



grammar dog.com

grammar, style, and proofreading exercises

The Grammar Dog Guide to Short Stories by Jack London

All Gold Canyon

The Mexican

The Story of Jees Uck

The White Silence

To Build A Fire

**All exercises use sentences from the stories.
Includes over 250 multiple choice questions.**

About Grammartdog

Grammartdog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Grammartdog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Grammartdog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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SHORT STORIES by Jack London – Grammar and Style
All exercises use sentences from the stories.

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SAMPLE EXERCISES - SHORT STORIES by Jack London – Grammar and Style

EXERCISE 5 COMPLEMENTS

Identify the complements in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

d.o. = direct object

i.o. = indirect object

p.n. = predicate nominative

o.p. = object of preposition

p.a. = predicate adjective

THE WHITE SILENCE

- ___ 1. A row among the dogs cut short the wonders of the Outside, and by the time the snarling combatants were separated, she had lashed the sleds and all was ready for the trail.
- ___ 2. Happy is the man who can weather a day's travel at the price of silence, and that on a beaten track.
- ___ 3. Little was said; those of the Northland are early taught the futility of words and the inestimable value of deeds.

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

Identify the phrases in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

par = participial *ger* = gerund *inf* = infinitive *appos* = appositive *prep* = prepositional

THE WHITE SILENCE

- ___ 1. A shrewd clout behind the ear with the butt of the dog whip stretched the animal in the snow, quivering softly, a yellow slaver dripping from its fangs.
- ___ 2. The river took a great bend, and Mason headed his team for the cutoff across the narrow neck of land.
- ___ 3. But Malemute Kid restrained himself, though there was a world of reproach in his eyes, and, bending over the dog, cut the traces.

EXERCISE 9 STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label underlined words:

p = personification *s* = simile *m* = metaphor *o* = onomatopoeia *h* = hyperbole

THE WHITE SILENCE

- ___ 1. Snap! The lean brute flashed up, the white teeth just missing Mason's throat.
- ___ 2. The cold silence of outer space had chilled the heart and smote the trembling lips of nature.
- ___ 3. "D'ye recollect the time she shot the Moosehorn Rapids to pull you and me off that rock, the bullets whipping the water like hailstones?"

SAMPLE EXERCISES - SHORT STORIES by Jack London – Grammar and Style

EXERCISE 12 STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS

Identify the allusions and symbols in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

a. *mythology* b. *religion* c. *literature* d. *fatalism/Naturalism* e. *war/combat/weapons*

THE WHITE SILENCE

- ___ 1. “And I was president of an Epworth once, and taught in the Sunday school.”
- ___ 2. Nature has many tricks wherewith she convinces man of his finity – the ceaseless flow of the tides, the fury of the storm, the shock of the earthquake, the long roll of heaven’s artillery – but the most tremendous, the most stupefying of all, is the passive phase of the White Silence.
- ___ 3. And the fear of death, of God, of the universe, comes over him – the hope of the Resurrection and the Life, the yearning for immortality, the vain striving of the imprisoned essence – it is then, if ever, man walks alone with God.

EXERCISE 13 STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

The afternoon wore on, and with the awe, born of the White Silence, the voiceless travelers bent to their work. Nature has many tricks wherewith she convinces man of his finity – the ceaseless flow of the tides, the fury of the storm, the shock of the earthquake, the long roll of heaven’s artillery – but the most tremendous, the most stupefying of all, is the passive phase of the White Silence. All movement ceases, the sky clears, the heavens are as brass; the slightest whisper seems sacrilege, and man becomes timid, affrighted at the sound of his own voice. Sole speck of life journeying across the ghostly wastes of a dead world, he trembles at his audacity, realizes that his is a maggot’s life, nothing more. Strange thoughts arise unsummoned, and the mystery of all things strives for utterance. And the fear of death, of God, of the universe, comes over him – the hope of the Resurrection and the Life, the yearning for immortality, the vain striving of the imprisoned essence – it is then, if ever, man walks alone with God. (From *The White Silence*)

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and any other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- 1 The afternoon wore on, and with the awe, born of the White Silence, the voiceless travelers bent
- 2 to their work. Nature has many tricks wherewith she convinces man of his finity – the ceaseless
- 3 flow of the tides, the fury of the storm, the shock of the earthquake, the long roll of heaven’s artillery –
- 4 but the most tremendous, the most stupefying of all, is the passive phase of the White Silence.
- 5 All movement ceases, the sky clears, the heavens are as brass; the slightest whisper seems sacrilege,
- 6 and man becomes timid, affrighted at the sound of his own voice. Sole speck of life journeying

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7 across the ghostly wastes of a dead world, he trembles at his audacity, realizes that his is a
8 maggot's life, nothing more. Strange thoughts arise unsummoned, and the mystery of all things
9 strives for utterance. And the fear of death, of God, of the universe, comes over him – the hope of
10 the Resurrection and the Life, the yearning for immortality, the vain striving of the imprisoned
11 essence – it is then, if ever, man walks alone with God.

- ___ 1. Line 2 contains an example of . . .
a. metaphor b. simile c. personification d. hyperbole
- ___ 2. Line 10 contains an example of . . .
a. anecdote b. allegory c. analogy d. allusion
- ___ 3. ALL of the following descriptions are parallel in meaning EXCEPT . . .
a. *Nature has many tricks* (Line 2)
b. *the slightest whisper seems sacrilege* (Line 5)
c. *the hope of the Resurrection and the Life* (Line 9-10)
d. *man walks alone with God* (Line 11)