

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? Tick one.

- 1963
 1943
 1974
 1976

2. What did Morpurgo enjoy doing at boarding school?

3. In what year did Morpurgo write his first book? Tick one.

- 1976
 1973
 1974
 1963

4. Draw lines to match the year to what happened in Morpurgo's life.

1963

1976

1943

1974

Morpurgo was born

Morpurgo wrote his first book

Morpurgo married Clare

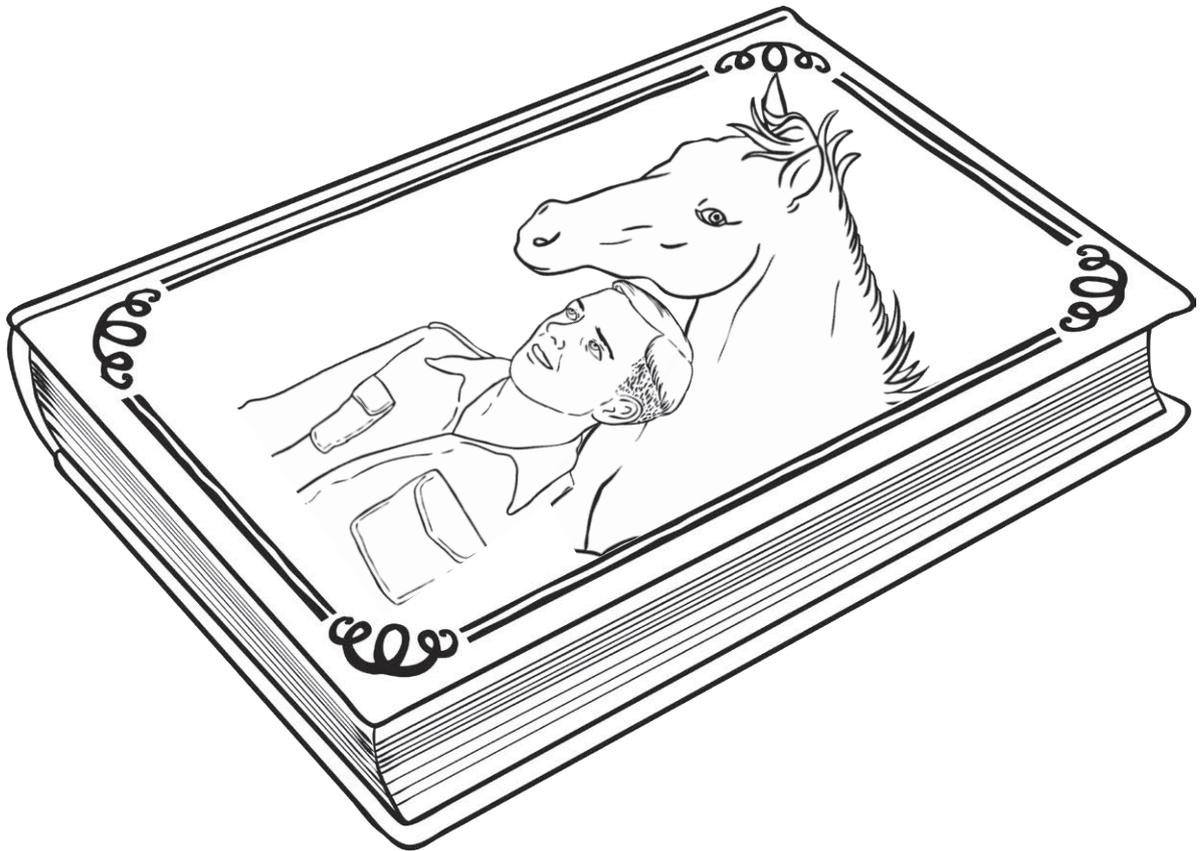
Morpurgo moved to Devon

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

6. In what year was Morpurgo awarded an OBE? Tick one.

- 2007
 2008
 1999
 2018

7. Why do you think Michael Morpurgo was given the position of Children's Laureate? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.



Answers

1. In what year was Michael Morpurgo born? Tick one.

- 1963
 1943
 1974
 1976

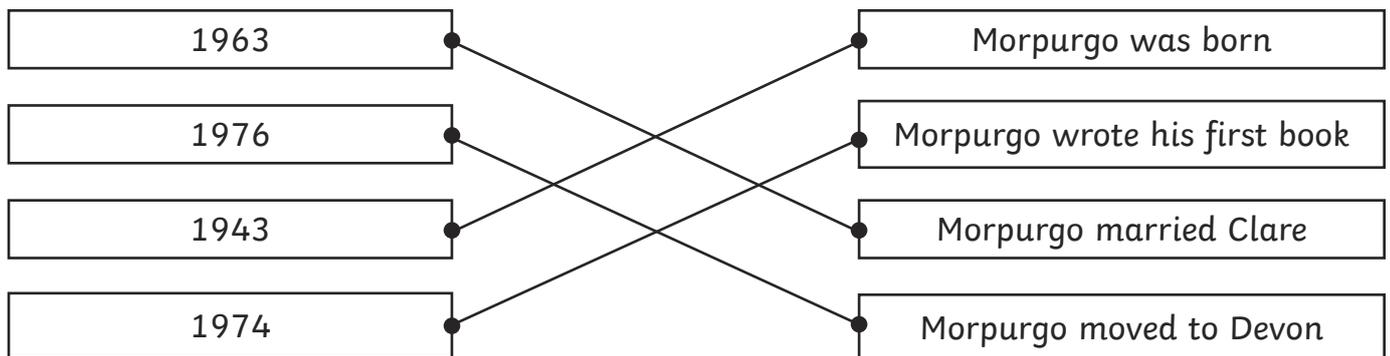
2. What did Morpurgo enjoy doing at boarding school?

Playing rugby and singing.

3. In what year did Morpurgo write his first book? Tick one.

- 1976
 1973
 1974
 1963

4. Draw lines to match the year to what happened in Morpurgo's life.



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

Farms for City Children

6. In what year was Morpurgo awarded an OBE? Tick one.

- 2007**
 2008
 1999
 2018

7. Why do you think Michael Morpurgo was given the position of Children's Laureate? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Pupil's own response, such as: I think that Michael was given the position of Children's Laureate because it says in the text that this is given to writers to celebrate their extraordinary contribution to children's literature and Morpurgo has written over 100 books, one of which has been made into a stage show and a film. He is a very successful children's author.

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 to Northumberland to keep them safe from German bombs when the Second World War began. When they eventually returned to London, their mother married a man called Jack Morpurgo who then 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. After school, Michael decided to join the Army. Although Michael enjoyed aspects of army life, he did not enjoy being shouted out and so he left shortly afterwards and went to university instead. In 1963, Michael married the love of his life, Clare Lane, and they went on to have three children. They are called Sebastian, Horatio and Rosalind.

Michael's Career

After graduating from 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 stated that the days he spent teaching are some of the happiest of his life.



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

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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 poorer, inner-cities the chance to come and stay on a working farm for a week. Children learn from hands on experience 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

As a result of his successes, Michael Morpurgo has received many awards in his lifetime. He was given the position of 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 making him Sir Michael Morpurgo.

Questions

1. Where was Michael Morpurgo born? Tick one.

- Kent
- Hertfordshire
- Northumberland
- Devon

2. What aspect of Army life did Morpurgo NOT enjoy?

3. What was the name of Morpurgo's first book? Tick one.

- It Always Rains: Five Stories
- It Sometime Rains: Five Stories
- It Never Rains: Four Stories
- It Never Rains: Five Stories

4. Number the events below to show the order in which they happened in Michael's life. One has been done for you.

- Morpurgo wrote his first book
- 1 Morpurgo went to university
- Morpurgo married Clare
- Morpurgo was awarded with a knighthood
- Morpurgo moved to Devon

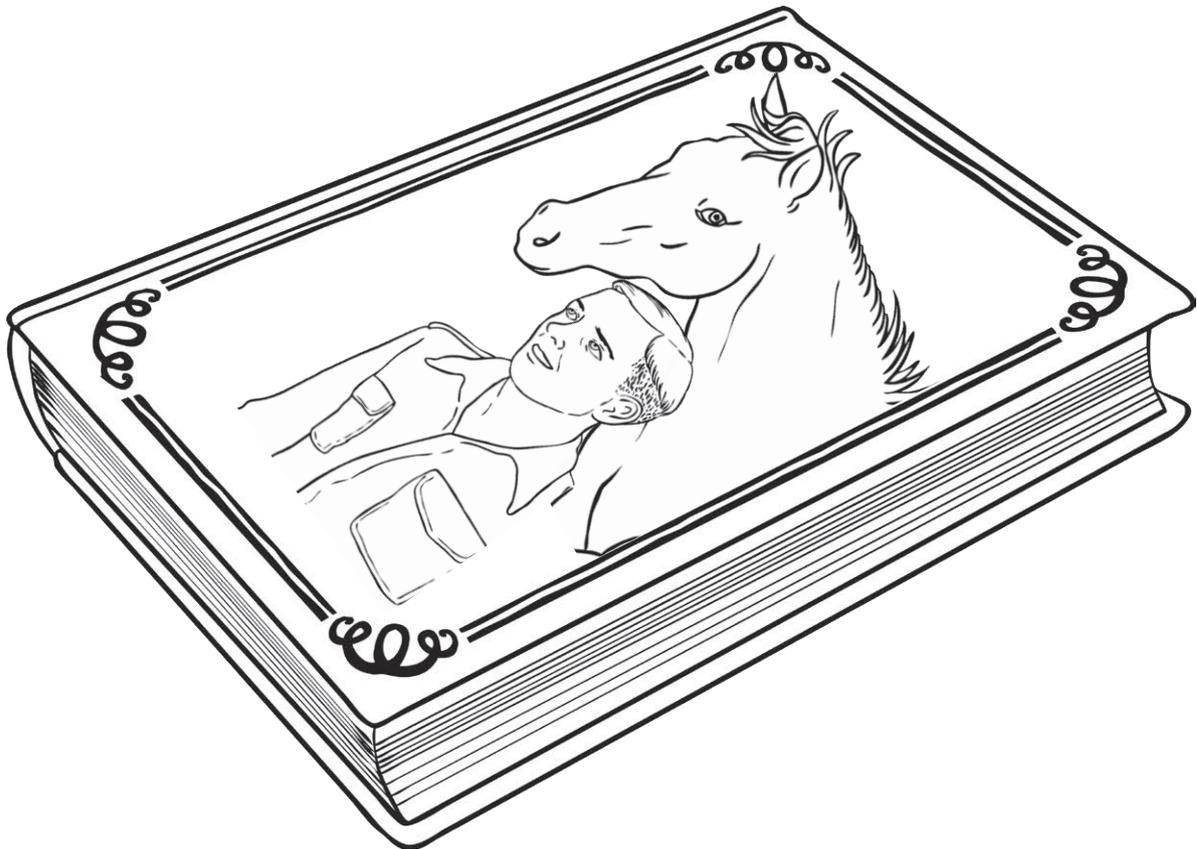
5. What is the name of the charity that Michael and his wife started?

6. Why do you think the charity is one of Morpurgo's greatest achievements? Explain your answer.

7. What was Morpurgo awarded with in 2007?

- Children's Laureate
- A knighthood
- An MBE
- An OBE

8. Why do you think Michael Morpurgo was given the position of Children's Laureate? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.



Answers

1. Where was Michael Morpurgo born? Tick one.

- Kent
- Hertfordshire**
- Northumberland
- Devon

2. What aspect of Army life did Morpurgo NOT enjoy?

Being shouted at.

3. What was the name of Morpurgo's first book? Tick one.

- It Always Rains: Five Stories
- It Sometime Rains: Five Stories
- It Never Rains: Four Stories
- It Never Rains: Five Stories**

4. Number the events below to show the order in which they happened in Michael's life. One has been done for you.

- 3** Morpurgo wrote his first book
- 1** Morpurgo went to university
- 2** Morpurgo married Clare
- 5** Morpurgo was awarded with a knighthood
- 4** Morpurgo moved to Devon

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

Farms for City Children

6. Why do you think the charity is one of Morpurgo's greatest achievements? Explain your answer.

Pupil's own responses, such as: I think that the charity is one of Morpurgo's greatest achievements because it helps thousands of children who live in poor, inner-cities to learn about where their food comes from and how to look after animals. The charity is also very successful because it is still running and it now has three farms so it can help more children.

7. What was Morpurgo awarded with in 2007?

- Children's Laureate
- A knighthood
- An MBE
- An OBE**

8. Why do you think Michael Morpurgo was given the position of Children's Laureate? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Pupil's own response, such as: I think that Michael was given the position of Children's Laureate because it says in the text that this is given to writers to celebrate their extraordinary contribution to children's literature and Morpurgo has written over 100 books, one of which has been made into a stage show and a film. He is a very successful children's author.

Michael Morpurgo

Early Years

Sir Michael Morpurgo was born in St Albans, Hertfordshire on 5th October 1943. As they were living near London when the Second World War broke out, he and his brother, Pieter, were evacuated to Northumberland due to the German bombardment known as the Blitz. Michael's biological father, Tony van Bridge was away fighting at this time during which, Michael's mother met and married a man called Jack Morpurgo; Michael's stepfather. At the end of the war, Tony van Bridge emigrated to Canada and it would not be until many years later that he and Michael would see each other again. Growing up, Michael went to two different boarding schools where he enjoyed playing rugby and singing. However, he did not enjoy his time at either school as he often felt very homesick. Michael decided to join the Army at Sandhurst after school and although he enjoyed some aspects of army life, he did not enjoy being shouted out and so left shortly afterwards and went to university. In 1963, Michael met and fell in love with the daughter of the founder of the publishing house, Penguin Books, Sir Allen Lane. Michael and Clare subsequently married and went on to have three children: Sebastian, Horatio and Rosalind.

Michael's Career

Once he had graduated from university, Michael joined the teaching profession and taught in a small school in Kent. He enjoyed teaching immensely and reading stories to his class was his favourite part of the job. Significantly, when he ran out of stories to read to them, Morpurgo started to write his own. In 1974, Morpurgo wrote his very first book which was called, 'It Never Rains: Five Stories'. Morpurgo has stated that the days he spent teaching and living with his young family are some of the happiest of his life.



When writing a book, Morpurgo doesn't sit at a desk and use a computer or typewriter. Instead, he chooses to work on his bed, propped up by pillows and writes his stories in exercise books! Even though he enjoys listening to the composer Mozart, Morpurgo prefers to work in silence so that he can concentrate on his writing.

Two years after writing his first book, Michael, Clare and his children moved to Devon where they bought a large house next to a working farm. It was here that they set-up the charity, Farms for City Children. This charity offers children who live in deprived, inner-cities the chance to come and stay on a working farm for a week. During their stay, children learn from hands on experience about how to care for animals, where their food comes from and how to work with others as part of a team. The charity, which is still running today, has three farms (in Devon, Gloucestershire and Wales) and over 90,000 children have been to stay at one of them. Farms for City Children is one of Morpurgo's greatest achievements.



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

Morpurgo's Achievements

As a result of his numerous successes, Michael Morpurgo has received many awards in his lifetime: in 2003, Michael was named Children's Laureate; in 2007, he was given an OBE (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) by the Queen and then in 2018, Morpurgo was awarded with a knighthood in recognition for his charity work and his contribution to literature. Thus, he is now referred to as Sir Michael Morpurgo.



Did You Know...?

Children's Laureate is an award given to a writer or illustrator to celebrate their extraordinary achievements in children's literature. Morpurgo was the third person to receive the award, after Quentin Blake and Anne Fine. Other well-known Laureates are Julia Donaldson, Jacqueline Wilson and Michael Rosen.

Questions

1. Where were Michael and his brother evacuated to during the Second World War. Tick one.

- London
- Northumberland
- Devon
- Hertfordshire

2. Who was Michael Morpurgo's father-in-law?

3. Number the events to show the order that they happened in Morpurgo's life. One has been done for you.

- Morpurgo marries his wife, Clare
- Morpurgo is appointed Children's Laureate
- 1 Morpurgo goes to university
- Morpurgo and Clare set-up Farms for City Children
- Morpurgo writes his first book

4. Find and copy a word which means 'disadvantaged'.

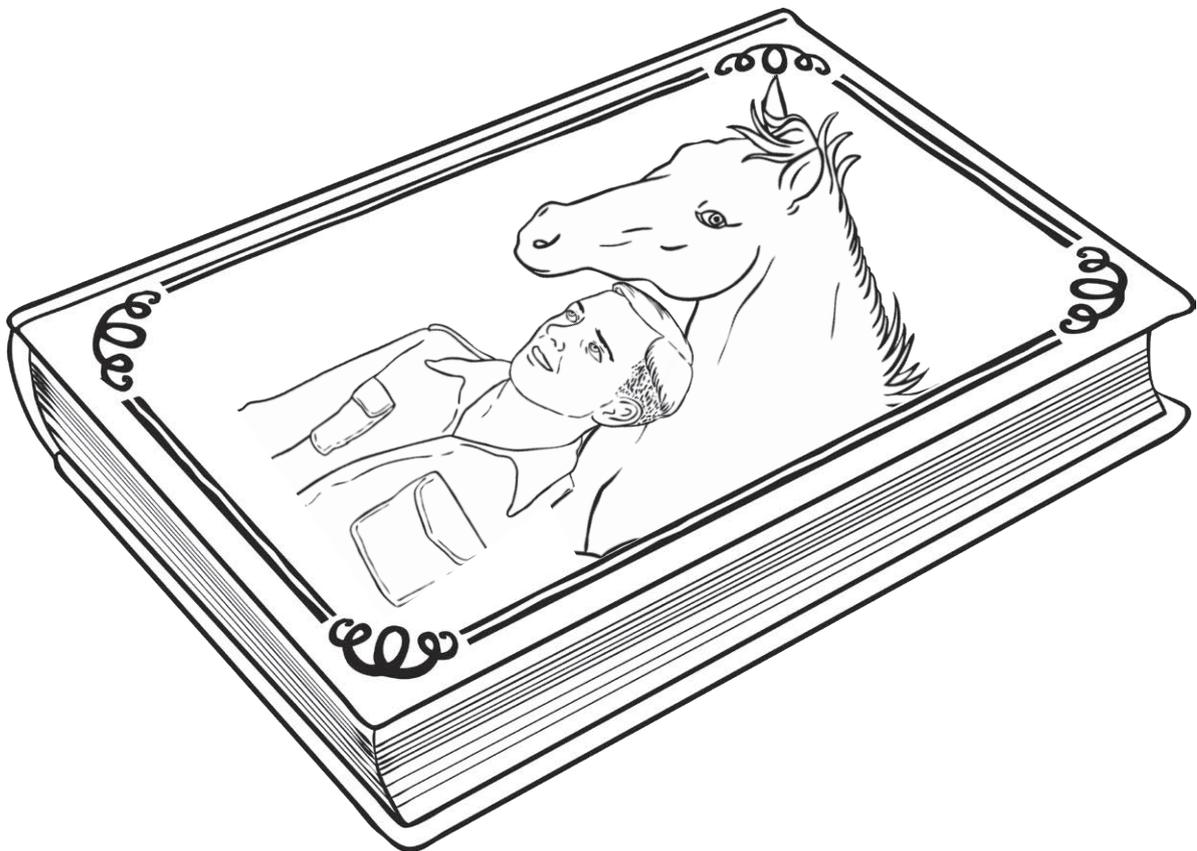
5. How do you know that the charity, Farms for City Children, is still doing well? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

6. Why do you think a great deal of Morpurgo's books are set in war time? Explain your answer.

7. Fill in the missing words.

Children's Laureate is an award given to a _____ or _____ to celebrate their extraordinary achievements in children's _____.

8. Why do you think Michael Morpurgo was given the position of Children's Laureate? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.



Answers

1. Where were Michael and his brother evacuated to during the Second World War. Tick one.

- London
 Northumberland
 Devon
 Hertfordshire

2. Who was Michael Morpurgo's father-in-law?

Sir Allen Lane, the founder of Penguin Books

3. Number the events to show the order that they happened in Morpurgo's life. One has been done for you.

- 2 Morpurgo marries his wife, Clare
 5 Morpurgo is appointed Children's Laureate
 1 Morpurgo goes to university
 4 Morpurgo and Clare set-up Farms for City Children
 3 Morpurgo writes his first book

4. Find and copy a word which means 'disadvantaged'.

deprived

5. How do you know that the charity, Farms for City Children, is still doing well? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Pupil's own responses, such as: I know that the charity is still doing well because it says in the text that there are now three farms, one in Devon, one in Gloucestershire and one in Wales and that over 90,000 children have been to stay.

6. Why do you think a great deal of Morpurgo's books are set in war time? Explain your answer.

Pupil's own responses, such as: I think that a great deal of Morpurgo's books are set in war time because Morpurgo lived during the Second World War and so understands what it was like to be a child living in war time. He also joined the army for a while and so knows what it is like to be a soldier.

7. Fill in the missing words.

Children's Laureate is an award given to a **writer** or **illustrator** to celebrate their extraordinary achievements in children's **literature**.

8. Why do you think Michael Morpurgo was given the position of Children's Laureate? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Pupil's own response, such as: I think that Michael was given the position of Children's Laureate because it says in the text that this is given to writers to celebrate their extraordinary contribution to children's literature and Morpurgo has written over 100 books, one of which has been made into a stage show and a film. He is a very successful children's author.