

The Call of the Wild Vocabulary Test #1

Name: _____

1. impending	6. malingerer	11. obscurely	16. precipitate
2. metamorphosed	7. daunted	12. futilely	17. resolutely
3. imperative	8. conspicuous	13. impartial	18. abjectly
4. vicarious	9. solidarity	14. malignant	19. insidious
5. arduous	10. inexorable	15. indiscretion	20. placatingly

Date: _____ Class: _____



Directions: Use the words above to complete the passage below. Students should use only the first 10 words since the last 10 words are already integrated into the text of the test.

Chapter 3 of The Call of the Wild presents a significant set of challenges for Buck, who proves he is ready to meet those challenges. At the beginning of the chapter, Buck possesses an **insidious** hatred for his rival Spitz. Up to this point in time, he has not given it away through any (1) _____ or **precipitate** action. He successfully avoids any trouble with Spitz until the night that the camp is overrun with the wild, starving huskies.

Earlier that night, Buck finds Spitz had taken his bed while he had been eating his ration of fish. Buck is not (2) _____ by this trespass. Spitz's **indiscretion** brings Buck's blood to the boiling point, and he is (3) _____ into a raging adversary. He surprises Spitz by **resolutely** attacking him for the first time. Even Francois is caught off guard and eagerly roots him on. However, as quickly as the fight starts, it comes to an end with the arrival of the husky pack, which has entered the camp **obscurely** as all attention is on the two fighting dogs.

Immediately, all of the dogs find themselves fighting for their lives against a **malignant** wave of skin, bones, and snapping teeth. Perrault and Francois **futilely** attempt to save both the food and their dogs, but are likewise quickly overwhelmed by the attack. In the heat of the fight, Spitz attacks Buck from the side, and moments later attempts to charge and knock him down in the midst of the husky pack, but Buck's (4) _____ experience in front of the log store at Dyea prepares him, and he narrowly avoids certain death.

The next morning the team struggles back to camp to find Francois and Perrault in bad moods, most of the food eaten, and the equipment badly damaged from the previous evening's attack. And to top it off, they are about to begin the most (5) _____ part of the trail that they will experience over the next 400 miles to Dawson. During this part of the trip it becomes apparent that the climactic battle to the death between Buck and Spitz is (6) _____. The environment continues to present challenges to Buck and opportunities for Spitz to attack.

One morning, Pike lingers too long in his nest after Francois had called all of the dogs to the sled. Spitz is eager to punish the offender, and he rages through the camp in search of him. When at last Spitz finds him, Buck jumps in and prevents Spitz from punishing the (7) _____. Pike, who at first had been trembling **abjectly**, suddenly finds new courage, joins Buck, and springs upon his overthrown leader.

Soon, Buck's open challenge to Spitz's leadership begins to affect the (8) _____ of the entire team. Because they know that Buck will back them up, the other dogs no longer find it (9) _____ to acknowledge Spitz's authority, and begin to openly defy him. Sometimes they even steal his food. Even Billee, the good-natured, becomes less good-natured, and whines not half so **placatingly** as in former days. The dogs increasingly quarrel among themselves and trouble continues to increase until the night of the rabbit chase.

The night that Buck leads the pack after the snowshoe rabbit offers the climactic showdown between Buck and Spitz. Spitz uses his superior experience to spoil the chase for Buck by breaking off from the pack, cutting off the hare, and breaking its back in midair. The fight that follows is not only brutal, but reveals Buck as an (10) _____ opponent.

Buck discovers through experience and observation that nature is **impartial** in its enforcement of its laws. Initially, that had put him at a disadvantage in this environment. The laws of civilization are worthless here. The overpowering goal in this new environment is to survive. Experience has taught him well. He has learned the law of club and fang and mastered it. He is not only a survivor; he has fought to become the leader.