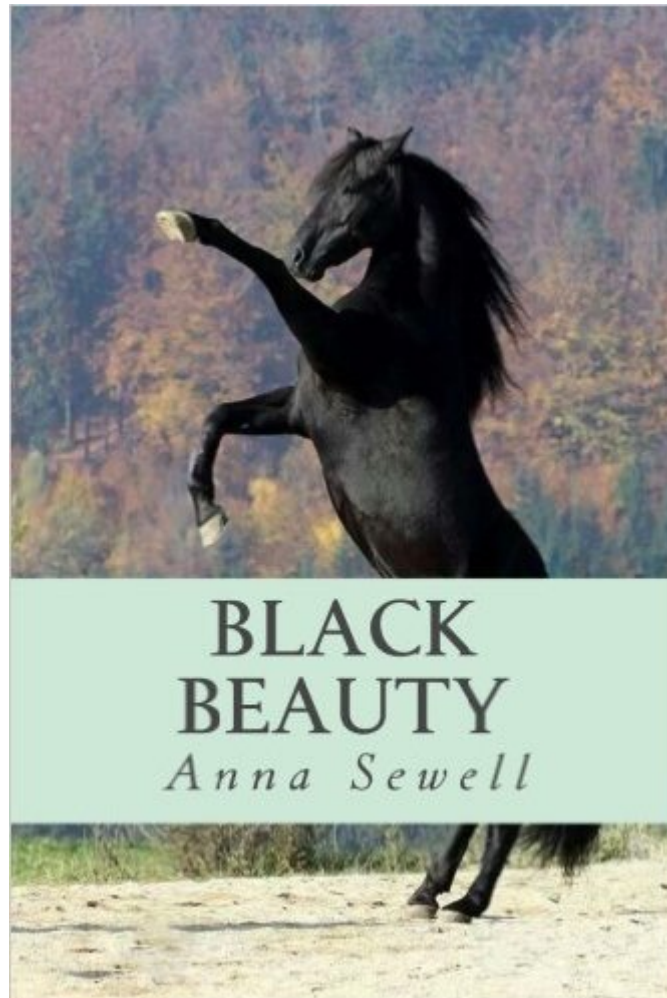


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# Black Beauty



## Synopsis

A stunning picture-book introduction to the first famous fictional horse! Anna Sewell's classic *Black Beauty* comes vividly to life in this 40-page picture-book adaptation by Sharon Lerner. Follow the famous stallion as he meets many masters, from Squire Gordon, whose wife *Black Beauty* saves nearly at the cost of his own life; to the cruel Nicholas Skinner, who drives horses to death; and finally to a reunion with Joe, the kind groom he knew as a colt. Caldecott Award winner Susan Jeffers illustrates this beloved tale with lush watercolor drawings guaranteed to delight and enchant children. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

Paperback

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Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.3 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (536 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #2,054,619 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)

## Customer Reviews

Being a typical horse-loving 10 year old girl (way, way back in the day..), it almost goes without saying that of course I read *Black Beauty* by Anna Sewell. The story of the gentle black horse in Victorian England is simple and perfect. It's a true classic for kids, proven over several generations that have grown up reading it just as I did. With this in mind, I went looking to buy a copy at a bookstore yesterday as a birthday present for a 10 year old young lady. Now as far as I know, kids today are no less intelligent, and they do still teach them to read starting in Kindergarten. So imagine my horror at discovering that the attractively bound, hardback of *Black Beauty* that I picked up was, uh, \*paraphrased\* (actually there are more accurate terms for it, but for the sake of the censors I'd better stick to the less graphic ones). Comparing selections of this version side by side with the original, the so-called "Classic Starts" *Black Beauty* plot is stripped down; worse, the lovely language of the original has been replaced with, ahem, simplified text and dialog that could have been written by the author of the Judy Moody books. This left little sense of the turn of the century England setting, and completely obliterated the spirit and style of Anna Sewell. Is this the publisher's

idea of a quality introduction to children's lit? What I really want to know is, why change it at all? As I said, kids today aren't less smart, they should be able to read the real Black Beauty well enough by the time they are in the 9-12 suggested age range. The reason it's a classic is because IT WORKED JUST AS IT WAS. Sorry, I had to put that in large type for the publishers, who evidently believe that the rest of the population matches their literary fluency.

Since pictures & illustrations are as much a part of a child's imagination as the written word, then this book beautifully combines both, with the abundant B&W line illustrations by illustrator Lucy Kemp-Welch, in addition to the 12 colour plates included - all in keeping with the time period this novel is set in. A wonderful edition to any child's library. I've been reading horse-topic related books for as long as I can remember; but the very 1st horse story that left an indelible impression on me was ANNA SEWELL's "BLACK BEAUTY". It really opened my eyes as to the abuse and cruelty - and majestic frailty - that these wonderful creatures suffer at the hands of their human counterparts. Ms Sewell opted to write this book from "the horse's point of view" and she was one of the very few authors that was able to pull this off with such great success. This book also laid the cornerstone for the ASPCA aims and goals, and brought to light the conditions and treatment of working horses in 20th century London, England (and elsewhere). The story is such a wonderful tale of a horse's life from start to finish; told with a quiet dignity and warmth - and serves as a successful analogy also, as to how humans should interact with one another. This book also laid the cornerstone for my interest and love of horses, and further spurred my interest in reading about all things Equine.

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