

Reader's Guide
For
A Horse of Her Own
by
Annie Wedekind
A Debut Middle Grade Novel

About the Book

Fourteen-year-old Jane Ryan has always dreamed of having a horse of her own—but so long as she gets to ride her favorite school horse, Beau, at Sunny Acres farm, she's content. And this is the summer she means to try out for the advanced riding class.

But just as camp begins, Jane receives heartbreaking news about Beau. She loses not just her favorite horse, but also her chance to ride in the end-of-summer competition. When her trainer asks for her help with an out-of-control chestnut warmblood, Lancelot, a newcomer to the barn, she has no choice but to say yes.

There's another new addition to the farm: Ben Reyes, the grandson of the barn's manager. As Jane struggles to go on without Beau, and to make Lancelot the great horse she believes him to be, her feelings for Ben, her relationships with the privileged group of girls she rides with, and her painful, joyous road to self-discovery all lead to a heart-pounding conclusion that is truly a new beginning. Only Jane's faith in Lancelot, and her own rediscovered skill and strength, can see her through the hard journey toward a horse of her own.

About the Author

Annie Wedekind grew up riding horses in Louisville, Kentucky, at a farm very much like Sunny Acres. Since then, she's been in the saddle in every place she's lived, from Providence to New Orleans, South Africa to Brooklyn. She is an assistant editor at Farrar, Straus and Giroux, and this is her first book.

Discussion Questions

1. There are many different kinds of riders at Sunny Acres, and many different kinds of horses. What kind of rider do you think you would be—competitive like Jane? More easy-going, like Robin? What sort of horse would you have, if you could have any horse of your own?
2. Jane feels like she doesn't fit in anywhere, and there are other outsiders at the farm, including Lancelot and Ben. Do you ever feel like you don't quite fit in? Do you think there are good things about being "different"?
3. Jane has a difficult relationship with her friend Jessica. Have you ever had a "hard" friend, maybe one who doesn't treat you very well? Have you ever had a falling out with a friend, the way Jane and Jessica do? How do you think Jane and Jessica handled it?
4. Jane keeps a lot of secrets, and runs some pretty big risks during camp. Do you think she went about things the right way? What do you think about her decisions? How about Susan's decisions?
5. Horseback riding is a challenging sport, and can be dangerous as well as fun. Does it remind you of any sports you play? How is it different from other sports? Have you had to compete in a big competition like Jane? What was that like?

Activity

We find out at the end of the book that Lancelot isn't the horse we think he is. Write a story about where you think he came from and what happened to him! And remember: We don't even know his real name. What do you think it is?