

Suppose the Wolf Were an Octopus

Grades 5 to 6

**A Guide to Creative Questioning
for Elementary-Grade Literature**

Revised Edition

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White Fang

by Jack London, 1906

White Fang, half dog, half wolf, soon learns the relentless law of the North: kill or be killed. Captured and used as a sled dog by the indigenous people of the region and tortured by a cowardly white man, he becomes a fierce and deadly fighter until he finds a master he can trust and love.

Level 1 (Remembering)

- Who is old One Eye? Kiche? Collie?
- Where does the story take place?
- Why do the women at the end of the story call White Fang “The Blessed Wolf”?
- What is the law of the North?

Level 2 (Understanding)

- Why do the other puppies not accept White Fang?
- How does Gray Beaver’s strength allow him to acquire White Fang? How does his weakness then lose him?
- How does White Fang become domesticated?
- Why does Collie act the way she does toward White Fang?

Level 3 (Applying)

- If White Fang were your pet, how would you put people at ease about him? What would you tell others about him?
- If you had been with Henry and Bill, how would you have tried to keep the wolves at bay?
- If you had seen White Fang being rejected by the puppy pack, what might you have done to help him win acceptance?
- Would you have tamed White Fang if you had been Scott? If so, would you then have tried to leave him? Explain.

Level 4 (Analyzing)

- Why can't White Fang conquer the bulldog, when he can beat every other animal pitted against him in a fight?
- Which of White Fang's qualities is most important in enabling him to survive? Why?
- What does Weedon Scott see in White Fang that makes him want to rescue him?
- In what ways was White Fang's relationship with the Love-Master different from White Fang's relationship with Grey Beaver?

Level 5 (Evaluating)

- According to the principle of survival of the fittest, who do you think was White Fang's best master? Why?
- Which sled dog arrangement was better: that of the indigenous people or that of the white men? Why do you think so?
- Is Judge Scott a fair man? Explain your reasoning.
- Which human character is least honorable? Which character is least honorable from White Fang's perspective? Are they the same? Explain.

Level 6 (Creating)

- How would the story have been different if White Fang had been only one-quarter wolf?
- What do you imagine a pup of White Fang's would be like as a pet?
- How would the story change if food had been plentiful in the Yukon, rather than scarce?
- Suppose White Fang had killed the bulldog. How would the story be different?

Freaky Friday

by Mary Rodgers, 1972

A thirteen-year-old girl named Annabel wakes up in her mother's body for a day. The mother becomes Annabel. Annabel, now the mother, must deal with a day filled with grown-up activities and unexpected events. She sees life through her mother's eyes and understands how hard it is to be an adult with responsibilities. She wishes to be a teenager again.

Level 1 (Remembering)

- What is Annabel's brother's nickname?
- What is Annabel's wish on Thursday?
- Who is Morris?
- List three situations Annabel has to deal with while in her mother's body.

Level 2 (Understanding)

- Why does Annabel fire the cleaning lady?
- Why does Annabel wrongly call Morris "Boris"?
- What does Annabel learn from the parent-teacher conference?
- Which event in Annabel's day surprises her the most?

Level 3 (Applying)

- Choose an adult who you would like to become for a day. Why did you choose that person?
- What things would you do if you were an adult for a day?
- If you were an adult for a day, what do you think you would find the hardest?
- Would you like Annabel for a friend? Why or why not?

Level 4 (Analyzing)

- What do you think Annabel's mother might have learned when she was in Annabel's body?
- Why does Annabel's brother like his nickname?
- What does Annabel learn about responsibility on Freaky Friday?
- Compare Morris's relationship with Annabel to Morris's relationship with Annabel's mother.

Level 5 (Evaluating)

- What do you think is the most important thing that Annabel learns about herself while in her mother's body?
- What do you think is the most important thing that Annabel learns about her mother while in her mother's body?
- Which event is the most difficult for Annabel to deal with as her mother? Why do you think so?
- Is Annabel a good big sister? Why or why not?

Level 6 (Creating)

- Suppose Annabel had remained in her mother's body. What might have happened?
- Imagine that on Saturday, Annabel wakes up as her brother. Tell what might happen.
- Imagine that Annabel, as her mother, decides to dye her hair purple and get a nose ring. How would that change the story?
- How do you think this experience will change the rest of Annabel's life?