



Jumper

Michele Martin Bossley

Reading level: 3.2

978-1-55143-620-3 PB

AR Quiz # 110748

Book Summary

Reese loves horses and longs to be a competitive show jumper. When the leased horse she rides is sold, she is left riding the orneriest horse in the stable. She decides she must find a horse of her own. Her parents can't afford a trained horse, so she decides to buy a wild horse at auction.

She bids on her favorite horse, a beautiful chestnut mare she first saw running wild on the prairie, but she is outbid by an unpleasant local rancher. Reese is horrified to learn that he plans to sell the horses to a slaughterhouse, even though it is illegal. Determined to save the horse from a terrible fate, she enlists her grandfather's help and finds herself in more danger than she ever could have imagined. With the help of a girl she's never much liked, Reese saves the horses and finds herself the proud owner of Prairie Rose, the chestnut mare.

Prereading Ideas

- Ask students to research wild horses. Write a brief history of wild horses in North America. Ask students to answer the following questions: Why is it considered unethical to slaughter horses while other livestock is routinely used for meat? Are there places where horsemeat is more acceptable? Why?
- Why are people from different socio-economic backgrounds often antagonistic towards each other?

Connecting to the Text

Plot

How important is conflict to a plot? Ask students to identify all the conflicts in *Jumper* and write a brief paragraph that imagines the book without one of the conflicts. What happens to a book when conflict is removed?

Vocabulary

- Reese refers to something called a “martingale” in *Jumper*. Other unusual words that relate to equestrian sports are:

dressage	quirt	crupper	hackamore
surcingle	cavesson	honda	cavalletti
gymkhana	tapaderos	romal	capriole
oxer	bradoon		

Divide students into groups and assign each group one of these words. Get students to find out what the words mean and then get them to make up fake definitions as well. One student from each group will present both definitions to the rest of the class. Have the students vote on which is real and which is fake.

- Every sport has its own unique vocabulary. Have students choose a sport and list and define some of the words used in that sport.

Connecting to the Curriculum

Math

- Horses are measured in hands. How big is a hand? Figure out (in inches or centimeters) how tall a horse of sixteen hands would be.
- Research the history of measurements such as hands, feet, leagues, fathoms, yards, furlongs, gills, stones and cords. Ask students:
 1. What is the distance between your house and your school in furlongs?
 2. What is your weight in stones?
 3. What is the size of a regulation soccer or football field in yards?
 4. How deep is an Olympic-size pool's deep end in fathoms?
 5. How many gills is a can of Coke?
 6. How many leagues can you walk in three hours?

Science

- Reese believes that horses are very intelligent. Does research bear this out?
- How do behavioral scientists measure animal intelligence?
- Which is thought to be smarter—a dog or a dolphin?

Connecting to the Students—Discussion Questions

1. Most people in North America find the idea of eating horsemeat distasteful. Why is eating cow meat or pig meat okay, but not horsemeat or dogmeat?
2. Kayla helps Reese even though they don't like each other. Have students discuss whether they have ever reached out to help someone they don't like.

Author's Note

While Reese's story is fictional, the events surrounding this novel are based on a real incident. On January 25, 1994, a military-sanctioned roundup began on Canadian Forces Base Suffield of over 1,200 feral horses. Those horses were called feral instead of wild because they were originally domesticated horses that escaped or roamed, forming a herd that bred and became untamed. True wild horses have never been tamed, but for the purposes of this story, I have referred to them as wild. I have also fictionalized the actual roundup for my story.

The Suffield wild horses roamed the military land for more than fifty years. In the early 1990s, arguments were made that the horses were destroying fragile grasslands, and the roundup began. Animal rights activists opposed the roundup, fearing that the horses might be mistreated or sold for meat. While the Canadian military put rules in place to try to protect the horses, there were later allegations that many of the horses, which were supposedly adopted legitimately, were slaughtered for profit. While these allegations were never proven, this scandal was the basis for Reese's story.

Resources***Food and Culture***

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_meat
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taboo_food
www.foodreference.com/html/arthorsemeat.html

Horses

www.localriding.com/glossary.html
<http://northernhorse.com/wildhorses>
www.canadiangeographic.ca/Magazine/ma05/indepth

Animal Intelligence

www.animalintelligence.org

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal_cognition

www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=intelligence-evolved

Measurements

www.onlineconversion.com

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Measurement>

Author Biography

Michele Martin Bossley is the author of numerous books for children and teens, including titles in the Orca Sports series and the Orca Currents series. Michele lives with her family in Calgary, Alberta.