



# Reader's Digest Best Loved Books for Young Readers: The Jungle Books

Written by Rudyard Kipling

---

Published by ninastrattoria

# Table of Contents

Reader's Digest Best Jokes .....	1
Reader's Digest Best Price .....	2
Reader's Digest Best Health .....	3
Reader's Digest Best Neighborhoods .....	4
Reader's Digest Best Loved Books .....	5
Reader's Digest Best Small Towns .....	6
Reader's Digest Best Cities To Live In .....	7
Reader's Digest Best Books .....	8
Reader's Digest Best Stories .....	9
Reader's Digest Best Rv Parks .....	10

# Digest Best Loved Books for Young Readers: The Jung

By Rudyard Kipling

## Reader's Digest Best Jokes

My new favourite.

Incredible. 10/10

Timeless.

So much thought and imagination.

Animal lover forever.

Everything made sense, the laws of the jungle.

Can't rememeber the last time i read something so amazing and unique.

I dont cry reading books but this nearly got me at the end.

## Reader's Digest Best Price

eBook

Once again, I'm struck by the savagery that resonates throughout Kipling's writing. It would be so easy to think of *The Jungle Book* in a more Disney-fied light: talking animals, singing, the rhythmic cadences of a fairy tale or lullaby. But overarching all that is the ever-present reminder that the world of the jungle is a world of nature, red in tooth and claw. Mowgli is raised by wolves and instructed by Baloo for the explicit purpose of survival in a harsh world that actively seeks his death. eBook

Once again, I'm struck by the savagery that resonates throughout Kipling's writing. It would be so easy to think of *The Jungle Book* in a more Disney-fied light: talking animals, singing, the rhythmic cadences of a fairy tale or lullaby. But overarching all that is the ever-present reminder that the world of the jungle is a world of nature, red in tooth and claw. Mowgli is raised by wolves and instructed by Baloo for the explicit purpose of survival in a harsh world that actively seeks his death. Kotick is born and raised amidst bloodshed from two distinct sources: other seals and man. "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi" subverts the traditional story of a pet protecting his master by making the masters little more than incidental characters; Rikki-Tikki wants to protect them, but his actions are driven by instinct rather than any familial bond with the humans. Even in the less-obviously blood-drenched stories, violence is a powerful force. Toomai's journey to witness the dance of the elephants puts him at great risk of death.

The story I found most interesting, however, was the one which closes the book, "Her Majesty's Servants." The characters of this particular story are the camp animals for an army, but paradoxically, these might be the most innocent characters in the whole book. All their conversation is about war and its methods, but without any real recognition of what it means. These animals have been tamed by man, stripped of their natural instincts, and so, with the exception of the elephant, they don't realize what war means, content merely to follow orders and limit their perspective to the specifics of their duties.

And maybe that's the true lesson of *The Jungle Book*. Yes, it's violent, endlessly circling and returning to the themes of death and danger, but in the world of the animals, death and danger exists because they are necessary parts of life. Animals must eat, so animals must hunt and kill. But for people, violence is stripped of that which makes it necessary. Wars don't happen for food and survival; they happen for sport and profit.

Or maybe I'm just a filthy hippie. ...more

This was a Jephony/Mah Fah buddy read that we went into with great excitement and enthusiasm â€”  
 â€œCanâ€™t Wait!â€• â€œSo looking forward to this!!â€• â€œIâ€™ve had this on my shelves forever,  
 letâ€™s get started!!!â€• Woo Hoo!!!!

Alas, it was on the disappointing side. The hope was to get the original take on these stories that Disney has whitewashed on a couple of occasions and to that point it does succeed. Sort of. Kipling presents the adventures of a feral jungle boy and his bloodthirsty pals as they brutally live by the law of the jungle. No singing. No dancing. No resulting cute plushy version of Shere Khan to wander around Disneyland only to get kicked in the faux tiger family jewels by a vengeful four year old, summarily filmed and get a gazillion hits on YouTube and every dude who watches gets to wince at the "thank God that wasn't me" implications. Youch, shots to the groin just aren't funny! Woo Hoo!!!!

Alas, it was on the disappointing side. The hope was to get the original take on these stories that Disney has whitewashed on a couple of occasions and to that point it does succeed. Sort of. Kipling presents the adventures of a feral jungle boy and his bloodthirsty pals as they brutally live by the law of the jungle. No singing. No dancing. No resulting cute plushy version of Shere Khan to wander around Disneyland only to get kicked in the faux tiger family jewels by a vengeful four year old, summarily filmed and get a gazillion hits on YouTube and every dude who watches gets to wince at the "thank God that wasn't me" implications. Youch, shots to the groin just aren't funny!

But I digress.

This volume is The Jungle Books " plural, not The Jungle Book " singular. My favorite Mah Fah buddy reader of all time and Thunder Buddy for Life, Stepheny, was lucky to pick up The Jungle Book (singular) whilst I got stuck reading The Jungle Books (Two. Count 'em. Two!)(plural).

It's also the smarty pants Penguin version, which includes a scholarly introduction by some elbow-patched, flannel jacketed, pipe smoking ass who gets to discourse with pseudo-intellectual insight what Kipling's underlying message was for these stories. Plus, there are eight footnotes per page that direct you to the back of the book for even more "useless" background on this tome. The reader can repeatedly swing back and forth between text and appendix all the while humming "Bare Necessities" to him or herself.

Also, kids, caveat emptor. All the stories aren't about Mowgli and his savage, vicious pals. Rikki-Tikki-Tavi is the best of a wan bunch of animal-themed stories. Kipling even throws in a Seal and an Inuit story to keep the reader off balance and question the rather poor choice of titles.

Arctic -&gt; Freeze-your-nuts-off cold

Jungle -&gt; Sweat-your-nuts-off hot

Just sayin'.

The Mowgli stories are the best things here but they're spread out through the two jungle books \*waves to his favorite Mah Fah buddy reader Stepheny, who owes him big time\*:

Baby Man Cub is rescued and raised by wolves. Man Cub gets befriended by big bear and panther

(Bagheera, the best character, by far, in this book). Man Cub wreaks revenge on evil human village. Man Cub grows up to dominate and lead his jungle pals (he has stare-down contests with â€˜em). Man Cub grows up, gets restless and clumsy (read: horny). Does he leave the jungle to boogie elsewhere? Maybe.

Snakes are Our Anthropomorphic Friends Department: As Stepheny and I will espouse with great conviction, snakes can be real pals (Hi Ermot!). So why does Kaa the Python get such a bum rap in the cartoon and â€œlive actionâ€• remake? Sure he does his hypnotize thing but thatâ€™s only to eat some annoying, poo-flinging monkeys. He and Mowgli are good pals and he helps the Man Cub on a number of occasions. Man-eating pythons are manâ€™s best friend. Yes?

If I havenâ€™t mentioned it before, this isnâ€™t a kid-friendly version of these stories. So if you plan to sit down with your young â€˜un and read stories based on seeing the cartoon, just donâ€™t. (view spoiler)[ Mowgli skinning the bloody hide from a barely dead Shere Khan will keep the kiddies in nightmares for years to come. (hide spoiler)] ...more

## Reader's Digest Best Health

Yeah, yeah, ignore the White Man's Burden stuff. Kipling is one of the best storytellers who ever lived, and neither the author's obnoxious politics nor a complete butchery of this wonderful wonderful story in its many terrible movie incarnations can take away the fact that the Mowgli stories of this and the Second Jungle Book are some of the greatest tales ever created. Read this, for real. It's a classic.

My Mom bought me The Jungle Book from her school and for years I didn't read it.

Not until the summers of 2015 came and I promised myself that I'm going to complete that years' Goodreads' challenge. After reading the book, I remembered the days I used to watch the animated version on TV.

Everything was perfect. Thank you Rudyard Kipling.

## Reader's Digest Best Neighborhoods

Whilst I think it is important to note and be aware of Rudyard Kipling's acknowledged support for imperialism and colonialism when reading any of his works – these aren't themes which I found to be particularly evident let alone prevalent throughout this book. Whilst we may find his politics distasteful at best and abhorrent at worst, I do think it is valid to judge a book (or any other work of art) outside of and standing alone from the artists political / moral beliefs – more specifically and

Whilst I think it is important to note and be aware of Rudyard Kipling's acknowledged support for imperialism and colonialism when reading any of his works – these aren't themes which I found to be particularly evident let alone prevalent throughout this book. Whilst we may find his politics distasteful at best and abhorrent at worst, I do think it is valid to judge a book (or any other work of art) outside of and standing alone from the artists political / moral beliefs – more specifically and perhaps only when those views do not (as in this case) overwhelm or define the art which is produced.

On to the book: Difficult at first when reading the first Mowgli stories for those of us who know and love the 1967 animated Disney version – not to picture the animated characters in the context of the original stories. However, it transpires that the original book / stories have little or nothing to do with the animated Disney film – other than character names and the (sporadic) jungle setting. Once I was able to transcend that brief initial barrier to the imagination, I was then able to immerse myself fully in these stories to their full extent.

As far as rating the book goes, this was challenging as the stories varied from anything between 2 and 5 stars – hence my eventual 4 star rating. To give some idea, I have listed the stories that I thought the most successful and enjoyed the most, as well as some that I found somewhat tedious and ultimately pointless.

Favourites (not in any order):

The White Seal

Rikki-Tikki-Tavi Toomai of the Elephants The Miracle of Purun Bhagat

How Fear Came

The King's Ankus

Quiquern

The Spring Running

Kaa's Hunting Tiger! Tiger!

Most definitely bottom of the list:

Her Majesty's Servants

The Undertakers

(I didn't enjoy much of the poetry in between all the stories – with the odd notable exception).

Overall and bearing in mind the number of great stories vs the number of ones that I think really should

---

Reader's Digest Best Loved Books for Young Readers: The Jungle Books

have been left out, this is a (generally) great collection of stories which creates a fantastic anthropomorphised world not just "of the jungle" but of many other scenarios outside of/significantly remote from the jungle as well (which came as a surprise). This is written with such skill and creativity in some cases creating and resulting in some almost perfect short stories.

...more

2.5 Stars

I liked some stories more than others. The first few were my favorite and then I got bored. Half read, half listened to on audio b/c it seemed every time I picked it up, I fell asleep.

## Reader's Digest Best Loved Books

Probably the first books that I read in English. Can't wait for the upcoming movie.

Thoroughly enjoyable. Thank you, Karen, for this.

## Reader's Digest Best Small Towns

I read this to Nick because I read it myself as a first grader. (Yes, I was a precocious reader.) Since I haven't even glanced at it in the quarter century of intervening years, it was interesting to come back to it.

In some ways I was disappointed as an adult reader. The formal, quasi-Elizabethan language the animals use to talk to each other struck me as pretentious, which I don't believe was at all my original reaction. There was that almost total lack of female characters that is almost inevitable in books meant for boys, which ticks me off every time. Kipling's imperialism and unconscious racism were also sadly clear to me. By racism, I hasten to add, I do not mean hatred. I mean an unthinking assumption that white people, specifically the English, are inherently better than brown people, specifically Indians, in certain ways. (The imperialism clearly arises from the same source.) In fact I think Kipling loved India, including the people who lived there. He just thought they weren't quite his equal. These things bothered me, but at the same time I don't want to be too hard on him. The man was writing over a hundred years ago, after all. He was a product of his time, and really, I think his attitudes were better than most of his contemporaries.

In spite of all this, there were many things to admire about these stories. They are undeniably exciting, with a fully realized, exotic setting. Riki-Tiki-Tavi was just as good as I remembered it. The Mowgli stories were more melancholy and violent than I remembered, but that's not entirely a bad thing. It didn't bother Nick any, certainly, and it meant I enjoyed them more than I might have otherwise.

Nick's opinion may matter the most. And he loved it. Maybe not as much as Harry Potter, but he was totally into the book. The parts that bothered me didn't impinge on his mind at all. All he heard was a series of cool stories about tough little boys and brave, noble animals. ...more

Jungle Booksâ€¦ I was really iffy coming in whether Iâ€™d like this; never read Kipling before. At my favorite bookstore, I saw that they had one of the Readerâ€™s Digest books that I love so much, but my dad said he had an old copy of this book, so I went ahead and went with the old copy (chiefly because it was free to me). Contrary to what I thought, it was more a collection of short stories than one contiguous tale, though Mowgli featured in several of them, and it chronically various episodes in h

Jungle Booksâ€¦ I was really iffy coming in whether Iâ€™d like this; never read Kipling before. At my favorite bookstore, I saw that they had one of the Readerâ€™s Digest books that I love so much, but my dad said he had an old copy of this book, so I went ahead and went with the old copy (chiefly because it

was free to me). Contrary to what I thought, it was more a collection of short stories than one contiguous tale, though Mowgli featured in several of them, and it chronically various episodes in his young life. But Sher Khan, his great antagonist, is really only in two of the stories, and is (spoiler warning) killed off pretty quickly in the book. I was kind of left wondering, "That's it? That's the end of Sher Khan?" It'd be like reading a Batman v. Joker novel, and Joker dies (permanently) in the second chapter. It's kinda like that, huh?

Anyway, the writing itself is somewhat torn. It's a lot like Phantom of the Opera to me. Much of it is kinda boring, don't really like it too much, but there's parts that I enjoyed. For the most part, I liked the book early on, the middle was pretty boring, and the end was so-so. If I was to rate each part, the first third, I'd give 4 stars, the middle third, two stars maybe, the third half, three stars. So I guess you can see where this is going. Three stars. Seems fair.

Of the non-Mowgli stories, the only one I liked was Rikki-Tikki-whatever (spelling), the story of a mongoose who does battle with a nest of snakes. He's a hero! Haha, I liked that little ferret. Good to keep around the house if you have a snake problem. Anyway, yep, three stars overall for the book. I do kinda wanna see the new film. It was purely coincidental that I chose to read Jungle Book this month when the film was coming out; I didn't know about the film. ...more

## Reader's Digest Best Cities To Live In

I've already completed reading the first book( or let me say the first part) , and I am not quite sure whether I continue reading or not . even though several and various moral lessons are embodied within the animals tales , I have not found any interest nor excitement so far . Consequently, I doubt whether I read all of it , and begin to think about another book .

The tale of the Seal sea that defies all the odious challenges and the atrocious underestimating of his kind to discover a safe plac I've already completed reading the first book( or let me say the first part) , and I am not quite sure whether I continue reading or not . even though several and various moral lessons are embodied within the animals tales , I have not found any interest nor excitement so far . Consequently, I doubt whether I read all of it , and begin to think about another book .

The tale of the Seal sea that defies all the odious challenges and the atrocious underestimating of his kind to discover a safe place for them has lots to say about human ~s determination . That no matter how hard a thing is , people will find a way to seek it as long as means too much for them .

The snake killer's , mongoose, story tells readers about the beauty and value of loyalty because that creature puts himself in harms way to rescue a family from snakes ignoring the fact that he is not an expert .

However , I find myself being bored and looking at the watch all the time , for the minutes do not sound to move at all . despite the fact that the stories are pretty short , I found them unbelievably tedious and monotonous . SIGHS!

Nevertheless, I have this book on my coffee table , so perhaps I may read the rest of it one day .  
...more

A series of stories, mostly but not always set in India. I did not know when I first picked this up that not all of these tales feature the most famous character: Mowgli, the baby carried off by a lame tiger and rescued by wolves, who grows to be master of the jungle. (In this, he predates Tarzan by a couple of decades.) I remember reading some, but not all, of this book many years ago, but I remembered little of it, especially from the second book.

Some of the tales are well-known ("Rikki-Tikki- A series of stories, mostly but not always set in India. I did not know when I first picked this up that not all of these tales feature the most famous character: Mowgli, the baby carried off by a lame tiger and rescued by wolves, who grows to be master of the jungle. (In this, he predates Tarzan by a couple of decades.) I remember reading some, but not all, of this book many years ago, but I remembered little of it, especially from the second book.

Some of the tales are well-known ("Rikki-Tikki-Tavi" ) and some not so well known ("Servants Of the

Queen," in which various army pack animals discuss their lot, and by extension, the lot of their masters, in life). For me, the ones that jarred the most were the stories that take place in the Arctic regions of all places ("The White Seal" and "Quiquern"). They seemed wildly incongruous mixed in between the better-known tales of the tropics. The one connecting thread of the tales, no matter what their locale, is that they all deal in some way with an animal's view of the world. Are these tales allegories of colonialism? I don't know. I can see how one might argue the fact --- "The White Seal" in particular appears to be a particularly blatant suggestion of the superiority of the white man --- but it's also clear that Kipling loved India, far too much to write about it simply to push an agenda. Even if it is an extended allegory (which I don't believe) it's a very poor one, since it's so rich and subtle. Anyone could pick it up and enjoy a tale of adventure, fantasy, heroism, familial love, triumph over tragedy, and sad farewells without ever dreaming there might be some hidden meaning, or considering what the various animals "represent." It's often considered a children's book, but I doubt it would be thought so if it appeared today; the language is complex, there's quite a lot of killing and threats of torture, and, least Disneyfied of all, the end is not at all the neatly-tied happy resolution that the majority of non-series children's stories seem to require today. (Kipling seems to favor ambiguous, rather sad endings; Kim and Thy Servant a Dog are respective examples). Still, what kid wouldn't want to hear about how Mowgli massacred the pack of wild dogs with the help of a python, some wolves, and about a million angry bees?

...more

## Reader's Digest Best Books

The Jungle Books: I should have realized when it states "Books" there are other tales other than just the Jungle Book. I guess I was just a little dense from reading the Little Golden Book version for so long to my Son and Grandsons. So once I got passed the point of 340 pages not dedicated strictly to Mowgli I began to read and enjoy the many tales enclosed.

Everyone (Im sure) knows the story of Mowgli and have seen the versions of films. It was the first film my Son saw as a toddler and the mov The Jungle Books: I should have realized when it states "Books" there are other tales other than just the Jungle Book. I guess I was just a little dense from reading the Little Golden Book version for so long to my Son and Grandsons. So once I got passed the point of 340 pages not dedicated strictly to Mowgli I began to read and enjoy the many tales enclosed.

Everyone (Im sure) knows the story of Mowgli and have seen the versions of films. It was the first film my Son saw as a toddler and the movie my Grandsons fell asleep to each and every night, they loved it that much.

This second book of Kiplings can be enjoyed by adults, the story has more depth than the version I have always read. There are also moral lessons of loyalty included with a little of man law justice. I think older readers will get much more out of these tales than younger readers that are used to the Disney version of Mowgli who is raised by wolves in the jungles of India. Once grown he has many guides who teach him the ways, these include his friends Baloo the bear, Bagheera the panther and Kaa the python, as they face the jungle enemy Shere Khan the tiger.

The other tales? â€œThe White Sealâ€•, which is the story of a rare white furred northern seal looking for a new home where he will not be hunted by humans. â€œRikki-Tikki-Taviâ€• a stand-a-lone tale of a mongoose who defends a family living against a pair of cobras. â€œToomai of the Elephantsâ€• is about boy of 10 that helps to take care of the elephants that are used to work and how someday they dance. And finally â€œHer Majestyâ€™s Servantsâ€• about a camp full of men and their animals that talk amongst themselves about their work and being afraid.

It is not the simple tale I was imagining in the beginning, nevertheless Kipling is an incredible writer.

Kipling was the recipient of the 1907 Nobel Prize in Literature. ...more

Three and a half stars.

Well, this was kind of a pleasant surprise. I expected absolutely nothing from this book. Instead I found a couple of stories exploring the eternal question of what is good and what is evil.

The Jungle Books have been on my shelf for decades. I havenâ€™t the foggiest idea where I got it from.

Probably, I've inherited it from my mom or my parents-in-law, as this is not a book I would have wanted to buy myself.

The books consists of fifteen different tales. Some take part in Three and a half stars.

Well, this was kind of a pleasant surprise. I expected absolutely nothing from this book. Instead I found a couple of stories exploring the eternal question of what is good and what is evil.

The Jungle Books have been on my shelf for decades. I haven't the foggiest idea where I got it from. Probably, I've inherited it from my mom or my parents-in-law, as this is not a book I would have wanted to buy myself.

The books consists of fifteen different tales. Some take part in the jungle, others elsewhere. We get to meet the white seal (who leads his fellow seals to safety), the clever mungo (who saves humans and other animals from evil snakes in a garden), an Indian nobleman (who leaves his earthly possessions in order to become a monk), a very old crocodile (who watches over his village and is revered like a god), and many other creatures.

However, the most known character of the books is Mowgli, and quite a few stories are dedicated to him. As an infant he is taken by the evil tiger Shere Khan, but is saved by a pack of wolves. When the tiger claims his prey he is bought free by the panther Bagheera.

Mowgli is raised by the wolf pack, and educated in the laws and the languages of the jungle by Baloo, the bear, and Bagheera. Kipling lets the reader follow a number of his adventures: How he kills his arch enemy Shere Khan, how he destroys a village to revenge his foster parents, how he fights a pack of wild dogs etc.

As time goes by, Mowgli becomes the leader of the jungle, and that changes him. He gets more and more frustrated and melancholic. Slowly he makes up his mind that the jungle may not be his real home after all.

Lesson learned: Disney was wrong. Kaa, the snake, is a reasonably good guy.

...more

## Reader's Digest Best Stories

Before Tarzan there was Mowgli, lost in a jungle in India as a child and taken in by a family of wolves. He is raised by the animals of the jungle, and has adventures with them. He learns loyalty and devotion and the Jungle Law. Every small boy eventually grows up but, to paraphrase Kipling, his adult adventures are a different story. Written in 1894 and 1895 the two collections of adventure/jungle/wilderness stories are included in one volume. Mowgli and his stories are the vast majority, but Before Tarzan there was Mowgli, lost in a jungle in India as a child and taken in by a family of wolves. He is raised by the animals of the jungle, and has adventures with them. He learns loyalty and devotion and the Jungle Law. Every small boy eventually grows up but, to paraphrase Kipling, his adult adventures are a different story. Written in 1894 and 1895 the two collections of adventure/jungle/wilderness stories are included in one volume. Mowgli and his stories are the vast majority, but there are other scenes and other stories included, such as "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi", about a small boy and his mongoose.

As usual Disney took Mowgli's stories from The Jungle Books and turned it into this cream-puff of a movie. Kipling's versions are a little darker as one might imagine, and have deeper undertones about the environment that are at best glazed over in the Disney cartoon.

Not the best stuff I've read recently, but it's good to finally be able to mark it off my list. I would have liked to have heard less about Mowgli (which is Disney's fault for the overkill factor) and more about the Arctic region as in Kipling's story, "Quiquern". ...more

The first time I met Mowgli was when I was very small. I must have been only around two years old and I had watched the Disney film. I HATED it. But when I realized that it was based off of a book (when I was around five or six) I immediately went to the library and checked out both Jungle Books. It was then that I fell in love.

Kipling is very problematic racially and politically. Throughout these books it is easy to pick up on Kipling's inherent prejudice. Through Mowgli the reader is introduced to a "superstitious" and often "savage" race of people. The first time I met Mowgli was when I was very small. I must have been only around two years old and I had watched the Disney film. I HATED it. But when I realized that it was based off of a book (when I was around five or six) I immediately went to the library and checked out both Jungle Books. It was then that I fell in love. Kipling is very problematic racially and politically. Throughout these books it is easy to pick up on Kipling's inherent prejudice. Through Mowgli the reader is introduced to a "superstitious" and often "savage" race of people.

In spite of Kipling's racism this is still one of my favorite book series. Mowgli, his friends, and his adventures still make me smile, cringe, and cry (especially at certain character deaths). The Jungle Books is something that can be enjoyed by anyone whether they are adults or children. I'd recommend these books to anyone who loves an adventure and characters who, while flawed and occasionally severe, get right up inside you and live there for years to come. ...more

## Reader's Digest Best Rv Parks

I read this as a "I need to be culturally literate" read. I enjoyed about 2/3rds of this. And to be honest, had to force myself through the other 1/3. Glad I read it but glad it is done.

really a beautiful collection of stories. Though the book somehow leaves out the inclusion of Baloo singing "the Bear Necessities" ... a gross oversight in my opinion.