

Read a Chapter, Mowgli



Donna Reish

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Contact via email: characterinklady@gmail.com

About Read-a-Chapter, Mowgli

Read a Chapter, Mowgli is a beginning chapter book in Character Ink's Book-Movie-Book line up of products based on old books that have modern movies.

This beginning chapter book bridges the gap for young readers from picture books to lengthier stories. It is a great "first chapter" book with familiar characters, settings, plots, and scenes. It re-tells the popular Rudyard Kipling story, *The Jungle Book*, at a beginning middle school level. Readers will love following Mowgli as a baby carried into the jungle and raised by Mother and Father Wolf.

They will delight in his antics with his friends Baloo the bear and Bagheera the panther. And they will love the excitement of Mowgli fighting Shere Khan, leaving the jungle, and then returning with Brother Wolf.



Chapter 1

One day the normal sounds of the jungle were disturbed by a strange noise. Though some creatures ignored it, it didn't take long for Father Wolf to notice it. He had been hunting throughout the jungle for food, but the sound immediately excited his curiosity.

Turning aside from his previous trail, the wolf began to follow the noise. He came closer and closer until he pushed aside some leaves. He saw the source of the sound. A human baby lay in a basket crying!

Father Wolf was surprised at the sight of a man-cub in the jungle. He quickly began wondering what to do with the child. As he thought about it, he realized that the baby would be eaten if he was left alone in the jungle.

The dog-like father decided he would carry the basket back to the den where he lived with Mother Wolf and their

wolf-cubs. He picked the handle up between his teeth and carried the basket with the child back to his cave.

Once he reached the small clearing just outside his home, Father Wolf set the basket down and called for Mother Wolf.

Immediately Mother Wolf came out and then stopped in surprise. "A man-cub! Where did you find him?" she questioned.

"I heard a crying sound and went to find out what it was. This little guy was lying in this basket in the middle of the jungle all by himself. His parents must have left him. I can't believe he survived as long as he did with all the hungry creatures in the jungle."

"Well, now that we have found him, I guess we will have to raise him," replied Mother Wolf.

"At least until he and our cubs are old enough to be presented to the pack," agreed Father Wolf. For both he and Mother knew that the child would not be safe at the presentation. Human cubs were not wanted among the other wolves.

At that moment, they heard a slight rustle in the leaves behind them. They turned around just in time to see Shere Khan slide out of the undergrowth. When the tiger saw the basket, he asked smoothly, "What have you found? Is that a man-cub?"

"If it is, that is no business of yours," replied Father Wolf. The daddy stood between himself and the vicious tiger. At that moment, the baby gave a low cry.

"It is a man-cub!" exclaimed the tiger. "What can you possibly want with him? Surely he will be just another mouth to feed."

"What we want is to keep him from your clutches," replied Mother Wolf sternly.

"Ha!" laughed the tiger. "Well, you may be able to protect him for now, but you won't be able to forever. When he must be presented to the pack, he may not fare nearly as well." And with a gleam in his eye, Shere Khan turned and went on his way through the jungle.

"Maybe the pack will accept him," Mother Wolf thought out loud after the last rustling of leaves died away.

"Don't worry, dear," Father Wolf comforted. "Many moons are ahead of us before we are required to present him to the pack. We will deal with that when the time comes."

So, Mother Wolf picked up the basket in her teeth and went back to the den. Father Wolf, meanwhile, trotted back off into the jungle to carry on his hunt. Mother Wolf and her cubs licked and comforted the lonely child.



Chapter 2

Mother and Father wolf grew to love the man-cub. They named him Mowgli, which means "the frog." This human cub was loved and cared for by his adoptive parents and fun-loving brothers and sisters.

The wolf cubs and the boy grew larger and stronger until the time came to present them to the council. So on the moonlit night when the meeting was called, Father and Mother Wolf went to the meeting with their cubs, including their human cub, their little Mowgli.

As the council began, each family presented their cubs to the pack. Soon it was Father and Mother Wolf's turn. All their cubs went into the middle of the circle and were accepted into the pack.

Then it was time for Mowgli. As he came into view of all the wolves, Shere Khan suddenly leaped out of the forest. Padding up to the outside of the circle, he grinned and asked, "What business can the pack have with a man-cub?"

Shere Khan was not supposed to speak since he was not an accepted member of the pack. Thus, Akela, who was the head of the pack, ignored the remark.

However, a wolf repeated the tiger's question. Akela turned to the normal procedure for settling

"Since this 'wolf' is in question, two members besides the father and mother must support allowing him into the pack," he announced.

For a few minutes, the silence was unbroken. Baloo, the bear, was the only other animal allowed to have a voice in these meetings. He was the first to speak, "I will support Mowgli's acceptance into the pack. One man-cub can do little harm to the pack."

"We now have one to back the boy. Will another do the same?" questioned Akela.

At that moment, a dark creature leaped nimbly down out of the trees and into the circle. "I will vouch for Mowgli," Bagheera, the panther, calmly announced.

"However, I know I do not have a vote in your council. So I have a proposal. If you let my vote count, I will allow your pack to eat the meat of a bull I have just killed. Do you accept?"



"Your offer is accepted," replied Akela.

Immediately, most of the wolves except Akela ran off to find and devour the bull. The meeting was over. Mowgli was an accepted member of the pack.

However, Shere Khan was angry. He had failed to get his prey. "The man-cub will not always be protected by the pack," he muttered under his breath as he slunk away. "And when he is on his own, I'll have my chance."



Chapter 3

The years passed, and Mowgli grew and learned everything a young wolf-cub would learn. He loved to go on adventures. And he loved to explore every part of the jungle.

Mowgli was often exploring with his friend Baloo. This fun-loving bear taught him everything he needed to know about living in the wild. Mowgli learned all the languages of the animals from the old bear. This companion also taught the boy how to survive and how to act politely toward other creatures. Finally, the fuzzy friend warned Mowgli to avoid the monkeys because they refused to obey any laws.

However, one day as Mowgli ran through the jungle, he was suddenly grabbed by several monkeys. He struggled to escape their grip, but it was useless. He was caught.

As the monkeys carried him through the tree tops, a bird spotted him. This flying fowl carried the news of Mowgli's situation to Bagheera and Baloo. Both of them stopped what they were doing and rushed toward Monkey City. They were certain the monkeys would carry their human captive there.

Bagheera arrived first and charged into the mob of monkeys around Mowgli. Scratching and biting, he attempted to rescue. But soon his enemies began to overwhelm him.



As Bagheera was about to be defeated by the monkeys, Baloo lumbered into the fray. At first, he drove their enemies back. However, he too was unable to rescue Mowgli.

Just in time, Kaa, the snake, slithered into the scuffle. Striking at several of the primates, Kaa quickly sent them leaping and swinging away from the city. Kaa had his own plan, however. This serpent began a hypnotizing snake dance.

Though the other animals realized what he was doing, they were caught up in the trance of his movements. Bagheera and Baloo were even captivated by it. It seemed that Kaa's hypnotizing was working!

Soon Mowgli realized he had to do something. The man cub shook his friends and broke the spell of the snake. All of the animals sprinted away to safety.



Chapter 4

Mowgli and his friends enjoyed numerous adventures, but soon Akela began to weaken with age. Other wolves did not tolerate Mowgli. They devised a plot to kill Akela.

One night, the evil wolves gathered together in a clearing.

"How are we going to get rid of Akela?" barked one wolf.

"Quiet! I'll tell you the plan," replied the leader of the plot, "All we have to do is let me challenge Akela to a fight. His honor won't let him refuse a challenger. When I win, the pack will have to accept you and me as leaders. Then, we can also throw out that stinking man-cub."

The evil wolves began to cackle.

“We’ll have both of them for sure,” declared one of the larger wolves.

“How do we know that the boy will allow you to fight Akela alone? He won’t care whether Akela must do it for his honor or not,” challenged a doubtful one.

The cackling stopped.

“I hadn’t thought of that, “ the leader slowly replied.

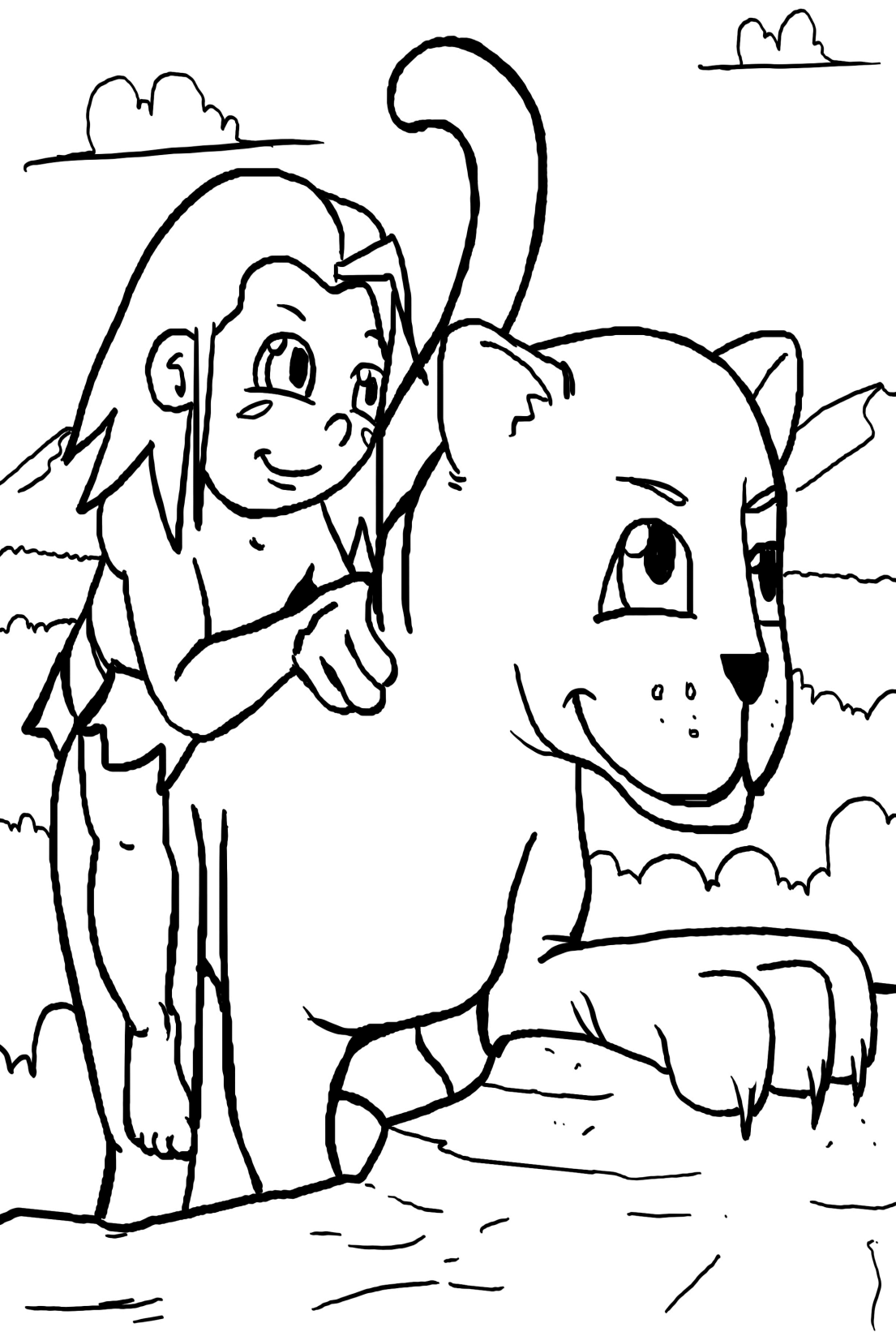
“But I had,” said a growling voice out of nowhere.

The wolves turned and saw Shere Khan, sliding out of the underbrush.

“Listen to me, “ hissed Shere Khan. “I will help you as long as you let me handle the man-cub.”

“It’s a deal,” responded the leader of the evil wolves.

“Next full moon, when the pack gathers together, I’ll be there to help,” smiled Shere Khan, revealing his huge teeth. And with that, he slinked back into the dark shadows of the jungle.



Chapter 5

Bagheera had been listening from the branch of a tree on the edge of the clearing. As soon as the meeting ended, he leaped as fast as he could through the treetops to warn Mowgli. He discovered the boy sleeping in the family's cave.

He woke Mowgli, and he took him away from the cave and into a wooded area. "Mowgli," he whispered, "Shere Khan is planning to kill you. He'll wait for the next full moon when the pack gathers together. Then he'll strike."

"If he wants to kill me, why would he wait until then? Why not now?" questioned Mowgli.

"He thinks he has a perfect opportunity at that time. Don't worry; I am going to foil his plans," replied Bagheera, trying to avoid Mowgli's question.

"You didn't answer my question," insisted Mowgli.

“Alright,” sighed Bagheera. “Some of the wolves who don’t like Akela are plotting to kill him. They are planning to attack at the next meeting of the pack, on the night of the next full moon.

Their leader will challenge Akela. He understands that the good wolf won’t be able to refuse him since that would be against his honor. They expect Akela will be killed, and they will become leaders of the pack.”

“That’s awful!” exclaimed Mowgli. “But how would that be a reason for Shere Khan to kill me that same night?”

“The wolves realize that you’ll be there, and they’re afraid you will stop them from fighting Akela. Shere Khan agreed to kill you then so that they don’t have to worry about you.”

“Oh,” replied Mowgli, and then he dropped onto a rock. He remained there for a minute or so, staring at his feet and contemplating what he had just heard.

Still staring at the ground, he spoke, “Well, it would be easier for me to stay away from the meeting that night, but then Akela would certainly die. But if I go, Shere Khan will kill me.” Raising his head and eyeing the wise panther, he asked, “What would you have me do, Bagheera?”

“Akela will die either way,” began Bagheera. And Shere Khan will still chase you if you stay away from the meeting. However, I have a weapon that everyone, even Shere Khan fears.

“What is it?” Mowgli questioned, leaning forward eagerly.

“The Red Flower. Or as men call it, fire.”

“The Red Flower! No creature except man will go near it, but how would I get it and carry it here?”

“In the village, by every house, rests some of the Red Flower,” replied Bagheera. “As far as carrying it, you are one of the humans. You do not need to fear it.”

“Oh Bagheera! I’m not sure I can do it,” Mowgli cried out.

“I’m confident in you,” replied Bagheera. “Now get some sleep.”



Chapter 6

The days leading up to the meeting of the pack quickly passed. Just before the gathering, Mowgli hurried through the jungle. He had often spotted the Red Flower as he watched the village from the shelter of the underbrush.

This time he would come within inches of its power. Creeping up to the nearest hut, he quietly removed the lighted torch from its holder. He reached his hand toward the flame. With a yelp, he pulled it back. *That hurts*, he thought.

As speedily as he could, Mowgli carried the Red Flower back through the jungle. Soon, he reached the clearing where the wolves always met. Most of them were already there, and the rest were arriving.



Crouching in the shelter of the trees, Mowgli waited for the meeting to begin. On the rock in the middle sat Akela. Next to him, Mowgli spotted the leader of the evil wolves. Then, Mowgli noticed two gleaming eyes peering out of the underbrush on the other side of the clearing. It was Shere Khan.

Akela started the meeting as tradition demanded. This meant that he challenged anyone to fight him. The other wolves were shocked when the leader of the evil wolves sauntered toward the rock. Akela prepared to face the challenger in the fight.

With a leap, the evil wolf knocked Akela off the rock. The old leader was up in an instant. Soon he and the younger wolf were in a life-and-death struggle.

Mowgli was filled with passion at the sight of the evil wolf knocking Akela off the rock. The brave man cub stepped out of the shadows. At the same moment, Shere Khan's huge body emerged from the other side of the clearing. The time for the fight between Mowgli and Shere Khan had arrived.

Shere Khan bounded across the clearing toward Mowgli. Fearless, Mowgli stood ready with the torch in his outstretched hand. Shere Khan stopped short at the sight of the Red Flower in the boy's hand. Staring at the flame, he began to pace back and forth.

"Too scared to fight me?" Mowgli challenged.

"No!" growled the tiger. He sprang at Mowgli. Shere Khan missed and leaped away. His jaws "snapped" shut on air.

Shere Khan rolled into the underbrush, leaped onto his feet, and turned to face Mowgli. As he did so, Mowgli threw the torch. It struck Shere Khan in the face. Roaring in pain, the giant cat bounded back into the jungle.

As soon as Shere Khan was out of sight, Mowgli turned to watch the fight between Akela and the evil wolf. What he witnessed caused him pain. Akela was lying unmoving on the ground, and the evil wolf occupied the rock.

Tears began to cloud Mowgli's eyes. Not only was Akela dead, but Mowgli's days in the pack were over. His eyes were blinded by tears. The young human stumbled into the darkness of the jungle.

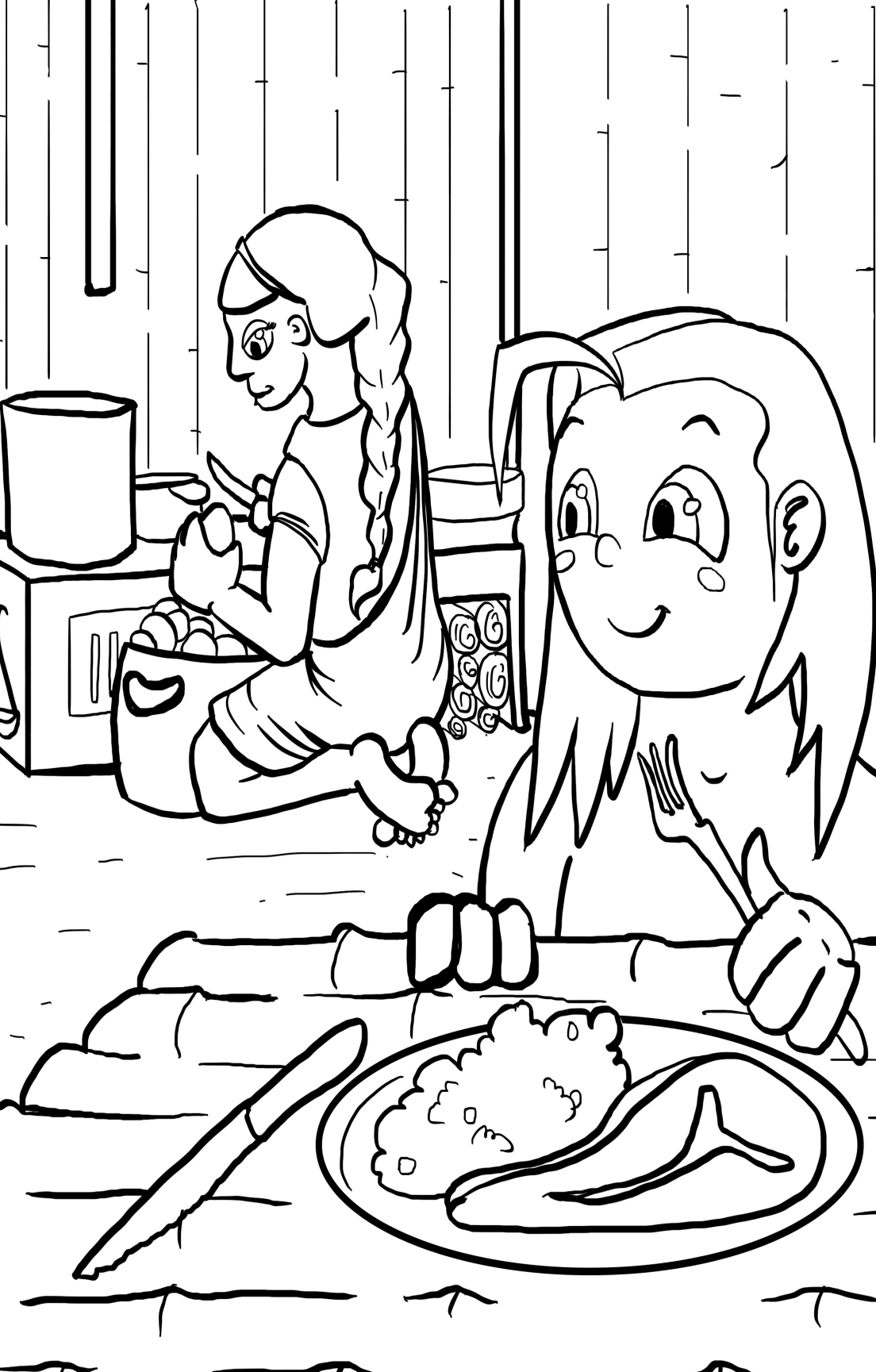


Chapter 7

Bagheera had witnessed both battles from a nearby tree. He spotted Mowgli leaving the clearing. Softly leaping to the ground, the old panther padded up beside the boy.

Comforted by the presence of his friend, Mowgli lifted his head up as he ambled along the path. Bagheera realized the pain the boy was feeling and remained quiet. Mowgli, accepting the new life he would now begin, turned his steps toward the village.

Soon, they were at the edge of the jungle. Turning to Bagheera with tears in his eyes, Mowgli hugged him and whispered goodbye. Then, leaving the shelter of the trees, he trotted toward the village.



Chapter 8

As he came closer to the village, Mowgli realized that he would still be dangerously close to Shere Khan if he lived in this town. So, he decided to travel down the valley until he was farther away from the jungle.

So, he trotted down the road that ran along the bottom of the valley until he reached an area he did not recognize. The land he saw was a wide plain cut in several places by large ravines. In the center of it, there lay a small village.

Walking boldly into the village, Mowgli immediately caused an uproar. The first person who saw him ran and told others. Soon the whole town was gathered to stare at the strange boy.

Everyone talked and pointed and wondered until finally several women in the crowd remembered something. Turning to another woman in the crowd, they excitedly questioned, "Could this be your son whom the tiger stole years ago?"

The woman, whose name was Messua, looked closely at Mowgli's face. "He certainly resembles my son, but I do not know whether he is or is not my Nathoo." Thinking to herself, she spoke again, "Although I do not know, I will take him into my house anyway." Then, she motioned for Mowgli to follow her. She led him to her hut.

After giving him something to eat, Messua looked carefully at Mowgli. Then, she remembered that when Shere Khan took her son Nathoo, the boy had been wearing shoes. Realizing that Mowgli's feet would be softer if he had worn something on them, she reached down and touched his feet. They were extremely hard, and she knew that this could not be her son.

However, knowing that he had nowhere else to go, she made a decision. "You are not my Nathoo," she told Mowgli. "But I will adopt you as my son anyway."

Mowgli could not understand any of this. The hut made him nervous. It seemed more like a trap than a place to live and sleep. Looking around the building, he could see that he would be able to easily break through the roof or climb out the window if he needed to escape.

Mowgli determined that he could get away any time if needed. Thus, he decided he would try to learn the humans' language by copying everything Messua said. That is what he did. By the time night came, he knew the names for many things.



Chapter 9

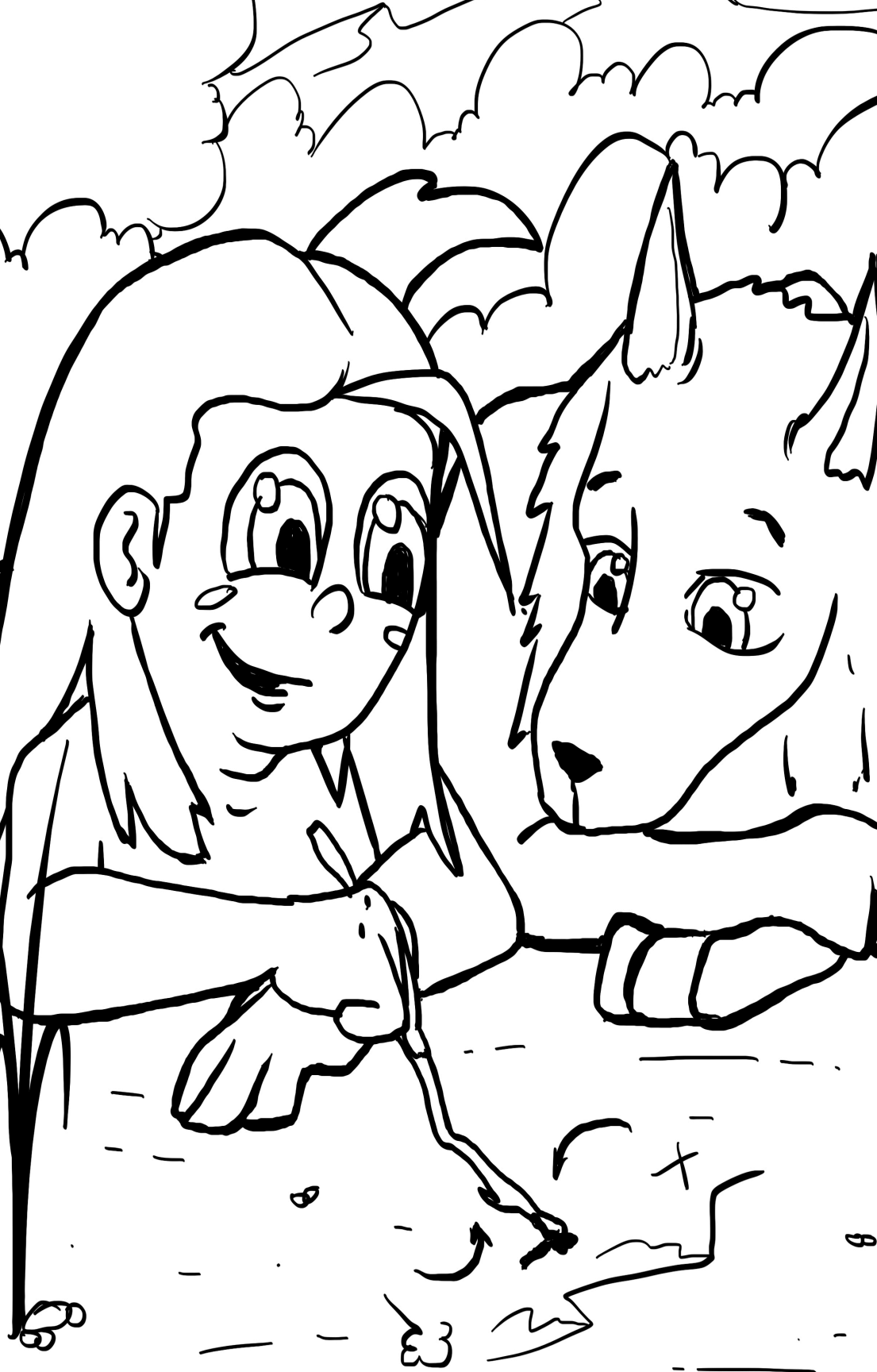
As Mowgli was about ready to fall asleep, he suddenly felt something warm and furry tap him on the shoulder. He sat up immediately and turned to see Brother Wolf, Mother Wolf's oldest child.

Delighted, he hugged him and asked, "Why are you here?"

"I followed you to bring you news," responded the wolf. "Shere Khan has left for another part of the jungle until he recovers from the burns you gave him. He has sworn, however, that he will return. Then he claims he will not rest until you are dead."

"Well, I will be ready for him. I'll find a way to get his hide one way or another. But, Brother Wolf, please tell me as soon as you hear news of his return."

"I will, Mowgli. Next time, I will meet you in the trees at the edge of the grazing land."



Chapter 10

For the next few months, Mowgli had little time to think about meeting with Brother Wolf again. He had to learn hundreds of new things about living in a village. After much practice, he was able to speak and understand all the words that the people used.

Eventually, it was determined that he would be one of the boys whose job it was to herd the cattle. So, after he was given a few simple instructions, Mowgli was sent off into the pasture lands, riding the lead bull. The rest of the cattle followed, lowing loudly.

They rode out onto the open plains. Once there, each boy took his part of the herd to one area of the grazing land. Thus, Mowgli was able to take his herd to where he knew Brother Wolf would be waiting.

As he had promised, Brother Wolf was waiting for Mowgli at the edge of the plain. Soon the cattle were

happily grazing, so Mowgli ran over to the wolf to hear the news. Brother Wolf told the boy that Shere Khan would most likely be back soon.

So, they agreed that the wolf would sit on a rock near the place they were currently meeting if Shere Khan had still not arrived. However, once the tiger made his appearance, Brother Wolf would wait for Mowgli in a ravine on the other side of the plain.

For several weeks Mowgli would spot Brother Wolf sitting on the rock that they had agreed upon. One day the boy rode out on the bull as usual. But when he looked toward the normal spot, nothing was there.

Mowgli led the herd to the agreed upon ravine. There Brother Wolf was waiting, "Shere Khan is here, but he must be waiting to hunt you down until this evening. He has eaten his fill and is sleeping in the largest ravine. What is your plan?"

"I'm thinking," Mowgli spoke slowly as his mind raced. Suddenly, he brightened up, "Aha! What a fool Shere Khan has been! He will be so full and tired he will not even have a chance to escape me. Yes, I have him this time!"

Turning to the wolf, he excitedly asked, "Brother Wolf, can you help me split this herd?"

"Ah! I see your plan now," replied the wolf, with a gleam in his eye. "Yes, with a little work I'll have them right where they need to be."



Chapter 11

Brother Wolf charged into the herd and began nipping at the heels of the cows all throughout the center of the crowd. Bellowing, the beasts moved away from their fellows. Soon, Brother Wolf had done his work.

Leaving the other part of the herd to fend for themselves for a little while, Mowgli began striking the cattle with a bamboo switch while Brother Wolf attacked their heels. Soon they had the group moving. With some maneuvering, they were able to use the cows to block one of the entrances to the valley.

Mowgli and Brother Wolf raced back to the other part of the herd. They moved them just like they had the other cattle until this group was herded at the other side of the ravine. Now they were ready to finish off their plan.

At Mowgli's signal, Brother Wolf let loose a blood-curdling howl from the rear of the group. Immediately, both groups of cattle began to move around anxiously, wondering where they would be attacked by the wolf. When the cows heard a second call from the feared animal, they panicked. Gathering together, each group charged down into their end of the valley.

At the sound of the bellowing cattle, Shere Khan woke up and glanced nervously toward either end of the ravine. Suddenly he realized the cows on one side of the valley were stampeding. He turned to run to the other side. But he was met by another mass of cattle hurtling towards him.

Desperately searching for a way to escape, the tiger found none. A few seconds later, Shere Khan disappeared beneath hundreds of hooves as the two herds of cows ran headlong into each other. After exerting some effort to calm down the cows, Mowgli was able to move them along. As they trotted out of the valley, they revealed the dead body of the tiger.



Chapter 12

After making certain that the herd was grazing calmly again, Mowgli returned to the body of Shere Khan. Thinking it a shame to waste such a beautiful hide, the boy began skinning the tiger. Brother Wolf stood nearby as Mowgli was working.

After some hours, the work was finally complete. There, in Mowgli's hands, lay the huge hide of Shere Khan. As he turned to head back to the village, the wolf broke the silence.

"Mowgli," Brother Wolf began, "I know the pack has been taken over by the evil wolves, but that does not have to be the only group of wolves any more. My brothers and I have no loyalty to the new leaders. If you would return to the jungle, we would hunt with you."

“I do not bear any loyalty to the pack of men either,” replied Mowgli. “I was raised in the jungle and it is home to me. I accept your offer.”

So, instead of returning to the village, Mowgli only left the hide of Shere Khan outside its gate so that the villagers would know that the tiger was dead. Then, he and Brother Wolf trotted off into the jungle.

Soon they met up with Brother Wolf's other siblings. These wolves happily agreed to join, and so the new pack was started. From that day forward, Mowgli lived in the jungle and hunted with his wolf brothers.

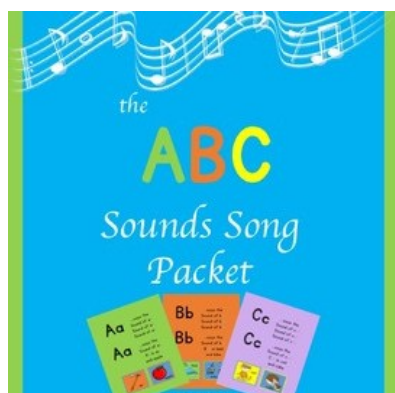
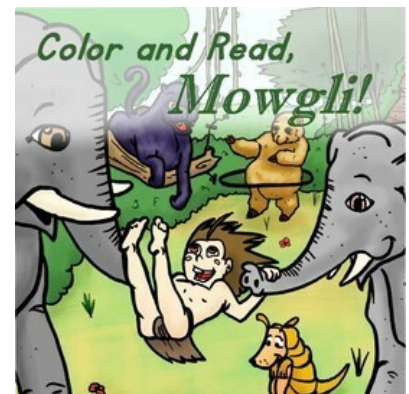
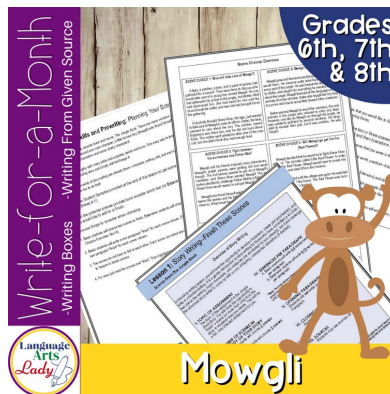
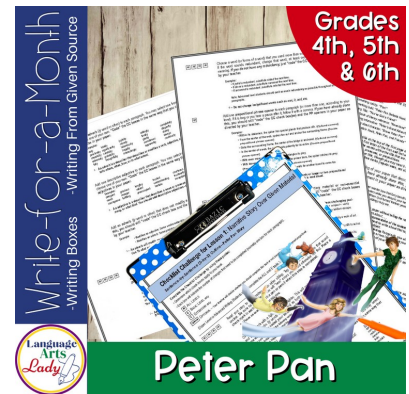
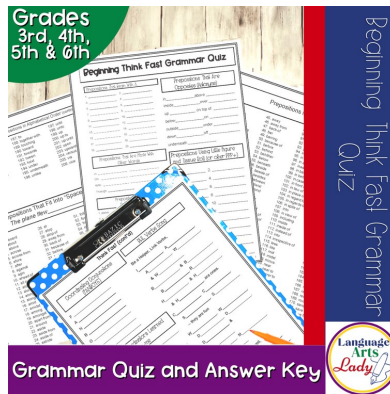
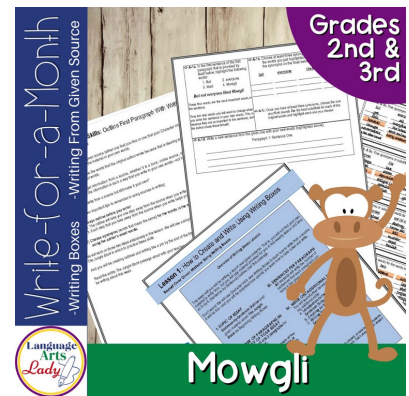
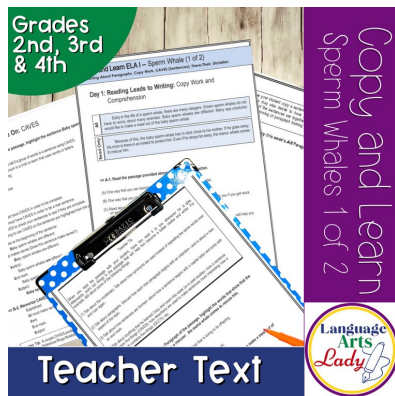
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Donna Reish, mother of seven grown children and thirty-two year homeschool veteran, is a prolific curriculum writer, blogger, and teacher from Indiana. She graduated from Ball State University with a degree in Elementary Education and did master's work in Reading Specialist following that. Donna began writing curriculum for a publisher out of Chicago specifically for homeschoolers twenty years ago. Following the completion of those thirty books

over ten years, she and her husband started a small press publishing company writing materials for homeschools and Christian schools. With the surge of digital products, Donna now writes curriculum books that are digital downloads (both secular and faith-based products), bringing her total curriculum products to 120 books of 50,000+ pages. Donna tests all of her books with 50-80 in-person students each year locally before they are published--and this is her real love: Seeing the faces of students who achieve language arts goals that they never thought were possible using her creative, incremental approaches and materials. Donna teaches parents, teachers, and teacher parents, about grammar, language arts, writing, reading, learning, and more at her teaching website, *Language Arts Lady Blog*, and through her videocasts/podcasts, *How I Teach*.

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