**Class Schedule**

1. Vocab Bingo! (15 mins)
2. Opening Activity (10 mins)
3. Read extract (10 mins)
4. Comprehension questions (15 mins)
5. Read through new vocab (10 mins)

**Vocabulary Bingo**

* Spot check on definitions, antonyms and synonyms of last week’s words (use the words in sentences)

**Opening Activity**

*Match the word to the definition!*

1. Voracious
2. Obligatory
3. Tedious
4. Turbulent
5. Wither
6. Venerable
7. Raucous
8. Ally
9. Sleek
10. Supple
11. Become dry and shrivelled; fall into decay or decline
12. Making a disturbingly harsh and loud noise
13. Bending and moving easily and gracefully; flexible
14. Required by a legal, moral or other rule; compulsory
15. Smooth and glossy (of hair, fur or skin)
16. Too long, slow, or dull; tiresome or monotonous
17. Given a great deal of respect, especially because of age, wisdom or character
18. A person or organisation that cooperates with or helps another
19. Characterised by conflict, disorder or confusion; not stable or calm
20. Engaging in an activity with great eagerness or enthusiasm

The Call of the Wild by Jack London – Alleyn’s School 11+ English Paper

**This passage is about a sled dog called Buck and his owner, John Thornton. Some men have issued a challenge that Buck cannot break the sled out of the ice and snow and get it moving on his own. John has accepted this challenge.**

The team of ten dogs was unhitched, and Buck, with his own harness, was put into the sled. He had caught the **contagion** of the excitement, and he felt that in some way he must do a great thing for John Thornton. Murmurs of **admiration** at his **splendid** appearance went up. He was in perfect condition without an ounce of **superfluous** flesh, and the one hundred and fifty pounds that he weighed were so many pounds of **grit** and **virility**. His furry coat shone with the **sheen** of silk. Down the neck and across the shoulders, his **mane**, in **repose** as it was, half bristled and seemed to lift with every movement, as though excess of **vigour** made each particular hair alive and active. The great breast and heavy fore legs were no more than in proportion with the rest of the body, where the muscles showed in tight rolls underneath the skin. Men felt these muscles and proclaimed them hard as iron, and the odds went down to two to one.

Thornton knelt down by Buck’s side. He took his head in his two hands and rested cheek on cheek. He did not playfully shake him, as was his wont, or murmur soft love curses; but he whispered in his ear. ‘As you love me, Buck. As you love me,’ was what he whispered. Buck whined with suppressed eagerness.

The crowd was watching curiously. The **affair** was growing mysterious. It seemed like a **conjuration**. As Thornton got to his feet, Buck seized his mittened hand between his jaws, pressing in with his teeth and releasing slowly, half-reluctantly. It was the answer, in terms not of speech, but of love. Thornton stepped well back.

‘Now, Buck,’ he said. Buck tightened the **traces**, then slacked them for a matter of several inches. It was the way he had learned.

‘Gee!’ Thornton’s voice rang out, sharp in tense silence.

Buck swung to the right, ending the movement in a **plunge** that took up the slack and with a sudden jerk **arrested** his one hundred and fifty pounds. The load **quivered**, and from under the runners arose a crisp crackling.

‘Haw!’ Thornton commanded.

Buck **duplicated** the **manoeuvre**, this time to the left. The crackling turned into a snapping, the sled **pivoting** and the runners slipping and grating several inches to the side. The sled was broken out. Men were holding their breaths, intensely unconscious of the fact.

‘Now, MUSH!’

Thornton’s command cracked out like a pistol-shot. Buck threw himself forward, tightening the traces with a **jarring** lunge. His whole body was gathered compactly together in the tremendous effort, the muscles **writhing** and knotting like live things under the silky fur. His great chest was low to the ground, his head forward and down, while his feet were flying like mad, the claws scarring the hard-packed snow in parallel grooves. The sled swayed and trembled, half-started forward. One of his feet slipped, and one man groaned aloud. Then the sled **lurched** ahead in what appeared a rapid **succession** of jerks, though it never really came to a dead stop again...half an inch...an inch... two inches... The jerks **perceptibly** diminished, as the sled gained **momentum**, till it was moving steadily along.

Men gasped and began to breathe again, unaware that for a moment they had ceased to breathe. Thornton was running behind, encouraging Buck with short, **cheery** words. The distance had been measured off, and as he neared the pile of firewood which marked the end of the hundred yards, a cheer began to grow and grow, which burst into a roar as he passed the firewood and halted at command. Hats and mittens were flying in the air. Men were shaking hands, it did not matter with whom, and bubbling over in a general **incoherent** **babel**.

But Thornton fell on his knees beside Buck. Head was against head, and he was shaking him back and forth. Those who hurried up heard him cursing Buck and he cursed long and **fervently**, and softly and lovingly.

‘Gad, sir! Gad, sir!’ spluttered the Skookum Bench king. ‘I’ll give a thousand for him, sir, a thousand, - twelve hundred sir.’

Thornton rose to his feet. His eyes were wet. The tears were streaming frankly down his cheeks. ‘No, sir. You can get lost, sir.’

**Comprehension Questions**

1. Summarise the extract in a few sentences.
2. Where do we think this extract comes in the book and why?
3. What two feelings does Buck experience at the start of the challenge?
4. What four different details point to the impressive physical appearance of Buck in the first paragraph?
5. How does the author make the passage exciting for the reader? Think about words/phrases, sentence types, and the use of dialogue.
6. Explain why Thornton acts and speaks the way that he does here?

**Vocabulary**

* *Define each word, put it into one of four categories (noun, adjective, verb or adverb) and, where applicable, note down a synonym or antonym.*

1. Contagion – the transmission of disease from one person to another by close contact
2. Admiration
3. Splendid
4. Superfluous – unnecessary, especially through being more than enough
5. Grit – courage and resolve, strength of character
6. Virility – (in a man) the quality of having strength and energy
7. Sheen – a soft shine on a surface
8. Mane – a growth of long hair on the neck of a horse or lion
9. Repose – a state of rest, sleep or tranquility
10. Vigour – physical strength and good health
11. Affair – an event that has been previously referred to
12. Conjuration
13. Traces – (in this context) a path or track
14. Plunge
15. Arrested – seize and detain; stop
16. Quivered
17. Duplicate
18. Manoeuvre
19. Pivot – turn as if on a pivot
20. Jarring – causing a physical shock, jolt or vibration; clashing
21. Writhing – making twisting, squirming movements or contortions of the body
22. Lurch – make an abrupt, unsteady, uncontrolled movement or series of movements
23. Succession – a number of people or things of a similar kind following one after the other
24. Perceptible – able to be seen or noticed
25. Momentum
26. Cheery
27. Incoherent
28. Babel – a confused noise made by a number of voices
29. Fervent – having or displaying a passionate intensity

**Homework**

* Revise the vocabulary we have learned today.
* Write a modern-day story about a heroic dog using 10 of the words from the vocab list above.