***War Horse***Chapter 1: The novel is about a horse’s life from his early

years being trained to work on a farm to his experiences in war.

My earliest memories are a confusion of hilly fields and dark, damp

stables, and rats that scampered along the beams above my head.

But I remember well enough the day of the horse sale. The terror of

It stayed with me all my life.

I was not yet six months old, a gangling, leggy colt who had never 5

been further than a few feet from his mother. We were parted that

day in the terrible hubbub of the auction ring and I was never to see

her again. She was a fine working farm horse, getting on in years but

with all the strength and stamina of an Irish draught horse quite evident

in her fore and hind quarters. She was sold within minutes, and before 10

I could follow her through the gates, she was whisked out of the ring

and away. But somehow I was more difficult to dispose of. Perhaps it

was the wild look in my eye as I circled the ring in a desperate search

for my mother, or perhaps it was that none of the farmers and gypsies

there were looking for a spindly-looking half thoroughbred colt. But 15

whatever the reason they were a long time haggling over how little I was

worth before I heard the hammer go down and I was driven out through

the gates and into a pen outside.

‘Not bad for three guineas, is he? Are you, my little firebrand? Not bad

at all.’ The voice was harsh and thick with drink, and it belonged quite 20

evidently to my owner. I shall not call him my master, for only one man

was ever my master. My owner had a rope in his hand and was

clambering into the pen followed by three or four of his red-faced friends.

Each one carried a rope. They had taken off their hats and jackets and

rolled up their sleeves; and they were all laughing as they came towards 25

me. I had as yet been touched by no man and backed away from them

until I felt the bars of the pen behind me and could go no further. They

seemed to lunge at me all at once, but they were slow and I managed to

slip past them and into the middle of the pen where I turned to face them

again. They had stopped laughing now. I screamed for my mother and 30

heard her reply echoing in the far distance. It was towards that cry that I

bolted, half charging, half jumping the rails so that I caught my off foreleg

as I tried to clamber over and was stranded there. I was grabbed roughly

by the mane and tail and felt a rope tighten around my neck before I was

thrown to the ground and held there with a man sitting it seemed on 35

every part of me. I struggled until I was weak, kicking out violently every

time I felt them relax, but they were too many and too strong for me. I felt

the halter slip over my head and tighten around my neck and face. ‘So

you’re quite a fighter, are you?’ said my owner, tightening the rope and

smiling through gritted teeth. ‘I like a fighter. But I’ll break you one way or 40

the other. Quite the little fighting cock you are, but you’ll be eating out of

my hand quick as a twick.’

**Questions**

**Q1 [AO1]** Read again the first part of the source, **lines 1 to 4**.

List **four** things from this part of the text that we learn about the

**horse’s early memories**. **[4 marks]**

**Q2 [AO2]** Look in detail at this extract from **lines 5 to 18** of the source.

I was not yet six months old, a gangling, leggy colt who had never 5

been further than a few feet from his mother. We were parted that

day in the terrible hubbub of the auction ring and I was never to see

her again. She was a fine working farm horse, getting on in years but

with all the strength and stamina of an Irish draught horse quite evident

in her fore and hind quarters. She was sold within minutes, and before 10

I could follow her through the gates, she was whisked out of the ring

and away. But somehow I was more difficult to dispose of. Perhaps it

was the wild look in my eye as I circled the ring in a desperate search

for my mother, or perhaps it was that none of the farmers and gypsies

there were looking for a spindly-looking half thoroughbred colt. But 15

whatever the reason they were a long time haggling over how little I was

worth before I heard the hammer go down and I was driven out through

the gates and into a pen outside.

How does the writer use **language** here to show us what the horse felt about

being up for sale?

You could include the writer’s choice of:

* words and phrases
* language features and techniques
* sentence forms. **[8 marks]**

**Q3 [AO2]** You now need to think about the **whole** of the source**.**

How has the writer **structured** the text to interest you as a reader?

You could write about:

• what the writer focuses your attention on at the beginning

• how and why the writer changes the focus as the extract develops

• any other structural features that you think help to develop the

introduction of the horse. **[8 marks]**

**Q4 [A4]** Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source,

**from line 19 to the end.**

A teacher, having read this section of the text said: “I like how the writer

helps my students to feel involved in this moment. It is as if they are there

in the pen with the Horse.”

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

• write about your own impressions of the horse and the man

• evaluate how the writer has created these impressions

• support your opinions with quotations from the text. **[20 marks]**