Joey the horse recalls his experiences growing up on an English farm, his struggle for survival as a cavalry horse during World War I, and his reunion with his beloved master. The plot contains violence.

Topics: Animals, Horses; Wars, World War I

Main Characters

Albert    Joey's trainer and friend who is determined to find Joey after he is sold from the farm
Albert's father    a man who becomes cruel when drinking and who sells Joey to save his farm
Captain Nicholls    the officer who buys Joey from Albert's father and rides Joey into battle
Corporal Samuel Perkins    the man who trains Joey for war
Emilie    an ill young girl who grows stronger through her friendship with Joey and Topthorn
Joey    a horse who travels from his farm in Devon into the battles of World War I and finally returns to his Devon farm
Topthorn    a huge, sleek horse who befriends Joey as they head toward battle
Zoey    a horse who befriends Joey on the farm

Vocabulary

canter    an easy gallop used in pleasure riding; in horseback riding, a mild pace, faster than a trot but slower than a gallop
convoy    a fleet of vehicles or ships traveling together, often escorted to provide protection
devotion    unquestioning love, affection, or loyalty; dedication
instinctively    by natural impulse; without thinking; as a reflex; naturally; involuntarily
khaki    made of a yellowish-brown to olive-drab twilled cloth, especially used by the military; yellowish-brown or olive-drab
mortgage    a loan extended to purchase property; the transfer of ownership of property that hinges on satisfactory repayment of a loan
ominous    threatening; menacing; foreshadowing, suggesting, or warning of danger, evil, or ill fortune; arousing fear or dread; scary or frightening; sinister
ration    a set amount, as in food; an allotted portion; an allowance
remnants    those which are left after a part of something is removed, destroyed, or used up; small parts or portions that are left after the main part of something no longer exists; fragments or scraps; traces
stamina    resistance to fatigue, weakness, or discouragement; the ability to withstand hardship; physical, mental, or emotional strength or endurance

Synopsis

Joey (the narrator of the story) is a colt who has been cared for and trained by Albert, a young English farm boy. At the outbreak of World War I, Albert's father sells Joey to the cavalry to help pay the mortgage. The boy is devastated and promises that he will someday find Joey. Joey, who is shipped to France, experiences army life and the disastrous consequences of a cavalry charge into machine guns. Throughout the war, Joey serves on both sides and has several owners--some who treat him well and some who do not. While serving the Germans, Joey's friend Topthorn dies. Joey stays by his friend's side until tanks come and frighten him. He bolts and ends up in no-man's-land, between the trenches, where he is injured on barbed wire. By a coin toss, he again becomes the property of the English. Joey is taken to a veterinary hospital, where he is reunited with Albert, who is a veterinary orderly. Because of the kindness of a French farmer who cared for Joey during the war, Joey is able to return to England with Albert.

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Open-Ended Questions
Use these open-ended questions as the basis for class discussions, student presentations, or extended writing assignments.

Literary Analysis
How would the story have been different if Albert instead of Joey had been telling it?

_The reader would not have known many of the things that happened to Joey in France. More emphasis would have been placed on relationships between human characters. The reader would know more about what Albert was doing before he joined the Veterinary Corps and his experiences in the war._

Inferential Comprehension
Think about the conversation between the Welshman and the German who tossed a coin to decide Joey's fate. How did they feel about the war?

_They thought it could be ended if a couple of regular people sat down to talk about it. They realized that although they were supposed to be enemies, they were more alike than they were different. They were tired of the fighting and the killing._

Teachable Skills

- **Responding to Literature**  Responding to Literature
- **Understanding Hist/Cultural Factors**  Understanding Historical and Cultural Factors
- **Understanding the Author's Craft**  Understanding Author's Craft
- **Understanding Literary Features**  Understanding Literary Features