

## **Horace the Baker's Horse**

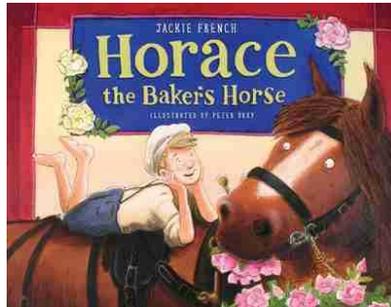
By Jackie French & illustrated by Peter Bray

Publisher: National Museum Australia

ISBN 9781921953255

\$24.95

Horace is a very big horse with an even bigger heart. Every day he pulls the bakers cart and helps Old William, Big Bill and Young Billy take bread, buns and other doughy delights to all the people in the town. But when a terrible flu makes everyone sick, who is going to deliver the bread to hungry families? Written by Jackie French and based on a true story told to her by her grandmother, Horace the Bakers Horse captures a time when horses were part of everyday life. Set in 1919 during the Spanish influenza epidemic, it tells the story of how, when the baker and his family are struck down by illness, Horace sets off on his well-trodden round to deliver bread to the townsfolk all by himself.



### **Themes:**

- Horses
- Community
- Helping out
- Earlier years

### **Discussion Points & Activities**

- Can you tell when this story might be set? What clues are there?
- The bakery baked lots of delicious things. What is your favourite thing to get from your bakery and why?
- Compare how times have changed from the story until now. As a class, make a list of all the things you notice, including clothes, transport etc.
- How did things change even in this story from the beginning to the end?
- Most of the town became sick with the flu. Can you imagine this happening now? Explain.
- Why was it so important for the people of the town to get their bread each day?
- What characteristics did Young Billy show when he started to do everything on his own?
- Do you think you could do what Young Billy did? Why or why not?
- Did children of earlier days have to start work earlier in their life than children do today? Discuss.
- Discuss how there is a sense of 'community' in this story. Do you think that this still happens today?
- How do you think Horace knew what to do and where to go?
- Do you think that we give animals enough credit for what they do?
- Can you think of other examples when animals have done extraordinary things? As a class, you make like to research this topic further.
- Did Horace like it when he was no longer needed to deliver the bread? When he was in his paddock, what was it that made him happy?
- Have your own 'bread baking' day at school. Share what you make with other classes and teachers.