

Classic Literature: Black Beauty

Black Beauty is the story of a black horse in England in the 1800s. Written in 1877 by Anna Sewell, it tells the story from the horse's viewpoint. The story covers Black Beauty's life from the time he is born until his old age.

In this passage, Black Beauty has been harnessed to a cart to take his owner, or master, and his caretaker named John on an trip into town. It had been raining a great deal, and while it had stopped raining, the wind was blowing very hard. As the passage begins, they are on their way home as it gets dark.

Black Beauty • Chapter 12. A Stormy Day

So back we went and round by the crossroads, but by the time we got to the bridge it was very nearly dark; we could just see that the water was over the middle of it; but as that happened sometimes when the floods were out, master did not stop. We were going along at a good pace, but the moment my feet touched the first part of the bridge I felt sure there was something wrong. I dare not go forward, and I made a dead stop. "Go on, Beauty," said my master, and he gave me a touch with the whip, but I dare not stir; he gave me a sharp cut; I jumped, but I dare not go forward.

"There's something wrong, sir," said John, and he sprang out of the dog-cart and came to my head and looked all about. He tried to lead me forward. "Come on, Beauty, what's the matter?" Of course I could not tell him, but I knew very well that the bridge was not safe.

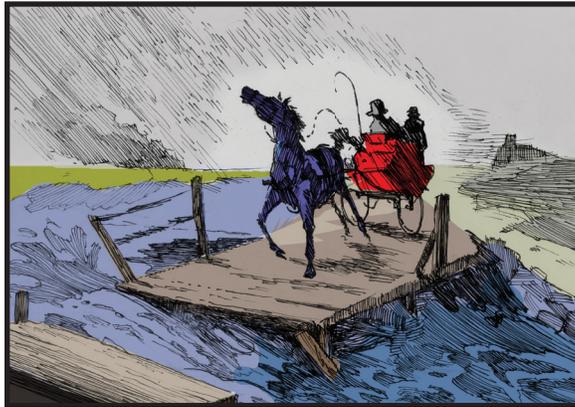
Just then the man at the toll-gate on the other side ran out of the house, tossing a torch about like one mad.

"Hoy, hoy, hoy! halloo! stop!" he cried. "What's the matter?" shouted my master. "The bridge is broken in the middle, and part of it is carried away; if you come on you'll be into the river."

"Thank God!" said my master. "You Beauty!" said John, and took the bridle and gently turned me round to the right-

hand road by the river side. The sun had set some time; the wind seemed to have lulled off after that furious blast which tore up the tree. It grew darker and darker, stiller and stiller. I trotted quietly along, the wheels hardly making a sound on the soft road. For a good while neither master

nor John spoke, and then master began in a serious voice. I could not understand much of what they said, but I found they thought, if I had gone on as the master wanted me, most likely the bridge would have given way under us, and horse, chaise, master, and man would have fallen into the river; and as the current was flowing very strongly, and there was no light and no help at hand, it was more than likely we should all have been drowned.



Name: _____

Understanding Black Beauty

Part I. Order of Events

Place the following actions in the story in the correct order by writing 1 in front of the first thing that happened, 2 in front of the second thing that happened, and so on.

- A. _____ John got out of the cart
- B. _____ The man from the toll-gate yelled about the bridge.
- C. _____ Black Beauty and the cart reached the bridge.
- D. _____ John and the master knew that Black Beauty kept them from drowning.
- E. _____ Black Beauty stopped and wouldn't cross.

Part II. Short Answer

Answer each question below.

1 What did the master do when Black Beauty wouldn't go across the bridge?

2. When did Black Beauty know that something was wrong ?

3. What had happened to the bridge?

4. What did the man from the toll-gate wave?

5. Was it John or the master who first knew something was wrong?

Name: _____

Vocabulary in Black Beauty

I. Vocabulary Match

Match each word in Column A with its meaning in Column B

Column A

- _____ crossroads
- _____ lulled
- _____ furious
- _____ pace
- _____ stiller
- _____ torch
- _____ bridle
- _____ dog-cart

Column B

- violent or intense
- part of a harness for a horse
- sent to sleep
- quieter
- a light or lamp
- a two-wheeled horse-drawn vehicle
- steady or continuous speed
- intersection of two streets or lanes

Part II. Which Meaning?

Below are words from the passage. Each word has at least two meanings; circle the meaning for the words as it is used in the passage.

1. stir

A. barely move

B. move a spoon through a bowl

2. mad

A. angry

B. insane

3. current

A. movement of a body of water or air

B. belonging to the present time

4. chaise

A. a carriage pulled by a horse

B. a reclining chair

5. dare

A. challenge someone to do something

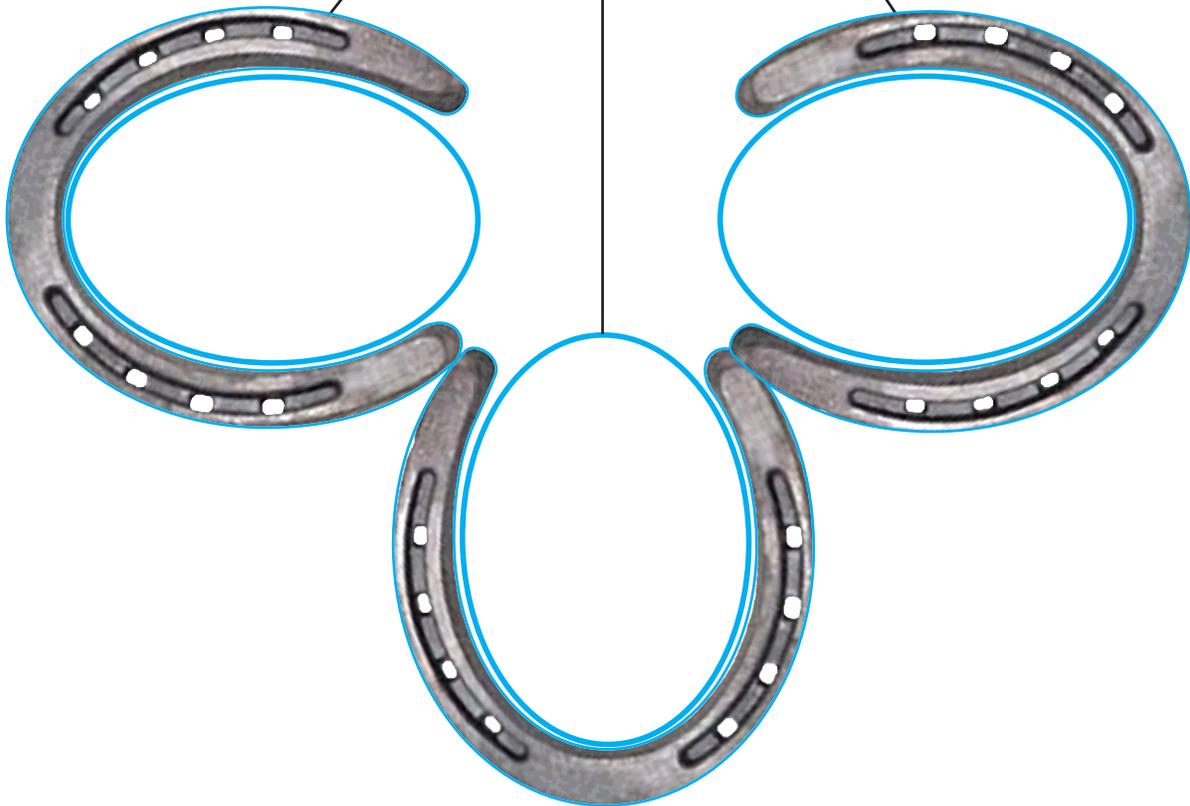
B. have courage to do

Name: _____

Black Beauty: Find the Supporting Evidence

Below is one of the main ideas of the passage. Write three ideas from the passage that support this main idea.

Black Beauty knew the bridge was dangerous.



Name: _____

Black Beauty Word Search

Circle each word from the list in the puzzle. The words can go in any direction.

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

BEAUTY
BLACK

BRIDGE
CART

DROWNED
FLOODS

MASTER
RIVER

SAFE
WATER

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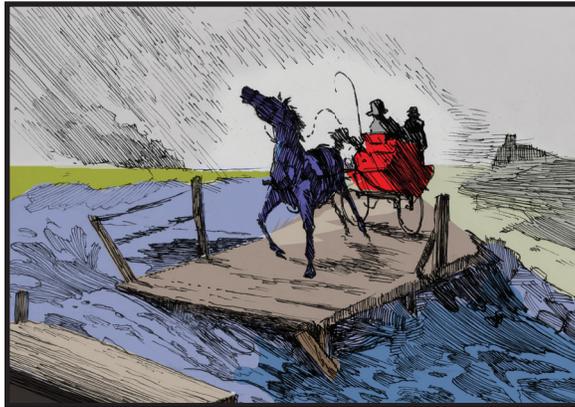
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- A. 3 John got out of the cart
- B. 4 The man from the toll-gate yelled about the bridge.
- C. 1 Black Beauty and the cart reached the bridge.
- D. 5 John and the master knew that Black Beauty kept them from drowning.
- E. 2 Black Beauty stopped and wouldn't cross.

Part II. Short Answer

Student's answers will vary. Example of correct answers:

Answer each question below.

1 What did the master do when Black Beauty wouldn't go across the bridge?

He touched Black Beauty with the whip

2. When did Black Beauty know that something was wrong ?

When his feet first touched the bridge

3. What had happened to the bridge?

It had been broken by the storm.

4. What did the man from the toll-gate wave?

a torch or light

5. Was it John or the master who first knew something was wrong?

John

Name: _____ **KEY**

Vocabulary in Black Beauty

I. Vocabulary Match

Match each word in Column A with its meaning in Column B

Column A

1. **H** crossroads
2. **C** lulled
3. **A** furious
4. **G** pace
5. **D** stiller
6. **E** torch
7. **B** bridle
8. **F** dog-cart

Column B

- A. violent or intense
- B. part of a harness for a horse
- C. sent to sleep
- D. quieter
- E. a light or lamp
- F. a two-wheeled horse-drawn vehicle
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A. challenge someone to do something

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Student's answers will vary. Example of correct answers:

“...the moment my feet touched the first part of the bridge I felt sure there was something wrong.”

“he gave me a sharp cut; I jumped, but I dare not go forward.”

“ I knew very well that the bridge was not safe.”

Name: _____ **KEY**

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

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