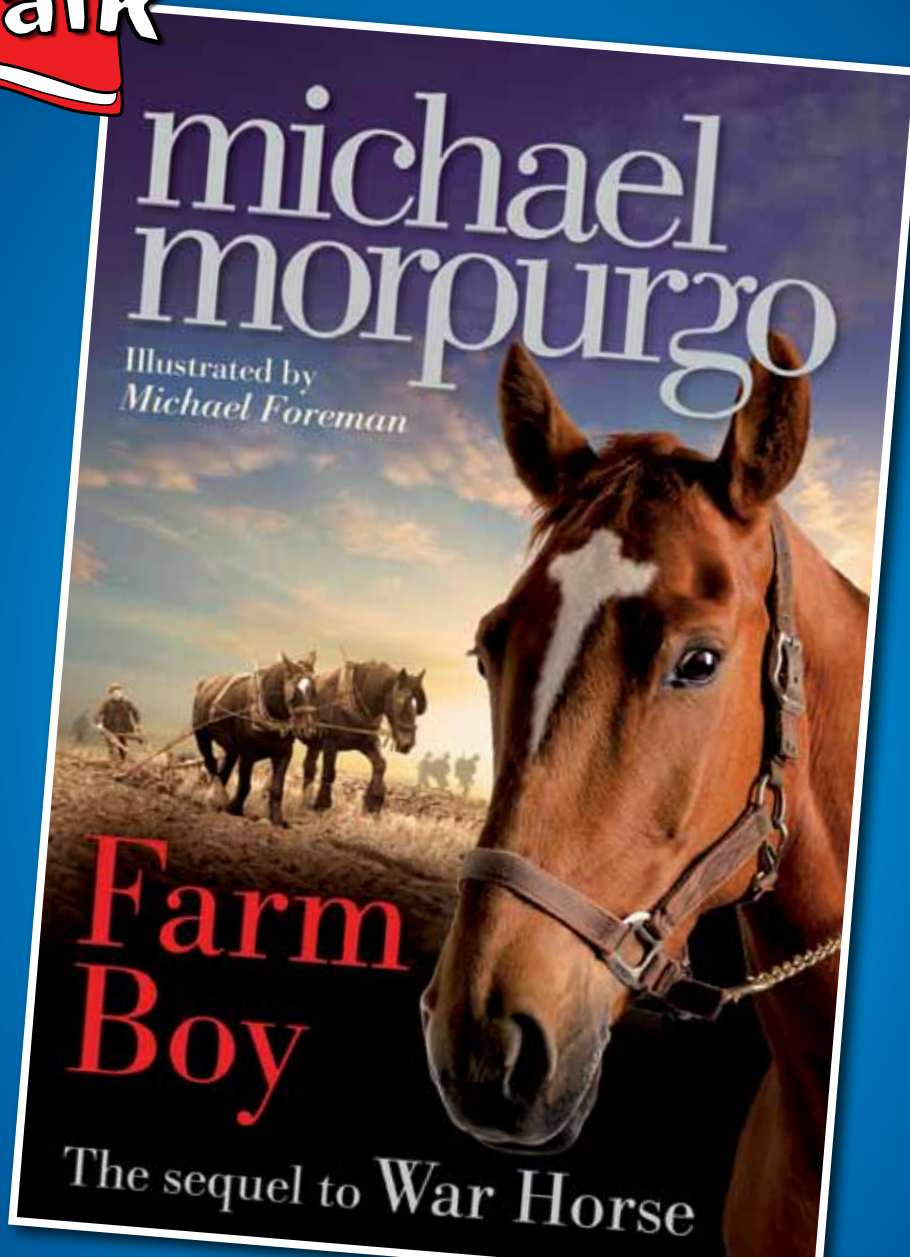


 SCHOLASTIC

**Book
Talk**



AGES 8+

**Engage and inspire your
pupils with a Book Talk!**



Look out for this book at your Fair!

AGES 8+

Price	£2.99 / €3.70
Case	Read On
Author	Michael Morpurgo
Illustrator	Michael Foreman
Publisher	HarperCollins Children's Books

Using this book in your classroom

Themes

A thought-provoking historical story about **love**, **loyalty** and **family pride**.

Summary

This moving sequel to Michael Morpurgo's classic bestseller *War Horse* is set many years after the First World War, long after Albert and his horse Joey have safely returned from battle. The story unites three generations of the same family: a young man who comes back to help out on the family farm, the young man's grandfather and *his* father, who was Albert.

The first half of the book allows Grandpa to retell the story of how Albert and Joey survived the trenches of the First World War. When Grandpa then confesses that he never learnt to read, the relationship between the two men begins to blossom. Before long, he is writing his own lively story of how his beloved tractor was won, in a ploughing competition in which it was defeated by none other than Albert's horse, Joey!

Eventually, after the grandson has travelled and finished his studies, those bonds built while working together on the farm draw him back to his Grandpa, to live and work alongside him, united in their love of family and land.

Did you know?

- This book is set in the village of Iddesleigh, Devon, where Michael Morpurgo lives.
- Michael Foreman, who created the atmospheric pictures for *Farm Boy*, has twice won the prestigious Kate Greenaway Medal for illustration.

The Story Session

1. Introducing the book

- Before reading the story, read the back cover blurb together and encourage the children to predict what kind of book this will be. If they have read *War Horse*, or seen the play or film based on the book, discuss what they know about Joey and Albert and their harrowing experiences in the First World War.
- Read the first part of the story, up to the end of Grandpa's story on page 31. Ask the children to tell you what they have found out about the young man and his family. What kind of person do they think Grandpa is? How do they think Grandpa feels about his father, Albert, and Albert's horse Joey? Is he proud of them? How do they think the young man feels about his family?

2. Reading the story

- Encourage the children to read the rest of the story, either independently or as a class. Pause occasionally to talk about the story, and ask the children to keep an eye out for clues about how the relationship between Grandpa and the young man is developing. Ask whether they would like to have a grandparent like Grandpa and how he is similar to or different from their grandparents.
- Discuss why Grandpa is so ashamed of not being able to read or write. Is it his fault? What do the children think of the story he writes down for his grandson in the second half of the book?
- Encourage the children to look out for quotations that show that Grandpa writes in much the same way as he talks (e.g. "There were nothing he could do about it."). Ask whether they think this way of writing helps the story to come alive. Would it be better or easier to read if it were written in standard English?
- At the end of the book, talk about the ways in which Grandpa and his grandson have changed during the course of the story. Ask: "What do you think the young man has learnt about his family? Do you think he has learnt anything about himself too?"

3. Follow-up

- Ask the children to think about how the young man would have felt as he finished reading Grandpa's story. Challenge them to write a brief letter from the young man to Grandpa, explaining how he feels and why.
- Michael Morpurgo's website provides an extract from the audio version of the story and a video clip of Michael Morpurgo reading part of the story: www.michaelmorpurgo.com
Children could watch the video and then practise their own performance of the same part of the story, or a different part of their own choice.

YOU TELL US

- Did you use these notes to have a Book Talk in class? • Were they helpful?
- Are there any changes you'd like to see to make them more useful?

We're always happy to hear your comments, so please email us at bookfairs@scholastic.co.uk or bookfairs@scholastic.ie