

Read and listen

Michael Morpurgo

Early Years

Michael Morpurgo was born on 5th October, 1943 in St Albans, Hertfordshire. He and his brother, Pieter, were evacuated from London when the Second World War began. When they returned to London, their mother married a man called Jack Morpurgo. He became Michael's stepfather. Michael went to two different boarding schools when he was growing up. He particularly enjoyed playing rugby and singing but he often felt homesick and missed home. After school, Michael joined the Army but he did not enjoy being shouted out and so he left shortly afterwards. Michael then decided to go to university instead. Michael married the love of his life, Clare Lane, in 1963 and they had three children together. They are called Sebastian, Horatio and Rosalind.

Michael's Career

After university, Michael became a school teacher and taught in a small school in Kent. He loved teaching and his favourite thing to do was to read stories to his class. When he ran out of stories to read to them, Morpurgo started to write his own. His first book was written in 1974 and was called, 'It Never Rains: Five Stories'.



Morpurgo has written more than 100 books, many of which you will have heard of. Here are just some of the titles:

- The Butterfly Lion,
- Kensuke's Kingdom,
- Billy the Kid,
- Private Peaceful and
- An Elephant in the Garden.

War Horse is one of Morpurgo's most famous books and has been turned into a stage show and even a film!



Morpurgo enjoys listening to music by the composer Mozart. However, when he is writing, he likes to work in complete silence so that he can concentrate.

In 1976, Michael and his family moved to Devon. It was here that they started the charity, Farms for City Children. This charity offers children who live in cities the chance to come and stay on a working farm for a week. Children learn about how to care for animals, where their food comes from and how to work with others as part of a team. The charity is still running today, and thousands of children have been to stay at one of the three farms that the charity now owns. Farms for City Children is one of Morpurgo's greatest achievements.



Did You Know...?

Children's Laureate is an award given to a writer or illustrator to celebrate their extraordinary contribution to children's literature. Quentin Blake, Julia Donaldson and Jacqueline Wilson have all been previous Laureates.

Morpurgo's Achievements

Michael Morpurgo has received many awards in his lifetime. He became the Children's Laureate in 2003. In 2007, he was given an OBE by the Queen and then in 2018, Morpurgo was awarded with a knighthood for the work that he has done for charity and in literature.

Questions

1) In what year was Michael Morpurgo born?

1963
1943
1974
1976

2) What did Morpurgo enjoy doing at boarding school? (choose two)

playing rugby – studying maths – singing – reading stories

3) Match

a) He had to evacuate London	• Jack Morpurgo
b) His mom married	• he joined the army
c) He had a brother called	• Pieter
d) When he finished school	• He didn't like being shouted at
e) He left the army because	• When the second world war began

4) In what year did Morpurgo write his first book?

1976
1973
1974
1963

5) Write in which year happened these events in Morpurgo's life.

a) Morpurgo was born. _____

b) Morpurgo wrote his first book. _____

c) Morpurgo married Clare. _____

d) Morpurgo moved to Devon. _____

5) What is the name of the charity that Michael and his wife started?

6) In what year was Morpurgo awarded an OBE?

2007
2008
1999
2018