

BLOOD RED HORSE

Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award Nominee 2008 Grades 6-8

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Blood Red Horse by K.M. Grant. Walker & Company, 2005. 277 pages.

Summary

Blood Red Horse is the first novel of the De Granville Trilogy, written by K.M. Grant. The story takes place in England during the Third Crusade. Will is a young boy who desperately wants to become a knight like his father and older brother Gavin. The time has come for him to pick a "great horse" and prepare for his introduction into knighthood. Will picks Hosanna, a beautiful shiny, red horse, who is rather small to be considered a "great horse." Ellie is a young girl who was taken in by the boys' father after she became orphaned. She is promised to Gavin, since he is the older brother even though Will seems to like Ellie and she likes him. Will, his father, and Gavin are sent to fight for King Richard in the battle against Saladin and his troops, during the Crusade. The boys encounter many difficulties and learn many lessons. Grant has written an exciting, dramatic historical novel with both action and romance that will appeal to a wide range of readers.

Read an excerpt:

<http://www.walkeryoungreaders.com/books/catalog.php?key=488&display=adoc>

Awards and "Best Book" Lists

Best Children's Books of the Year, 2005; Bank Street College of Education
Outstanding International Books, 2006: US Board on Books for Young People/ Children's Book Council

Top 10 First Novels for Youth, 2005; ALA

Top 10 Historical Fiction for Youth, 2005; Booklist

Author's Biography

K.M. Grant was born and raised in Scotland as the third of seven children. She grew up with ponies and did a tribute to her mare, Ms. Muffet in *Blood Red Horse*, which is the first title in the DeGranville Trilogy. She works as a journalist and now lives in Glasgow, Scotland with her husband and three children.

http://www.walkeryoungreaders.com/authors_and_illustrators/index.php?cmd=showtitles&author_id=375&author_name=K.+M.+Grant&author_type=1

<http://www.degranville.com>

This site has information about the DeGranville Trilogy, plus K.M. Grant's blog.

Other Titles by K. M. Grant

Green Jasper

Blaze of Silver (forthcoming April 2007)

Related Titles

The Book of the Lion by Michael Cadum.

The Leopard Sword by Michael Cadnum.

Merlin's Mistake by Robert Newman.

My Guardian Angel by Sylvie Weol.
Pagan's Crusade by Catherine Jinks.
Parsifal's Page by Gerald Morris.
Parzival by Katherine Paterson.
Saladin: Noble Prince of Islam by Diane Stanley.
The Third Crusade 1191 by David Nicolle. (Nonfiction with lots of illustrations)

Classroom Connections

Language Arts

- **Reading Group Discussion Guide for *Blood Red Horse***
<http://www.degranville.com/bloodredhorse/guide.php> Have students go over the questions in the Reading Group Guide provided by K.M. Grant. Assign students to 5 small groups to answer four questions each (there are 20 questions). This will allow them to hear other students' reactions and feelings about the novel.

Social Studies

- **Scholastic.com Instructor Magazine (Medieval Times)**
<http://content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3750> This is a lesson plan for teachers that introduces Knights and medieval times to students with activities and very nice images to print out.
- **Internet Medieval Sourcebook**
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html> This site provides information about the Middle Ages. It includes ancient maps. There are links to many resources.
- **Medieval History**
http://www.members.aol.com/Teacher_Net/Medieval.html Hotlinks to topics that deal with the history of the Middle Ages with information about the Crusades.
- **TeacherNet: Medieval History**
<http://members.aol.com/TeacherNet/Medieval.html#Archa> This site has extensive information about medieval history.

Geography

- Have a class discussion about the Crusades.
- Using a map, show the various routes of the different Crusades. Discuss the places involved in the crusades.

Science: Horses

- Students can research horses: history, eating habits, various breeds, living habitats, etc.

Art

- Have a discussion about the middle ages and then encourage students to draw or paint a scene from the story, a horse, a castle or other related images.
- **Education World: The Middle Ages: Twelve Activities for Students**
http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson156.shtml Activities include paper-making and creating coats of arms.
- **EdunetConnect: Light Motif: 5 Art Activities for an Integrated Medieval Unit**
<http://www.edunetconnect.com/cat/teachers/medlt.html> This is an, excellent site with detailed directions for making tapestries, stained glass, heraldic shields and masks. It also describes how to produce a medieval mystery play.

Organizing a Medieval Activities Day

http://faculty.smu.edu/arthuriana/teaching/Hutchison_Medieval_Day.html

This site gives details about how to organize a student medieval day with numerous activities for all curriculum areas: Art—brass rubbing, calligraphy, gargoyle sculptures, stained glass, weaving and more; Biology—falconry; Home Economics—banners, costumes, embroidery, food and feasting; Music—madrigals and recorders; Physical Education—archery, dancing, juggling, tumbling; Physics—armor, weapons, and siege engines; Technical Education—blacksmithing, chain mail, leatherworking, pewter casting; Games (chess and backgammon) and Storytelling.