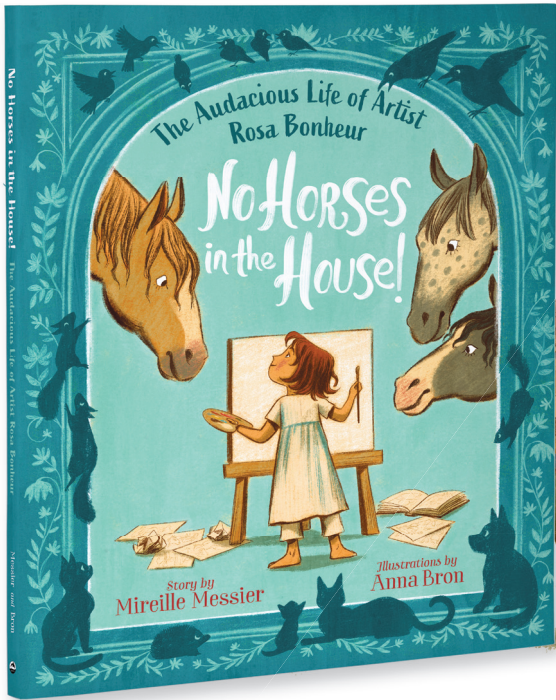


9781459833524



Discussion Guide

About the Book

Based on the incredible life of the pioneering feminist and queer artist Rosa Bonheur, this charming story depicts Rosa's early years and her drive to fight for her dreams.

Rosa Bonheur loved to draw animals. She was good at it too! Unfortunately, in nineteenth-century France, girls were not allowed to be artists. But Rosa didn't let that stop her. In this fictionalized account of her early life in Paris, Rosa studies art at home, bringing a menagerie of animals into the apartment to study up close. When she is kicked out of the horse market for sneaking in wearing boys clothing, Rosa must think creatively to challenge the rules in pursuit of her dream of becoming a world-class realist painter.

This book is also available in French as *Pas de chevaux dans la maison!* (9781459836006)



Photo credit: Ian Partridge

About the Author

Mireille Messier is a Montreal-born, Ottawa-raised and now Toronto-based award-winning children's writer with a background in broadcasting and theater. Mireille has published over thirty books, some in French, others in English, for children of all ages, including the nonfiction picture book *Sergeant Billy: The True Story of the Goat Who Went to War*. Her picture book *The Branch* was nominated for Shining Willow and Blue Spruce Awards and the Governor General's Literary Award. Before becoming an author, Mireille worked as a television and radio host, a scriptwriter, a book reviewer and a voice actress. Sometimes she still does those things. Mireille lives in Toronto with five cats, two birds and over one hundred goldfish (but no horses!).



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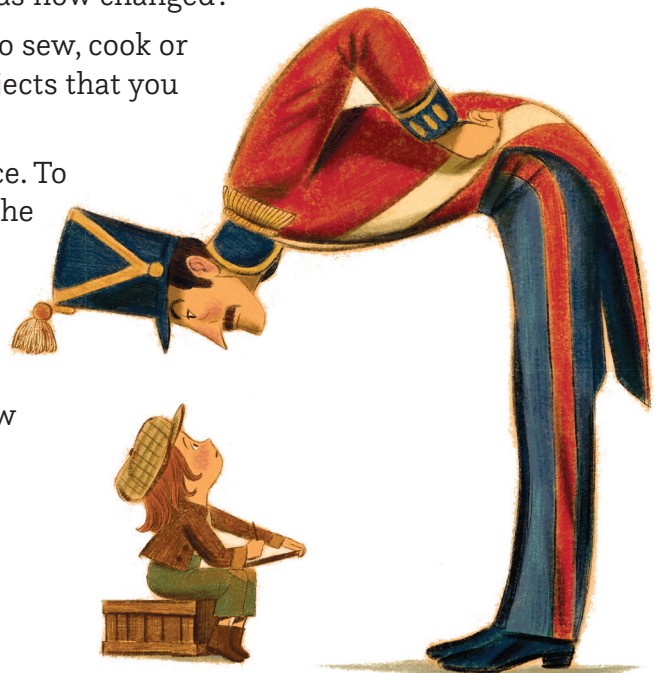
No Horses in the House!

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Discussion Questions

1. The subtitle of the book is *The Audacious Life of Artist Rosa Bonheur*. How was Rosa audacious?
2. Why do you think Rosa's father did not want her to bring horses in the house? What animals are you not allowed to bring in the house?
3. What is your favorite animal to draw?
4. Two hundred years ago in France, girls and ladies were not allowed to wear pants. Can you think of an activity that would be harder to do if you could only wear a dress?
5. Why did Rosa's mother teach her to read by making up a drawing game?
6. When Rosa's mother devises a clever game to teach Rosa to read, she gets her to draw an animal for each letter of the alphabet. Can you identify the animals that are on each letter in the illustration?
7. Why does Rosa's father want her to learn to sew, garden and cook?
8. What did Rosa do to become the best artist in her city?
9. Rosa liked to draw from life, which means that she would draw by looking at a real, live animal instead of a picture or simply by using her imagination. Why is this a good technique? Why could it also be harder?
10. What part of an animal do you find the hardest to draw? The eyes? The fur or feathers? The paws or feet?
11. Where did Rosa want to go to draw horses? Why was she not allowed there?
12. Rosa uses an old French word when she disagrees with people's opinions. What is that word? Can you guess what it means?
13. Why did Rosa want to return to the horse market? What did she do to sneak in?
14. Two hundred years ago, there were many laws that no longer exist today—like the law that said that women could not wear pants. Thanks to people like Rosa, some of these laws have changed. Can you think of another rule or law from a long time ago that has now changed?
15. Rosa was not a good student when it came to learning to sew, cook or garden. Imagine a school that would teach only the subjects that you enjoy. What would it teach? Does such a school exist?
16. Rosa was determined to be the best artist in all of France. To do so, she had to work hard. What would you like to be the best at? What would you do to make that happen?
17. The story of Rosa takes place two hundred years ago. The illustrator of the book, Anna Bron, made sure that her illustrations looked like the world in that era. Can you find details in the illustrations of the book that show that the story takes place in the nineteenth century?



Activities

1. Pick one letter (or more!) of the alphabet and draw an animal whose name starts with that letter. Can you find an animal for each letter of the alphabet?
2. Drawing from life, like Rosa did, is difficult! Try it! You can draw a person or an animal.
3. Think of a rule or law that you do not agree with. Write a card or draw a picture to try to get that law changed.
4. Think of a time when you did not get to wear the clothes that you are comfortable wearing. Discuss with a partner why being able to wear clothing that makes you feel happy is important.
5. Rosa's first painting shown at the Salon de Paris was *Rabbits Nibbling Carrots*. Can you find it in the book? Draw your version of *Rabbits Nibbling Carrots*.
6. Rosa's last name, Bonheur, means happiness in French. Make a list of things that made Rosa happy and a list of things that made Rosa unhappy. In the end, do you think Rosa lived up to her name?

