

Lamont Books Standing Order

February 2014

Teacher Notes and Activities

Midnight

By Mark Greenwood & Illustrated by Frané Lessac

ISBN 9781921977718

\$27.95

A foal is born at midnight, on the homestead side of the river. Coal black. Star ablaze. Moonlight in her eyes.

On 31 October, 1917, the 4th and 12th Regiments of the Australian Light Horse took part in one of the last great cavalry charges in history. Among the first to leap the enemy trenches was Lieutenant Guy Haydon riding his beloved mare, Midnight. This is their story.



Teacher notes taken from those prepared by the publisher, Walker Books. A full version is available at www.walkerbooks.com.au.

Themes:

- Heroes
- ANZAC'S
- Animals in War
- Bravery
- Courage
- Mateship

Discussion Points and Activities:

Before Reading

- Look closely at the front cover of the book. As a class, discuss your expectations of the book. What do you think the story will be about? Where and when might it be set? What genre do you think it will be (e.g. fantasy, suspense, comedy, true story)? Provide reasons for your responses.

After Reading

- Write an acrostic poem using the letters in the name "Midnight" to describe what Guy's beloved mare was like.
- Research Guy Haydon's Unit, the 12th Light Horse Regiment, B Squadron. When did they arrive at Gallipoli? When did they leave?
- Research other horse and rider stories from the light horse. What happened to the horses? Did they ever return to Australia?
- Where is Beersheba, and what is it officially known as today?
- Imagine you are a rider in the desert column, slowly snaking across the wilderness towards the enemy garrison at the foot of the Judean hills. Describe your thoughts and feelings.
- In the story, Greenwood writes that Guy "shares a secret between horse and rider." What do you think that secret might be?
- What is the significance of Guy sharing his water with Midnight? What does it show about the relationship between Guy and his horse?
- Have a class discussion about the battle of Gallipoli. As a class, draw a mind map about what students already know about the battle. What date did the Anzacs land on Gallipoli? How does Australia and New Zealand commemorate this historic battle?
- What defines a "hero"? Is it bravery, or is it a combination of other qualities such as kindness, nobility, or intelligence?
- Have the class create a mural and create different panels telling Midnight's story.