



2018-19 SEASON  
*for*  
Young People

Performance Guidebook

*Call of the Wild: Illustrated Edition*

Theatre Heroes



*presented by*



TENNESSEE  
PERFORMING  
ARTS CENTER

# From our Season Sponsor



For 135 years Regions has been proud to be a part of the Middle Tennessee community, growing and thriving as our region has. From the opening of our doors on September 1, 1883, we have committed to this community and our customers.

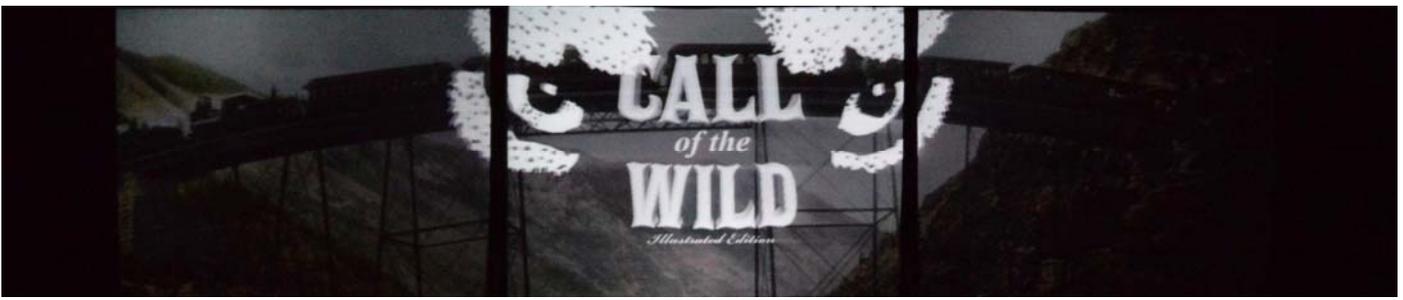
One area that we are strongly committed to is the education of our students. We are proud to sponsor TPAC's Humanities Outreach in Tennessee (HOT). What an important program this is – reaching over 30,000 students, many of whom would never get to see a performing arts production without this local resource. Regions continues to reinforce its commitment to the communities it serves, and in addition to supporting programs such as HOT, we have close to 200 associates teaching financial literacy in classrooms this year.

## Thank you, teachers,

for giving your students this wonderful experience. You are creating memories of a lifetime, and Regions is proud to be able to help make this opportunity possible.



**2018-19 SEASON**  
for  
**Young People**



Dear Teachers,

We are delighted to bring *Call of the Wild: Illustrated Edition* to the Tennessee Performing Arts Center for student audiences!

Theatre Heroes is known for their high-quality touring performances for young audiences, celebrating the live theatre experience to promote creativity and innovation.

This multi-media performance will take audience members on a journey through the Yukon Territory during the Klondike Gold Rush, using masterful storytelling and projected scenery surrounding the stage. The lessons in this guidebook are designed to involve students in engaging and meaningful cross-curricular activities related to the performance concepts and the arts.

As always, we are grateful for the work you do to involve students in learning through the arts, and we look forward to seeing you in the theater!

TPAC Education

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**Photos in this guidebook by Annie McCall, featuring projections of classic book illustrations and images created by Michael Rae.**

*Guidebook lessons by Alex Wallace and Beth Anne Musiker. Compiled and edited by Cassie LaFevor.*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Jack London* was an American novelist, journalist, and social activist. A pioneer in the world of commercial magazine fiction, he was one of the first writers to become a worldwide celebrity and earn a large fortune from writing. He was also an innovator in the genre that would later become known as science fiction.

His years in the Klondike searching for gold left their mark in his best short stories; among them, *The Call of the Wild* and *White Fang*. His work embraced the concepts of unconfined individualism and Darwinism in its exploration of the laws of nature.

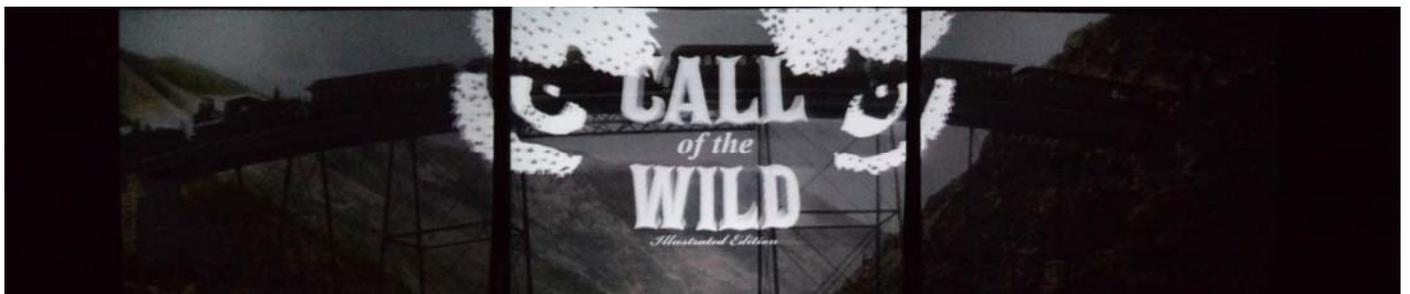
## ABOUT THE COMPANY - THEATRE HEROES



*Theatre Heroes* is an Austin-based company of artists who create high-quality touring performances for young audiences and those young at heart. They celebrate the live theatre experience as a launch pad for promoting creativity and innovation. They make story and adventure; encouraging youth to pursue their own dreams and keep this art form alive. They strive to create a world of infinite possibilities and limitless imagination where anyone can be their own hero.

## ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Against a breathtaking backdrop of scenic projections, this multi-media adventure uses dramatic storytelling to recreate Jack London's novel about the canine offspring of a St. Bernard and a Scottish Collie. The magnificent Buck is kidnapped from his owner's California estate and sold as a sled dog during the great Klondike Gold Rush of the 1890s. Through the heroics and hardships of life in the Yukon Territory, he fights to survive and becomes the most famous dog in the history of the northland. Three enormous screens surrounding the actor on stage advance the action in this engaging and fast-paced story, adapted by Jason Tremblay.





## LESSON 1 - THE NEED FOR PERSPECTIVE

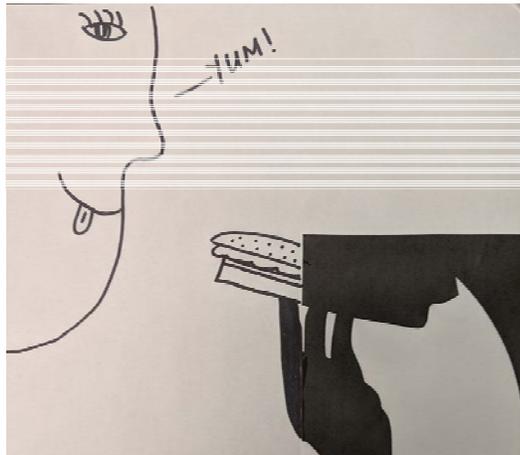
Lesson by Alex Wallace

- Objectives:**
- The student will identify the meaning and need for perspective in writing.
  - The student will create a character profile and write a journal entry with that character.
  - The student will compare perspectives of multiple characters encountering the same event.

**Materials Needed:** Photograph cut into pieces, character profile template (optional)

### Warm-Up:

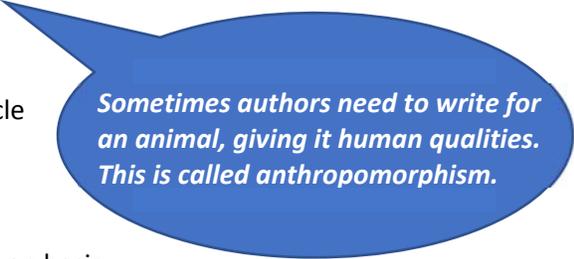
- Each student will be given a small piece of a larger picture, which has been cut into pieces. Students should draw what they think the rest of the photo might look like, without looking at the other pieces. Using a piece of an image, the teacher may want to model how to take that image and create the rest of the image. For example, using the following wolf image, you can see the original image, the cut piece with drawing added, and a reminder of how the pieces fit together in the end.



- After giving students a few minutes to create their drawings, gather into small groups to share illustrations with one another. Engage students in discussion about the similarities and differences of their illustrations, and ask them to predict what the entire picture might be. Finally, assemble all of the pieces of the picture to reveal the entire image.
- After completing the photograph activity, introduce the concept of perspective. Explain that perspective is how someone sees a situation, their feelings about a situation, their opinions of a situation, etc.
- Share and Discuss:
  - Connect to photograph activity, where each student formed a different idea of the original photograph because each was seeing it from a different perspective.
  - Relate the idea of perspective to reading: Explain to students that when we read, we see the story from the perspective of the narrator, whoever is telling the story at a particular point. Sometimes the narrator is a character in the story. Some stories have more than one narrator, so we get different perspectives on the story.

### **Instructional Procedures:**

- Discuss: The job of a writer is a difficult one. Not only do they have to tell a clear story; they also must create unique individuals with different thoughts, motivations, and experiences to live in that story. The more believable and relatable your characters are, the more involved the audience will be in what happens to them. Have you ever stopped paying attention in a play or a book because you didn't care about the characters? It's probably because they didn't seem real to you, or you couldn't relate to their thoughts or experiences. How do we fix that? **Perspective.** It is crucial for a writer to know how to get into the head of different characters. Without perspective, all of your characters would sound, act, and believe the same way, and audiences can become alienated, not relating or connecting to your story at all.
- What a person knows and thinks (perspective) determines how they will react to a certain circumstance or topic. As a class, answer the following questions:
  - a. How would a person who is afraid of sharks respond to being in a small boat in the middle of the ocean?
  - b. How would a person who has been bitten by a dog react to meeting a stray?
  - c. How would a person who can't be hurt by anything react to someone pointing a laser gun at them?
- On the board, draw three large circles. In the first circle write RICH MAN WITH WARM COAT. In the second circle write POOR MAN WITH NO COAT. In the third circle write WILD DOG.
- Starting with the RICH MAN WITH WARM COAT, as a class briefly identify and record on the inside of circle one what this man might know, feel, or have experienced in his lifetime. On the outside of the circle identify and record physical features that might define this character.
- Repeat with each of the other circles; POOR MAN WITH NO COAT and WILD DOG. (Note: When writing for the WILD DOG, you will use human thoughts and emotions but think of them in more simple terms, focused on basic needs and desires.)
- Individually students will choose one of the three characters and create a more in-depth character profile. (Note: If you don't have a character profile template you already use, you can find many examples online in graphic organizer or list form. One of our favorite resources for character profile handouts is Literacy Leader.)
- After creating profiles, tell students they will now continue by writing a journal entry from their character's perspective. Using what they know about that character, students will write a journal entry describing the moment the character comes upon a warm camp fire.
  - *Consider:* What might a fire mean to your character? Is this the first one they have ever seen? What does it look like to them; shape, size, color? What words would they use to describe it? What does fire provide for your character?
- After writing, divide the class into groups based on the character they chose. In each group, students should share their character profile, and journal entries, discussing similarities and differences in their character choices. Did they all have similar perspectives, or were they different?
- Finally, bring the class together and discuss what they found in their small groups. Share a few examples from each character. Discuss the difference each character brought to the same event.



*Sometimes authors need to write for an animal, giving it human qualities. This is called anthropomorphism.*

**Closing –** Discuss the importance of perspective. Can students identify three reasons why a writer should use multiple perspectives when creating and writing characters? What effect does perspective have on stories like *Call of the Wild*? How is perspective important in our every day lives?



## LESSON 2 - IS THAT A DOG OR A WOLF I HEAR?

Lesson by Beth Anne Musiker

**Objectives:** The student will investigate the sounds, variations, and expressions in human and animal voices.  
The student will dramatize a scene from *Call of Wild*, focusing on the vocal approach to character.  
The student will compare and contrast vocal choices.

**Materials Needed:** Scene excerpt from *Call of the Wild: Illustrated Edition* (provided on page 9), optional “Dog Barking Sound FX” links and internet access

### Warm-Up:

- Begin with students standing in a circle. Ask students to think about all the people they know at home, school, and in the community. Pose the following questions:
  - Do we all have the same voice? The same way of talking?
  - Does the situation we are in require that we adjust the way we use our voice and express ourselves?
  - Can you tell by the sound of your Mother’s or Father’s voice if they are in a good or bad mood? Angry with you or proud of you? What are some of the differences you hear in your family’s voices depending on what they are experiencing?
  - What about dogs? Since their bark is their voice...can you tell if a dog is happy, angry or hungry from his or her barks? Can you tell if a dog is large or small by the sound of their voice?
- Optional – You may want to start the warm-up by using some of the “Dog Barking Sound FX” links found on the following page and have students listen and consider what they can tell about each dog – size, personality, emotion, etc. If you choose not to add this element, move on to the next bullet point.
- Take a minute to close your eyes and really think about a specific dog barking. Get the sound of the dog’s bark in your head. (Note: Before giving the next instruction, be sure to establish a signal for when you want them to stop!) On the count of three open your eyes and let’s hear your dog bark.

### Instructional Procedures:

- Split the class into two large groups and have them stand on two separate taped or imaginary lines that face each other across the playing space. This set up will be used throughout the class – taking turns sharing and observing with reflection to help us refine our choices.
- Have students share their dog sounds. One group observes from their line as the other group shares their barking sound in the playing space between the lines. After each group presents allow students to share what they observed about the other group’s choices.
  - What did you notice? How did they show us their choice?
  - If you were observing what did you learn that can help you refine your own choices?
  - Did you have a sense of the size of these dogs from the sound of their barks?
- Repeat the process with the other group.

- The solo actor/storyteller in *Call of the Wild: Illustrated Edition* captures the bark, voice and personality of a number of different dogs. How can one actor/storyteller become a variety of dogs by creating their bark/voice? Have students repeat the entire exercise with new dog sounds, asking them to pick a very different dog with a very different voice than the first. On the count of three let their 2<sup>nd</sup> dog bark.
- Repeat sharing with the two facing lines, and follow with observations and noticing.
- Invite all students into the playing space. This time you are going to invite them to bark like their first dog until you say, “Switch,” at which point the students will share the barking sounds of their second dog, practicing switching quickly between the two dogs repeatedly. Ask students to reflect on how they were able to switch back and forth. What did they need to do to make this happen?
- Next, ask students if they think it’s possible to personify their dogs by giving their dog a human speaking voice that sounds similar to their bark? Provide students a short phrase to work with. It can be something very simple but should have an accessible emotional context like, “I’m hungry!” or “I’m happy I want to play.”
- Allow students some time to enter the playing space and explore how they might take the bark of their dogs and turn it into a human voice. Remind them to consider how the phrase they are using might be said to convey the feelings attached to it. Have students share their choices in two lines as before.
- Provide the short scene from *Call of the Wild: Illustrated Edition* to students (provided on page 9). Have students split into small groups of 4-6. Ask them to work as a team to discover the text clues about the dogs in the scene.
  - What does this portion of the story tell us about Buck, Curly and Spitz and the other huskies? How might this information impact our choices about the voice to use for each? (It might be helpful for students to know that Buck is a mix of St. Bernard and Scotch Shepard, Curly is a Newfoundland and Spitz is a Husky.)
  - Have students determine where in the script each dog’s voice could be heard. Where do they think the audience should hear the dogs bark or speak the words or both?
  - Have students select roles which may include a narrator and the other huskies in the scene so that everyone has a part.
- Provide a few minutes to practice a vocal performance. The goal is primarily a vocal approach to the work and NOT the staging of the scene.

**Closing** - Allow each group to present their version of the scene, providing time for feedback on the choice making involved. How were the choices of where to hear the dogs’ voices similar or different? Did it bring the script to life? Were you pleased with your own choices?

**Dog Barking Sound FX** – These Dog Barking Sound FX might be useful for your class either before or after this lesson as research. Ask the students to consider what they know about these dogs based on what they are hearing. What does the barking tell you about the dog – size, personality, emotion being communicated, etc.

<https://youtu.be/iuy-oOJCOoM> - DOG BARKING | Sound Effects [High Quality]

<https://youtu.be/muAiqLbbIVQ> - DOGS BARKING | 11 Dog Breeds Barking HD Sound Effect

<https://youtu.be/op7fRsvWowA> - Wolf Howling Compilation

<http://soundbible.com/tags-dog-bark.html> - sound samples of various dogs barking

<https://retired.sounddogs.com/extendedsearch.asp> - sound samples of various dogs barking

**Extension:** The term “Nature Faker” was coined in 1903 by John Burroughs, the renowned naturalist, stating that writers were portraying animals in what he claimed was a sentimental and anthropomorphic fashion. Jack London argued that his characters did the opposite. Can any writer create a believable and compelling nonhuman character without being a “nature faker”? Extend your animal-themed lesson with the Edsitement lesson about this topic - <https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/jack-londons-call-wild-nature-faker>.

# LESSON 3 - ILLUSTRATIONS AND IMAGERY THAT ILLUMINATE

Lesson by Beth Anne Musiker

**Objectives:** The student will recognize the benefits of visual imagery and storytelling in stories and plays.  
The student will apply the concept of imagery and scenic design to an excerpt from *Call of the Wild*.  
The student will design, share and reflect on proposals for visual content in *Call of the Wild*.

**Materials Needed:** excerpt from *Call of the Wild* script (provided on page 9) or novel, paper and pencil

## Warm-Up:

- Begin the class with a Think-Pair-Share discussion. Give students the following questions to consider individually for a few minutes, writing down notes (Think). Then ask students to compare their responses with a partner and synthesize a joint solution (Pair). Come together as a class and ask some pairs to share their thoughts with the entire class (Share).
  - Can stories be told primarily through visual imagery (Visual imagery pertains to graphics, visual scenes, pictures, or the sense of sight.)?
  - Where are some places you typically find visual storytelling?
  - What types of visual storytelling do you experience on a regular basis?
  - How many of you share your own visual stories by posting photos, videos, memes, and sketches, etc. to Instagram, Twitter, and other social media?
  - Why do you share photos, video or animation?
- Shift the conversation to include scenic design. Ask the class to define *Scenic Design* for a theatre piece. (*Scenic design - also known as scenography, stage design, set design, or production design - is the creation of theatrical, as well as film or television scenery.*) Why does a play require scenic design? How does the scenic design help the audience understand the story? How does scenic design communicate?
- Next, give students the following questions and ask them to Quickwrite their responses for use later in the class.
  - This story is set in 1897 – What scenic elements might help the audience understand the time and place?
  - What are the pros and cons of include projected images as part of a play or when telling a story?
  - What would it be like to see a play where images (photos, pictures) are projected on a screen as the main part of the scenery?

## Instructional Procedures:

- Keeping their Quickwrite responses with them, have students divide into working groups of 4-6. Assign a selection from the *Call of the Wild* script (provided on page 9) or from the novel and have students read the selection for comprehension.
  - *Note:* Students may take turns reading aloud to their group members and/or read silently the first time through, depending on the needs of the group. Allow students to discuss what they believe is happening in the selection.
- Let your students know you have good news! You have all been asked to submit a design proposal with your team to provide the visual content for a production of *Call of the Wild: Illustrated Edition*. Your proposal will be based on the scene you just read.
- Provide students with the handout on the following page with instructions. Go over the instructions to make sure all groups know what to do and provide time limits as needed.

**Closing** - Once students have completed their work, it is time to present their proposals. As each group shares their work the other teams are to observe as if they are the creative team for the show trying to determine whose ideas are best suited to their production. Students may refer back to the proposal parameters from which they all worked to determine if and how the parameters were met.

Following each group's presentation allow students an opportunity to reflect on the work they saw:

- What did you notice about the group's choices?
- Did their work meet the requested parameters?
- How were their choices the same or different from the other groups?
- Do you think their choices served the story and made it better?
- Allow the groups to reflect on their own work? Did it meet their satisfaction?
- Ask the class to share which team they would hire for the job and WHY!
- What was it about their presentation that sold you on their work?



## ILLUSTRATIONS AND IMAGERY THAT ILLUMINATE HANDOUT

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Good news! You have all been asked to submit a design proposal with your team to provide the visual content for a production of *Call of the Wild: Illustrated Edition*. Your proposal will be based on the scene you just read. Your design proposal should address the following:

- This is a one-man show presented in theatrical storytelling style.
  - The creative team plans to use photos, video, and illustrations as scenic design to create a sense of time, place, movement and mood throughout the piece.
  - Your design should incorporate 3 separate screens that may be used simultaneously in similar or different ways.
  - Your proposal should provide visual content to illuminate the scene and enhance the storyteller's performance.
  - Your design should demonstrate imagination and incorporate more than one type of imagery.
- 

The following steps should be taken by each group.

1. Select a portion of the scene that will be better understood with the addition of a photo, video, animation, sketch, or other visual to go with it.
2. Research and/or create the specific images, photos, videos, sketches, or other visuals that will enhance your selection. What do the text clues suggest your audience might need to see?
3. Develop a plan for how and when to display these images during the scene.
4. Use the information below to determine how best to execute the presentation of your ideas to the creative team for *Call of the Wild: Illustrated Edition*.

### ***Tools for editing photos and illustrations and sharing them on a screen for presentation:***

**Canva App:** (free) used on a computer or phone - Search for tri-fold brochure and edit images and text as you please (tri-fold option not available on iPhone). When your selections are finalized, save/download. The finished images can either be printed and shared on a screen via overhead projector set up, like an "elmo" or "ladybug." Or, if the technology is available, students won't need to print and can connect their computer to the projector to see their work on the screen.

**TriCamera App:** (free) used on phone - Creates triptych photos from your photo library or by taking photos within the app. The finished images can be printed and shared on a screen via overhead projector set up, like an "elmo" or "ladybug." If the technology is available, students won't need to print and can connect their computer to the projector to see their work on the screen.

**Transparency Film:** If using an "elmo" or "ladybug," students can use markers and or paint to create illustrations on overhead transparency film and either view the image by itself or place the transparency over a photograph to create a more complex layered image.

**iMovie or other Video Program:** Students may consider creating a short iMovie from their selected and created images then connect computer to the screen to share the movie.

**Elmo or Ladybug:** Using these overhead projectors allows manipulation of the image during the presentation. This equipment also allows for multiple types of imagery and objects to be seen.

# Excerpt from *Call of the Wild: Illustrated Edition*

Adapted from Jack London's novel *Call of the Wild* by Jason Tremblay

**TITLE CARD: "The Law of Club and Fang" (fade out)**  
**The Mining Town of Dyea Beach**  
**November 21, 1897**

Buck's first day on the Dyea beach was a nightmare. Every hour filled with shock and surprise. These men and dogs were savages.

He had never seen dogs fight as wolfish creatures fought – Curly, Buck's only friend, was the first victim.

## ***Spitz Face, Eyes, and Teeth***

They were camped near the log store, where Curly, in her friendly way, made advances to a husky dog the size of a full grown wolf.

He was larger, stronger; mean and menace in every muscle. His name was Spitz. Curly only sniffed up to say hello. There was no warning.

## ***Husky's Circle Around the Fight***

Like a wolf, who fights by striking and leaping away, Spitz attacked Curly again and again. Thirty or forty huskies ran to the spot and surrounded the combatants in an intent and silent circle licking their chops. In a final move to save her life, Curly rushed Spitz, who struck her again; knocking her to the ground.

## ***The Narwhal***

This is what the huskies were waiting for. They closed in on Curly, snarling and yelping, until she was buried, screaming with agony, beneath the mass of dogs.



## LESSON 4 - POINT OF VIEW

Lesson by Alex Wallace

- Objectives:**
- The student will write a persuasive letter from a unique point of view.
  - The student will examine Point of View and how it affects storytelling.
  - The student will create a narrative using Point of View with a scene from *Call of the Wild*.

**Materials:** Poster Paper (Optional), Excerpt from Jack London's *Call of the Wild* (included on the following page)

### Warm-Up:

- As students enter, they are given this assignment - "You are an orphan dog. Using first person point of view you have five minutes to write a persuasive letter to potential owners. Your goal is to encourage them to adopt you."
- Briefly share one or two letters with the class. Discuss: Are these letters convincing? Why? What if the letter was written by a person writing ABOUT the dog – How would it be different?
- Discuss: What points of view were used in your letters? What other types are there?
- Review the ideas of Point of View and Narrator with your students. (Note: In literature, a narrator is the one who tells a story. Since you can only read a book from one person's viewpoint at a time, all literature has a narrator. In theatre, this is not as common because instead of one voice telling the action we are able to see it for ourselves. Sometimes though, by necessity or by choice, a playwright can use a character to narrate events or actions that have happened off stage. When this is done, it is important for the playwright to understand the literary concept of point of view.)
- Make an anchor chart of the following information on the white board or poster paper:

**Point of View** – The way an author lets the audience "hear" and "see" what takes place in a story, poem, or essay.

#### **Three Types:**

1. First Person: The author narrates from the direct viewpoint of a single character in that story. (I, Me, We)
2. Second Person: The author narrates from the viewpoint of the reader as if they were in the story. (You, Yours)
3. Third Person: The author narrates from the viewpoint of someone outside the events of the story. There are three types of third person point of view.
  - a. Limited – The author narrates knowing the thoughts and feelings of only one character.
  - b. Omniscient – The author narrates knowing the thoughts and feelings of all the characters.
  - c. Objective – The author narrates only facts and events as a neutral observer.

### **Instructional Procedures:**

- Ask students to individually identify as many “jobs” as they can that the narrator of story is responsible for, and write down their list. Then have students pair up and combine their lists to create a top three list, placing the “jobs” of the narrator in order of importance from most to least. Ask groups to share their lists with the class.
- As a class, read the excerpt from Jack London’s *Call of the Wild*. This story is narrated from the viewpoint of someone not directly involved in the story and focused only on the thoughts and feelings of Buck the dog. Which point of view is it written in? (Third Person Limited) What reasons would cause a playwright to have a character narrate an offstage event using each of the five different points of view discussed with the anchor chart?
- Getting into small groups, students will now take the events of this passage and narrate from a unique point of view. Each group will be assigned either first person, second person, third person omniscient, and third person objective. (We will not use third person limited since that is what it was already written in.)

*Tip 1.* Make sure you choose the right narrator first: depending on which point of view you have will determine whose “eyes” you can tell the story through.

*Tip 2.* Refer to the anchor chart to determine which pronouns you should be using.

- After students have had time to write their narration, give them time to practice and then perform for the class.

**Closing - Discuss:** In the book *Call of the Wild* the story is told from a 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient point of view. How would the story be different or similar if Buck was the narrator like in our warm-up letters? Thornton?

In the play *Call of the Wild: Illustrated Edition* the point of view changes in different scenes. Whose point of view do you predict the actor will use on stage? After seeing the play, follow up with discussions about what was surprising and/or effective about these choices.

### **An Excerpt from *Call of the Wild* by Jack London**

<sup>1</sup> Again Hal's whip fell upon the dogs. They threw themselves against the breast-bands, dug their feet into the packed snow, got down low to it, and put forth all their strength. The sled held as though it were an anchor. After two efforts, they stood still, panting. The whip was whistling savagely, when once more Mercedes interfered. She dropped on her knees before Buck, with tears in her eyes, and put her arms around his neck.

<sup>2</sup> "You poor, poor dears," she cried sympathetically, "why don't you pull hard?--then you wouldn't be whipped." Buck did not like her, but he was feeling too miserable to resist her, taking it as part of the day's miserable work.

<sup>3</sup> One of the onlookers, who had been clenching his teeth to suppress hot speech, now spoke up:-

<sup>4</sup> "It's not that I care a whoop what becomes of you, but for the dogs' sakes I just want to tell you, you can help them a mighty lot by breaking out that sled. The runners are froze fast. Throw your weight against the gee-pole, right and left, and break it out."

<sup>5</sup> A third time the attempt was made, but this time, following the advice, Hal broke out the runners which had been frozen to the snow. The overloaded and unwieldy sled forged ahead, Buck and his mates struggling frantically under the rain of blows. A hundred yards ahead the path turned and sloped steeply into the main street. It would have required an experienced man to keep the top-heavy sled upright, and Hal was not such a man. As they swung on the turn the sled went over, spilling half its load through the loose lashings. The dogs never stopped. The lightened sled bounded on its side behind them. They were angry because of the ill treatment they had received and the unjust load. Buck was raging. He broke into a run, the team following his lead. Hal cried "Whoa! whoa!" but they gave no heed. He tripped and was pulled off his feet. The capsized sled ground over him, and the dogs dashed on up the street, adding to the gayety of Skaguay as they scattered the remainder of the outfit along its chief thoroughfare.

# THE KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH

The Klondike Gold Rush was a migration by an estimated 100,000 prospectors to the Klondike region of the Yukon in north-western Canada between 1896 and 1899. Gold was discovered there by local miners on August 16, 1896, and, when news reached Seattle and San Francisco the following year, it triggered a stampede of prospectors.

To reach the gold fields, most took the route through the ports of Dyea and Skagway in Southeast Alaska. Here, the Klondikers could follow either the Chilkoot or the White Pass trails to the Yukon River and sail down to the Klondike. Each of them was required to bring a year's supply of food by the Canadian authorities in order to prevent starvation. In all, their equipment weighed close to a ton, which for most had to be carried in stages by themselves. Together with mountainous terrain and cold climate, this meant that those who persisted did not arrive until summer 1898. Once there, they found few opportunities, and many left disappointed.

One of those who journeyed to the Klondike was Jack London, soon to be an internationally famous author. What he sought in the Yukon was not gold, however, but the adventure and "the metaphorical gold for his first stories." London's experiences in the Yukon provided him not only with an appropriate setting for the life and death struggles he wanted to depict, but also with sufficient local color to lend authenticity to his writing.

## 6 Gold Rush Facts about the Klondike Gold Rush (also called the Alaska Gold Rush):

- ✓ Every prospector had to carry about one ton (2,000 lbs.) of supplies up to Dawson City.
- ✓ Many prospectors used pack animals, who were not strong enough to make the trip and many perished.
- ✓ Other prospectors carried the load on their back, which required 30 trips to travel any distance.
- ✓ The All Canada route was the only one that didn't require border crossings, so prospectors didn't have to prove they had all required gear.
- ✓ The All Canada route was extremely difficult, and only one out of three people made the trek all the way to Dawson City.



## Metaphorical Gold Mining

Check out this wonderful lesson on Edsitement - By "mining" online databases for primary texts and period photographs, your students can explore the Klondike Stampede, and glean from their visit sufficient period details to help them create their own narratives based on the Gold Rush. If time does not permit students to write their own stories, the teacher can select stand-alone sections from this lesson that deal with the history of the Gold Rush era. While the emphasis of this lesson is on history and research rather than literature, selections from Jack London's *Call of the Wild* are used to provide focus and structure for students' research in online databases of primary sources, and to serve as models of vivid narrative prose for students' own stories.

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/metaphorical-gold-mining-gold-rush-stories>

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