

Extensive reading project 'War Horse'

Teaching pack



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Overview of lessons

Lesson 1

In class: Introduction to war horse

Introduction 'companions in the trenches'

1.1 Point of view

Homework: Read chapters 2-6 +finish assignment 1.1

Lesson 2

In class: 2.1 Check you understood

2.2 The draft

Homework: read chapters 7-11 and complete assignment 2.2

Lesson 3

In class: 3.1 Check you understood

3.2 War animals- reading and writing

Homework: Read chapter 12-16 and complete assignment 3.2

Lesson 4

In class: 4.1 The tossing of the coin

4.2 Talk show

4.3 Learning new words

Homework: Read chapters 17-21 and complete assignment 4.3

Lesson 5

In class: 5.1 Timeline

5.2 The Good, Bad, and Worse

5.3 Pen pal

Homework: complete assignment 5.3

Lesson 6

In class: 6.1 Movie trailer plus discussion

6.2 Theatrical trailer plus discussion

6.3 Adapting the book to the stage/ screen

Homework: fill out the feedback form for this course

LESSON 1 INTRODUCTION & PRE-READING

**HOMEWORK for next lesson: READ CHAPTER
2-6 + finish assignment 1.1**

Introduction to War horse

Please have a look at the following questions. You have a few minutes to think about them then we will discuss.

- Do you think animals were used in wars? Which animals?
- What do you think about the use of animals in wars? Is it right or wrong? Why?

YouTube clip

We are now going to watch a clip on You-tube about animals in the Great War:

‘Companions in the trenches – Animals of World War 1’

<https://youtu.be/wRN45tje2X0>



Please have a look at the assignment on page 8 and try to submit as much of the missing words as possible while listening/ watching the clip. Don't worry if you can't get all the answers!

Once you are done we will discuss the answers together.

Introduction 'Companions in the trenches'

1. Finish the sentence: "Hundreds of thousands of
..... were also
needed just for transport."
2. The British army was largely dependent on horsepower. That
army, by the end of the war, had nearly horses.
3. It's important to remember that all senior military personnel in
World War 1 believed in the supremacy of the cavalry charge. But
the cavalry charge couldn't cope with which weapon?
4. How many horses died in the war?
5. What was the main downside to having horses in the army?
6. Finish the sentence: "It's safe to say the horses were
right along with the soldiers and many of them from the
facts of life on the front."
7. What exotic animals were used at the front as well? Name two.
8. What other animals played important roles in the Great war?
9. Finish the sentence: "Any sort of survival for the men in the
Great War would quite simply have been impossible without
10. or soldiers."

Assignment 1.1'Point of view'

student form

War horse is written from a horse's point of view. Now write from the point of view from your pet. Write about one day out of the life of your pet. Think of one disastrous event that happens during that day. There's a short example below. If you want to write about a pet bird, you can finish this. If not, write your own.

First write a draft, then type it out in Word (1A4 Arial 12)

Example:

When I woke up the sun was shining through the bars of my cage. I ruffled my feathers and swoll up to a big fluffy ball. I felt great. Through the bars and out of the window I could see it was a lovely day. I was just enjoying my morning routine of singing and picking seeds, when I heard a loud thump from under my cage.....

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Lesson 2 Growing up

**Homework for next lesson: read chapters 7-11
and complete assignment 2.2**

Assignment 2.1 Check your understanding

First answer each question for yourself, and then discuss it with your neighbour. Did you write down the same answers? If not, explain your answers to your neighbour. Then move on to the next question.

Question 1

In chapter 2 you can read about how Joey grew up on the farm with Albert. What can you tell about this period in his life? Was he happy, or sad, or afraid for instance? And why do you think so?

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Question 2

At the end of chapter 3 Albert's father goes into Joey's stable to fetch him. All of a sudden he is being very nice to Joey. Why is that?

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Question 3

At the end of chapter 4 Albert has to say goodbye to Joey, who has been sold to Captain Nichols. Albert says to Joey: 'I'll find you again, you old silly. Wherever you are, I'll find you, Joey.' Do you think he will find Joey again? Why do you think that?

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Question 4

In chapter 5 Joey is being prepared for his work as a war horse in the cavalry. A lot changes for him, having left the farm and his friends Albert and Old Zoey. But he also finds new friends. Who are his new friends in the cavalry and why do you think they become friends?

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Question 5

On page 22 (chapter 2) Joey says: 'I began to feel an acute sense of foreboding', meaning that he felt that bad things were going to happen.

In the first few pages of chapter 6 (p. 46-49) you can again find some signs that bad things are about to happen. Write down at least two of these signs.

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Now share your answers with the rest of your class.

Assignment 2.2 The draft

Watch the clip on YouTube about teenage soldiers in the Great War.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HmehUObwfVU> [first 4:55 min.]

When Great Britain joined the war against the German invaders its army was much smaller than the German army. Therefore British men were asked to volunteer as soldiers. Many people responded, some as young as 14. Albert, 16 years old at the time, also wants to join the army but he is turned down because Captain Nichols thinks he is too young. Can you imagine what would have happened to him and Joey if Captain Nichols had let him join his cavalry? Write a short story of 200-300 words about it. Make a draft in your notebook and then write your story on the computer.

Lesson 3 Joey goes to war

HOMEWORK for next lesson: Complete assignment 3.2 and read chapters 12 - 16

Assignment 3.1 → Class discussion

Question 1

In chapter 7 Joey says that for months Trooper Warren's loving attention was to keep him alive. Their friendship does not only save Joey but it also helps the reader. In what way does their friendship help the reader understand what is going on?

Question 2

At the end of chapter 8 Joey and Tophorn are made prisoners of war by the German troops and they are separated from the British soldiers. Captain Stewart tells Trooper Warren not to worry about Joey and Tophorn because 'the Germans love their horses every bit as much as we do.' Was he right about that? You may look for the answer in the next few chapters.

Question 3

In chapter 10 a German soldier gives Joey and Tophorn his Iron Cross. Why does he give it to them and what is so special about this?

Question 4

Joey and Tophorn are happy while they work on the farm of Emilie and her grandfather. Why doesn't her grandfather try to keep Joey and Tophorn at the farm when the German officer comes to take them away?

Assignment 3.2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wm1IEKVWMIIs>

1. Now read the text on page 18-21 about the use of animals in war.

[text: War Animals From Horses to Glowworms]

2. Pick one of the animals that you just read about in the text and write a letter of 150 – 200 words about its experiences in a war. You can write from the perspective of the animal, or from the perspective of a soldier using the animal.

War Animals From Horses to Glow-worms:

7 Incredible Facts

December 22, 2011 By [History.com Staff](#)



The movie “War Horse,” which follows a cavalry horse through the trenches and turmoil of World War I, opens in U.S. theaters on December 25. Explore these fascinating facts about the role horses and other animals have played in warfare throughout history, from dogs and elephants to glow-worms and dolphins.

World War I, in which 10 million soldiers died, also resulted in the deaths of 8 million military horses

Whether pulling chariots, transporting equipment or carrying people to battle, the horse has seen more action in wars than any other animal; in fact, the earliest equine training manual dates back to 1350 B.C. By the outbreak of World War I, advances in military technology meant that conditions on the front were often more dangerous for horses than for humans. In just one day during the 1916 Battle of Verdun in France, for instance, some 7,000 horses were killed, including nearly 100 animals

that died after being struck by a French naval gun blast. Horses were also more susceptible to the elements, and thousands succumbed to exhaustion, disease and poison gas attacks. Many more might have been lost without the efforts of units such as Britain's Royal Army Veterinary Corps, which treated more than 2.5 million injured horses during World War I. Of these patients, 75 percent were successfully returned to service.

Sergeant Stubby, the most decorated dog of World War I, captured a German spy and outranked his owner.

In 1917, a stray puppy wandered onto the Yale University campus, where members of the 102nd Infantry Regiment were training. The pit bull mix won over the unit with his antics, participating in drills and even learning how to salute with his right paw. Private J. Robert Conroy adopted the dog, named him Stubby and smuggled him to the front lines in France. There, exposure to mustard gas left Stubby highly sensitive to the noxious fumes and able to warn the 102nd of imminent attacks. He also learned to locate wounded soldiers during patrols. One day, Stubby spotted a German spy and attacked the bewildered man until reinforcements arrived; the achievement earned him the rank of sergeant. In his 18 months of service, Stubby participated in 17 battles, survived a series of wounds and provided a much-needed boost of morale to his fellow soldiers. After the war he returned to the United States with Conroy (who never made it past corporal himself) and became a national icon, leading parades and receiving awards until his death in 1926.

Camels drafted by the U.S. Army fled to Canada in the 19th century.

Camels have long taken part in combat operations, most notably in the Middle East and North Africa during both World Wars. They also took part in an improbable experiment that by all accounts failed miserably. In the mid-19th century, the U.S. Army faced the difficult task of hauling supplies across newly acquired lands in the Southwest, where the arid and inhospitable terrain proved too harsh for traditional beasts of burden such as horses and mules. Enter the U.S. Camel Corps, composed of 60-plus camels that were purchased and shipped to America in the

1850s. At first, the camels performed admirably on numerous surveying missions, impressing their military handlers with their strength and ability to survive on little food and water. But trouble soon arose when the dromedaries' famously irritable and stubborn dispositions started spooking other army animals. Shortly after the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, the Camel Corps was discontinued entirely. Some of its members fell into the hands of private citizens, while others escaped into the wild and traveled as far as Canada—where residents reported seeing feral camels up until the 1930s.

World War I soldiers brightened the trenches with glowworms.

One of the most unlikely nonhuman contributions to World War I was made by *Lampyrus noctiluca*, more commonly known as the European glowworm, which emits light through bioluminescence. Huddled in dank, dark trenches, enlisted men and officers alike turned to the incandescent insects for help, collecting them in jars by the thousands. These instant but ephemeral lanterns allowed soldiers to examine intelligence reports, study battle maps or simply read comforting letters from home. According to a 2010 study, just 10 glowworms can provide the same amount of illumination as a modern-day roadway light.

A pigeon flew 150 miles to deliver news of D-Day's success during World War II.

The use of homing pigeons as military messengers dates back to the ancient Greeks and Persians, but it wasn't until the late 19th and early 20th centuries that birds were used in large-scale intelligence efforts. During both World Wars, the United States and United Kingdom assembled special pigeon service units comprised of tens of thousands of birds. So important were pigeons to the British war effort during World War I that the army issued orders aimed at protecting them; intentionally killing or hurting a homing pigeon could land offenders in prison for six months. More than 16,000 homing pigeons were parachuted into Europe during World War II, including Gustav (formally known as bird NPS.42.31066), who flew more than 150 miles back to England on D-Day to deliver the first official word of the Normandy landings.

Elephants' alleged fear of pigs inspired an ancient military tactic.

Elephants regularly participated in military campaigns in ancient times, most famously during the Carthaginian general Hannibal's legendary trek over the Alps in 218 B.C. According to Greek and Roman chroniclers, the giant creatures had one fatal flaw that enemy armies exploited as a countermeasure: The sound of a squealing pig could give even the largest trained elephant a debilitating fright. Pliny the Elder, Aelian and others describe battles in which pigs were lit on fire or swung from the walls of besieged cities, produce piercing cries that scattered advancing elephants.

Dolphins and sea lions work undercover—and underwater—for the U.S. Navy.

Operating in secret until the 1990s, the U.S. Navy Marine Mammal Program has been recruiting and training sea creatures for more than 40 years. Early on, various species were considered for the initiative, including killer whales and seals, but bottlenose dolphins and California sea lions quickly emerged as the star pupils. Endowed with superior underwater senses and immune to the bends, the smart swimmers have served in Vietnam, in the Persian Gulf and at naval bases on the home front. Dolphins discover and mark sea mines, which they're too lightweight to trigger, with their incredible echolocation skills. Sea lions dive hundreds of feet below the surface to investigate and recover lost or suspicious objects. And both animals are taught to guard harbours and ships by detecting unauthorized intruders such as enemy divers.

Lesson 4 Sojourn into no man's land

**HOMEWORK for next lesson: read chapters 17-21
and complete assignment 4.3**

Assignment 4.1 The tossing of the coin

Read the following extract out loud:

“.... The German held the coin up in the sun and then turned a full slow circle before spinning it high and glinting into the air. As it fell to the ground the Welshman called out in a loud, resonant voice so that all the world could hear, ‘Heads!’

‘Well,’ said the German stooping to pick it up. ...”

What do you think would have happened if the German had won the tossing of the coin? Discuss with your neighbor.

Assignment 4.2 the Talk show

With two or three other students prepare to participate in a television talk show featuring characters from war horse. Choose an interesting character from the book (it doesn't necessarily have to be Albert). Prepare about a half-dozen questions to ask and possible answers.

Assignment 4.3 Learning new words

Vocabulary: Synonyms are words with similar meanings. Draw a line from each word in column A to its synonym in column B. Then use the words in column A to fill in the blanks in the sentences below. Feel free to use a dictionary.

A		B	
1	harsh	a.	able to float
2	frolicking	b.	difficult
3	unperturbed	c.	to react angrily

- | | | | |
|---|-----------|----|-------------------------|
| 4 | mound | d. | unkind |
| 5 | buoyant | e. | playfully |
| 6 | arduous | f. | not worried |
| 7 | bristling | g. | great admiration |
| 8 | adulation | h. | large pile of something |

Sentences

- 1 Stop around and get to work!
- 2 Darian was, ready to attack, while Jule frowned.
- 3 I agree with you but you could have been a bit less.....
- 4 Nothing we can do or say has any effect on him. His composure is always
- 5 After this they raised a great, striving to make it as high as possible.
- 6 The boat proved to be only just
- 7 It was an trip.
- 8 Although Jason was a famous celebrity, he was very uncomfortable with the from his fans.

LESSON 5 POST-READING

HOMEWORK: finish assignment 5.3

Assignment 5.1 'Timeline'

Please write down the correct order of Joey's career in the book. Use the assignment on page 23.

Assignment 5.2 'The good, the bad and the worse'

Try to link the good with the good and the bad with the bad people in Joey's life using the assignment on page 24.

Discuss your answers with your neighbour and then share with the class.

Assignment 5.3 'Pen pal'

Pick one of the characters of the book to write a letter to. What would you like to know/ find out that you haven't already read?

You can find the assignment on page 25 .

Assignment 5.1 'Timeline'

Write down the correct order of Joey's career in the book.



Source: <http://www.worldwar1postcards.com/>

A Ambulance transport



Source: <http://www.britishbattles.com/firstww/>

B Cavalry horse



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_artillery/

C Artillery horse



Source: <http://www.ebay.ca/itm/Farm-Horse-Wagon-Loading-Hay-Original-Snapshot/>

D Farm horse

Assignment 5.2 'The good, bad and worse'

Draw a line from the characters below to the right column: the ones who treated Joey well, the ones who treated him bad or not so well and the ones who treated him downright poorly.

- Albert
- Albert's father
- Zoey
- Captain Nicholls
- Samuel Perkins
- Tophorn
- Trooper Warren
- Herr Hauptmann
- Emilie
- The artillery troop & Herr Major
- Crazy old Friedrich
- David
- Maisie Brown

Good

Bad

Worse

Lesson 6 Warhorse: the film and the musical

HOMEWORK: please fill out the feedback form

Assignment 6.1 Show movie trailer and discuss accompanying questions

Watch the trailer from the film. How well do you think it portrays the book? Do you expect anything or anyone to be left out? DISCUSS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6Ru9Y9Xwjg>

Assignment 6.2 Show theatrical trailer plus additional clip and discuss

Watch the trailer from the musical plus the other short clip where Joey (a puppet) meets a real horse. Do you think it could work as a musical? Why or why not? DISCUSS

Trailer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-bni4QqSv4>

Joey meets a real horse

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xg2wEA3tJW0>

Assignment 6.3 Adapting the book to the screen/ theatre

Writing a scene for a movie or a play is completely different than writing a book. Pick one chapter or scene in the book that you really liked and transcribe it so it reads like a film script or play. For example:

An AUCTION WORKER holds a clipboard out for the lead farmer.

AUCTION MAN 1

Mornin', pop. Put your mark here.

Good luck.

3.

EXT. JOEY'S PEN. THE SAME.

Two men approach the pen.

AUCTION MAN 2

Get the colt...

One man grabs Joey and pulls him out of the pen. Suddenly there is a look of horror on his face. His terrified mother realises they are being separated. Joey panics and desperately tries to get back to his mother, he rises up throwing the man who is leading him aside. Joey is out of control. The man regains control of Joey.

AUCTION MAN 3

Whoa! Whoa!

He pulls Joey away from his mother, who lets out a heart-rending cry, paws the ground, and crashes her foreleg against the fence. Joey remains disoriented in the midst of the market day chaos.

Summary

War Horse opens as Joey is taken away from his mother and sold to a farm. On the farm, Joey is broken in (gently) by a kind-hearted young boy named Albert Narracott. Albert's drunken father sells Joey to the British army to earn money to keep his farm and family alive.

In the army now, Joey is paired up with Captain Nicholls, a cavalry man, and sent to the front lines. Nicholls perishes in battle, and Joey is transferred to a younger, more inexperienced rider named Trooper Warren. Warren is a kind, gentle man. Joey still longs for Albert as he carries Warren into battle. The British lose the battle, and Warren and Joey are captured by the Germans.

The Germans put Joey to work as a cart-puller, hauling injured soldiers to medic tents for treatment. Doing his duty, Joey meets Tophorn, a strong black stallion who becomes his best friend. As the front line moves, and casualties decrease, Joey and Tophorn are left with a kind French farmer and his granddaughter, Emilie, who cares deeply for the two horses. Emilie is a sickly child, but the horses give her strength and a reason to live. The war returns and Joey and Tophorn are commissioned once again by the Germans.

Tasked with pulling a gun, Joey and Tophorn are put into great danger. Two other horses in their unit, Heinie and Coco, perish, along with Joey's new caretaker, Friedrich. Worst of all for Joey, Tophorn also succumbs after many months in cold, harsh conditions with little food.

Finding himself injured and alone, Joey is discovered by the British and taken to their vet tent. There he is reunited with Albert, who has enlisted in the military as a veterinarian. Albert nurses Joey back to health. The war ends and Joey is put up for auction. Emilie's Grandpapa shows up and wins the auction for Joey. Sadly, Emilie has died, so Grandpapa gives Joey to Albert. Albert takes Joey back to England, marries his sweetheart Maisie Brown, and they live happily ever after.

Bonus material

Michael Morpurgo on writing War Horse, World War I and war today

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CpIF6KYTBY>

Behind the Curtain: War Horse - Joey the Horse

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgbWEonptVo>

Handspring Puppet Company: The genius puppetry behind War Horse

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7u6N-cSW>

War Horse: the real story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GCGQAQgYbs>

World War I in 6 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3UjJ5kxiLI>

**Feedback and reflection form to submit after
completion of lesson 6: WAR HORSE**

What did you enjoy most about this reading project and why?

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Was there anything or any assignments you found particularly hard?
Explain.

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Would you like to engage on a similar project again?

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Have you learnt anything from this experience?

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Is there anything you would like to do differently next time?

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**We hope you have enjoyed reading this book and
participating in all the different excercises!**