



School Sheet 6

Story-time: A tale of two horses...

Main subjects covered: English and Art & Design

Note:

Combine with the story about 'Snowy' by Berlie Doherty.

Resources include: Photographs from Middlewich

Horses were prized animals in the Town, doing numerous jobs for the trades people and while each horse had been trained up, they still had their own personalities. Here follows two short stories, both true events. They can of course be adapted for differing age groups.

Contrast the work of two horses, one working the canals and one working in the town. (Story could have the horses living at the stables by the town bridge)

One of the horses was owned by the Canal Company. Bertie the horse found himself hired by a very strange man indeed, who was a bully to everybody. Bertie didn't like this man at all, even though he was driving the boat and not on the bank, his shouting was very loud and grumpy; this made Bertie nervous.

A small boy attached the rope called a cut line and made sure the straps were right before walking behind him. "Gee up!" he'd say, so Bertie got going, he'd worked this canal all his life and knew it well. The grumpy man wanted to get to the main port as fast as he could and he wasn't very happy that he had to wait for a horse in the first place.

So the man kept shouting and Bertie kept pulling, faster and faster he'd go, but still the man was shouting. Finally Bertie stopped moving and he said to himself, I've had enough of this man shouting at me.

By this time the man was so angry that he got out the whip, ready to hit him, Bertie knew he was in trouble; he turned and ran as fast as he could for home, the cut line broke and off he galloped. The boy tried to catch him and ran behind shouting "come back", but Bertie didn't like a bully and ran all the way home.

By the time the boy reached the stables, the man from the Canal Company stood scratching his head, why did the horse come back? The boy couldn't talk because he'd run for two miles! But he had to explain what had happened. The man from the Canal Company was very cross at his horse being treated badly and refused to give the boy another. The grumpy man was stuck and couldn't get to Port; no one likes a bully; not even a horse.



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Contrast this with a town horse called Henry who worked for the milkman. The town back then was smaller and the roads were not very good. The most popular method of travel was still by horse and cart. The milk round was completed by Henry who was trained to lead the milkman's cart around the little streets, stopping at each one while his owner placed the bottles by the doors. Henry knew his route very well, but this was also his problem...

Middlewich now had a fire engine, but no horses of their own to pull it, so the traders of the community lent them theirs, the milkman was one of those kind people.

One day a fire broke out and the alarm was raised, off went the milkman with Henry; they fastened him in front of the fire engine and they started with a gallop down the road. Henry then stopped at the road junction, the puzzled fireman led him on but when they got to the top of the next road he stopped again, the fireman again led him on and this happened all the way there! When the fire engine finally arrived they put out the fire, the owner and his family who had got out of their house asked "what kept you?" The house had burned down to the ground; the fireman replied "we had a milk round to do"!

Frozen Moments – small groups/individuals to select a scene from a story they have been working with and describe it in detail. (Picture a scene) They then need to recreate those frozen scenes for others to see using any art technique they like: painting, drawing, montage, collage etc.

Once the scenes are completed, then they can be displayed in sequence to illustrate the entire story visually.

This helps to;

- Respond imaginatively to stories they hear
- Communicate their imaginative response to others to develop characters, settings, create mood etc.
- Communicate their imaginative responses to stories they have heard through visual art.

The children can also create their own short story about a working horse; what other work did horses do? What personality and name would you give them? What adventure could they be part of?

Get the children to think about the different trades within Middlewich and the routes on the town map. You can also link the stories to a map, where was Henry's starting point and the destination of the fire? Now work out how many roads did the firemen have to stop at? Draw a map of the journey, label the streets, and place on the buildings including the Fire Station and scene of the fire.