

War Horse

Extract from Chapter 4 of 'War Horse' by Michael Morpurgo and told from the viewpoint of a horse called Joey.

Tying a long rope to the halter he walked me out of the stable. I went with him because Zoey was out there looking back over her shoulder at me and I was always happy to go anywhere and with anyone as long as she was with me. All the while I noticed that Albert's father was speaking in a hushed voice and looking around him like a thief.

He must have known that I would follow old Zoey, for he roped me up to her saddle and led us both quietly out of the yard down the track and over the bridge. Once in the lane he mounted Zoey swiftly and we trotted up the hill and into the village. He never spoke a word to either of us. I knew the road well enough of course for I had been there often enough with Albert, and indeed I loved going there because there were always other horses to meet and people to see. It was in the village only a short time before that I had met my first motor-car outside the Post Office and had stiffened with fear as it rattled past, but I had stood steady and I remember that Albert had made a great fuss of me after that. But now as we neared the village I could see that several motor-cars were parked up around the green and there was a greater gathering of men and horses than I had ever seen. Excited as I was, I remember that a sense of deep apprehension came over me as we trotted up into the village.



 michael morpurgo

month

 Bookclub



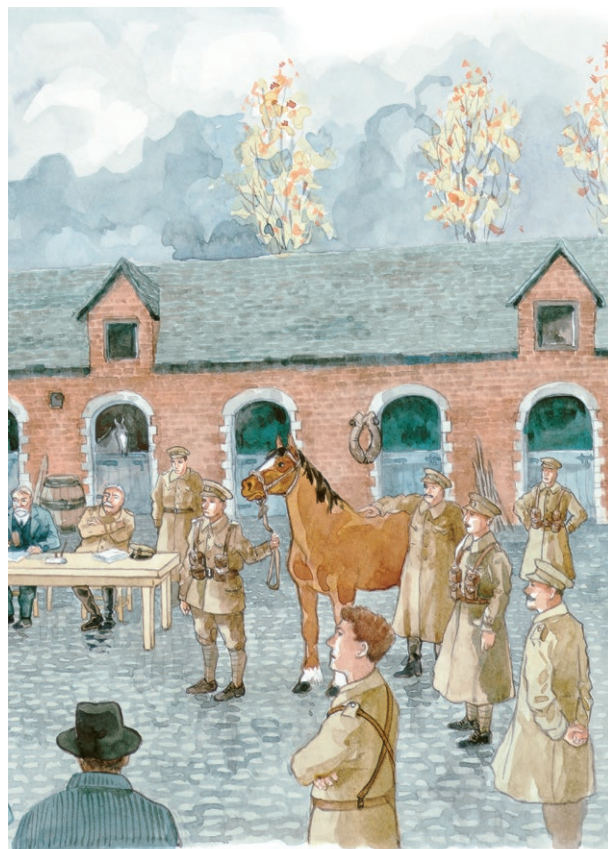
War Horse

Extract from Chapter 4 of 'War Horse' by Michael Morpurgo and told from the viewpoint of a horse called Joey.


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There were men in khaki uniforms everywhere; and then as Albert's father dismounted and led us up past the church towards the green a military band struck up a rousing, pounding march. The pulse of the great bass drum beat out through the village and there were children everywhere, some marching up and down with broomsticks over their shoulders and some leaning out of windows waving flags.

As we approached the flagpole in the centre of the green where the Union Jack hung limp in the sun against the white pole, an officer pushed through the crowd towards us. He was tall and elegant in his jodhpurs and Sam Brown belt, with a silver sword at his side. He shook Albert's father by the hand. 'I told you I'd come, Captain Nicholls, sir,' said Albert's father. 'It's because I need the money, you understand. Wouldn't part with a horse like this 'less I had to.'



'Well farmer,' said the officer, nodding his appreciation as he looked me over. 'I'd thought you'd be exaggerating when we talked in The George last evening. "Finest horse in the parish" you said, but then everyone says that. But this one is different – I can see that.' And he smoothed my neck gently and scratched me behind my ears. Both his hand and his voice were kind and I did not shrink away from him. 'You're right, farmer, he'd make a fine mount for any regiment and we'd be proud to have him – I wouldn't mind using him myself. No, I wouldn't mind at all. If he turns out to be all he looks, then he'd suit me well enough. Fine looking animal, no question about it.'

'Forty pounds you'll pay me, Captain Nicholls, like you promised yesterday?' Albert's father said in a voice that was unnaturally low, almost as if he did not want to be heard by anyone else. 'I can't let him go for a penny less. Man's got to live.'

Questions



1. Why has Albert's father led Joey into the village? Tick one.
- to give him exercise to show him to Captain Nicholls
- to go to the Post Office to buy a motor-car

2. Underline **one** word from the quotation below that suggests that Joey was feeling worried.

Excited as I was, I remember that a sense of deep apprehension came over me as we trotted up into the village.

3. Fill in the missing words.

Once in the lane he _____ Zoey swiftly and we _____ up the hill and into the village.

4. Give **two** examples of items of clothing or equipment worn by Captain Nicholls.

• _____ • _____

5. How much money does Albert's father want as payment for Joey?

6. **I had met my first motor-car outside the Post Office and had stiffened with fear as it rattled past...**

Explain why Joey may have 'stiffened with fear'.

7. How can you tell that Albert's father does not feel comfortable about selling Joey to Captain Nicholls?

8. Predict what might have happened if Captain Nicholls was not impressed with Joey.



Answers

1. Why has Albert's father led Joey into the village? Tick one.

- to give him exercise **to show him to Captain Nicholls**
 to go to the Post Office to buy a motor-car

2. Underline **one** word from the quotation below that suggests that Joey was feeling worried.

Excited as I was, I remember that a sense of deep apprehension came over me as we trotted up into the village.

3. Fill in the missing words.

Once in the lane he **mounted** Zoey swiftly and we **trotted** up the hill and into the village.

4. Give **two** examples of items of clothing or equipment worn by Captain Nicholls.

Accept any two of the following: jodhpurs; Sam Brown belt; (silver) sword

5. How much money does Albert's father want as payment for Joey?

Albert's father wants forty pounds for Joey.

6. **I had met my first motor-car outside the Post Office and had stiffened with fear as it rattled past...**

Explain why Joey may have 'stiffened with fear'.

Pupils' own responses, such as: He may have stiffened with fear because it was loud and he hadn't seen a car before so wouldn't have known what the noise was.

7. How can you tell that Albert's father does not feel comfortable about selling Joey to Captain Nicholls?

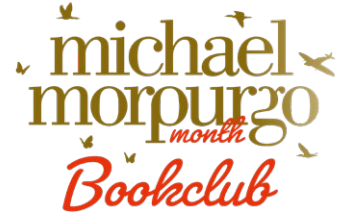
Pupils' own responses, such as: I can tell because he says that he needs the money and would not part with Joey unless he has to. He also speaks in hushed tones so others can't hear him.

8. Predict what might have happened if Captain Nicholls was not impressed with Joey.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I predict that Captain Nicholls may have refused to pay Alfred's father forty pounds and that Joey may have been led back home to the farm.



Questions



1. Number the events from 1-5 to show the order in which they occur in the text. The first one has been done for you.

- Albert's father meets with Captain Nicholls.
- 1 Joey leaves the stable.
- Captain Nicholls strokes Joey.
- Albert's father rides Zoey up the hill.
- Joey, Albert's father and Zoey arrive at the village.

2. **Excited as I was, I remember that a sense of deep apprehension came over me as we trotted up into the village.**

Which words mean the same as 'apprehension' in this sentence?

Tick **two**.

- worry
- happiness
- fear
- contentment

3. Why is Albert's father selling Joey to Captain Nicholls?

4. Find and copy a phrase that shows there were soldiers in the village that day.

5. Where did Albert's father and Captain Nicholls meet to talk about selling Joey the evening before?

6. How would you describe the atmosphere in the village that day? Explain your answer.



Questions



7. How can you tell that Captain Nicholls is impressed with Joey?

8. Why do you think that the author describes the great bass drum beat as a 'pulse'?

9. How do you think Albert's father feels about selling Joey to Captain Nicholls? Explain your answer.





Answers

1. Number the events from 1-5 to show the order in which they occur in the text. The first one has been done for you.

- 4 Albert's father meets with Captain Nicholls.
- 1 Joey leaves the stable.
- 5 Captain Nicholls strokes Joey.
- 2 Albert's father rides Zoey up the hill.
- 3 Joey, Albert's father and Zoey arrive at the village.

2. **Excited as I was, I remember that a sense of deep apprehension came over me as we trotted up into the village.**

Which words mean the same as 'apprehension' in this sentence?

Tick **two**.

- worry**
- happiness
- fear**
- contentment

3. Why is Albert's father selling Joey to Captain Nicholls?

He is selling Joey because he needs the money to live.

4. Find and copy a phrase that shows there were soldiers in the village that day.

men in khaki uniforms (everywhere)

5. Where did Albert's father and Captain Nicholls meet to talk about selling Joey the evening before?

They met at The George the evening before.

6. How would you describe the atmosphere in the village that day? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I would describe the atmosphere as busy and exciting because there were lots of unfamiliar people, children waving flags and marching, several motor-cars in the village as well as a loud band playing rousing music.

Answers

7. How can you tell that Captain Nicholls is impressed with Joey?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I can tell that he was impressed because he nodded in appreciation and called him a 'fine looking animal'. He also said that he would like to have Joey for himself.

8. Why do you think that the author describes the great bass drum beat as a 'pulse'?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think the author describes it as a pulse because it would have made a rhythmic, thumping sound like a pulse.

9. How do you think Albert's father feels about selling Joey to Captain Nicholls? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think he is ashamed about having to sell him because it says he was 'looking around him like a thief' and speaking in a hushed voice because he didn't want others to see or hear.



Questions

1. Look at the first sentence of the text. Who does the word 'he' refer to?
Tick one.

- Albert Albert's father
 Joey Captain Nicholls

2. Draw **four** lines and match each word from the text to its antonym.

hushed

leisurely

swiftly

dispiriting

apprehension

calmness

rousing

noisy



3. Why does Joey love going to the village?

4. Find and copy one word from the text that shows that the military band was producing a rhythmic beat.

5. Give **three** examples of events in the village being different from usual that day.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Questions



6. **'I can't let him go for a penny less. Man's got to live.'**
How might Albert's father be feeling at this point in the story?
Explain your answer.

7. **Excited as I was, I remember that a sense of deep apprehension came over me as we trotted up into the village.**

Why do you think that Joey has a 'deep sense of apprehension'?

8. Discuss how you can tell that Captain Nicholls is impressed with Joey.

9. Give a summary of what happens in this extract of text in 20 words or fewer.



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Answers

10. Read the text carefully from the paragraph beginning 'As we approached the flagpole...'

What impression do you get of Captain Nicholls?

Give two impressions, using evidence from the text to support your answer.



Impression	Evidence

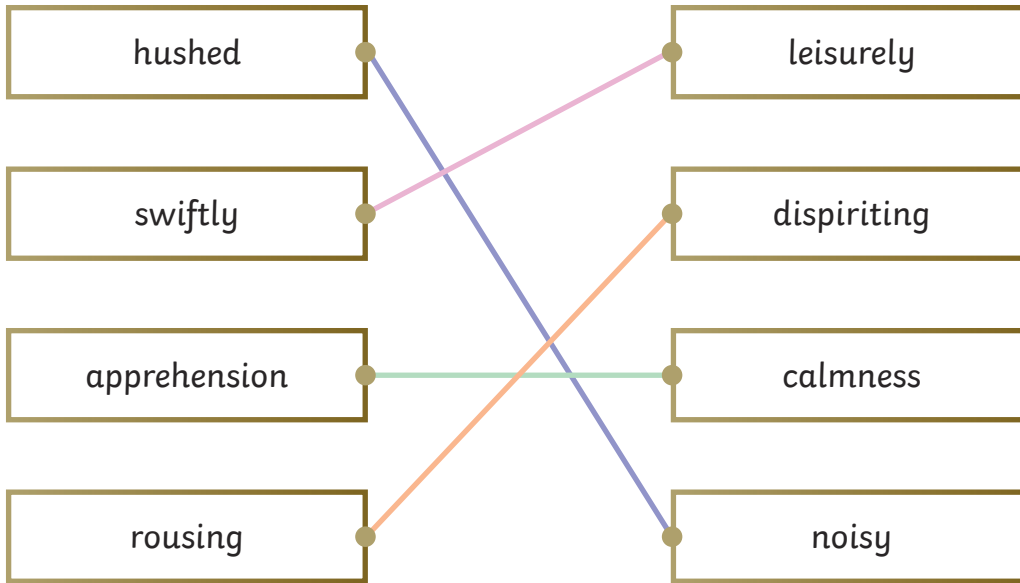
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Answers

1. Look at the first sentence of the text. Who does the word 'he' refer to? Tick one.

- Albert
- Albert's father**
- Joey
- Captain Nicholls

2. Draw **four** lines and match each word from the text to its antonym.



3. Why does Joey love going to the village?

There were always other horses to meet and people to see.

4. Find and copy one word from the text that shows that the military band was producing a rhythmic beat.

Accept either of the following: pounding; pulse.

5. Give **three** examples of events in the village being different from usual that day.

Accept any three of the following: several motor-cars parked up around the green; military band playing; soldiers/men in khaki uniforms; children marching with broomsticks; gathering of men and horses; people waving flags from windows.

Answers

6. **'I can't let him go for a penny less. Man's got to live.'**
 How might Albert's father be feeling at this point in the story?
 Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think Albert might be feeling upset about and ashamed of having to sell Joey to Captain Nicholls but desperate as he needs the money from the sale to survive.

7. **Excited as I was, I remember that a sense of deep apprehension came over me as we trotted up into the village.**

Why do you think that Joey has a 'deep sense of apprehension'?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that he feels worried because the village is much louder and busier than usual and Albert's father is behaving strangely.

8. Discuss how you can tell that Captain Nicholls is impressed with Joey.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I can tell that he was impressed because he nodded in appreciation and called him a 'fine looking animal'. He also said that he would like to have Joey for himself.

9. Give a summary of what happens in this extract of text in 20 words or fewer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Albert's father is reluctantly taking Joey into town to sell him to an army captain as a warhorse.



Answers

10. Read the text carefully from the paragraph beginning 'As we approached the flagpole...'

What impression do you get of Captain Nicholls?

Give two impressions, using evidence from the text to support your answer.



Acceptable points (impressions)	Likely evidence
1. He is important/distinguished	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has the title 'Captain' • Albert's father calls him 'sir' • he is smartly dressed/carries a silver sword • he says that Joey would be good enough for him to use
2. He is well-dressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • elegant • he has a smart uniform (jodhpurs and Sam Brown belt) and a silver sword
3. He is an animal lover/ he respects horses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • he smoothed Joey's neck gently • he spoke kindly to and about Joey • he scratched Joey behind the ears • Joey isn't afraid of him • he nodded with appreciation
4. He is fair/honest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • he says he thought Albert's father was exaggerating but admits that he wasn't
5. He is respectable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • he shakes Albert's father's hand • he meets Albert's father as he agreed to

Award 3 marks for **two** acceptable points, at least **one** with evidence.

Award 2 marks for either **two** acceptable points, or **one** acceptable point with evidence.

Award 1 mark for **one** acceptable point.