

MICHAEL MORPURGO

War Horse

1.

What makes a book "a classic"? 'War Horse', published in 1982 and loved by many readers, is often described in this way. What elements contribute to this book's status as a modern classic?

2.

How might we understand Morpurgo's decision to tell this story in the voice of Joey, so that we hear the gunfire, see the devastation, feel the earth shudder underfoot, all from horse's sensitive perspective? Why not choose Albert as a narrator, or another soldier? What unique truths are revealed by Joey's perspective?

3.

'War Horse' is full of intricate details, from the look of barbed wire to the piping on the German soldiers uniforms and the organization of veterinary care at the front. Is this a story about World War I, or does it have a more universal message about war, conflict, and humanity? Or do both co-exist?

4.

The theme of human connection to nature is prominent in Morpurgo's work. What forms does this theme take in 'War Horse'? How do we see it explored through human relationships with animals and the landscape, in farming and in battle and other forms?