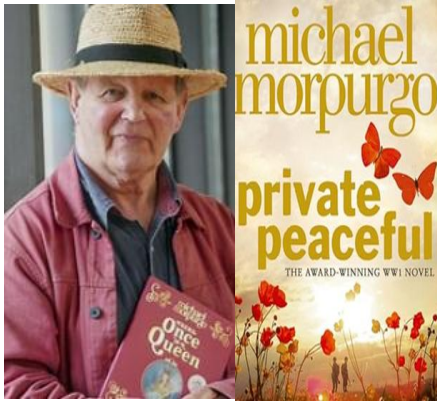


Autumn 1 Knowledge Organiser – Year 7

Michael Morpurgo



Michael Morpurgo is a British author, poet and playwright. He was born on the 5 October 1943. He is best known for his children's novels, including the acclaimed "War Horse" (1982).

Over his career, he has written more than 150 books and has received numerous awards, including the Smarties Prize and the Whitbread Award.

Morpurgo also served as the Children's Laureate, highlighting his significant contribution to children's literature.

Context

The novel is set during World War One (1914 – 1918). The Peaceful brothers grow up in Iddesleigh (a rural village in Devon) but later, Charlie and Tommo are enlisted to fight in the war. Together, they are trained for trench warfare and serve in Flanders and Etaples.

Over 290 British soldiers were executed for cowardice and desertion during the war. These men endured extremely stressful conditions and likely had developed what we would now call PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). Still, these men were given a short trial by court- martial (if at all) before being executed by a firing squad likely made up of their fellow soldiers.

If you enjoyed Private Peaceful by Michael Morpurgo, you could check out War Horse, Born to Run and Friend or Foe by the same author.

Key Vocabulary

Symbol	A thing that represents or stands for something else e.g. a rose is a symbol of love.
Recruitment	The action of enlisting new people in the armed forces
Enlist	To join the armed services.
Court Martial	A judicial court for trying members of the armed services accused of offences against military law
Structure	The arrangement of story elements i.e. how the plot is presented to the reader
Flashback	A reference to a past event, giving the reader an insight into the past of the narrator
Resolution	The unfolding or solution of a complicated issue in a story
Protagonist	The main character in a novel, film or play
Tension	An element in a novel that brings out (evokes) emotions such as worry, anxiety, fear and stress on the part of both the reader and the characters in a novel
Annotate	To add notes to a text

Key Characters	
Tommo	Tommo narrates the story. He is the younger brother of Charlie and Joe. Tommo feels guilty over the death of his father.
Charlie	Protects Tommo at school and is Tommo's hero.
Big Joe	Big Joe is the eldest of the three boys and is mentally disabled. He likes looking after animals.
Molly	Charlie and Tommo's best friend. They both fall in love with her.
Mother	Following the death of her husband, raises her sons on her own. A kind woman.
Grandma Wolf	A relative who looks after the boys whilst mother is working. She is cruel, especially to Big Joe.
The Colonel	Owens the manor house and the surrounding land. Many villagers work for him.
Hanley	A cruel Sergeant who bullies the soldiers.
Wilkes	A kind Captain who improves the moral of the soldiers and tries to protect Charlie and Tommo.

Key themes
War
Conflict
Relationships
Family
Patriotism
Growing up
Love
Disabilities
Bullying
Blame / guilt
Grief