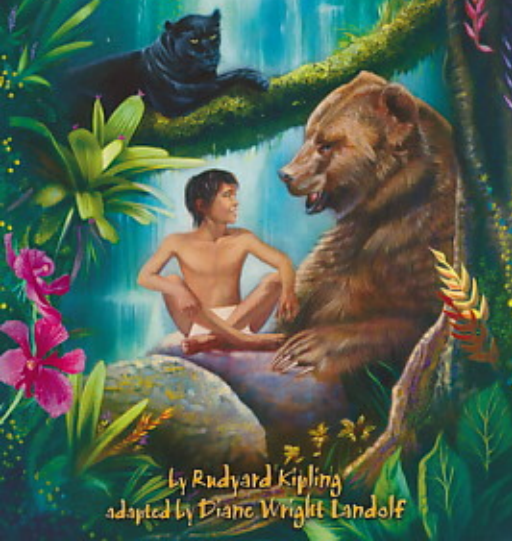


STEPPING STONES™  
a chapter book

CLASSIC

# The Jungle Book



By Rudyard Kipling  
adapted by Diane Wright Landolf



## Chapter 1

**F**ar away in India was a cave in the hills where a wolf family lived. Just before the sun set, Father Wolf woke up to hunt. Next to him, Mother Wolf lay with her big grey nose on her four cubs. A bushy-tailed shadow fell across the cave.

It was the jackal Tabaqui. The wolves did not like Tabaqui. He was a mischief-maker and a gossip, and he stole scraps from the village trash. Still, Father Wolf let Tabaqui enter to look for food.

Tabaqui hurried in and began crunching on a bone. "Shere Khan is hunting nearby," the jackal told the wolf family.

Shere Khan was a tiger. He was born lame, but he was still powerful.

"He has no right," Father Wolf said. The wolves followed the Law of the Jungle. By that law, Shere Khan should have warned the other animals before changing his hunting grounds.

Tabaqui saw he was not welcome with the wolves. He slunk out of the cave.

The jungle echoed with the sound of a terrible snarl. It was Shere Khan, and he was hungry. "He will scare away all the deer with that noise!" said Father Wolf.

"He is not hunting deer," Mother Wolf said. "Tonight, Shere Khan is hunting man."

"Man!" cried Father Wolf with disgust.

Hunting man was off-limits. Men were weak, and it wasn't fair to kill them. Besides, whenever an animal killed a man, hundreds of people came soon afterward with torches and guns. Then every creature in the jungle had to pay.

The wolf family listened to Shere Khan. They heard a howl of pain. Father Wolf peered out of the cave. Shere Khan had burned his paws on a woodcutter's fire.

"Something is coming up the hill," said Mother Wolf.

The bushes rustled. Father Wolf crouched down. He sprang forward, then stopped himself mid-leap.

Right in front of him toddled a little boy, a man's cub. The boy was just old enough to walk. He looked up at Father Wolf and laughed.

Mother Wolf had never seen a man's cub.

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Mother and Father Wolf aren't looking for trouble, but when a small man-child toddles by their cave, they decide they can't leave him alone in the jungle. They name the boy Mowgli and raise him as one of their own cubs. From the big old brown bear Baloo and the clever black panther Bagheera, Mowgli learns the Law of the Jungle and the languages of the animals. But even Baloo and Bagheera can't keep an eye on him *all* the time!

Rudyard Kipling's classic Mowgli stories have been adapted into this easy-reading chapter book.

