

The Jungle

Chapter I

1. Give a detailed description of the opening setting.

2. Describe the bride and groom.

3. The author says of the music "It stretches out its arms to them..." What rhetorical device does he employ and why?

4. What, if any, significance is there with "five" roses and "eleven" leaves?

5. Who is Tamoszius Kuszleika? What is "special" about him?

6. Why is the *veselija* so important to the community?

7. Describe Marija Berczynskas.

8. What is the unwritten compact between friends and family at a veselija? How do the young men respond to the compact?

9. Included in the author's description of withered old Aniele is the polysyndeton—she “was a widow, and had three children, and the rheumatism besides, and did washing for the trades people on Halsted Street.” What is the purpose of the polysyndeton?

10. What can be discerned about the character of Jurgis from Chapter I?

11. The morning following the wedding both Ona and Jurgis are required to report to work quite early. Jurgis cannot afford to be even a few minutes late lest he find his brass check turned to the wall. What is a “brass check”?

Chapter II

1. Why is Jurgis able to find a job so quickly?

2. How does Jurgis's views on marriage reflect Sinclair's views?

3. How did Jurgis propose to Ona?

4. Who proposes the family move to America? Why?

5. Why did Jurgis and the family agree to go to America?

6. Find examples within this chapter that are counterexamples to the family's original thoughts of America.

7. How did Sinclair begin the story? What did the beginning accomplish?

8. Describe the conditions in Chicago.

9. After touring the city, how do Jurgis and Ona feel?

10. Describe Sinclair's writing style and purpose.

Chapter III

1. Who is Jokubas Szedvilas?

2. After Jurgis secures a job and returns to the delicatessen, Jokubas takes the day off to show the newcomers the city. Describe the sights.

3. Why is Jokubas so proud?

4. Why is Jurgis proud?

5. Sinclair shifts to the authorial voice saying, "Our friends were not poetical, and the sight suggested to them no metaphors of human destiny; they thought only of the wonderful efficiency of it all." The narrator then describes in painstaking detail the process of the killing of the pigs and the beef. What is his purpose in inviting the reader to view these activities metaphorically?

6. At one point, the narrator describes the hogs as "so innocent...coming so trustingly...so very human in their protests...so perfectly within their rights." Why does Sinclair personify the hogs?

7. Explain the extended metaphor in the passage: "Each one of these hogs was a separate creature. Some were white hogs, some were black; some were brown, some were spotted; some were old, some young; some were long and lean, some were monstrous. And each of them had an individuality of his own, a will of his own, a hop and a heart's desire; each was full of self-confidence, of self-importance, and a sense of dignity."

8. What kind of company is Durham and Company in that it has amongst its maze of buildings several auxiliary plants contributing to its main industry, meatpacking?

Chapter IV

1. Describe the jobs that each secures. What are the expectations for the others?

2. In the early 1900s, there were few to no laws governing advertisements. They could make whatever claims they chose. How does the advertisement for the house differ from the house in reality?

3. Describe the process of the purchase.

4. Why is the household in an uproar?

Chapter V

1. How does the family furnish their home?

2. Why is Jurgis opposed to the unions?

3. What is the main objective of the unions?

4. The narrator comments "Jurgis... would not have known how to pronounce '*laissez-faire*.'" What does it mean and why is it mentioned?

5. Why the allusion to Malthus?

6. Explain the concept of grafting and its effect on Jurgis.

7. Jurgis to this point still believes in the old-fashioned idea that hard work will lead to advancement. What does he discover about this concept?

8. What is revealed about the way that Jonas and Marija come by their employment?

9. What atrocities of the meatpacking industry does Sinclair reveal in this chapter?

10. Why does Sinclair first address the conditions of the workplace and then the packaging and distribution of diseased meat?

Chapter VI

1. What prevents Jurgis and Ona from marrying?

2. Why mention the babe of Bethlehem that stands on the family's mantel?

3. What does the family glean from their conversation with Grandmother Majauszkiene?

4. What may the Grandmother's story foreshadow?

5. How does the swindling of the immigrants by the real estate agents present a paradox?

6. What aspects anchor *The Jungle* in reality?

7. How does Sinclair begin and end Chapter VI? What may be the purpose?

Chapter VII

1. What is the result of the wedding ceremony?

2. What conclusions about the American Dream has Jurgis come to?

3. What new atrocities that affect the family are exposed?

4. How does the discourse regarding the poet remind the reader of Sinclair's purpose?

5. What brings about the demise of old Antanas? How does the allusion to a One-Horse Shay accurately describe Antanas?

6. What new atrocities in the work place are exposed?

7. What do the saloons offer the destitute workers? What is their price? Is Jurgis welcome? Why or why not?

8. What is ironic about the personification of the saloons?

9. How does Chapter VII conclude?

Chapter VIII

1. What great adventure befalls Marija? What are the benefits of the relationship?

2. Interpret the phrase, "Yet even by this deadly winter the germ of hope was not to be kept from sprouting..."

3. To whom does Sinclair refer as "the capitalist of the party"? Why?

4. What change occurs in Jurgis? What conditions provoke the change?

5. Analyze Sinclair's word choice when he writes, "...and so the struggle became a kind of crusade." What other words does Sinclair use to support this analysis?

Chapter IX

1. What effects does joining the union have on Jurgis?

2. What kinds of corruption and scandal are exposed in this chapter?

3. To what is the corruption of the naturalization process attributed?

4. Who are Dante and Zola? What does the allusion add to the text?

5. Jurgis compares America to Russia. What does he compare and what is his conclusion?

6. During the early 1900s, what laws governed advertising?

7. Describe the dangers that Durham's various factories expose the workers to.

8. After carefully reading Chapter IX, what would you consider Sinclair's main point?

Chapter X

1. What are the problems associated with each season?

2. How does Sinclair use authorial voice?

3. What injustices does Marija suffer first in her old job and then in her new?

4. Describe Ona's predicament. What does the statement "...Ona would not have stayed a day, but for starvation..." foreshadow?

5. Interpret the statement "Things that were quite unspeakable went on there in the packinghouses all the time, and were taken for granted by everybody; only they did not show as in the old slavery times, because there was no difference in color between master and slave."

6. How does Ona's pregnancy affect her?

7. How is the birth of his son a decisive event for Jurgis?

8. What prevents the close-knit family that Jurgis desires?

Chapter XI

1. How is the structure of the work force changed? What does this change foreshadow?

2. Define "speeding-up."

3. At the turn of the century, trusts were prevalent. What is a trust? What does the Beef Trust control?

4. What does "a run on the bank" mean? Why does it concern Marija? How does it start?

5. Marija's fear of being weighed down in the mud by her money is a metaphor for what?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
6. Identify and interpret the metaphor and alliteration that appear in the paragraph beginning "That blizzard knocked many a man out, for the crowd outside begging for work was never great..." which appears about midway through the chapter.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
7. What accident befalls Jurgis? How does it affect him?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
8. What practice was illegal in Europe?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Chapter XII

1. How, according to Sinclair, is capitalism to blame for the destruction of the family and their value system?

2. What happens to Brother Jonas?

3. How is Brother Jonas' income replaced?

4. What revelation dawns on Jurgis after his many attempts to secure work are futile?

Chapter XIII

1. In the last few chapters, how has Sinclair conveyed the idea of social Darwinism?

2. "All this while that he was seeking for work, there was a dark shadow changing over Jurgis; as if a savage beast were lurking somewhere in the pathway of his life, and he knew it, and yet could not help approaching the place." What work is this quote an allusion to? Why did Sinclair employ this allusion?

3. Where do the lowest workers on the social Darwin ladder work? What is produced there?

4. What is Jurgis's new job? What are the conditions under which he worked? How do they affect him?

5. How are the two boys, aged ten and eleven, changing?

6. During this season of "prosperity," what changes does the family make?

7. What job is Elzbieta able to secure? How does it affect her?

Chapter XIV

1. How does Packingtown deal with spoiled meats?

2. Describe the ingredients found in packages of sausage.

3. Interpret the statement "...they use everything of the pig except the squeal."

4. Why does Sinclair write: "This is no fairy story and no joke..."

5. How has the American dream changed for Jurgis and his family?

6. Interpret the metaphor "for all the help it gave them the vast city in which they lived might have been an ocean waste, a wilderness, a desert, a tomb."

7. What simile shows how separate Jurgis and Ona have become?

8. What other change takes place in Jurgis? Why?

9. Why does the drinking trouble him?

10. What parts of this chapter reflect Sinclair's life or views on marriage and children?

Chapter XV

1. Interpret the meaning of the two similes in first paragraph.

2. Earlier, Jurgis was happy to be a cog in the wonderful machine of Packingtown. How has this changed?

3. Describe the first episode when Ona does not come home. Where do you suspect she spends the night?

4. The second time Ona is missing, Jurgis sets out in the early morning to Jadvyga's home. What does he find out? What causes him to be cold and merciless?

5. Why is there such intensity in this scene?

6. What aspects of Sinclair's style convey the utter baseness to which Jurgis has fallen?

7. How does this chapter work to further the basic ideas that Sinclair is conveying?

Chapter XVI

1. Why does Jurgis settle down when he spies the blue uniforms of the policemen? What will happen if he challenges them?

2. What is the nightmare that haunts Jurgis throughout the night?

3. For what thematic purpose does Sinclair continue to insert his authorial voice?

4. What is the outcome of Jurgis's trial?

5. Why does Jurgis start in a cell of his own? Why does he remain alone?

6. What is the purpose of posing the following rhetorical questions: Would the family know that he was in jail, would they be able to find out anything about him? Would the family be allowed to see him or would they be kept ignorant of his whereabouts? Would they [the legal authorities] let them [his family] lie down in the street and die? Would the family wander about until they froze? Would any man in his sense have trapped a wild thing in its lair, and left its young behind to die?

7. Sum up the author's exclamation regarding the law of the land.

8. What is the tone with which Sinclair inserts the line, "So wrote a poet, to whom the world had dealt its justice," between the stanzas of the poem at the end of this chapter?

Chapter XVII

1. Describe Jurgis's cellmate.

2. How does the allusion to Noah's Ark contribute to the idea of *The Jungle*?

3. Interpret the final antitheses in this statement: "All life had turned to rottenness and stench in them [the prisoners]—love was a beastliness, joy was a snare, and God was an imprecation."

4. What takes place in court? Who is present?

5. What is "Bridewell"?

6. What news does Stanislovas bring to Jurgis? Why does the family send him?

7. What does Jurgis give Stanislovas?

Chapter XVIII

1. How is Jurgis like his clothing?

2. How does Jurgis finally find his way home?

3. What does he find when he reaches his doorstep? Who lives inside the house now?

4. Why is the Irish woman just as surprised as Jurgis?

5. How much time has passed since Jurgis and his family first purchased the home?

6. Where and in what condition does Jurgis find his family?

Chapter XIX

1. Describe the "midwife."

2. The argument about money between the German woman and Jurgis support what theme?

3. Jurgis, sent out into the night so the midwife and ladies could deliver the baby, goes where?

4. What happens to Ona and the baby?

5. How old is Ona when she dies?

6. How does Sinclair use the past two chapters to refocus the reader's thoughts on the plight of the immigrants and their demise at the hands of capitalism?

7. Who brings money home? What does Jurgis spend it on?

Chapter XX

1. After returning to sobriety, what is Jurgis's response to Ona's death?

2. In the sentence "Marija said not a word to Jurgis; he crept in like a whipped cur, and went and sat down by the body," what does the word cur mean?

3. What two primitive creatures is Elzbieta compared to? How do they aptly describe her?

4. How does Elzbieta help Jurgis begin to come out of his despair?

5. Why is Jurgis unable to get work? What is blacklisting?

6. What is deceptive about the advertisements for job openings?

7. Why is nothing done about the “fake” advertisements?

8. When and why did laws regarding truth in advertising come about?

9. How does Jurgis finally find work?

10. What is a “trust”? What was the Harvester Trust? Where might Marija work?

11. What brings hope back to Jurgis?

Chapter XXI

1. What underlying principle of capitalism causes the plant Jurgis has found work in to close?

2. What does Little Juozapas contribute to the family? Where does he find his job?

3. What are "settlement-workers"? What is their mission in the streets of Chicago?

4. What sentence expresses the feelings the settlement-worker experiences as she views the destitution of this family?

5. Where does the settlement-worker send Jurgis to find work? Describe the factory.

6. What is the Bessemer furnace? Who brought this process to the United States?

7. Compare/contrast the working conditions and pay between the slaughterhouses and the steel mills.

8. In what way does Sinclair's description of the steel mill sound like his description of the slaughterhouses?

9. What significance is there in the fact that Jurgis eats his lunches at a free-lunch counter? Consider that Sinclair is a believer in Socialism and is quite religious.

10. Describe Jurgis's relationship with his son.

11. How does the chapter end? Where does Sinclair get the idea?

Chapter XXII

1. What is Jurgis's response to his son's death?

2. What are the accursed weaknesses that Jurgis decides to leave behind him?

3. What is the significance of the garden metaphor Sinclair uses to describe Jurgis's grief?

4. How does plan to leave his weaknesses behind? What act demonstrates his intent?

5. What are the responses he receives from the farmhouses he approaches for meals?

6. In what way(s) is Jurgis a dynamic character?

7. Find an example of social Darwinism.

8. What does the life of a tramp consist of? How does this kind of life treat Jurgis?

9. What is harvest-work? What is the pay?

10. Why does Jurgis run out of the Slav's house?

Chapter XXIII

1. What is ironic about Jurgis's realization that he must return to Chicago?

2. How does Jurgis gain employment? What job does he get?

3. Why does the tunnel system seem odd to Jurgis?

4. Describe the government corruption regarding the tunnels. What is the intent of the railroad system?

5. Describe the quality of Jurgis's life while he is working on the "telephone tunnels."

6. What is ironic about the reason Jurgis does not go to church?

7. What dangers arise in this new work? What happens to Jurgis?

8. What small element of humor does Sinclair inject into the scene of Jurgis's time in the hospital?

9. Interpret the simile "He was like a wounded animal in the forest."

10. What is the job of a "sitter"?

11. What benefit is the religious revival? How does Jurgis feel about religion?

12. How does Jurgis survive through the winter months?

13. What words reinforce Sinclair's metaphor of the city to a jungle?

Chapter XXIV

1. What is the purpose of Jurgis's "adventure" with Freddie Jones?

2. What compromise to his naturalist themes does Sinclair make in order to create irony in this episode?

3. Define insouciance. What does it describe?

4. For the last several chapters, Sinclair has not spoken of the slaughterhouses. Why?

Chapter XXV

1. What happens to the one hundred dollar bill?

2. What arrangements does the bartender have with the police and judge?

3. Serving his time in jail, Jurgis learns about the ways that many keep themselves alive in the world. What is his plan when he leaves?

4. Where does he find Jack Duane?

5. Describe the first robbery. How does it turn out?

6. Who runs the city of Chicago?

7. What does "graft" mean?

8. How do all the agencies of corruption work together?

9. Why does Jurgis's status in life change?

10. One night when Jurgis is drunk, he is arrested again. How is this jail experience different from his prior arrests?

11. Explain the Racing Trust and how they control horse racing.

12. Why is Jurgis listed as a Democrat? What causes him to become a Republican?

13. What does the term "sheeny" refer to?

14. What does the narrator explain to the reader regarding Scully that Jurgis does not understand?

15. What is the new political party introduced? What does Jurgis remember about the Socialists? Why is this point important?

16. What are the qualifications for the elected officials during this period?

17. What problems is Sinclair addressing in this chapter?

Chapter XXVI

1. Jurgis is wearing a greasy red tie. What is the red tie symbolic of?

2. What is ironic about Jurgis's statement: "I thought I could count on you"?

3. What is the "Beef Strike"? What role does Jurgis play?

4. What benefits come to Jurgis since he returns to work?

5. What is ironic about Sinclair's assessment of the men Jurgis is to supervise? What might Sinclair be suggesting?

6. How does Sinclair portray society's opinion in the early 1900s of the black man? How is the description of the Negro more degrading than the description of the foreigners?

7. How does the first strike end?

8. Why is there a second strike?

9. How does Packingtown replace the workers the second time? How are the packers able to house them?

10. Sinclair arrived in Chicago with a mission to expose the “wage” slavery and likened it to pre-abolition “chattel” slavery. What portion of this chapter is directly related to this specific idea?

11. Jurgis, a dynamic character, has undergone many changes. Name a few from this chapter. Does Jurgis realize how he has changed?

12. “This called for punishment, of course; and the police proceeded to administer it by leaping from the truck and cracking at every head they saw.” What called for punishment? Was the punishment justified?

13. What lands Jurgis in jail? What is the outcome?

Chapter XXVII

1. Interpret the following statement and apply it to Jurgis's life. "There is one kind of prison where the man is behind bars, and everything that he desires is outside; and there is another kind where the things are behind the bars, and the man is outside."

2. What is a "free-soup kitchen"? Why were they opened?

3. What about the political rally brings tears to Jurgis's eyes?

4. Reread the paragraph when the senator is explaining the system of Protection. In it, he says: It is because of "it" that Columbia is the gem of the ocean. What is Columbia? What does "it" refer to?

5. How does Jurgis find Marija? How does this event compromise Sinclair's naturalist intent?

6. How does Jurgis end up in jail again?

7. What has happened to the rest of the friends and family? What is Sinclair's point in providing this exposition?

8. Describe the gamut of thoughts that Jurgis has as he lay in his jail cell.

Chapter XXVIII

1. What is morphine? Why is Marija using it?

2. How do many of the girls become prostitutes? Why do they not leave the brothels?

3. The French girl with the yellow hair has crazy fits as a result of drinking absinthe. What is absinthe? Structurally, why is Sinclair introducing morphine and absinthe into the story at this point?

4. After his visit with Marija, what plans does Jurgis have and where does he end up?

5. Compare and contrast this second meeting in the hall with the first. What might Sinclair be suggesting by the contrasts?

6. Compare and contrast the messages delivered at the two meetings.

7. What word does Sinclair use that alerts the reader that the message in the hall on the second night is associated with Socialism?

8. With his choice of vocabulary and figurative language, Sinclair creates a religious atmosphere. Cite examples from the text.

9. Why does Sinclair liken this Socialist meeting to a religious revival?

Chapter XXIX

1. How does the previous chapter transition into this chapter?

2. "But the wonderful spirit of it seized upon him—it was the Marseillaise!" What was the Marseillaise? Why is it referred to in this episode?

3. Who is Tolstoi? Why does Sinclair mention him?

4. After the meeting, Jurgis does not leave but goes to find the energetic and enthusiastic speaker. Describe the speaker when Jurgis finds him. Why is he that way? What does Jurgis want to say?

5. The orator realizes that Jurgis does not know what he is thanking him for and sums it up for him: "You want to know more about Socialism?" Why is this the first time Sinclair sums up the ideals presented as Socialism?

6. Summarize Ostrinski's explanation of Socialism.

7. What plan have the Socialists devised to accomplish their goal?

8. Interpret the word choice by Sinclair included in his description of Socialism: "...just when Socialism had broken all its barriers and become the great political force of the empire..." "...had no bosses..." "...an organization of all mankind to establish liberty and fraternity..."

9. After Ostrinski finishes explaining Socialism to Jurgis, why does it appeal to Jurgis?

10. How does Sinclair equate the teaching of Socialism with religion?

11. What is "the spirit of Capitalism made flesh"? What rhetorical device does Sinclair use in his description of it?

12. According to Ostrinski, what are the effects of this "Capitalism made flesh" in the city government of Chicago?

13. In conclusion, Sinclair restates the task of Socialism as seizing "the huge machine called the Beef Trust, and us[ing] it to produce food for human beings." Why does Sinclair return to the issue of the meat packing industry?

Chapter XXX

1. What might Elzbieta symbolize?

2. Why good luck finally befalls Jurgis?

3. Why does Sinclair choose this setting?

4. Jurgis's securing of a job seems contradictory to Socialist ideals. Why?

5. How does Sinclair convince the reader that Tommy Hinds, the Socialist, is a good man?

6. To what does Hinds attribute his rheumatism and the death of his brother?

7. Interpret Hinds's muttering: "Capitalism, my boy, capitalism! 'Écrasez l'Infâme!'"

8. What is a Bryanite?

9. How does Sinclair present Socialism as the cure to all levels of society, not just the hard-working underdog?

10. According to Hinds, who controls the United States government?

11. Who was Henry D. Lloyd?

12. Define Paternalism.

13. Sinclair states, "...tens of thousands of them...obey the orders of a steel magnate, and produce hundreds of millions of dollars of wealth for him, and then let him give them libraries..." To whom is Sinclair referring?

14. Jurgis has his first encounter with "Appeal to Reason." What is it?

15. What genre is *The Jungle*?

16. Who was the "pitchfork senator?" How did he earn that name?

Chapter XXXI

1. Why is Jurgis invited to the home of the millionaire-turned-settlement-worker?

2. Jurgis and his family are noticeably less important as the book ends. What do you believe is Sinclair's purpose for his characters?

3. According to Nicholas Schliemann, what is the nearest that one can approach to independence "under capitalism"?

4. How does Schliemann define the difference between marriage and prostitution?

5. According to Lucas, who is the true founder of the Socialist movement? Why does Sinclair weave so much scripture into this chapter?

6. How has Sinclair prepared his reader to accept Lucas's assertion about Jesus and Socialism?

7. Compare and contrast the view of Lucas and Schliemann regarding Socialism.

8. What does Schliemann consider to be of monumental waste?

9. How should the price of an article be determined? Is payment for all jobs equal? What about intellectual production?

10. What would be a benefit to the abolition of wage slavery?

11. Who is Friedrich Nietzsche? What is his gospel?

12. What does Schliemann mention as the positive economies of cooperation?

13. Schliemann says that preventable diseases kill off half our population. Who is blamed?

14. When the returns from the election come in, how do the Socialist movement fare? What surprises the leaders most?

15. How does Sinclair end the story?

16. Although the theme remains the same throughout the book, Sinclair focuses on three distinct issues in the course of the narrative. What are the issues?
