



Black Beauty



*Retold from the Anna Sewell
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What Do *You* Think? Questions for Discussion



Have you ever been around a toddler who keeps asking the question “Why?” Does your teacher call on you in class with questions from your homework? Do your parents ask you questions at the dinner table about your day? We are always surrounded by questions that need a specific response. But is it possible to have a question with no right answer?

The following questions are about the book you just read. But this is not a quiz! They are

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designed to help you look at the people, places, and events in the story from different angles. These questions do not have specific answers. Instead, they might make you think of the story in a completely new way.

Think carefully about each question and enjoy discovering more about this classic story.

1. *Black Beauty* is told from the unique perspective of a horse. How long did it take you to realize that the narrator was an animal? Have you read other books that were told by animals? How does *Black Beauty* compare to them?

2. How does the fact that *Black Beauty* is telling the story affect the way the scenes of cruelty are depicted? Would it have been as powerful a story if it was told from the human point of view?

3. Why are the horses willing to follow James out of the burning stable? Have you ever had a pet that would follow you anywhere?

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4. Trust plays an important role in *Black Beauty*. How is Black Beauty's trust betrayed? How is it rewarded?

5. Why does John react as he does when Tom Green calls him ignorant? Do you agree with his reaction? What would you have said to Tom?

6. What happens to make Black Beauty realize that Joe will always protect him from harm? How does this event change Joe "at once from a boy to a man"? Have you ever experienced such a life-altering event? What was it?

7. Why is the bearing rein used on the horses? Can you think of any fashionable clothing that humans used to wear even though it made them uncomfortable? What about today?

8. How did Ginger's attitude toward beatings change? Do you think she gave up, or was she still looking out for her own best interest?

9. Jerry takes every Sunday off with one exception. Do you agree with his reasons for only

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working six days a week? Why did he give in and work one Sunday? Would you have done the same?

10. In many ways, Black Beauty's life comes full circle. By the end of the book, he is once again in a good home and under the care of Joe Green. How has their time apart changed Beauty from the horse Joe used to know? How has the time changed Joe? In what ways have the two remained the same?