

In this selection, a horse named Black Beauty describes an adventure he has while pulling his master and his driver in a carriage on a stormy day. Read the selection below. Then read each question and choose the best answer. Use the provided answer sheet at the end of the workbook to record your answers.

from **Black Beauty**

by Anna Sewell

The wind was then much higher, and I heard the master say to John, he had never been out in such a storm. . . .

(2) [Suddenly] there was a groan and a crack, and a splitting sound, and tearing, crashing down among the other trees came an oak, torn up by the roots, and it fell right across the road just before us. I will never say I was not frightened, for I was. I stopped still, and I believe I trembled. . . . John jumped out and was in a moment at my head.

"That was a very near touch," said my master. "What's to be done now?"

"Well, sir, we can't drive over that tree nor yet get round it; there will be nothing for it, but to go back to the four crossways, and . . . round to the wooden bridge. . . ."

So back we went and round by the crossroads; but by the time we got to the bridge, it was very nearly dark. We could just see that the water was over the middle of it; but as that happened sometimes when the floods were out, master did not stop. We were going along at a good pace, but the moment my feet touched the first part of the bridge I felt sure there was something wrong. I dare not go forward, and I made a dead stop. "Go on, Beauty," said my master, and he

gave me a touch of the whip, but I dare not stir; he gave a sharp cut, I jumped, but I dare not go forward.

"There's something wrong, sir" said John, and he sprang out of the dogcart<sup>1</sup> and came to my head and looked all about. He tried to lead me forward. "Come on, Beauty, what's the matter?" Of course I could not tell him, but I knew very well that the bridge was not safe.

Just then the man at the tollgate<sup>2</sup> on the other side ride out of the house, tossing a torch like mad.

"Hoy, hoy, hoy, halloo, stop!" he cried.

"What's the matter?" shouted my master.

"The bridge is broken in the middle, and part of it is carried away; if you come on you'll be in the river."

"Thank God!" said my master. "You Beauty!" said John, and took the bridle and gently turned me round to the right-hand road by the riverside. The sun had set some time, the wind seemed to have lulled<sup>3</sup> off after the furious blast which tore up the tree. It grew darker and darker, stiller and stiller. I trotted quietly along, the wheels hardly making a sound on the soft road.

1. dogcart: a small, two-wheeled carriage

2. tollgate: a gate where travelers pay tolls or fees for using a bridge or road

3. lulled: calmed

1. What is the effect of beginning the selection with a storm?
  - A to show the characters at their worst
  - B to establish a mood of suspense
  - C to create a calm atmosphere
  - D to focus readers' attention on Beauty
  
2. Which of these events happened last?
  - A A tree falls in the cart's way.
  - B A storm begins.
  - C The sun begins to set.
  - D The toll keeper comes out with his torch.
  
3. According to the selection, what keeps Beauty and the men from reaching their destination?
  - A the fallen tree
  - B the fierce storm
  - C the tollgate keeper
  - D the rising river
  
4. Which of the following *best* describes why Black Beauty refuses to cross the bridge?
  - A He is afraid of drowning.
  - B He is protecting his master.
  - C He is stubborn and willful.
  - D He is angry at being out in the storm.
  
5. Based on the selection, which statement is *most likely* true of John the driver?
  - A He loves and respects animals.
  - B He is unhappy about being out in the storm.
  - C He dislikes the master for the way he treats Beauty.
  - D He is angry that Beauty did not listen to the master and cross the bridge.
  
6. Based on the context of the last paragraph, what does the word *blast* mean?
  - A explosion
  - B festive event
  - C fixed shot
  - D forceful wind

7. Who is the narrator of this selection?
- A Beauty
  - B the toll keeper
  - C John
  - D the master
8. How might the master act differently the next time he is caught in a storm with Beauty?
- A He will probably wear warmer clothes.
  - B He will probably use a stronger whip next time Beauty refuses to cross a bridge.
  - C He will probably make Beauty cross the bridge no matter what.
  - D He will probably trust Beauty's instincts.
9. Which statement **best** summarizes the theme of this selection?
- A Animals are nicer and kinder than humans.
  - B Animals possess an understanding that humans lack.
  - C Animals do not understand humans.
  - D Animals can sometimes speak English.