



The Jungle Book **Summary**

Gather around to enjoy the story of *The Jungle Book* as it unfolds right before your eyes. Make yourself comfortable beside the warm, crackling campfire and listen, as Dad begins to tell his children "just one more story" before bedtime. Suddenly, you will find the stage transformed into the deep, dark jungle and the animal characters appearing to give an interpretive dance of the narrated story. Listen carefully as Dad adds excitement and drama to the happenings of this famous tale.

The law of the jungle is in place. All animals know, and MOST animals respect these laws. It is with the introduction of a "man-cub" (an infant who is found in the jungle) that these laws are brought to the forefront. The animals that befriend the man-cub must try to pass these laws along to help him adapt to their ways -- but they are unfortunately met with much resistance from this very inquisitive intruder.

The man-cub is named Mowgli, (which means little frog). Bagheera the panther, Baloo the bear, and Hathi the wise elephant, dance their teachings to young Mowgli. The monkeys have a great time whooping it up with Mowgli, teaching him their wild ways. Mowgli learns that he must always be on guard, for the jungle shows little mercy and mistakes can be deadly--- unfortunately, Shere Khan, the tiger, has entered the picture! This selfish and uncooperative tiger shows that he is a threat to the animal kingdom and particularly, the man-cub, by his alarming actions.

Just as it seems that Shere Khan will successfully trap Mowgli, (thus threatening his life), one of the boy's best allies comes along to his defense -- Kaa, the rock snake. She is a wise old reptile, a python, which is not poisonous. The mere sight of her scares any creature away because they all know that whatever strength THEY possess, it is no match for her killing embrace. Although the snake has great power, ultimately, Hathi, the elephant, proves to be the true master of the jungle.

Mowgli learns for himself that although the jungle has been his home, he can no longer stay. Being a grown man, even his animal friends will eventually turn on him. As much as they have taught him and loved him, in the end, humans should live with humans. It is his friend Bagheera, along with Mother Wolf, that alert Mowgli to the use of the "Red Flower," (fire) which only humans possess. This could be Mowgli's ticket to safety.

Mowgli and Shere Khan dance their final confrontation. Mowgli uses the "Red Flower" to direct the fatal blow to Shere Khan. Mowgli drags this jungle menace off stage and returns to his jungle family with the tiger skin as a symbol of his victory. He must now follow his instinct and leave for the man village.

Mowgli never forgets his friends from the jungle or the lessons he has been taught. They never forget their little Mowgli, the frog, whom they, too, love so much. The pages of *The Jungle Book* close in peace.