them plan and write their own thrilling adventure stories inspired by *The Call of the Wild*. In addition, this teacher's guide contains thought-provoking discussion and viewing prompts that will help students draw upon the movie's important themes of courage, survival, and overcoming adversity. These teaching materials are designed to generate excitement and discussion with your students before or after seeing the movie and can be used in conjunction with or independent of the novel.

Please share these resources with other language arts teachers in middle and high school. Although these materials are protected by copyright, you may make as many copies as you need for educational purposes. Then, on February 21, be sure to catch *The Call of the Wild* starring Harrison Ford in a theater near you.

Return the enclosed reply card or comment online at [ymiclassroom.com/feedback-call-of-the-wild](https://www.ymiclassroom.com/feedback-call-of-the-wild) to let us know your thoughts on this program. We depend on your feedback to continue providing free educational programs that make a real difference in students' lives.

Sincerely,
Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired

For questions, contact us toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by email at feedback@ymiclassroom.com.



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Target Audience

Students in middle and high school as a supplement to English Language Arts classes

Program Objectives

- Build students' literacy skills by raising awareness of key elements of the action-packed adventure genre
- Spark students' imaginations and challenge them to plan and write their own suspenseful tales
- Promote critical-thinking skills by encouraging students to make connections between their own lives and themes from *The Call of the Wild*

About *The Call of the Wild*

Adapted from the beloved literary classic, *The Call of the Wild* vividly brings to the screen the story of Buck, a big-hearted dog whose blissful domestic life is turned upside down when he is suddenly uprooted from his California home and transplanted to the exotic wilds of the Canadian Yukon during the Gold Rush of the 1890s. As the newest rookie on a mail delivery dog sled team — and later its leader — Buck experiences the adventure of a lifetime, ultimately finding his true place in the world and becoming his own master.

How to Use This Program

Make copies of the student activity sheet to distribute to your students. Visit [ymiclassroom.com/call-of-the-wild](https://www.ymiclassroom.com/call-of-the-wild) for a standards alignment chart and to view the film's trailer.

Activity: Write Your Own Adventure!

Introduce this lesson by telling students that *The Call of the Wild* movie is based on the famous adventure book written by Jack London in 1903. In the story, the main character, a St. Bernard named Buck, is stolen from his warm, safe home in California and uprooted to the frigid Yukon where he is put to work as a mail delivery sled dog. Buck is thrown into a whole new world and must adapt in order to survive. Ask students: *What other adventure stories do you know? What are some key elements that make adventure stories so thrilling?* Answers will vary, but could include that there is risk or danger involved, an unusual setting, something unexpected occurs in the plot, a main character faces obstacles and must display courage, and so on. Then ask: *Why do some books translate well into adventure films?* You can show the movie trailer at [ymiclassroom.com/call-of-the-wild](https://www.ymiclassroom.com/call-of-the-wild) to the class to generate enthusiasm and discussion.

Explain to students that they are going to use their imaginations to write their own adventure stories. Distribute and review the activity sheet, which is designed to help students map out their stories. After students complete the assignment, break them into small groups to discuss and share their ideas. They can peer review their

work for feedback as they formulate and revise their stories. Encourage students to think creatively as they write. They may write their tales as narratives, in a blog form, or as a series of suspenseful social media posts.

Discussion and Writing Prompts

Below are additional prompts to engage students:

- Buck needed to be brave when he was unexpectedly transported to a scary, new environment. Think about a time when you were placed in a new or difficult situation and had to be brave. Write a journal entry that reflects your feelings.
- *The Call of the Wild* is set during the Yukon Gold Rush of the 1890s. Tens of thousands of people traveled to the area in hopes of striking it rich. Research this time period and create pamphlets with maps encouraging prospectors to come to the area.
- Sled dogs work together as a team under incredibly harsh conditions. Think about a time you had to work with others to accomplish an important goal. What challenges did you face? What were the pros and cons of working as a group?
- In the trailer, Harrison Ford's character, John Thornton, who befriends Buck, says: "The Yukon is a dangerous place. You never know what's coming." Discuss how this statement captures the essence of adventure stories. How do you think the quote foreshadows what obstacles the characters in the film may face?
- In order to survive, Buck goes from being a newcomer to the leader of the sled dog team. Discuss the qualities that make someone a leader. Brainstorm someone from history, current events, or your own life whom you consider a leader. Write three questions you'd like to ask that person.
- When Buck arrives in the Yukon, he experiences snow for the first time. Write about the first time you experienced something in nature. Emphasize sensory details, describing what you saw, how you felt, or what you smelled or heard.

Post-Viewing Activity

As we read, we visualize the story based on details and descriptions from the author. Ask students: *What do filmmakers have to take into consideration when adapting a book into a film? How do the cinematography and music impact the story? What movies have you seen as adaptations of books that have been successful? What made them successful?*

Resources

- [ymiclassroom.com/call-of-the-wild](https://www.ymiclassroom.com/call-of-the-wild)
- [family.foxmovies.com/movies/call-of-the-wild](https://www.family.foxmovies.com/movies/call-of-the-wild)