

ACTIVITY EIGHT: THE ANIMALS THAT HELPED US**Learning Objectives:**

ALL: Students will know some of the roles that horses undertook during WWI;

MOST: Students will know the hazards that horses came across and how humans on the front took care of them;

SOME: Students will know the developments in animal care and more recent involvement of animals in warfare including the Dickin medal.

Resources

[Historical Context 18. Animals](#)

[War Horse on Stage](#) (video 3 is a general trailer)

[War Horse Education resources](#) (footage of horses being used)

Excerpt from *War Horse* by Michael Morpugo

Access to IT or printed resources for research

STARTER

Look at the above online resources and or read an excerpt from *War Horse* by Michael Morpugo.

Ask students to brainstorm ideas about what jobs we expected horses to do in the war.

INTRODUCTION

Ask students to draw/trace or source a picture of a horse and annotate it with ways in which they know it is a living animal.

It may help to discuss MRS GREN at this point if students are not aware of it.

Show students example of an animal statement key and ask them to use it to decide what type of animal a horse is – link this the birth of live young and joey as a colt.

Discuss how we train animals that we want to work with – you may wish to choose some excerpts from the book/film to back up your discussions about using body language and sound to communicate with animals.

MAIN TASKS

Students are to discuss in pairs some of the hazards faced by horses doing a particular job near the trenches: You may wish to give them specific roles or allow them to choose one that they find particularly interesting such as cavalry or drawing gun carriages.

Students should use books/IT to research basic expectations that we have about care for horses such as [RSPCA advice and welfare of pets and horses](#)

They should prepare a poster or presentation to discuss the problems, treatment and dangers that horses faced when being used for their particular role in trench warfare and whether they believe that it was fair to include animals in this type of situation.

Extension

Students could research how these problems were overcome in more modern warfare – for example using more cars and fewer animals for transport. Refer to the Dickin Medal and use an example of how the animals that have given their lives in warfare are now celebrated: [Dickin Medal](#)

REVIEW

Students to present their work to the class