

Anna Sewell Black Beauty

Hello! My name's Black Beauty. I'm a horse. I have an interesting story to tell you. I want to tell you about my life. I'm old now, but I still remember everything. My story starts with my mother, who taught me many things. When I close my eyes, I can still see all of my old friends standing together under the apple tree. Oh, how I loved my first home, then Earlshall, and then ... but wait, I can't tell you my story here. Read it, and see what happens to me.

In this reader you will find:

- Information about Anna Sewell
- A section focusing on background and context
- A glossary of difficult words
- Comprehension and grammar activities including A1 Movers style exercises and 21st century skills activities
- Final test

Tags

Animals | Friendship | Adventure

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A1

Anna Sewell

Black Beauty

Stage 1 A1

Teen Readers

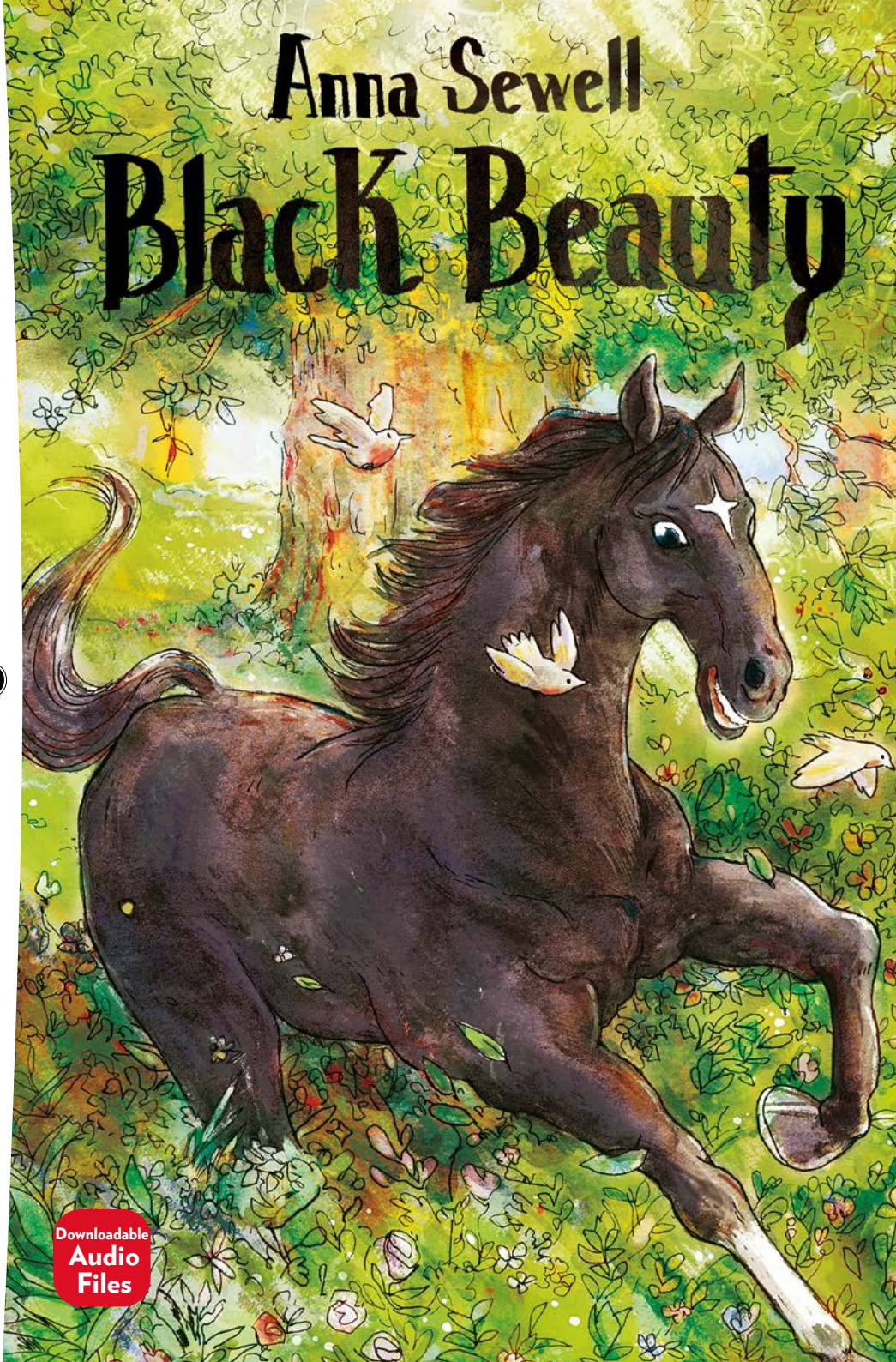


Teen



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Book brief

- 1** *Black Beauty* is English author Anna Sewell's one and only novel, but it's one of the best-selling books of all time and was an immediate success.
- 2** The novel shows Sewell's love of horses and it helped to make people be kinder to them.
- 3** It tells the story of a horse's life through the eyes of the horse, *Black Beauty*.
- 4** Sewell didn't write the story for children, but to make people in Victorian England understand how hard life was for working horses. This led to new laws to help these horses.
- 5** This story was the first of its kind and was followed by many other 'pony books' – books for children about horses and learning to ride.

Anna Sewell

Black Beauty

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For Review Only

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Main Characters



Lady Anne

*Lord Wilson's daughter.
She loves horses
and is always
kind to them.*



Black Beauty

*A handsome black horse,
he tells the story of how he
works hard as a carriage
horse and always tries to
do his best for his masters.*



James

*A kind young boy
who works for Squire
Gordon and helps
John with the horses.*



Little Joe Green

*He comes to help John
with the horses
when James
goes away.*



John

*He works for
Squire Gordon
and rides
Black Beauty.*



Mr York

*He does the same job
as John but works at
Earlshall for
Lord Wilson.*



Harry and Dolly

*Harry and Dolly
are Jerry and Polly's
children and live
in London.*



Jerry and Polly

*Jerry and Polly are husband and wife.
Jerry has a taxi service in London.
He's always kind to the horses he works with.*

Reading

1 Match questions about *Black Beauty* with the correct answers.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| A 'What is the book about?' | 1 'It's quite exciting. A lot of things happen to Black Beauty. I like it.' |
| B 'What are you reading?' | 2 'A book called Black Beauty.' |
| C 'What kind of story is it?' | 3 'It's about a horse. His name is Black Beauty.' |
| D 'Is it a new book?' | 4 'No, a woman wrote it a long time ago, in 1877.' |
| E 'Who was the writer?' | 5 'Her name was Anna Sewell.' |

Grammar

2 *Black Beauty* meets other horses in the story. Read about them and choose the correct verb.

Merrylegs is / are a very happy little horse.

Children (1) love / loves him.

Ginger is a very unhappy horse. She (2) become / becomes happier when she (3) meet / meets Black Beauty.

Sir Olivier (4) live / lives with Black Beauty and Ginger.

He's very old so he (5) don't / doesn't work.

Lizzie is always frightened.

She often (6) go / goes out with Black Beauty.

Captain is an interesting horse.

He (7) work / works with Black Beauty in London.

3 Read this passage and put the underlined verbs in the past tense.

In 1877 people use used horses to do a lot of things.

They (1) need _____ a horse to travel to different places.

It (2) takes _____ a long time to go from one place to another.

The horses (3) have _____ to rest and they

(4) can't _____ run for a long time. People also used horses to carry people or things. In this period, people (5) don't have _____ a telephone. They used a horse to send messages to friends, or to take them to see the doctor. A horse in these times (6) is _____ very busy!

Reading and Writing **MOVERS**

- 4 These words are all in Chapter 1. Look at the pictures and choose the correct word for each definition.



river



field



rabbit



church



mouth



~~cow~~



train



stable

You can get milk from this animal:

_____ COW _____

1 You use this to eat and speak:

2 Where a horse sleeps:

3 You can travel on this:

4 This animal has long ears:

5 There's water here:

Writing

- 5 **Black Beauty** is a story about a horse.

1 Do you like horses? Why / Why not?

2 What's your favourite animal? Why?

3 Do you like reading books about animals? Why / Why not?

4 When do you usually read?

5 What kind of things do you like reading?

6 How important do you think it is to read?

**21st
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Skills**

How I Got My Name

- ▶ 2 Hello. My name's Black Beauty. I think it's a nice name? Do you like it? I do. It's not a normal¹ name like Peter, or David. It's different. That's because I'm different. I'm not a man or a woman. I'm a horse. A horse has a story to tell, just like a man or a woman. This is my story.

I'm going to start my story at the beginning. That's where the best stories start. I'm old now but I still remember when I was young. At the beginning my name wasn't Black Beauty. It was Darkie. I was very handsome². Everybody said so. I lived with my mother. At first I couldn't eat grass. I was too young, so I drank my mother's milk. At night, I slept close to³ her. When it was hot, we stayed together under the trees.

Soon I was old enough to eat grass. There were six other young horses, who played with me in our field. We ran together. Sometimes we went to the river to drink the water there.

At first Black Beauty was called Darkie and he lived with his mother and played with the other young horses.

¹ **normal** something that you usually hear or see

² **handsome (physical description)** someone who is attractive (usually describing a man)

³ **close to** near



Black Beauty when he was very young with his mother.



My mother went to work during the day. She came back in the evening, and I was always happy to see her.

I wanted to be like my mother. She never got angry¹. She always did what her master² asked her to do.

One day my mother said to me, 'Son, there's something you must never forget.'

'What's that?' I asked.

'I often see you playing with the other young horses in the field. That's fine. But, remember that you're special³.'

'Special! What do you mean?'

'You come from an important family. Your father, and your grandfather were famous horses. They could run very fast. Everybody loved them. They were also gentle⁴ and kind⁵ horses. I want you to be like them.'

I always remembered what my mother told me that day. I'm always kind to other horses and to men, even when they aren't kind to me. That's what my mother taught me.

¹ **angry** 😡

² **master** he is the boss

³ **special** important and different

⁴ **gentle** not hard or angry

⁵ **kind** friendly, someone who likes to help other people

Black Beauty comes from an important family and is always kind to other horses and people even when they aren't kind to him.

Black Beauty

In those days, every day was the same. I stayed near my mother, and I played with my friends. But I remember one day, when something different happened. It was early spring and I was with my friends. I could hear some strange¹ noises.

We ran to the other part of the field, near the river and we saw a rabbit². The rabbit ran past us very quickly. It looked frightened. Soon I understood why. I saw some dogs.

‘They’re trying to get the rabbit,’ said one of my friends.

But it wasn’t a game, like I play with my friends. They wanted to get the rabbit, and kill³ it.

‘Why are they doing this?’ I asked my friend.

‘It’s called a hunt⁴,’ he said.

I wanted to ask what a hunt was. But then what I saw next helped me to understand. I saw some men on horses, following the dogs. The men were very excited. The rabbit ran and ran and ran. The dogs were closer, and closer, and closer, and then I heard a noise.

SPLASH!

¹ **strange** not something you usually see or hear

² **rabbit** 

³ **to kill** the rabbit dies when they do this

⁴ **hunt** to run after an animal for fun

A black horse fell into the river. A man was in the river too. I looked at them. They just stayed there in the water. They didn't move. Soon some men came. They carried the man to the house. Then some other men came to look at the horse. I could hear them speaking.

'It's no good,' said one of the men. 'It's his leg. There's nothing we can do.' Then the man took something out of a bag. He put it near the horse's head. And there was another loud noise.

BANG!

After this noise the horse never moved again.

A few days later, I saw a black car on the road. *It's going to the church*, I thought. Inside the car I could see a big box. Inside the box there was the man, who I saw in the river.

I learnt later that the horse's name was Rob Roy. Did he go to the church in a black car? Did he have a special box? I don't think so.

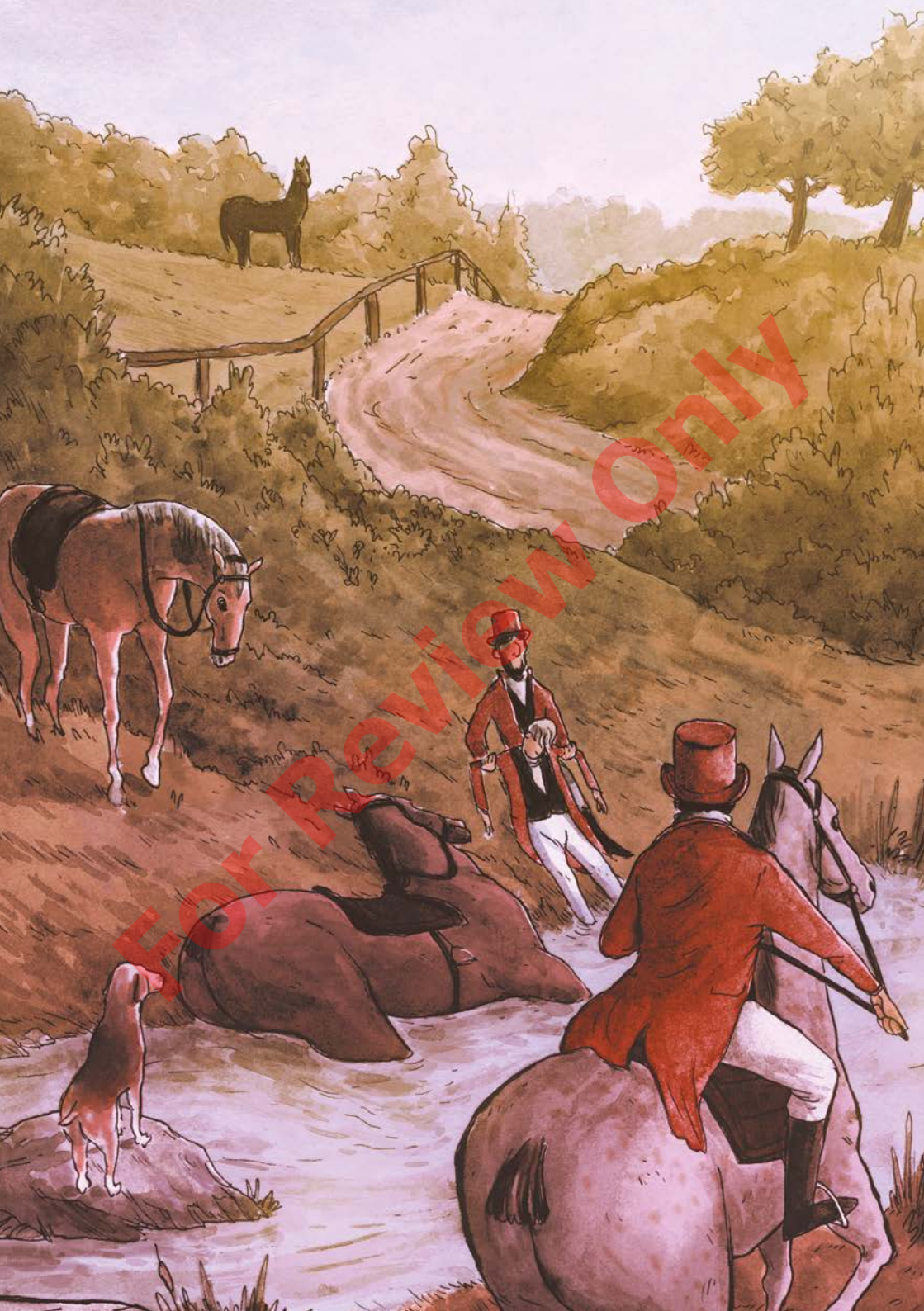
Later, I found out¹ that the man in the box was the master's son. His only son. I don't understand why men do this. All of this – just to get a little

The master's son falls into the river with his horse while hunting and both die. Black Beauty doesn't understand why men have to hunt.



The master's son and his horse fall into the river while hunting a rabbit.

¹ **find out** learn or hear about



rabbit. Sometimes they do very strange things. But we have to do what they say. They're our masters.

This was a very strange day. Normally the days passed very quickly, and nothing much happened. Soon I was four years old. I was no longer a baby. One day, the master came to look at me. He looked at my eyes, my mouth and my legs. First I had to walk, and run slowly for him. And then I had to run faster, while he watched.

'Well, now we can train¹ him,' said the master. 'I think he can do well.'

That evening, I had a lot of questions for my mother. 'What does, 'train' mean?' was my first question.

'It means that my master thinks you're ready to help him. Remember what I said and be kind. Do what my master says, even when you're tired or hungry.'

'Oh, I understand. What does ride mean?'

'To ride means to run with a man on your back,' she said.

Black Beauty is now 4 years old and his master wants to start riding him.

¹ **train** teach an animal to do something

Black Beauty

The next day, the master began to ride me around the field. I was very happy to carry the master. He spoke to me in a soft¹ voice². He did it every day, until it was normal for me.

Then one day, I had to wear shoes for the first time. A man took my feet and put my shoes on. It didn't hurt me. But my feet felt very heavy³. Then the master put something on my face. I couldn't see anything on my left, or on my right. I could only see what was right in front of me.

After this, the master sent me for two weeks to another field. There weren't any horses there. Only some cows and sheep. That was where I saw my first train. But before I saw it, I heard it. It made a loud sound⁴.

‘CHOO CHOO, CHOO CHOO’.

The train was long and black, and it was very fast. Much faster than me. At first, I was very frightened. I ran to the other side of the field. That day, I saw lots of trains. Every time, I saw that the cows weren't frightened. Very soon, I wasn't frightened. I knew that the train couldn't

The master starts to ride Black Beauty and puts shoes on his feet and something on his face to make him only look in front of him and not left or right. Then he puts him in a field with cows and sheep and here he sees his first train.

¹ **soft** not loud

² **voice** people hear your voice when you speak

³ **heavy** 

⁴ **sound** noise

Reading

1 Read the sentences and choose the correct word.

Black Beauty's ~~father~~ / mother was a famous horse.

- 1 Black Beauty's first name was *Blackbird* / *Darkie*.
- 2 The man who died at the hunt was the master's *friend* / *son*.
- 3 Black Beauty's mother had to work during *the day* / *the night*.
- 4 The master started to train Black Beauty when he was *two* / *four* years old.

2 Put the things that Black Beauty did in the correct order.

- a ☐ He had to walk, and run slowly for the master.
Then he had to run faster.
- b ☐ He had to wear shoes.
- c ☐ He saw lots of trains pass.
- d ☐ Black Beauty had to carry the master on his back.
- e ☐ The master put something on Black Beauty's face.

Vocabulary

3 Match the adjective with another word that has the opposite meaning.

- 1 Strange
- 2 Big
- 3 Good
- 4 Old
- 5 Kind
- 6 Angry

- a Calm
- b Young
- c Unkind
- d Little
- e Normal
- f Bad

Reading and Writing

MOVERS

4 Choose the correct word for each sentence.

Black Beauty is a horse.

~~horse~~ man woman

- 1 Black Beauty's mother always did what her master _____ her to do.

answered spoke asked

- 2 His mother taught _____ to be kind to other horses and men.

him his her

- 3 A black horse _____ into the river.

jumped swam fell

- 4 Ginger was always very _____.

happy angry sad

- 5 Black Beauty's new master is very _____.

bad kind stupid

Speaking

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5 Talk to a partner and answer the questions.

In Chapter 1 a boy and a horse die during a hunt.

- 1 What do you think of hunting?
- 2 What kind of animals do they hunt in your country?
- 3 Would you like to go hunting? Why / Why not?



Before-reading Activity

Listening

- 3 6 Listen to what Black Beauty says about his first home. What things did he like about it?

- | | |
|--|---|
| a ☐ He was free | d ☐ the other horses |
| b ☐ the food | e ☐ the master |
| c ☐ the field | f ☐ his mother was there |