

SIMPLIFIED READERS

A2
LEVEL 2

Black Beauty

ANNA SEWELL



WORKSHEETS

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ABOUT THE NOVEL

Anna Sewell's novel *Black Beauty* is one of the most popular books in history. It became a best-seller immediately after its publication in 1877. It still is one of the top ten bestselling novels for children ever written. It has been translated into 50 languages. The main character in the book is an intelligent and handsome horse named Black Beauty. The horse himself tells the story of his own life. The book's full title is *Black Beauty, His Grooms and Companions; the Autobiography of a Horse*. This book was Sewell's first and only publication. She began writing it in 1871, when she was 51. She died of a disease just five months after it was published. Sewell did not write the novel for children, actually.

She said that her purpose in writing the novel was "to provoke kindness, sympathy and a good treatment of horses". Sewell was an animal lover, but she particularly loved horses. The character Black Beauty was based on a nice horse which her family owned. Sewell was not able to walk without crutches due to a sprained ankle which she suffered at the age of 14. However, she often rode horses and drove a carriage. She was very concerned about the treatment of horses. She drove with a very loose rein and never used a whip. Her book made people aware of the cruel treatment of horses. Thanks to her book, the use of the bearing rein was banned in England.

SUMMARY

At the beginning of the novel, Black Beauty describes his life as a young horse on a farm together with his mother. His master is a farmer who is very kind to both Black Beauty and his mother. The farmer loves Black beauty and calls him 'Darkie'. Black Beauty runs and plays in the meadow with other young horses. His mother often gives him advice on how to be a good, gentle horse. She tells him to always obey his master and rider. When he is two years old, Black Beauty witnesses a hunting party, in which one of the riders falls from his horse and dies, and his injured horse is shot. The experience frightens Black Beauty.

When, Black Beauty is four years old, his master trains him to carry riders on his back and pull carriages. After his training, Black Beauty is sent to the village stables at Birtwick Hall. The squire at the village and his wife name him 'Black Beauty' because of his shiny black coat. He only has a white star on his forehead, and one of his hoofs is white. At Birtwick Hall, Black Beauty makes two close friends. The squire's head groom and the boy who helps him are very kind to Black Beauty and to all the other horses. Black beauty has a very happy life there. But when the squire's wife gets ill, the family decides to move to another country. So, Black Beauty and the other horses have to leave Birtwick Hall.

Black Beauty and his best friend are sold to another rich and noble man, who has a very arrogant wife. She orders the groom to put bearing reins on the horses to make them hold their heads up while she rides in the carriage. One day, the master's old head coach, who gets very drunk, makes Beauty gallop on a stony road with one of his horseshoes coming loose. Beauty's foot gets seriously injured, with many scars on it. After this, his master sells him to a man in Bath, who rents horses and carriages.

In Bath, Black Beauty is ridden by inexperienced, reckless customers. One of the customers, who is a kind man and likes him very much, buys him and keeps him in a good, comfortable stable. But the man's grooms do not take good care of him and do not feed him well. When Beauty gets too weak to work, he is sent to a horse fair where he is put on sale as a job horse. There, a kind but poor cab driver buys him at a low price.

Black Beauty now becomes a cab horse. The driver's wife and children love him and take good care of him. Black Beauty is happy to be their horse. But when the cab driver finds a better job in the country, Black Beauty is first sold to a corn dealer and then to a bad cab driver who makes him work too hard and neglect his health. When Beauty collapses from overwork, he's sold at an auction to a kind, old farmer. He makes Black Beauty regain his health and strength with the help of his grandson.

When Black Beauty is healthy again and much stronger, the old farmer looks for a place where he will live peacefully and not work very hard. He gives Black Beauty to three old sisters who live together and need a calm horse for their carriage. The young groom working for the old ladies recognizes Black Beauty. He used to work for the squire as a stable boy and loved Black Beauty. He is very happy to be with Beauty again. And the old ladies were once the neighbours of the squire and his family. They are also very happy to have the squire's favourite horse. So, finally Black Beauty has a good home, where he is loved and treated kindly. His work is very easy, and the groom takes good care of him. He now feels as happy as he was in his first home. When he runs in the meadow, he always thinks of his friends and the times they spent together.

Discuss before you begin reading:

- 1 **a** Do you like horses? Have you ever ridden a horse or ridden in a horse driven carriage? Did you enjoy it?
b Would you like to own a horse? Why? / Why not?
- 2 **a** Many people think horse racing is a cruel sport. What is your opinion? Discuss.
b What other animals are being treated cruelly by humans? Discuss by giving examples.

A Read the groups of sentences (a-f) and match them with the chapter titles (1-6). One has been done for you.

Chapters 1 to 5

1	My First Home	
2	Birtwick Park – My Second Home	a
3	Farewell to Birwick Park	
4	Life at Earls Hall Park	
5	Becoming a Job Horse	
6	A Happy Ending	

- a It was a very big house among big old trees. Squire Gordon had many horses and stables.
 b I was very tired in my first week. Driving in London was very hard.
 c Then I was old enough to eat grass, and my mother began to work for our master. ... I often played with the other colts in the meadow.
 d It was much bigger than Gordons' house, but it wasn't very nice.
 e So, here I am Black Beauty again! My troubles are all gone. ... I love my new home and my ladies.
 f Now, Ginger and I were on our way to Earls Hall Park, our new home.

B Word Search

Find 14 words about horses. Then fill in the blanks with the words you have found.

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

- The building where horses are kept and fed is called a _____.
- The dried, yellow stems of wheat or other crops is called _____. It is used to feed horses. Horses can lie and sleep on it too.
- The leather seat that a rider sits on the horse's back is called a _____.
- The job of a _____ is to take care of horses and feed them.
- In the past, people rode in _____s that were pulled by horses.
- A _____ is attached to the bottom of a horse's foot for protection.
- When a horse _____s, it moves slowly, in small steps.
- In the past, a horse carriage that was used as a taxi was called a _____.
- The foot of a horse is called a _____.
- When a horse _____s, it runs fast, with all of its four feet off the ground.
- A horse rider stops or slows a horse by pulling on the horse's _____s.
- Riders often hit horses with a _____ to make them run faster.
- The piece of metal that is put in a horse's mouth to control its movement is called a _____.
- A horse _____, which is used for carrying goods, has either two or four wheels.

A When you finish reading Chapter 2, study at this chart. Put the letter of the right information under the name of the horse. You may need to use the same letter(s) for more than one horse.

Black Beauty _____	Duchess _____	Ginger _____	Merrylegs _____	Rob Roy _____
a wise, obedient	b one foot white	c ridden by Squire's daughters and wife	d red-brown coat	e white coat
f shot because of his injury	g a pony	h a white star on the forehead	i the mother of Black Beauty and another horse	j Black Beauty's brother
k pretty face	l had a miserable life before	m hardworking, strong	n small in size and fat	o bad-tempered, aggressive
p riding partner of Black Beauty	q hunting horse	r well-behaved, good-tempered colt	s fast runner	t well-trained by first master

B When you have read up to page 53, fill in the boxes with the names or descriptions of Black Beauty's masters and the men working for them. Choose from the list given below.

Mr York	a reckless man	James	Lord Westland
Mr Barry	Farmer Grey	Reuben	John Manly
a thief	(Little) Joe Green	Squire Gordon	Jerry Barker
	owner of a horse rental stable in Bath		

1st master: _____

4th master: _____

2nd master: _____
 (head groom): _____
 (1st stable boy): _____
 (2nd stable boy): _____

5th master: _____
 (1st groom): _____
 (2nd groom): _____

3rd master: _____
 (coachman): _____
 (old groom): _____

6th master: _____

A Complete the table by answering the questions about the quotations.

<i>Alice Gryphon</i>	<i>the baby the Duchess</i>	<i>the caterpillar the jury</i>	<i>Cheshire the King</i>	<i>Cat the March Hare</i>	<i>the Dormouse the Queen</i>
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QUOTATION	Who is speaking?	To whom?	When or Why?
1 "Some men can be very cruel and bad at driving. But you should do your best and protect our family name."			
2 "And I shall never forget you, sir. I hope my Mistress will recover soon, and we can see you here again."			
3 "These horses must hold their heads higher up, so please make their reins shorter and tighter."			
4 "If they continue to make my rein tighter, I will be angry and do something bad."			
5 "I can't have a scarred horse in my stable. So, I must sell him."			
6 "They will send you away. Perhaps we will never see each other again."			
7 'Can we buy this horse, grandpa? I promise I will help you look after him.'			
8 "I made you ill, and you were almost dying. I was a small boy at that time."			

B Who is Black Beauty talking about? Match the underlined words in his statements (1-6) with the names in the list (a-f).

1 <u>She</u> was a tall arrogant woman. She didn't seem very pleased with us.	_____
2 Finally, I couldn't run anymore and fell down. Then, <u>he</u> fell down on my head.	_____
3 I was so happy for this family. But I felt sorry because I didn't want to part from <u>them</u> .'	_____
4 <u>He</u> and Willie took very good care of me. They often left me free on the meadows.	_____
5 I couldn't recognize <u>him</u> with his black moustache and a man's voice.	_____
6 <u>They</u> are very gentle and kind. They will never sell me. They promised. My work here is easy, and I enjoy it.	_____

a Mr Thoroughgood
d Joe Green

b the old ladies
e The Bakers

c Lady Westfield
f Reuben

TEST YOURSELF

TOTAL

.....

BLACK BEAUTY by Anna Sewell

A2 - Level 2

A Answer these questions with only one word in each blank. (6x3=18 pts)

- 1 What is the total number of Black Beauty's owners?

- 2 Who saved Black Beauty and Ginger from the fire at an inn's stable at Hertford? _____
- 3 Which horse was sent to Earls Hall with Black Beauty? _____
- 4 What was the name of the cab driver Jerry's other horse? _____
- 5 What kind of vehicle did Black Beauty pull when he was working for a corn dealer? _____
- 6 What was the name of the cab driver who overworked Black Beauty? _____

B Mark these sentences about Black Beauty as True (T) or False (F). (10x2=20 pts)

- 1 He didn't have any friends in his first home.
- 2 He lived on the same farm with his mother until he was two.
- 3 When Rob Roy was killed, he didn't know that he was his brother.
- 4 He had no idea about the bit until they placed one in his mouth.
- 5 He was very annoyed when Farmer Grey sat on the saddle on his back.
- 6 His name was Darkie until Squire Gordon and his wife named him Black Beauty.
- 7 He was harnessed for the first time and trained by Farmer Grey.
- 8 He fell very ill after the fire in the stable.
- 9 Squire Gordon's wife was not very fond of him.
- 10 His master and the grooms at Birtwick Park never used a whip on him.

C Match the two halves of the sentences (1-6 with a-f) according to Black Beauty's life story. (6x4= 24 pts)

- 1 Squire Gordon sold him to Lord Westland ...
 - 2 Lord Westland sold him to a man in Bath ...
 - 3 Mr Barry put him on sale at a horse fair ...
 - 4 Cab driver Jerry left him with his friend Governor, who sold him to a corn dealer ...
 - 5 Cab driver Skinner took him to a horse dealer ...
 - 6 Mr Thoroughgood sent him to the old ladies who needed a gentle horse ...
- a when he was moving to the country because of his poor health and a new job there
b because he decided not to have a stable anymore
c when he was healthy and strong again
d when the family had to leave the country because of his wife's illness
e because of the scars on his foot
f when he (Black Beauty) became too weak to work

D Mark the correct answers. (10x3=30 pts)

- 1 Black Beauty came from a good family of horses; his grandfather was - - - .
a the best horse of a lord
b a famous racing horse
c an army officer's horse
- 2 While Black Beauty was being trained to drive a carriage, he pulled the carriage with - - - .
a another colt b his mother, the Duchess
c his friend Ginger
- 3 Which of the following things hurt Black Beauty at first?
a blinkers b the bit c the saddle
- 4 Black Beauty saw a hunting accident when he was - - - .
a four years old b at Birtwick
c in the meadow with Duchess
- 5 Black Beauty was trained to be - - - .
a a carriage horse b a riding horse
c both a carriage horse and a riding horse
- 6 What problem did Ginger and Black Beauty have at Earls Hall Park?
a They were made to wear bearing reins.
b They were made to pull heavy carts.
c They were not given enough food.
- 7 On the way back from Hertford station, why didn't Reuben do anything about Beauty's loose shoe?
a He was too tired. b He was very drunk.
c He had no experience in horse care.
- 8 Black Beauty went from Earls Hall to Bath - - - .
a pulling a carriage with Ginger
b with Mr York riding him
c alone on a train
- 9 What did the cab driver Jerry Barker and his wife name Black Beauty?
a Max b Jack c Blackie
- 10 Which is true about Black Beauty and Ginger?
a They never met after they left Earls Hall.
b They saw each other once while they were driving cabs in London.
c Black Beauty saw Ginger fall and die in a street in London.

E Complete the sentences with the correct names from the list. (4x2=8 pts).

James – Jerry Barker – Joe Green – John Manly

- 1 Before leaving Birtwick, _____ decided to start his own business in horse training.
- 2 _____ left Birtwick to work for a friend of Squire Gordon.
- 3 _____ accepted the job offer as a coachman in the country, where he was given a house too.
- 4 _____ became a good groom at Rose Hall.

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