Rudyard Kipling's

THE JUNGLE BOOK

Adapted by

R. Rex Stephenson

Study Guide by

Tina Hanlon and R. Rex Stephenson

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With appreciation
to my dear friend Pat Whitton,
who both helped me see what this play could be.

_The Jungle Book_ was first performed at the Blue Ridge Dinner Theatre, Ferrum, Virginia, in July 1997 under the direction of Dean Gates. Underwriting for the production was provided by First Virginia Bank and the Franklin Guild.
The original cast was as follows:

<table>
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<th>Role</th>
<th>Actor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Basu</td>
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<td>Messua/ Mother Wolf</td>
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<td>Father Wolf</td>
<td>Beth Shively</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buldeo</td>
<td>Joe Ray</td>
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**Wolves, Monkeys and Villagers**
Mimi Adams, Ramon Allen, Abigail Ardis, Ragini A. Basu, Silvana Gwynn, P. Joshua Hamer, Theresa Hansen, Paige Jones, Christine Krawczel, Lisa Mariel LeMond, Michael Jule LeMond, Jessica McVicker, Alexandra Melesco, John Melesco, Garrett Shively, Toni Snyder, Sam South-Finkelstein, Travis South-Finkelstein, Mary Beth Ward, Kristin William, Kristen Young, and Shaunna Young.

Costumes Beatrice Chopski & Bettie Olcack
Lights Rachel Trochim
Make-Up Nina Gates
Scenic Artists Charles Wissinger & Shauna Jeayne
CAST

Mohammed Basu, The storyteller (Ba-su)
Shere Khan, the Tiger (Sheer Karn)
Baloo, the Bear (Bar-loo)
Bagheera, the Panther (Bag-eera--same as an "era" in history)
Kaa, a Cobra (Kar--with a sort of gasp in it)
Mowgli (Mow rhymes with cow)
Mother Wolf, -- Mowgli's adopted Mother
Father Wolf, -- Mowgli's adopted Father
Akela, Leader of Wolf Pack (A-kay-la)
Head Monkey
Brother Wolf, -- Mowgli's adopted brother
Priest, religious leader of village
Messua, Mowgli's adopted man-mother (Mes-war)
Buldeo, village hunter
Boy, Mowgli's man-brother
Rashita, a village girl

Additional wolves, monkeys, villagers.

The Chorus, who can be one actor or many. If the group is larger than five the director might want to give some of the lines to individuals and save others for a choral rendition. However, the Chorus can easily be composed of cast members not on stage at the time.
These roles can all be doubled or tripled.

SETTING
Across the back of the stage hangs a large drop of the Indian semi-tropical Jungle. The drop should cover most, if not all, of the back wall of the playing area. Various platforms of different height create the upstage playing area. They should range in height from 6 inches to 4 feet and should be arranged so that actors will have easy access to the various levels. The downstage area is bare except for one stool that is placed far stage right. This is for the storyteller. The lighting should be set so that the downstage playing area can be lit without much spill on the platforms or the backdrop. Similarly, various areas on the platforms need tightly focused lighting on acting areas.
Introduction

Watching the first production of Rex Stephenson's adaptation of The Jungle Book, I realized how quickly this play captivates both actors and audience. After only a few days of rehearsal, more than twenty children of various ages were already absorbed in their roles, interacting effectively with adult actors and directors, and obviously having great fun on stage playing monkeys, wolves, and villagers in 19th-century India.

The play is a masterly example of drama to entertain the whole family, while getting the audience hooked on the pleasures of digging into a classic book and participating in the storytelling process. Like Kipling's original two volumes of The Jungle Books, the play contains a collection of short stories and poems. The many generations of readers who have ranked Kipling's books among their favorite stories will appreciate Stephenson's fidelity to the original text. Scenes from the Mowgli stories are arranged in episodes that form a coherent account of Mowgli's young life. The fantasy of talking animals raising an abandoned man-cub makes this play particularly appealing to young children, while both children and adults identify with Mowgli's struggle to find his place in the world. As he is adopted and then cast out by communities of animals and humans, he experiences love as well as rejection. Stephenson has added a narrator, Basu, an Indian man with intimate knowledge of the Jungle. He tells the children in his village stories about Mowgli, providing links between Jungle life and village life as Mowgli moves between his two homes. At the end of the play Basu emphasizes the continuity of the storytelling process as he reminds the audience that the story "given freely to those who listen ... becomes theirs to retell or to keep secret. That is the law of the Jungle."

The Jungle Book will adapt easily to many different dramatic settings. It can be performed by a dozen actors or a much larger group, by players of varying ages, with simple representational costumes or more elaborate realistic ones. The set design requires platforms that are not difficult to construct, yet they provide variety in the placement of actors at different levels on the stage that help develop the plot and characterization, keeping the audience's interest as scenes alternate between Jungle and village. This flexible staging enhances the play's successful blend of quick scene changes and unifying elements, of comedy and poignant drama, allowing for the return in the second act of the rowdy, hilarious monkeys; the evil and powerful tiger; and the fascinating, mysterious snake. As with many classic stories about conflicts between good and evil, order and chaos, youth and age, The Jungle Book encourages us to root for the wise and just characters even though we can't help being enthralled by the dangerous ones and entertained by the mischief of those naughty, lawless monkeys.

-- Tina Hanlon
ACT I

Shortly before curtain rises, Indian Jungle sounds are heard. When the curtain rises the CHORUS is seated around the stage, both off and on the platforms. The storyteller, BASU, is hidden in the shadows; his robe blends in with the shrubbery. When lights come up, CHORUS rises.

CHORUS:
Oh, hear the call: Good hunting all
That keep the Jungle Law.
For we be playmates thou and I;
The night is dark and the sky is dry,
And we are free and on the loose.
Has the wolf pack called a truce?

BASU:
Let the Jungle listen
To the things I have heard.
Listen, I say,
Man-cubs, buffaloes, tigers, and birds.
For this is the law of the Jungle
As old and as true as the sky.
The man that keeps it may prosper,
But the man that breaks it must die.

CHILD 1: Tell us, Mohammed, of the stories of the Jungle boy, Mowgli.

(All children are excited.)

CHILD 2: Yes, tell us about Baloo and Bagheera.

BASU: I will.

CHILD 3: And, about Shere Khan.

(All children become silent.)

BASU: Shere Khan, yes. Shere Khan, the black prince of evil tigers.

CHILD 3: Please tell us of Mowgli and Shere Khan.

BASU: I will. I promise. But first I must tell you who I am. Mohammed Basu, appointed by the government as doctor and mid-wife to the Jungle. The vast, beautiful, mysterious Indian Jungle. I protect the animals and I guard against fire. It is an important responsibility. For in the dry season the tall dead grass can ignite a whole forest. Pale flames destroy both men and animals. Fire is most feared, for it has no friends as it blackens the earth. You must understand about my Jungle. our Jungle. It is not the deep tropical Jungles of Africa with foliage so lush that a man can barely walk through it. No, my Jungle is composed of grassy plains, tall forests, great mountains, and deep streams. We call it the Rukh.

CHILD 2: Begin Mohammed.

ALL CHILDREN: Yes. Yes.

CHILD 3: Tell us the story of the wolf-boy Mowgli. Please.

BASU: So sorry. You are anxious and so...

(with a smile)
...am I.

(He moves to a stool far right.)

CHORUS: Oh, hear the call! Good hunting all
That keep the Jungle Law.
The wolves now rest,
For it is best,
In the heat of day.
Gray brothers here abound,
Run without a sound.
What news is brought?
That a man-cub walks,
Though not yet talks,
Into our Jungle plain.

(Chorus fades into background; lights up on the platforms; it is almost dusk.)

BASU: It was 7 o’clock of a very warm evening in the Jungle of India. Mother Wolf
(She enters on the platform with her four cubs)
was washing her four young cubs, and Father Wolf
(Enters and sits on a taller platform)
was preparing to hunt.

MOTHER: Good luck go with you, father of my children. May none in the
Jungle be hungry on this night.
(Offstage, a cry is heard. It is a faint roar of Shere Khan.)

BASU: It was then they heard a noise. Father Wolf prepared to defend his pack.
(Father Wolf jumps upon a rock; Mowgli comes running in; Father wolf springs at him.)

MOTHER: Stop! Stop! It is a man-cub.
(Father Wolf stops in mid jump and lands crumpled in a heap.)
Are you unhurt, little frog?
(Mowgli smiles at her.)

FATHER: Worry about me. I’ve taken a fierce fall to spare your "little frog."

MOTHER: Be up, father, and see what I have.
(Mowgli hugs her.)
How little and how bold!
(Off in the distance, we hear "Aaaarrh! It is the roar of Shere Khan.)

FATHER: That is the cry of a tiger.

MOTHER: It is Shere Khan! Why does the Big One hunt in our hills? He has no right to come here without
due warning. It is the Law of the Jungle.

FATHER: He has come after this man-cub. The Lame One feeds on cattle and man.

MOTHER: Shere Khan means trouble.

FATHER: If he has injured or killed this man-cub’s parents, then men on elephants with guns will burn and kill
until they have satisfied their need for revenge.

MOTHER: This man-cub is so cuddly.
(Mowgli plays with wolf cubs.)

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Look, he loves us already.

**SHERE KHAN:** *(Offstage)* Aaaarrhh!

*(It is louder and closer. At the sound of the tiger, MOWGLI hugs MOTHER WOLF for protection.)*

**MOTHER:** Was there ever a Mother Wolf that could boast of a man-cub among her children?

**FATHER:** But Shere Khan is not to be denied his prey.

*(SHERE KHAN enters on a high platform on the opposite side of the stage; he looks down on them.)*

**MOTHER:** To let Shere Khan have him, Father Wolf, would mean the man-cub’s death.

**FATHER:** But Mother Wolf ...

**MOTHER:** We shall give shelter to this orphan man-cub.

**FATHER:** Quickly, back into our cave.

*(CHILDREN in the chorus, using their bodies, create a cave; SHERE KHAN crosses to the cave.)*

Shere Khan does us great honor. But what does Shere Khan need?

**SHERE KHAN:** My quarry. A man-cub. His parents ran off.

*(Slinking around the stage)*

Give him to me!

**FATHER:** We Wolves are a free people. We do not take orders from a striped cattle-killer. The man-cub is ours.

**SHERE KHAN:** I want the man-cub! You do not choose. It is I, Shere Khan the tiger, who speaks.

**MOTHER:** And it is I, *(She moves out of cave and faces SHERE KHAN.)*

Mother of Wolves, who answers. The man-cub is mine. He shall not be killed. I will raise him with my pack; my cubs shall be his brothers. And if you try to take him from me you will return to your home lamer than when you came into the world. Go, Shere Khan, Go!

**BASU:** Now Shere Khan might have faced Father Wolf, but he could not stand up against Mother Wolf, for a she wolf will fight to the death to protect her young.

**SHERE KHAN:** *(Backing away)* We will see what the Pack will say about adopting a man-cub. The cub is mine and soon my teeth will feel his flesh.

*(SHERE KHAN starts to exit.)*

**MOTHER:** Lame One!

*(She moves to him; MOWGLI follows.)*

Some day, when this man-cub is a cub no more, he shall hunt you!

*(SHERE KHAN growls and exits.)*

**BASU:** But Shere Khan spoke much truth. To keep the boy, the Wolf Pack Council must approve. That is the Law of the Jungle. When the next full moon rose high in the sky, Father Wolf and Mother Wolf and their cubs and the man-cub went to Council Rock.

*(Enter WOLVES; they are all over platforms. AKELA, the leader of the Pack, looks down on MOTHER WOLF and MOWGLI.)*

**AKELA:** Look well, O Wolves! Ye know the law--ye know the law. Look well, O wolves!

*(WOLVES stare at MOWGLI and howl.)*

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MOTHER: This, great Lone Wolf, is our man-cub. Akela, we call him Mowgli, the frog.

AKELA: He looks not like a frog to me.

MOTHER: When he tries to sit as my cubs do,
(Mowgli tries.)
he looks not like a wolf but rather like a frog.
(All the WOLVES laugh good-naturedly. SHERE KHAN enters and leaps onto the highest platform.)

SHERE KHAN: The cub is mine. Give him to me. What has the Wolf Pack, a free people, to do with a man-cub?

AKELA: The Law of the Jungle states that if there is any dispute at least two members of the Pack who are not his father or mother must speak on his behalf.
(Pause)
Who speaks for this man-cub?
(Silence)

SHERE KHAN: Then the man-cub, Mowgli, is mine.
(He begins to cross; he has won and he's very happy.)

BASU: The only non-wolf allowed at a Wolf Pack Council is Baloo, the sleepy brown bear, who teaches the wolf cubs the law of the Jungle.
(BALOO enters.)

BALOO: I speak for the man-cub. There is no harm in a man-cub. I have no gift of words, but I speak the truth. I myself will teach him.
(WOLVES are impressed; they talk among themselves.)

SHERE KAHN: The bear? The bear speaks for a man-cub. Should we listen to this fierce hunter of honey and nuts?
(WOLVES laugh.)

BALOO: It is my right to speak here. Why is Shere Khan even here?

SHERE KAHN: I saw him first. I want to "adopt" him. He is mine by law.

BALOO: What law?

SHERE KAHN: The law that...
(Crossing to BALOO)
...says the strongest shall have a mancub, if he wants.

BALOO: Surely someone else will speak for this man-cub.

AKELA: Yes. Who speaks besides Baloo?
(Silence. None of the WOLVES wants to cross SHERE KHAN.)

SHERE KAHN: I ask again, what have a free people to do with a man-cub? Who here wants to engender the wrath of Shere Khan to save a man-cub?
(WOLVES back away.)
Then the man-cub is mine.

AKELA: Free People. I, Akela, would speak for the man-cub, but the Law forbids it.
(Pause)
Will no one save this man-cub from Shere Khan? Look well, O wolves! Look well!

SHERE KAHN: I think not.
Mowgli, come to Shere Khan. Now!

(BAGHEERA enters and crosses between MOWGLI and SHERE KHAN.)

BASU: It was Bagheera, the Black Panther, that stood between the boy and the beast. Everybody knew Bagheera and nobody cared to cross his path.

BAGHEERA: I know I have no right to speak at your assembly. That is the Law of the Jungle.

AKELA: But we may grant you the right to speak, if you ask.

BAGHEERA: Free People, I ask your leave to speak.

WOLVES: Speak then. Speak! Speak!

BAGHEERA: To kill a little man-cub is a shame. I would think shameful things of the Free People if they were to allow this to happen. I speak for Mowgli, the man-cub.

SHERE KHAN: Listen not to the Panther. The cub is mine. I will have him. If not this day, then another.

AKELA: Bagheera has spoken for the man-cub. Look well, look well, O wolves!

(He crosses to SHERE KHAN.)

Mowgli, you are now a member of the Wolf Pack.

(All WOLVES howl; SHERE KHAN starts to exit.)

SHERE KHAN: Brother Wolves, you will all regret this day. The man-cub will make you all cowards. None will ever be able to look him in the eyes.

(He roars.)

Mark my words, Free People. Ye will regret this day!

BASU: We can only guess at the wonderful life he lived amongst the wolves. If it were all to be written out, it would fill ever so many books. I will tell you that Baloo taught him many things. When he was not learning, he sat in the sun or slept; and when he felt dirty or hot he swam, and when he wanted to play, he would tumble with his brothers. All this he did for ten years, until he became a man and was a cub no more.

(He crosses to SHERE KHAN.)

And when he was full grown, Mother Wolf said to him ...

MOTHER: Never trust Shere Khan. Someday you must kill the lame one or he will kill you.


(He tumbles with BROTHER WOLF and BALOO. They play-fight until CHORUS is ready. Lights fade on all but CHORUS; BALOO, BROTHER WOLF and MOWGLI freeze. All others exit.)

CHORUS: The monkey is talking just like men.

Excellent! Wonderful! Once again,
Here they sit in a branchy row
Thinking of beautiful things to know.
Dreaming of deeds they can do,
Waiting till evening when it's blue.
Nothing is feared; nothing is gained,
All can be lost if it rained.
Now these are the Laws of the Jungle
And many and mighty are they,
We need to always remember,
To these Laws we must all obey.

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To these Laws we must all obey.

(CHORUS exits; lights up full on downstage area.)

BASU: Now it came to pass that as Mowgli was growing up, Baloo spent much time with him, for he needed to know the Law of the Jungle. The big, serious, old brown bear was delighted to have so quick a pupil. Mowgli was also taught the stranger's Hunting Call, which is to be repeated out loud whenever one of the Jungle People hunts outside his own ground.

BALOO: Aah - Pee Ree Chinnne.

(BAGHEERA enters and watches.)

BALOO: Aaah - Ree Kinne.
MOWGLI: Aaah - Ree Kinne.

BAGHEERA: (Crossing to Baloo) That was a sharp blow, and thou dost not want to hurt our Little Brother.

BALOO: A man-cub must learn all of the Law.

BAGHEERA: But man-cubs have small heads. Baloo, they can only carry so much knowledge at one time.

BALOO: Maybe the blow was too severe.

BAGHEERA: Did he say he was going to play with the monkey people? Have you not taught him that they are an evil folk? That the monkey people are forbidden!

BALOO: I was going to teach him that next week. Now he's with the monkey people. What do I do, Bagheera?

BAGHEERA: We must find him at once.

BASU: They soon found Mowgli under a tree being fed nuts...

(MONKEYS on the platforms are feeding MOWGLI; they are playing together. This goes on for several seconds.)

...by the monkey people.

(Baloo enters.)

MONKEY 1: Have a nut.
MONKEY 2: Have a berry.
MOWGLI: This is the life.
MONKEY 1: You are just like me!
MONKEY 2: But you don't have a tail.
MONKEY 3: (Head MONKEY) But he has clothes.

(Baloo enters.)

MONKEY 1: Have a nut.
MONKEY 2: Have a berry.
MOWGLI: This is the life.
MONKEY 1: You are just like me!
MONKEY 2: But you don't have a tail.
MONKEY 3: (Head MONKEY) But he has clothes.

(Baloo enters.)

MONKEY 1: Scram, you rats of trees!

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Leave this man-cub alone.

(BALOO shakes fist; MONKEYS shake fists.)

I mean now!

(BALOO turns around in a circle; MONKEYS turn around in a circle. MONKEYS chatter at BALOO; they do a little dance around him, jabbing him. Finally, one crawls behind him and he is pushed over.)

MOWGLI: (Laughing) Now you see how it feels to be knocked about!

BALOO: Graaah!

(He rises and swings at MONKEYS. They laugh at him. BAGHEERA enters.)

BAGHEERA: (Roars) Leave, monkey folk. Leave now!

(MONKEYS all chatter and scamper away.)

MOWGLI: Why did you do that? They care about me. More than my "friends" do.

BALOO: The monkey people are your friends?

MOWGLI: Yes, when you hurt my head they had pity for me. They said I am their blood brother. Except I have no tail. They said that I would be their leader some day if I teach them how to make clothing.

BAGHEERA: They lie. They have no leader.

MOWGLI: They are kind to me. They stand on their feet as I do and they do not hit me with hard paws.

BALOO: Listen, man-cub. I have taught you all of the Law of the Jungle except about the monkey folk. They are outcasts.

BAGHEERA: They only boast and chatter, and pretend to be a great people. They neither plan nor build.

MOWGLI: But to me ... BALOO: (Interrupts) The monkey people are forbidden. Remember!

BAGHEERA: They can also be dangerous. One hundred monkeys banded together fear none.

MOWGLI: Awh, everyone fears you Bagheera, even Shere Khan.

BALOO: Even Shere Khan fears the might of one hundred monkeys.

(All exit; lights dim.)

BASU: What Baloo had said about the monkeys was perfectly true. They were always just going to have a leader, or laws or customs of their own, but they never did. Anyway, one of the monkeys invented what seemed to him to be a brilliant idea. They should capture Mowgli because he knew how to make clothing from hides, and if he taught them how, then all of the finest people would give them the same respect they gave man. You see, Mowgli was a child of a weaver and had inherited the ability to make all sorts of shirts and loincloths.

(About a dozen MONKEYS creep in on MOWGLI while he is sewing a piece of material; they all gather around him silently at various levels. MOWGLI is not aware they are there. Several seconds pass; then they grab him in a mean fashion and carry him off.)

So, for once, the monkey people made a plan. They kidnapped Mowgli and took him to the Cold Lairs, an abandoned city buried deep in the Jungle. There he would make them all clothing.

(Lights up downstage. BALOO is deep in sleep; we hear the buzzing of a bee. Several CHILDREN make the sound; one child's finger becomes the bee. It lands on BALOO's ear. BALOO tries several times to swat it. Finally it lands on his ear. When he brushes it away, it wakes him.)
BALOO: Bee, if you come again I'll swat you. I'll just pretend to be asleep.

(Big fake snore; BEE sound returns. BEE lands on his nose. He gives a big swat and punches himself in the nose.)

Aaah, Aaah, that hurt!

(BEE buzzes off. BAGHEERA enters.)

BAGHEERA: Wake up, Baloo! The monkey folk have stolen Mowgli!

BALOO: Why did I not warn him against the monkey people instead of breaking his head? They will kill him. This is all my fault. He could be hurt or dead.

(He lies down and rolls to and fro crying.)

My fault ... my fault ... my fault ...

BAGHEERA: You look like a porcupine all curled up. We must in all haste try to rescue him.

BALOO: What if Mowgli is dead?

(He stands.)

I'm responsible. I'm entrusted with teaching the Law ...

BAGHEERA: We must have a plan to get him back. Think, Baloo. I need your help!

BALOO: It is all my fault.

(He crosses away.)

All mine.

BAGHEERA: I can't think of anything; the monkey folk have no fear of any Jungle People.

BALOO: Wait, Bagheera! What is it Hiti the elephant always says? "To each his own fear!"

BAGHEERA: What?

BALOO: Do you not understand? "To each his own fear"? What do the monkey people fear?

BAGHEERA: Only the python ...

(They exit in haste; lights dim downstage, up on platform.)

BASU: Off they went in a great haste to find their friend with the most evil eyes ... Kaa, the snake. Now Kaa...

(KAA slithers on.)

...was a rock python, not a poisonous snake. In fact, Kaa thought poisonous snakes cowards, his strength lay in his hug...

(BALOO and BAGHEERA enter.)

...and once he has wrapped his huge coils round anybody, there is no more to be said.

BALOO: Kaa. Kaa. It is your friends, Baloo and Bagheera.

KAA: Sssso, why have you sssought me out?

BALOO: The monkey people.

KAA: Ssslime. I have no love for them. But what wrong have they done you?

BAGHEERA: Those nut-stealers have stolen away our man-cub.

KAA: I'm ssssorry.

BALOO: He is such a man-cub as never was. The best and wisest man-cub, my very own pupil.

KAA: Yessssss. I ssssense there's more.

BALOO: I ... we ... love him, Kaa.

KAA: Tss! Tss! I also have known what love is. There are tales I could tell ... on a moonlit night ten seasons ago there was a beautiful rock python who had just shed her skin ...

BALOO: Some other time, Kaa. Our man-cub is in the hands of the monkey folk and they fear only you.

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KAA: Yessss. With good reason. I’ll go. Do you think this man-cub might be my friend also? A rock python
hasss few real friendssss.

(All exit; stage goes black except on storyteller.)

BASU: And off they went to the Cold Lairs, a lost and buried city, to rescue their friend.

(Enter MONKEYS; they are on the platforms. When all are set, lights up. MOWGLI is fashioning
a skirt for one.)

The monkey people were very pleased with themselves and told Mowgli to fashion them clothes.

(The MONKEY with skirt models it for the others. Then one tears it off and tries to make a hat of
it, then another a shirt. Finally, the HEAD MONKEY waves it like a flag and speaks.)

MONKEY 3: We are great. We are the most wonderful people in all the Jungle! We all say so, and so it must
be true!

(All the MONKEYS jump and clap and the HEAD MONKEY waves the skirt around until it
covers his head and he falls down. All MONKEYS laugh and clap.)

MOWGLI: I would like to leave.

(Crossing away from them)

MONKEYS: (About 5 in chorus) He desires to leave.

MONKEY 3: Pinch him till he wants to stay.

(They pinch him.)

MOWGLI: Enough! Stop, you are hurting me!

MONKEYS: Is it your will to stay or leave?

BAGHEERA: (Leaping upon a platform) His desire is to leave.

BALOO: (Entering from the opposite side) We mean the monkey folk no harm. We only want our man-cub set
free.

MONKEY 3: These two should die. They will steal our man-cub. And we will have no clothes.

MONKEYS: There are only two.

(Other monkeys chorus)

One for me and one for you!

(Several MONKEYS grab MOWGLI and pull him to the side; the others prepare to fight BALOO
and BAGHEERA. The MONKEYS surround them in a slow, almost dance-like movement.
BAGHEERA and BALOO are back to back waiting for the attack. Slowly several MONKEYS
pinch and hit at them.)

MONKEYS: (Four different groups)

You will cry.

You will die.

You will never fly.

So foolish to try.

BALOO: We cannot win; they are so many.

BAGHEERA: And they have no sense of right or wrong.

(The pace picks up. The MONKEYS really grab and jab at them. We know BAGHEERA and
BALOO are in pain.)

Where is Kaa?

BALOO: Maybe the odds were too great even for him.
(From the back of the house, KAA enters. He slithers down the aisle silently; the audience may not all see him for a little while.)

BAGHEERA: We are of one blood. We three die together.

(MONKEYS throw MOWGLI into the circle.)

MONKEYS: (Four different groups)
We are great.
You now shake.
Death does take.
All help too late.

(KAA appears on stage; MONKEYS see him, freeze with terror in their tracks.)

KAA: Sssssort of a party. Sssssorry I wasn't invited. Sssso I came anyway.

MONKEYS: It's Kaa.

(Lots of improvisation as MONKEYS run)
To the trees. Run! Run! He will kill us!

(KAA whips his tail and knocks MONKEYS to and fro; finally they all scamper off stage, many running through the house.)

BALOO: (Hugging MOWGLI) You aren't hurt, are you?

MOWGLI: No, a little hungry and a little bruised. But you, my friends, are bleeding.

(He touches BALOO's eye.)

BALOO: It is nothing, if you are safe. But to Kaa you owe your life.

KAA: Sssss. This is the manling.

MOWGLI: Can we be of one blood, you and I?

KAA: A friend? Yesss. I want us to be friends.

MOWGLI: No, more than friends. Brothers.

KAA: A manling brother?

(He coils around MOWGLI and hugs him.)

Yessss, a rock python has few brothers.

BAGHEERA: Now, Mowgli, you must be punished.

MOWGLI: It is right.

(He steps out of KAA's coils.)

I am an evil man-cub.

BALOO: But he is sorry, and all turned out for the best.

BAGHEERA: What says the Law of the Jungle, Baloo?

BALOO: That blows must be given, and I must do the deed.

MOWGLI: It is just. I did wrong in playing with the monkey people and almost brought my best friends to great harm.

(Lights dim; CHORUS enters.)

BASU: So Baloo gave Mowgli four taps.

(They pantomime action described in the dialogue.)

And when the punishment was over he and Baloo, hand in hand, went off into the Jungle to find honey.

(They exit.)
But, Mowgli was soon to have a more serious problem than the monkey folk. You see, not all of Mowgli’s adopted wolf pack family loved him as Baloo, Bagheera, Mother Wolf, and Father Wolf did. This was Shere Khan's fault.

(Lights up on CHORUS)

CHORUS: When one has an enemy near,
He needs never show his fear.
For the stalker will stalk and the prey must pray,
That the just will win and say.
Now these are the Laws of the Jungle,
And many and mighty are they.
We need to always remember:
To these Laws we must all obey,
To these Laws we must all obey.

(Lights fade on chorus. SHERE KAHN and two wolves are gathered on a platform; all lights dim except on platforms.)

WOLF 1: Did you hunt today?
SHERE KAHN: Yes, I killed a goat. Ye may have it.
WOLF 1: Where is it to be found?
SHERE KAHN: I'll tell you later. First call some of your friends.
WOLF 1: H o o w o o u! (repeat)
SHERE KAHN: Have you noticed that at the Wolf Pack Council all wolves are afraid to look the man-cub in the eyes? It is true. Is it not?
WOLF 1: I am not afraid to look him in the eyes!

(Three WOLVES enter; they are also on platforms.)

SHERE KAHN: You lie ... as a coward lies. Are ye also afraid to look at the man-cub eyes?
WOLVES: No. No.
WOLF 1: It is not fear. But the man-cub can look longer into our eyes than we can into his.
SHERE KAHN: Yes. And you shrink from the man-cub. He makes ye cowards.
WOLVES: No. No.
WOLF 2: We have no fear of the man-cub.
SHERE KAHN: Why does he run your Council meeting then?
(Silence)

Whenever he speaks, all listen. Even I, the mightiest animal in the Jungle, am forbidden to speak.
WOLF 3: But Baloo and Bagheera always protect him.
SHERE KAHN: So you are not afraid of the man-cub, but ye are afraid of a hunter of honey and an aging panther?
WOLF 1: No. No. We could kill them all if we wanted.
SHERE KAHN: But you protect him. Why does your oldest and dearest friend, the one that brings ye goats and pigs to eat, have to bear the humiliation of being an outcast?
WOLF 1: No. We love you best.
WOLVES: Yes. Yes. You are our hero.
SHERE KAHN: Then give Mowgli to me, for he is mine.

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WOLF 1: That we will do, great tiger.

(They exit.)

SHERE KHAN: (Alone) For the price of a goat, these wolves have betrayed their brother. Shere Khan, you are the mightiest and most splendid creature in the Jungle.

(All lights dim. He exits.)

BASU: It is true. Very true. A man can look longer into an animal's eyes than an animal can look into a man's eyes. Now because Bagheera had ears everywhere, he knew what Shere Khan was planning.

(Enter MOWGLI and BAGHEERA; lights up downstage.)

MOWGLI: But Bagheera, the Wolf Pack would never let Shere Khan harm me. Besides, you and Baloo protect me.

BAGHEERA: Shere Khan is thine enemy.

MOWGLI: The tiger is all long tail and loud talk, like the peacock.

BAGHEERA: Open your eyes, little brother. Shere Khan dare not kill you without the Wolf Pack's consent. But he has been courting the young wolves, feeding them. He has taught them that a man-cub has no place in the Wolf Pack.

MOWGLI: Are not the wolves my brothers? I was raised with them. I obey the Law of the Jungle and have I not pulled many a thorn from their paws? They are my brothers.

BAGHEERA: They have forgotten all that you have done for them. They wish to kill you because you make them feel cowardly.

MOWGLI: You must explain this to me, Bagheera!

BAGHEERA: Look at me.

(They look at each other straight in the eyes. After several moments, BAGHEERA looks away.)

That is why.

MOWGLI: What?

BAGHEERA: Not even I can look you in the eyes. But it does not matter to me because I love you, as a brother. The Wolves hate you because their eyes cannot meet thine and they feel ashamed and small. They believe that if you were gone, they would be brave again. They hate thee because you are a man.

MOWGLI: I only look them in the eyes for fun. I will do it no more and then they will love me again.

BAGHEERA: No. No. No.

(He is angry.)

You are not listening to me, man-cub!

MOWGLI: You're not going to hit me with your paw like Baloo, are you?

BAGHEERA: No.

(Regaining control)

Do you not understand? Once we find what frightens us, then we need to kill it, so the fear will leave us. Where fear is concerned, Little Brother, man and animals are alike.

MOWGLI: If I can't live with the Wolf Pack in the Jungle, where shall I live?

BAGHEERA: You know the answer to that.

MOWGLI: In a man-village?

BAGHEERA: Thou art a man's cub. Thou must go back to men. To men who are your real brothers.

(BAGHEERA starts to leave.)

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If you are not killed by the wolves.

MOWGLI: Do not leave, Bagheera. Tell me what I should do.

BAGHEERA: Walk with me, Little Brother. I have a plan.

They exit; all lights fade except on BASU.

BASU: And it came to pass that at the next full moon, which as you remember is the sign for all wolves to gather at Council Rock, Shere Khan was ready to exact his revenge on Mowgli.

WOLVES gather on platforms. AKELA is on the highest platform; SHERE KHAN is stage right opposite from BALOO, BAGHEERA and MOWGLI. MOWGLI has the fire pot behind him.

Lighting should represent night.

SHERE KAHN: I will speak first, if there is no objection.

SHERE KHAN'S WOLVES: Let him speak. Speak, King of the Jungle.

AKELA: Surely there are objections ...

Silence. SHERE KAHN strolls forward.

SHERE KHAN: Brothers, I the King of the ...

MOWGLI: (Interrupting) I object. Free People. Does Shere Khan lead this Pack? What business has a tiger at a Wolf Pack Council?

SHERE KHAN: I was asked to speak.

MOWGLI: By whom? Are we all jackals to fawn over this butcher of calves?

SHERE KHAN'S WOLVES: Silence the man’s cub. Let Shere Khan speak. (etc.)

SHERE KHAN: Thank you, my "brothers." I will be brief. The man-cub has lived amongst you too long.

Remember, Free People, he was my meat first. Give him to me and I will hunt for thee, but shelter him and thou art mine enemy always.

SHERE KHAN'S WOLVES: Give the man to Shere Khan. What do we want with a man? (etc.)

AKELA: Silence! Let him go to his own people, then. We need not kill him.

SHERE KHAN: No. For the man-cub will turn all the people of the villages against us. Give him to me. He is a man, and none of us can look him in the eyes.

BROTHER WOLF: My brother has eaten our food, pulled thorns from our paws, and has broken no Law of the Jungle.

SHERE KHAN: No law but one: no man can run with the people of the Jungle.

BALOO: That is not a law. I should know. I teach the Law!

SHERE KHAN'S WOLVES: Then it should be the Law.

WOLF 2: We make it a law!

WOLF 3: It is a good law!

BALOO: You act as the monkeys. You cannot shout and make a law!

SHERE KHAN: It is a just law.

(He stands.)

I will have Mowgli!

WOLVES: Give Shere Khan the man-cub.

(Lots of WOLVES gather around SHERE KHAN.)

The King of the Jungle has spoken.

BAGHEERA: You must defend yourself now. The Pack has lost all ability to reason.

BALOO: Now we must fight!

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WOLF 2: Give Shere Khan the man-cub!
WOLF 3: Yes. He is our enemy!

(A great howl comes from all of the WOLVES; then MOWGLI steps forward.)

MOWGLI: Listen all!

(Silence)
I will go. I will no longer call you my brothers, but rather I will call you what men do ... dogs.
(SHERE KHAN and WOLVES start to creep towards him.)
Stay dogs! Stay. Here
(He brings the pot forward.)
is the Red Flower. Or as a man would say--FIRE!
(He sticks a torch into the pot and the torch is ablaze. They all back away from him.)
Now that you are ready to listen, I will tell this to you. I go from you to my own people. I was to each of you a brother in all but blood and though my heart breaks, I still love you and the life I lived with the Pack. I will never betray you as you have betrayed me.
(MOWGLI moves directly to SHERE KAHN.)
Up dog! Rise up when a
(He rises.)
man speaks or I will set your coat ablaze. Cattle killer, go now -- all of you.
(All WOLVES move away.)
Remember the next time I come to Council Rock it will be to lay Shere Khan’s hide on that stone! Leave, all of you.
(All exit except BALOO, BAGHEERA, BROTHER WOLF and MOWGLI, who begins to cry.)
What is this?
(He feels the tears.)
Am I dying, Bagheera? I feel so strange. What are these wet things that drop from my eyes?
BAGHEERA: Those are tears, Little Brother. Only men have them. You are sad and you should be, for a great wrong has been done to you. Let the tears flow.
(All exit; MOWGLI crosses to MOTHER and FATHER WOLF and his FOUR BROTHERS; pantomime action.)
BASU: And Mowgli went to say goodbye to Father Wolf and Mother Wolf. And again he cried and begged them not to forget him. And all the wolves that loved Mowgli howled the long sad howl that marks an end to one thing and the beginning of another.
(WOLVES howl.)
At dawn, Mowgli left the cave of his Wolf Mother and Father and went down the hillside alone, to meet those mysterious things that are man.
(WOLVES exit. CHILDREN enter. Lights bump up.)
Gather round, children. For now it is time for a pause, a chance to reflect, a time to anticipate.

CHILD 1: But, you must go on with the story.

CHILDREN: Yes. Please.

BASU: I will. But, now you must go over in your minds what has happened to Mowgli...

CHILD 3: (Interrupting) And, what will happen to him in the village of people.
CHILD 1: I think I know.

BASU: Ah. Don't we all? I will go now and have a cup of tea and try to recall all that Mowgli told me. You would do well to do likewise.

(Lights fade. They exit.)

END ACT I

INTERMISSION
COSTUMES

The costumes for *The Jungle Book* can be as elaborate or as simple as the director wants. All animal costumes can be either realistic or representational.

The simpler the better: for example, Shere Khan could wear a tiger robe with tights, or a sweat suit or a tee-shirt and khaki shorts underneath. Likewise, the wolves can also wear robes and when they become monkeys, simply add a tail. The villagers wear brightly colored cloth draped around them to represent Indian dress. Versatility in the costumes is more important than realism. The goal should be to allow the actors, with use of voice and body, to bring alive the animals of the Indian Jungle. Simplicity in costuming will allow the same actors to portray a wolf, a monkey, a buffalo and a villager. The buffaloes can be created simply by adding horns to the wolf costumes.

If more elaborate costumes are desired, realistic animal costumes can be utilized. All of the faces of the actors could be made up to give a fully representational wolf, monkey or bear. However, since the wolves will probably become villagers or monkeys, they can also wear masks. The one costume that should be elaborate is the python, Kaa. It can be made with hula hoops and double knit material. The costume should house between 5 and 9 actors.

A portfolio from the original production of the costume designs for Kaa and the monkey hats and detailed instructions for making these costumes and Shere Khan's striped coat is available from the publisher for $2.50, including first class postage.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

The fire-pot that Mowgli uses to light his torch can be created by using a large crock bowl and placing in it some flash paper or tissue paper lightly sprayed with lighter fluid. Mowgli, using a lighter, can easily light the paper in the bowl. An adequate and quite safe torch can be purchased at any lawn and garden store. If the director should choose not to use real fire, there are several commercially available flame substitutes that will serve.

11 pages of script in the Second Act.
R. REX STEPHENSON earned his Bachelor's degree in middle and secondary education at Ball State University and, upon graduation, taught at middle school and high school in Florida and Indiana. He received his M.A. from Indiana State University in theatre, and became drama professor at Ferrum College in Virginia. In 1984 he received his Ph.D. in educational theatre at New York University.

Stephenson has had many plays published, including Alice in Wonderland, Visions, The Jack Tales, Treasure Island, and Galileo: Man of Science. Also published by Leicester Bay Theatricals are The Littlest Shepherd and The Jungle Book. Stephenson has been a winner in two major playwriting contests, the American Alliance for Theatre and Education in 1995 for his historical play, Too Free for Me, and the National Archives playwriting contest for his drama about Reconstruction, Charity for All. In 1996 he received the Jean Ritchie Fellowship to research and write plays on John Wesley, the founder of the United Methodist Church. He was awarded the 1997 East Central Theatre Conference's Award for Theatrical Excellence. Stephenson lives in Ferrum, Virginia and has three daughters: Janice, Jessica, and Juliet.

TINA HANLON, who wrote the background material, bibliography, and many of the activities for the Study Guide, has her Ph.D. in English, which she teaches in Virginia, at Ferrum College, and the Hollins University Summer Graduate Program in Children’s Literature.

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