

**Split-Page Notes: *The Call of the Wild*, Chapter 2 “The Law of Club and Fang”**

Question	Response
<p>1. According to the text, how and why does Buck continue to steal? Cite textual evidence.</p> <p>2. What words or phrases does the author use to describe Buck at the end of chapter 2? How does this physical description demonstrate Buck’s transformation?</p> <p>3. Reread the following lines from the text: “And not only did he learn by experience, but instincts long dead became alive again. The domesticated generations fell from him. In vague ways he remembered back to the youth of the breed, to the time the wild dogs ranged in packs through the primeval forest and killed their meat as they ran it down. It was no task for him to learn to fight with cut and slash and the quick wolf snap.”</p> <p>What does this suggest about Buck’s transformation?</p>	<p>Buck learns to steal “secretly and cunningly, out of respect for club and fang.” The text states that Buck did not steal for joy, but rather to stop his hunger. He also has come to realize that stealing is a part of survival in the wild. By stealing, Buck demonstrates that he has continued to transition and adapt to his new life in the wild where he will do what it takes to survive and be like the other sled dogs.</p> <p>At the end of chapter 2, Buck is described as a strong, capable physical being. The text states that his muscles “became as hard as irony,” and that he was not affected by pain despite the harsh conditions. He also becomes able to eat anything for food and his body does not waste any of the nutrients. His sight and scent became stronger and his hearing became so acute that he was able to hear faint sounds in his sleep. Buck also has an ability to determine the weather and wind based on his instincts, which allows him to dig nests that keep him warm in the snow and climate. These changes in Buck demonstrate that he’s becoming more like a wild animal that is reliant on things like senses, instinct, and strength to survive in nature.</p> <p>These lines suggest that Buck is reconnecting to the spirits and ancestors of wild dogs before him. As Buck transforms physically and becomes an animal of the wild, he is also coming full circle or returning to who he once was, as signified by these lines of text. Buck is discovering some of the instincts and abilities that have long been hidden within him that he has not needed as a domesticated animal. These lines help emphasize that before Buck was a house dog, he was a part of a species that had the instinct and capabilities for survival.</p>

In chapter 2, Buck has both developed and retrogressed as he joins the law of club and fang. Identify one decision that Buck makes in chapter 2 and explain how it reveals both development and retrogression.

*Accept any possible decisions (e.g., Buck's decision to steal, Buck's decision to build a nest in the snow, etc.)*

In chapter 2, Buck learns to steal food from his owners, which is an example that shows both development and retrogression. In one way, this decision shows development, because it demonstrates that Buck is willing to do what it takes to survive in the wild. He is able to learn from the example of the other dogs and adapt his behavior to give him a better chance of surviving - in this case, to get more food to nourish and sustain his body during the trek. At the same time, this decision also shows that Buck has retrogressed from the dog he once was. As a house dog, Buck would not have stolen from his owner because the rules and laws that guided his behavior in the judge's house were more "civilized." Buck has given up his pampered lifestyle, and with it, he has also given up part of his moral character, as stealing for survival takes precedence over doing the "right" or moral thing.