

Comprehension: The Lion King

In the vast Pride Lands of Tanzania, life thrives under the benevolent rule of King Mufasa and Queen Sarabi. Their kingdom, governed from the majestic Pride Rock, is a testament to harmony and balance. The birth of their son, Simba, is a moment of celebration, symbolising the continuation of the "circle of life." Rafiki, the wise mandrill and trusted advisor, presents the newborn cub to the gathered animals, marking the beginning of Simba's journey toward kingship.

Mufasa, a noble and powerful leader, begins to teach Simba the values and responsibilities of being a king. Together, they explore the Pride Lands, with Mufasa explaining that a king must understand the delicate balance of nature. Everything, from the smallest antelope to the mighty lion, is connected in the "circle of life." This lesson instils in Simba a sense of wonder and curiosity, but also a desire to explore the unknown.



Scar, Mufasa's younger brother, watches these events with envy. Scar covets the throne and resents Simba for being the heir. His mind brims with schemes to seize power. One day, Scar slyly plants the idea of adventure in Simba's head, suggesting he visit an elephant graveyard beyond the Pride Lands. Despite his father's warning to stay within the borders, Simba, eager to prove his bravery, decides to venture there. His best friend, Nala, joins him, and the two sneak away, unaware of the danger awaiting them.

At the graveyard, the cubs are confronted by three fearsome hyenas: Shenzi, Banzai, and Ed. The hyenas, allies of Scar, close in on Simba and Nala, ready to attack. Just as the situation becomes dire, Mufasa arrives, alerted by Zazu, his loyal hornbill majordomo. With his strength and authority, Mufasa drives the hyenas away and rescues the cubs.

Back at Pride Rock, Mufasa reprimands Simba for his disobedience. While disappointed, Mufasa's love for his son shines through as he explains the importance of responsibility. He tells Simba that the great kings of the past watch over them from the stars, and one day, he too will watch over Simba. This moment deepens Simba's understanding of his future role but leaves him yearning for his father's approval.

Meanwhile, Scar's jealousy intensifies. He meets with the hyenas, promising them hunting rights in the Pride Lands if they help him overthrow Mufasa and Simba. Together, they devise a sinister plan. Scar lures Simba into a gorge, convincing him it's another chance to prove his courage. Unbeknownst to Simba, the hyenas drive a herd of wildebeest into a stampede, heading straight toward him.

Scar alerts Mufasa, who rushes to save his son. Mufasa rescues Simba, but as he attempts to climb to safety, Scar betrays him. With a cold sneer, Scar throws Mufasa back into the stampede, leading to his tragic death. Scar convinces Simba that Mufasa's death was his fault and urges him to flee, never to return. Consumed by guilt, Simba runs away. Scar then orders the hyenas to kill Simba, but the cub narrowly escapes.

Returning to Pride Rock, Scar tells the pride that both Mufasa and Simba perished in the stampede. Declaring himself king, Scar allows the hyenas into the Pride Lands. Under Scar's rule, the once-thriving kingdom falls into despair. The land becomes barren, and the harmony of the "circle of life" is broken.

Far from home, Simba collapses in a desolate desert. He is found and revived by Timon, a carefree meerkat, and Pumbaa, a warm-hearted warthog. The pair take Simba to their lush oasis and teach him their philosophy: "Hakuna Matata," which means "no worries" in Swahili. Simba grows up adopting their carefree lifestyle, burying the pain of his past.

Years later, Simba, now an adult, rescues Timon and Pumbaa from a hungry lioness. To his astonishment, the lioness is Nala, his childhood friend. Overwhelmed with joy, the two reunite. Nala tells Simba about the dire state of the Pride Lands under Scar's reign, urging him to return and take his rightful place as king. However, Simba, still haunted by guilt over Mufasa's death, refuses. He believes he is unworthy and storms off, leaving Nala disappointed.

While wandering alone, Simba encounters Rafiki, who reveals that Mufasa's spirit lives on within him. Guided by Rafiki, Simba looks to the night sky, where the spirit of Mufasa appears in the stars. Mufasa reminds Simba of his true identity and encourages him to embrace his destiny. Rafiki's wisdom and Mufasa's words reignite Simba's courage. Realising he cannot run from his past, Simba decides to return to the Pride Lands.

Simba, along with Nala, Timon, and Pumbaa, sneaks back into the Pride Lands. The once-prosperous kingdom is now a wasteland, overrun by hyenas and suffering from drought. Simba confronts Scar at Pride Rock, challenging his authority. Scar taunts Simba, accusing him of causing Mufasa's death. Overwhelmed, Simba nearly falters, but Scar's arrogance leads him to confess the truth: he was the one who killed Mufasa.

Enraged, Simba retaliates, forcing Scar to reveal his treachery to the pride. A fierce battle ensues between Simba's allies and Scar's hyenas. In the chaos, Simba corners Scar at the edge of Pride Rock. Scar begs for mercy, blaming the hyenas for his actions. Reluctantly, Simba spares Scar's life but orders him to leave the Pride Lands forever. Scar, refusing to accept defeat, attacks Simba. In the ensuing struggle, Simba overpowers Scar and throws him off the ledge. Scar survives the fall but is attacked and killed by the hyenas, who overheard his betrayal.

With Scar and the hyenas defeated, balance begins to return. Simba ascends Pride Rock, letting out a mighty roar that echoes across the land, symbolising the restoration of the "circle of life." Nala becomes his queen, and together they lead the Pride Lands into a new era of prosperity.

Rafiki, once again, presents Simba and Nala's newborn cub to the assembled animals. The Pride Lands rejoice, celebrating the continuation of the circle of life. Simba's journey from a carefree cub to a wise and courageous king becomes a testament to resilience, responsibility, and the enduring power of family and destiny.

1. **Why does Mufasa emphasize the "circle of life" when teaching Simba about kingship?**
 - A. To teach Simba how to hunt.
 - B. To explain the importance of balance and interconnection in nature.
 - C. To warn Simba about the dangers of the Pride Lands.
 - D. To prepare Simba for his battle with Scar.
2. **What can be inferred about Scar's character based on his actions and feelings toward Mufasa and Simba?**
 - A. He is loyal to the Pride Lands.
 - B. He is envious and manipulative.
 - C. He is caring and supportive.
 - D. He is indecisive and fearful.
3. **Why does Simba decide to visit the elephant graveyard despite Mufasa's warning?**
 - A. He is curious about Scar's advice.
 - B. He wants to challenge Mufasa's authority.
 - C. He feels the need to prove his bravery.
 - D. He believes it is safe to explore outside the Pride Lands.
4. **What does Mufasa's rescue of Simba and Nala at the elephant graveyard reveal about his leadership?**
 - A. He values strength over compassion.
 - B. He is willing to risk his own safety to protect others.
 - C. He believes in strict punishment for mistakes.
 - D. He is hesitant to act when danger arises.
5. **Why does Simba initially refuse to return to the Pride Lands after meeting Nala?**
 - A. He prefers his carefree life with Timon and Pumbaa.
 - B. He feels guilty and unworthy to be king.
 - C. He is unaware of Scar's destruction of the Pride Lands.
 - D. He is afraid of confronting Scar.

6. How does Scar manipulate Simba into believing he caused Mufasa's death?

- A. By making Simba witness the stampede.
- B. By planting false memories in Simba's mind.
- C. By exploiting Simba's guilt and vulnerability.
- D. By convincing the pride of Simba's betrayal.

7. What does Rafiki's guidance symbolize in Simba's journey back to the Pride Lands?

- A. The importance of friendship.
- B. The role of wisdom and self-discovery in overcoming challenges.
- C. The necessity of revenge to restore balance.
- D. The power of physical strength over inner resilience.

8. What can be inferred about the Pride Lands under Scar's rule?

- A. They prosper with the hyenas' help.
- B. They suffer due to Scar's greed and poor leadership.
- C. They maintain balance despite Scar's changes.
- D. They benefit from Scar's alliances.

9. Why do the hyenas turn on Scar during the final battle?

- A. They overhear Scar blaming them for his actions.
- B. They are loyal to Simba and the Pride Lands.
- C. They realise they were wrong to follow Scar.
- D. They are frightened by Simba's strength.

10. What does Simba's final roar from Pride Rock symbolise?

- A. The end of his journey and responsibilities.
- B. The defeat of Scar and the hyenas.
- C. The restoration of balance and the continuation of the "circle of life."
- D. The beginning of his reign without challenges.

Answers and explanations

1. Answer: B. To explain the importance of balance and interconnection in nature.

Explanation: Mufasa teaches Simba that everything in the Pride Lands is interconnected and part of the "circle of life." This philosophy is essential for Simba to understand his responsibilities as a future king, ensuring balance in the ecosystem.

2. Answer: B. He is envious and manipulative.

Explanation: Scar's actions, such as scheming to overthrow Mufasa and manipulate Simba, demonstrate his envy of Mufasa's position and Simba's inheritance. His resentment drives him to deceit and treachery.

3. Answer: C. He feels the need to prove his bravery.

Explanation: Simba's decision to visit the elephant graveyard stems from his desire to show courage and independence, influenced by Scar's sly suggestion and Simba's youthful overconfidence.

4. Answer: B. He is willing to risk his own safety to protect others.

Explanation: Mufasa's immediate and fearless response to rescue Simba and Nala highlights his protective nature and his dedication to the well-being of his family and subjects, even at personal risk.

5. Answer: B. He feels guilty and unworthy to be king.

Explanation: Simba believes Scar's lie that he caused Mufasa's death. His overwhelming guilt leads him to doubt his ability and right to lead, making him hesitant to return despite Nala's plea.

6. Answer: C. By exploiting Simba's guilt and vulnerability.

Explanation: Scar manipulates Simba's emotions by placing the blame for Mufasa's death on him, knowing that Simba's young age and trust in him make him an easy target for this deception.

7. Answer: B. The role of wisdom and self-discovery in overcoming challenges.

Explanation: Rafiki's guidance helps Simba reflect on his identity and responsibility. This moment symbolizes the importance of wisdom and personal growth in finding the courage to face challenges.

8. Answer: B. They suffer due to Scar's greed and poor leadership.

Explanation: Under Scar's rule, the Pride Lands fall into despair, with resources depleted and balance destroyed. This outcome reflects his inability to lead effectively or maintain harmony.

9. Answer: A. They overhear Scar blaming them for his actions.

Explanation: The hyenas turn on Scar after hearing him shift the blame for his treachery onto them. This betrayal leads to their attack, as they feel no loyalty to someone who uses them as scapegoats.

10. Answer: C. The restoration of balance and the continuation of the "circle of life."

Explanation: Simba's roar signifies the end of Scar's chaotic reign and the beginning of a new era of peace and prosperity, restoring harmony in the Pride Lands and continuing the "circle of life."