



# Written Comprehension Text

## THE ALPHA MALE

Grade 10

1. The concept of the alpha male comes from primatology research of the animal kingdom. Researchers have studied the complicated social structures of chimps, gorillas, and our other evolutionary cousins. Their physically imposing behaviour in ripping tree stumps out of the ground in terrifying displays of dominance, have come to symbolize a natural order that favours a single, dominant male.
2. Among animals, the alpha male gets what he wants. He eats first. He mates first. The others defer to him because he's proven that he is the strongest, fittest and most powerful male in the pack. However, the position is not permanent, and very soon his leadership is challenged by another aspiring alpha male.
3. The human version of an alpha male is the male who parts the crowd, nabs attention for service with a nod, and takes command in meetings. An alpha male has star power without being famous. He gets royal treatment without the lineage, and in this way, he is very much like the top dog or alpha monkey in that he enjoys elevated status without a formal rank.
4. The alpha males are powerful men who get everything they want simply because they are bold and ruthless enough to take it. It is because of these similarities we mistakenly assume that the same animalistic qualities that work for primates and canines will work for people.
5. Some traditional, masculine traits like competitiveness, protectiveness, aggressiveness, and independence are attributed to the alpha male. These traits have been undeniably intertwined with modern day and historical warfare. The military places a premium on the masculinity of war-fighters. Effeminate, pejorative adjectives are used as a form of irony to build camaraderie, diminish feminine traits, and highlight the inherent masculine nature of military tasks.
6. Yet, modern culture is shifting away from the embrace of such qualities and calling into question their relevance, even labelling some as toxic. With the rise of feminism, we see a decline in masculinity. The progressive empowerment of women has resulted in the disempowered masculinity. Furthermore, it will seem that women prefer a man who is capable of cultivating the traits of a prestigious man, a highly esteemed and kind man, to a dominant man. This means that men must develop a skill that brings value to society, and must cultivate a stable sense of identity.



# Written Comprehension Text

7. Though unseemly at times, we tend to accept the quality of alpha males as necessary traits for effective leadership. While we may recognize that our world needs strong leaders, primatology research of the animal kingdom suggests that the choice of an alpha leader may win a momentary position of power this glory is short-lived. While the world needs decisive headstrong leaders, the leaders should also embrace elements of compassion, accountability and humility. We mistakenly assume that the same animalistic qualities that work for primates will work for people. It won't. We are not animals.

Adapted from: <https://www.primermagazine.com/2012/live/dont-be-a-dick-the-false-virtues-of-the-classic-alpha-male>  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-debrief/201803/where-have-all-the-warriors-gone-part-1>  
<https://nymag.com/article/2016/05/the-rise-of-the-alpha-beta-male.html>