



Key Stage 3

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 1 Explorations in creative reading and writing
Year 9 Pack 3

Insert

The Source that follows is:

Source A: 20th Century prose-fiction

It is an extract from the novel *White Fang* by Jack London published in 1906.

It tells the story of a wild wolfdog called White Fang and is set in Canada during the 1890s gold rush.

**Please turn the page over
to see the Source**

Source A

This story is set on a farm in Canada. White Fang is the name of a wild, wolf-like dog guarding the house of the Scott family: Judge Scott, the judge's wife and the judge's son, Weedon Scott, whom White Fang calls 'master'. In the middle of the night an intruder called Jim Hall breaks into the house to try and murder the judge. White Fang refers to Jim Hall as 'the strange god'.

1 One night, while all the house slept, White Fang awoke and lay very quietly. And very quietly he smelled the air and read the message it bore of a strange god's presence. And to his ears came sounds of the strange god's movements. White Fang burst into no furious outcry. It was not his way. The strange god walked softly, but more softly walked White Fang, for he had no clothes to
5 rub against the flesh of his body. He followed silently. In the wild he had hunted live meat that
6 was infinitely¹ timid², and he knew the advantage of surprise.

7 The strange god paused at the foot of the great staircase and listened, and White Fang was as dead, so without movement was he as he watched and waited. Up that staircase the way led to the master and to the master's dearest possessions. White Fang bristled³, but waited. The
10 strange god's foot lifted. He was beginning the ascent.

Then it was that White Fang struck. He gave no warning, with no snarl anticipated his own action. Into the air he lifted his body in the spring that landed him on the strange god's back. White Fang clung with his fore-paws to the man's shoulders, at the same time burying his fangs into the back of the man's neck. He clung on for a moment, long enough to drag the god over
15 backward. Together they crashed to the floor. White Fang leaped clear, and, as the man
16 struggled to rise, was in again with the slashing fangs.

17 The family awoke in alarm. The noise from downstairs was as that of a score of battling fiends. There were revolver shots. A man's voice screamed once in horror and anguish. There was a great snarling and growling, and over all arose a smashing and crashing of furniture and glass.

20 But almost as quickly as it had arisen, the commotion died away. The struggle had not lasted more than three minutes. The frightened household clustered at the top of the stairway. From below, as from out of an abyss⁴ of blackness, came up a gurgling sound, as of air bubbling through water. Sometimes this gurgle became sibilant⁵, almost a whistle. But this, too, quickly died down and ceased. Then naught came up out of the blackness save a heavy panting of
25 some creature struggling sorely for air.

Weedon Scott pressed a button, and the staircase and downstairs hall were flooded with light. Then he and Judge Scott, revolvers in hand, cautiously descended. There was no need for this caution. White Fang had done his work. In the midst of the wreckage of overthrown and smashed furniture, partly on his side, his face hidden by an arm, lay a man. Weedon Scott bent
30 over, removed the arm and turned the man's face upward. A gaping throat explained the manner of his death.

"Jim Hall," said Judge Scott, and father and son looked significantly at each other.

Then they turned to White Fang. He, too, was lying on his side. His eyes were closed, but the lids slightly lifted in an effort to look at them as they bent over him, and the tail was perceptibly
35 agitated in a vain effort to wag. Weedon Scott patted him, and his throat rumbled an acknowledging growl. But it was a weak growl at best, and it quickly ceased. His eyelids drooped and went shut, and his whole body seemed to relax and flatten out upon the floor.

infinitely¹ - extremely

timid² – shy

bristled³ – stiffened and lifted his head

abyss⁴ – a gulf, a hole

sibilant⁵ – hissing

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Source A – White Fang by Jack London © Macmillan & Co. Ltd, 1906

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