

Introduction

The Jungle Book was written in 1894 by the Indian-born British writer Rudyard Kipling. It is a collection of stories that had been previously published in magazines in 1893–94. The best-known stories of the collection are about the adventures of Mowgli, a child who is brought up by wolves in the jungle. The book soon became a classic all over the world. It was also made into a cartoon by Disney in the 1960s. Its sequel, *The Second Jungle Book*, which appeared a year later, continued to appeal to children and adults alike.

Here you will read about the adventures of Mowgli. At first he enjoys living with the animals. But as he grows up, he begins to feel lost. Does he belong to the village or the jungle? Should he go back to the humans? Can humans and animals live in peace and harmony together?

You will also meet Akela, the leader of the wolves; Bagheera, the black panther; Baloo, the old brown bear; Shere Khan, the bad-tempered tiger; and many other animals in the jungle.

Read on to join Mowgli in his adventures in the jungle!

About Rudyard Kipling

Rudyard Kipling was born in 1865 in Bombay, India. At the age of six he was taken by his parents to England. In 1882 Kipling left school and sailed for India, where he worked for seven years as a journalist for a daily

English newspaper. He returned to England in 1889, and was soon regarded as one of the best writers of his time.

Kipling was most famous for his writings for children. Besides *The Jungle Book*, his best-known children's classics include such works as *Just So Stories*, *Puck of Pook's Hill*, and *Rewards and Fairies*. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907, the first Englishman to receive this honour.

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Mowgli's Brothers

An unwelcome visitor

One warm evening Father Wolf woke from his day's rest. Mother Wolf lay beside her four babies. The moon shone into the mouth of the cave where they lived. 'Time to go,' said Father Wolf. Just as he was going to leave, a little animal with a long tail ran in. 5

'Good luck to you,' it said. 'Have you got a bone for a hungry beggar?'

It was Tabaqui, the little jungle dog. The wolves all hate Tabaqui. He is a beggar and a thief. 10

'Come and look,' said Father Wolf, 'but there is no food here.'

'There is no food for a wolf, perhaps,' said Tabaqui. 'But for a poor person like me, a dry bone is as good as a feast.' He found a bone at the back of the cave and began to eat. 'All thanks for this good meal,' said Tabaqui. 'How beautiful your children are!' 15

Now Tabaqui knew that it was unlucky to say that. It pleased him to make Father and Mother Wolf uncomfortable. 20

'Shere Khan has changed his hunting grounds,' said Tabaqui. 'He is coming to hunt in these hills for the next month.'

Shere Khan was the tiger. He lived near the Waingunga River, twenty miles away. Father Wolf was angry. 25

'He must not do that!' he said. 'This is our hunting ground. Why can't he hunt in his own place?'