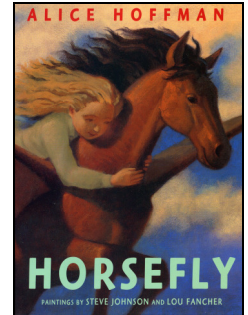




**Minnesota Storytime
Reading Guide**



Title: *Horsefly*

Author: Alice Hoffman

Illustrators: Steve Johnson & Lou Fancher

Publisher and Copyright Date: Hyperion Books for Children, 2000

Connection to Minnesota: Minnesota illustrators

Summary: This is a story about Jewel, a girl who lives on a horse farm called Cloud Ranch. She is afraid of everything. One day her grandfather gives her a scrawny baby horse to look after that she names Bug. Jewel takes care of Bug, and learns that Bug has magical powers and can fly. Then something happens and Jewel must demonstrate courage to save Bug. This enchanting story has themes at many levels.

Suggested ages: 7-10

Tips for Reading:

- Read clearly and slowly, as there is a great deal happening in the story.
- Spend a little extra time showing the illustrations as you read the story, as it will help bring out the magic of the story.
- Use your voice to express fear, wonder and other emotions in the story.

Questions before reading:

- Would you want a horse for a pet? Why or why not?
- Would you want to live on a horse ranch? Why or why not?
- What makes you feel frightened? What makes you feel brave?

To Introduce this story say: This is a story about a girl named Jewel, who lives on a farm called Cloud Ranch. Jewel is afraid of everything until her grandfather gives her a little horse to care for. Then the story gets even more interesting. Let's see and hear what happens.

Questions After Reading:

- The horse flies in the story. Is this story real or imaginary/prettend?
- How did Jewel take care of Bug? How did she know he could fly?
- What do you think it would be like to be able to fly on a horse?
- How did Jewel save Bug and the other circus horses?
- What or who helps you feel brave sometimes?
- Why is Jewel brave, and not frightened anymore, at the end of the story?
- Where would you like to live? Horse ranch? Circus? Where you live now?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

- Art:**
- Draw a picture of clouds in the sky. Have the clouds look like your favorite things.
- Culture:**
- Describe how you think life on a horse ranch or in a circus would be.
- Language:**
- Tell the group how you imagine flying over your house or school would feel and look.
- Science:**
- Learn about different species of horses, mules and donkeys.
- Writing:**
- Write a story about your favorite pet, or a pet you would like to have.
 - Write a story about what it would be like to fly on a horse.
 - Write a story about something that scared you and what you did about it.
- Suggestions for English Language Learners:**
- Clarify places the children may not have experienced, like circus and ranch.
 - List and define possible unfamiliar vocabulary words, like prairie, mare, foal, St. Bernard, and donkey.
- Related Books:**
- ***When Wishes Were Horses*** by Sharon Hart Addy, illustrated by Brad Sneed (Houghton Mifflin, 2002)
 - ***Black Cowboy, Wild Horses: A True Story*** by Julius Lester, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney (Dial, 1998)
 - ***Gift Horse: A Lakota Story*** by S. D. Nelson (Abrams, 1999)
 - ***The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses*** by Paul Goble (Atheneum, 1978)
 - ***Go Away, Big Green Monster*** by Ed Emberley (Little, Brown, 1993)
 - ***There's a Nightmare in My Closet*** by Mercer Mayer (Dial, 1968)

