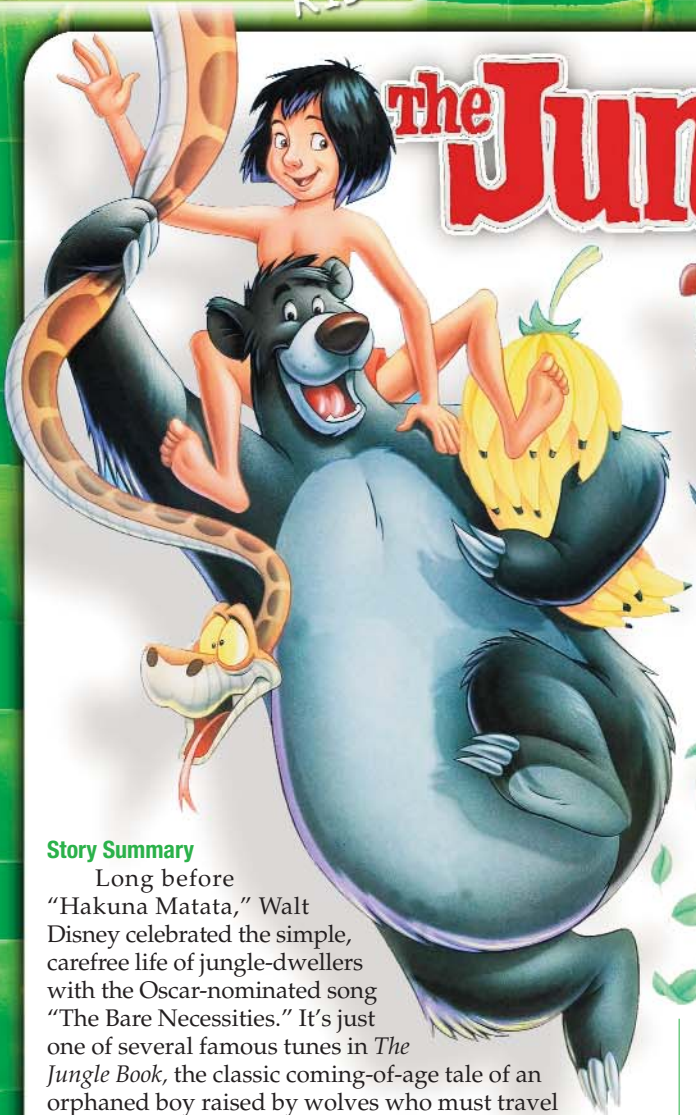




The Jungle Book



Rated: G
Running Time: 78 minutes

Themes: Friendship, trust, selfless service, knowing where you belong, avoiding the hypnotic pull of evil, standing up to bullies

Cautions: Mild cartoon violence and peril. When Mowgli's loincloth gets tugged, viewers get a brief glimpse of his backside (in profile). Young children may be saddened momentarily as Baloo is presumed dead after battling Shere Khan.

Story Summary

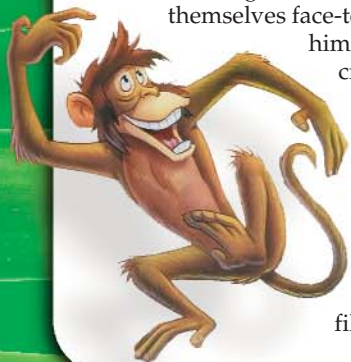
Long before "Hakuna Matata," Walt Disney celebrated the simple, carefree life of jungle-dwellers with the Oscar-nominated song "The Bare Necessities." It's just one of several famous tunes in *The Jungle Book*, the classic coming-of-age tale of an orphaned boy raised by wolves who must travel to take his place in a far-off man village.

Despite his untamed upbringing, Mowgli is a fairly typical 10-year-old boy. That makes him an obvious target of the vicious tiger Sheer Khan, who hates humans and is rumored to be on the prowl in their region. The no-nonsense leopard Bagheera volunteers to escort the man cub through the jungle, though the boy has no desire to rejoin his people. During the journey, Mowgli narrowly escapes a slithering serpent, befriends an easygoing bear named Baloo, and gets kidnapped by mischievous monkeys.

The monkeys' leader, a jazzy orangutan known as King Louie, offers to let Mowgli stay in the jungle in exchange for the secret of man's fire. Before the boy can oblige,

Baloo and Bagheera rescue the little guy, but soon find themselves face-to-face with the striped menace himself, Shere Khan. How can this cruel cat be defeated? And what will it take to convince Mowgli to re-enter the world of men?

Released in 1967, this animated feature was inspired by Rudyard Kipling's stories, but Walt Disney himself considered the source material too dark and insisted that his team take the film in a different direction. That



decision proved to be good for families, and it may have saved the studio. You see, Walt passed away during production, and the animation division's fate remained uncertain until *The Jungle Book* performed so well in theaters that it convinced everyone to carry on despite having lost their visionary founder.

Family Activity

Mowgli enjoyed imitating his jungle friends. You can, too! Gather the family for a playful relay race. Agree to mimic a specific animal in each leg of the race. Bounce like monkeys. March like elephants. Slither on your bellies like snakes. Or copy the fun walks of animals *not* in the film, such as crabs, penguins or chickens. If your family isn't very big, you can all be on the same team and compete against the clock.

Talking Points

1. How is Kaa similar to the deceitful serpent described in Genesis 3:1-13? Discuss Kaa's hypnotic gaze, as well as a few forces in our world (music, advertising, drugs, video games) that can have a trance-like effect on people who may not know they're being lulled into a vulnerable position.

2. If Bagheera's words honoring Baloo's "ultimate sacrifice" sound familiar, they should. He's quoting Jesus straight out of the Bible. Let children make this discovery for themselves by having them look up John 15:13.

3. Mowgli was embraced by a wolf pack, but also had chances to fall in with elephants, monkeys, vultures ... and humans. Ask, "Which of those animal groups would have been a good fit for Mowgli, and which would have been unhealthy? Why?" Read Proverbs 13:20 and 18:24, and help your child appreciate the need to choose friends carefully.

4. Baloo is mellow and fun-loving, while Bagheera is more dutiful and cautious. How did Mowgli benefit from *both* of their personalities, and what can this teach us about accepting others? —by Bob Smithouser

Want to be king of the jungle?
See how many words from the list
you can find. They will be located
up and down, across, diagonally
... even backwards!

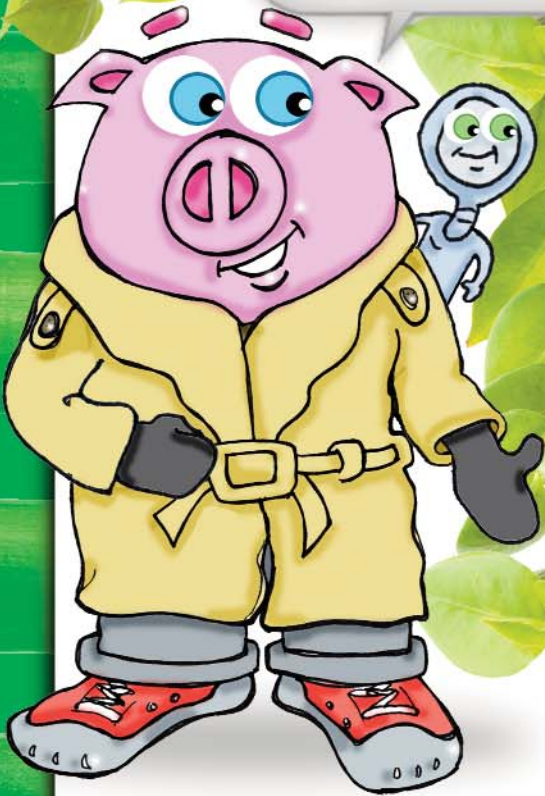
W B G D N I B O O K V
M O E A U S A T R I F
O S M A R E G I T P I
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Y Y V G G L R F L G O
S T I L J U A X I O M
Z H N E N V T T L R W
A O E L E P H A N T E
G N S A C U B M N E Y

Monkeys
Tiger
Kaa
Bear
Jungle

Python
Bagheera
Cub
Vultures
Book

Mowgli
Wolf
Elephant
Man
Kipling

Vines
Orangutan
Fire
Baloo
Fruit



Color our feathered
jungle friend, then
play tic-tac-toe!

