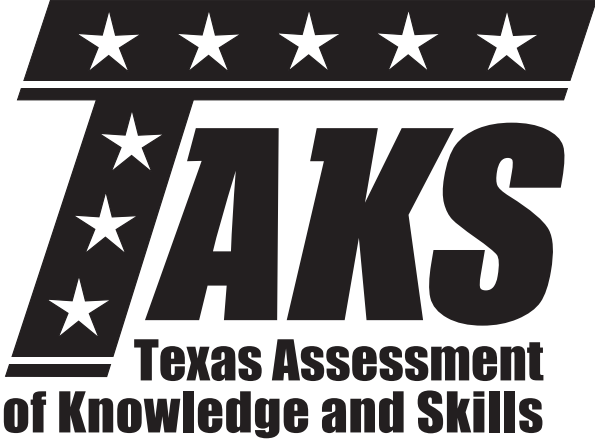


STUDENT NAME _____



**GRADE 9
READING**

READING

DIRECTIONS

Read the two selections and the viewing and representing piece. Then answer the questions that follow.

A Horse for Matthew

by William J. Buchanan

- 1 My name is Tommy Silva. I am 14. I live in a large adobe house on the Jemez Indian Reservation in New Mexico, the ancient home of my people. For as long as I can remember, one room in that old house has been a world apart, an enchanted place of exciting smells and sights and things—my grandfather’s room. There, shelves on two walls are heavy with silver trophies, jeweled belts and medallions, awards recognizing Señor Martino Silva as the greatest rodeo champion ever to emerge from the Indian nations.
- 2 In this room my father was born, my grandmother died, and as a young boy I had often lain at night with my head cradled in Grandpa’s arm, listening to tales of an era that I could never know.
- 3 It was to this room one morning that I came to the past in hopes of shaping the future.
- 4 Grandpa was bent forward in his rocker, poking a pinion log burning in the fireplace. This was the first year he had kept a fire going during the summer. I settled into a nearby chair and stared silently into the amber flames.
- 5 Grandpa pulled his woolen coat tighter. “So, are you going to tell me what is troubling you?”
- 6 “It’s my friend, Grandpa. Matthew.”
- 7 “The Anglo boy the horse fell on?”
- 8 “They removed his cast last week. He was in it three months, Grandpa. He won’t even go near a horse now.”
- 9 Grandpa nodded. “I’ve seen this kind of fear in grown men, much less a 14-year-old boy.”
- 10 “It’s not right, Grandpa. I mean, down here in the valley, a kid not riding. He’ll be left out of everything.”
- 11 Grandpa rocked, saying nothing. I let the silence hang for a while, then said, “Grandpa, you know more about horses than anybody. Would you find a horse for Matthew?”
- 12 It took him by surprise. He leaned back in his chair and shook his head. “My eyes are tired. . . .” He noticed the hurt on my face and stopped. Then, with a deep sigh, he said, “Tell me about the boy.”

My notes about what I am reading

13 It poured from me in a torrent of words: Matthew's skill with horses before the accident, how we rode the mesa together, how he tended sick calves as if they were from his father's ranch instead of the Jemez Pueblo. At last Grandpa put a leathery hand on mine. "I will try, because it is you who ask."

14 THAT EVENING AFTER CHORES I rode across the Rio Jemez to the Cannon ranch. I tied Cheyenne to the hitching post and walked around to the back patio. Matthew was seated, resting his wounded leg atop a low wall. In the corral Mr. Cannon was working with two young colts. I pulled up a chair. "Your dad breaking yearlings?"

15 "Halter breaking," Matthew replied.

16 "Hey, man, let's go help."

17 "Oh, sure," he said. There was both fear and remorse in his voice.

18 We sat like that for a while. Leaden silence. Then, figuring it was now or never, I broke the news. "I've asked my grandpa to find you a horse."

19 "You what?"

20 I told him everything that was said that morning in Grandpa's room.

21 "I thought you were my friend," he snapped.

22 "I am your amigo. Look, the Pueblo trail ride is in six weeks. Unless you're riding, it won't—"

23 "Look, amigo"—he spit out the word with sarcasm—"I'm not going on any trail ride in six weeks, or six years, or anytime again. You get that?" He shoved his chair back and stood. "Do me a favor: Tend to your business and let me tend to mine." He stalked into the house and slammed the door.

24 It was as if I'd been slapped.

25 "What was that all about?" a familiar voice asked. I looked around and saw Matthew's dad. I told him what had taken place.

26 He thought for a moment. "Thanks, Tommy. If your granddad finds anything, call me."

- 27 EACH DAY FOR TWO WEEKS, Mama would drive Grandpa to a different ranch, and they would return with nothing to report. Then, one evening, Grandpa said, "Have the boy and his father meet me tomorrow at Broadbents."
- 28 "Broadbents?" I said, puzzled. "Grandpa, that's a slaughterhouse."
- 29 "Just be there." He sipped his coffee without another word.
- 30 Broadbents Stockyard was west of Albuquerque on old Route 66. Grandpa and I were talking to the owner when Mr. Cannon arrived. Matthew had refused to come.
- 31 Grandpa pointed to a pinto standing alone. She was small. Her glossy summer coat shone like a burnished checkerboard. "There is the horse for Matthew," Grandpa said.
- 32 MR. CANNON STEPPED around for a closer look. The owner eyed him carefully, then said, "Mister, you don't want that mare."
- 33 Mr. Cannon turned. "Oh? Why?"
- 34 "Those are slaughter horses. Something wrong with all of them. Someone's mistreated that little paint. You can't get close to her."
- 35 "I don't understand," Mr. Cannon said. "Señor Silva, are you sure this is the horse for me?"
- 36 Grandpa shook his head. "Not for you," he said firmly. "For the boy."
- 37 Their eyes met for a moment, then Mr. Cannon turned to the owner. "How much for the mare?"
- 38 The owner shrugged. "She was going for four cents a pound for dog meat. Forty dollars and she's yours."
- 39 It took some doing, but we got her back to Cannon's ranch and led her into the small corral. We set out to gain her confidence, but nothing tempted her. Open the gate and she'd bolt madly to the far end of the lot. The mere sight of a rope caused her to panic.
- 40 At first, Matthew watched from the safety of the patio. Then one day he started coming to the corral. Favoring his wounded leg, he'd pull himself atop the fence. One day he yelled, "She jumps around like a Pueblo sun dancer."

42 IN THE BEGINNING, Matthew would leave the corral when we did. Then he started lingering behind, closely studying Sundance. And she studied him. Sensing that he was as apprehensive of her as she was of him, she began to accept his presence. One day he picked a handful of clover and held it over the fence. She cocked her head, hesitated a moment, then quickly nibbled it from his hand. In a few days she was coming to the fence to meet him. But the fence was always there, always between them.

43 Then came the day Mr. Cannon asked me to help trim Sundance’s hooves. Before we could corner her, she spotted the lariats. Emitting a sharp cry, she lowered her head and dashed toward the barbed-wire fence. Flexing her powerful muscles she tried to clear the barrier. Her rear fetlocks caught. She crashed to the ground, savagely entangled in the sharp wire. In a few minutes she would cut herself to ribbons.

44 “Hold her still! I’ll get the wire cutters!” Mr. Cannon yelled.

45 Suddenly, he was there, limping toward the terrified mare. “Matthew! Stop!” I cried.

46 Dodging flailing hooves, he put a hand on her face, softly, gently speaking to her. For an agonizing moment, she froze. Then, slowly, she exhaled a shuddering moan and lay back, quiet.

47 “The rope,” Matthew said.

48 I put the lariat in his hand. He eased the noose over Sundance’s head and held her while his dad snipped the wire from her legs. Matthew coaxed her and she stood.

49 WHILE MR. CANNON AND I watched from the porch, Matthew washed and treated Sundance’s wounds. All that day, and in the days that followed, he tended her while she healed.

50 But he still wouldn’t ride, still wouldn’t approach other horses. I decided my efforts were in vain.

51 One morning before dawn, three weeks later, the annual Pueblo trail ride set out from Pueblo Plaza. We were crossing the Rio Jemez heading for Red Rock Canyon when I heard the cry: “Hey, amigo, wait up!”

52 They came at full gallop, Matthew astride Sundance, wounded boy and wounded horse. I reined up and tried to speak. All that would come was a reverent whisper: “Madre de Dios . . . Madre de Dios (Mother of God).” Tears stung my cheeks. I wondered if Matthew could see them.

53 WE RODE SIDE-BY-SIDE, lagging behind the others. I said, “You’ve been working with her in secret, haven’t you?”

54 “Yeah,” he admitted. He patted Sundance. “She wouldn’t have much to do with you or Dad, would she?”

55 “No,” I chuckled, “she sure wouldn’t.”

56 “She took to me right off, though. Guess I’m the only one who really understood her.”

57 “No, amigo, not the only one,” I replied. And I thought of a soft-spoken old man in his rocking chair staring into a pinion fire. Grandpa had understood the little horse—and more besides.

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Hello, Old Paint

by Jeanne Marie Laskas

1 The check bounced. “Insufficient funds,” says the little note attached. Well, I’m sure it’s just a mistake. Probably the people didn’t make a transfer in time or something. “No big deal,” I keep saying to myself, standing at the mailbox.

2 But the check bounced! Isn’t that strange? I mean, is there a message here? The check was payment to us for the sale of Cricket, our ex-horse, and Sassy, our ex-mule. A sale, truth be told, I’ve been regretting. And now the check has bounced. Is it a sign?

3 No, of course not. Probably just a clerical error.

4 Even so, as I take the long walk back home, I get a picture in my head. I imagine that somehow Cricket and Sassy understand that the check bounced, that they understand the legal ramifications of this, that technically the deal is null and void, and in one burst of horse energy they leap over the buyer’s fence and come bounding in slow motion, as if in a shampoo commercial, up our driveway, toward me, kicking and snorting with glee, and I run toward them and we hug and live happily ever after. Together. As it was meant to be.

5 When I get home I snap out of it. No, we did the right thing, selling Cricket and Sassy. They’re in a better place now. Cricket will be a brood mare. A mom!

6 And Sassy, her friend, will be at her side. It’s better for them. Better for us. Cricket, a registered American saddlebred, is too much horse for novices like us. And

Sassy is too short for an adult to ride. And we have another horse and mule that we do ride. So this really is the best thing for all concerned. And what did I tell myself? Yes, some friendships are meant to end. That’s it. Never mind that Cricket was our love-horse, the horse that walked up our driveway on our wedding day. And Sassy was our love-mule, the mule that walked up our driveway beside her. They had flowers in their hair. Never mind! Because some friendships are just meant to end. And I am a mature person with a logical head who understands this.

So I call Cricket and Sassy’s new owners. “The check bounced,” I say.

“Oh, that’s our stupid bank,” the woman says. Then she gives me her bank’s stupid phone number, should I want to call for proof that her account is in good standing, which I don’t really, but I write the number down anyway. “Just resubmit the check, okay?” she says. I ask her how Cricket and Sassy are doing, and she says, “Great!” Nothing more. I wish she had said more.

Meantime, all this horse thinking gets my mind on Billy. Because not all fading friendships are meant to end. Billy is the neighbor who sold Cricket and Sassy to us. He’s the one who rode Sassy up the driveway on our wedding day, his feet dragging on the ground. Tom, his son, rode Cricket. They’re the ones who put the

■ see Old Paint, page 2

flowers in their hair. Billy and I used to see each other more. I don't know why we've drifted. There never seems to be a real reason for friendships to fade. Friendships take work. Maybe that's all there is to it.

10 I call Billy just to say hi. He seems happy to hear from me. "We got a donkey!" he says. "She's so goofy. You'd love her." I tell him the news about Cricket and Sassy, and when I mention the buyers he seems concerned: "Did you happen to insist on a certified check?"

11 Oh.

12 Sure enough, a few days later, I'm at the mailbox. "Insufficient funds." I can't believe it. What do they think, I'm an idiot or something? I stomp into the house. What about that bank phone number? I'll call that bank, I'll get to the bottom of this. What did I do with that number? I must have thrown it out. I start picking through the trash.

13 Here it is! But the paper is wet and the number is blurred.

14 Isn't that strange? I mean, is there a message here? It's hard not to think of disappearing ink as a message from above. I start getting shampoo commercials in my head again. Oh, dear.

15 Why am I putting myself through all of this? Why can't I just admit that I made a mistake? Not just the part about selling my beloved pets to, well, some questionable buyers. But selling them at all. And, anyway, why can't we breed Cricket? A lot of work, perhaps. But wouldn't that be an amazing experience?

16 I imagine Cricket back in our barn. I imagine brushing her, telling her everything I've learned. "Well, Cricket, friendships take work," I'll say. "That's all there is to it."

17 So I call the woman, sound very businesslike. "The check bounced again," I say calmly. "The deal is off." Strangely, she doesn't sound surprised. I get the distinct sense she and her husband have been through this before.

18 I call Billy. "Would you be able to go pick up Cricket and Sassy in your horse trailer and bring them back home?" I ask. He says of course. No questions asked. And I think that's what friends are for. And I say yeah, I'd love to stop over and meet his new donkey.

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Friends for Life

the magazine for friends

August
\$1.75

**What Kind of
Friend Are You?
Take Our Quiz**

**Find Your New
Best Friend . . .
at the Animal Shelter!**

**Making Friendship
Bracelets
A Step-by-Step Guide**

**Are You Fighting
with a Friend?
10 Foolproof Ways to
Say "I'm Sorry"**

Photograph courtesy of © Royalty Free/CORBIS.

Use “A Horse for Matthew” (pp. 4–8) to answer questions 1–16.

- 1 In paragraph 43, the word *emitting* means —
- A uttering
 - B viewing
 - C rushing
 - D whispering
- 2 Tommy’s grandfather was once well known as a —
- F horse trainer
 - G belt maker
 - H rodeo champion
 - J horse breeder
- 3 Approximately how long does it take Grandpa to find the right horse for Matthew?
- A A month
 - B A couple of days
 - C All summer
 - D Two weeks
- 4 How was Matthew’s leg broken?
- F A horse threw him.
 - G He had a rodeo accident.
 - H A horse fell on him.
 - J The corral fence collapsed.
- 5 Paragraph 42 is mainly about —
- A Matthew and Sundance becoming acquainted
 - B what horses like to eat while in the corral
 - C fences and their usefulness on ranches
 - D Matthew leaving the corral with the others
- 6 The primary conflict in the story is between —
- F Tommy and Grandpa
 - G Matthew and his fear
 - H Matthew and Sundance
 - J Tommy and his anger
- 7 Which line from the story best reveals Grandpa’s love for Tommy?
- A “*Tell me about the boy.*”
 - B “*So, are you going to tell me what is troubling you?*”
 - C “*I’ve seen this kind of fear in grown men. . . .*”
 - D “*I will try, because it is you who ask.*”
- 8 In paragraph 18, the author uses the phrase “leaden silence” to create a mood of —
- F suspicion
 - G mystery
 - H anger
 - J discomfort

- 9 Paragraph 12 tells the reader that Grandpa —
- A knows nothing about Matthew
 - B does not want to disappoint Tommy
 - C usually spends the day in his chair
 - D is not accustomed to being surprised
- 10 Which of the following foreshadows Tommy's intention to ask his grandfather for help?
- F *I settled into a nearby chair and stared silently into the amber flames.*
 - G *"They removed his cast last week. He was in it three months, Grandpa."*
 - H *Grandpa was bent forward in his rocker, poking a pinion log burning in the fireplace.*
 - J *It was to this room one morning that I came to the past in hopes of shaping the future.*
- 11 The story's point of view helps the reader understand —
- A the difficulty of working with wild horses
 - B the fear that Matthew experiences
 - C the depth of Tommy's concern for Matthew
 - D the importance of horses on the reservation
- 12 Paragraph 23 shows the reader that Matthew is feeling —
- F disappointed by Tommy's visit
 - G nervous about having to stay at home
 - H indifferent about being injured
 - J frustrated with his current situation
- 13 Tommy knows that Matthew's conflict has been resolved when —
- A Tommy visits Matthew
 - B Sundance gets hurt
 - C Matthew rides Sundance
 - D Grandpa finds the horse
- 14 Paragraph 8 suggests that —
- F Matthew will soon ride again
 - G Tommy is ashamed of Matthew's fear
 - H Matthew's accident was very serious
 - J Tommy is also afraid of horses
- 15 Based on Matthew's behavior around Sundance, the reader can conclude that Matthew —
- A has never trained a horse before
 - B plans to ride the horse on the trail ride
 - C does not like horses
 - D understands the horse's fear
- 16 The reader can infer from paragraph 24 that —
- F Matthew is not a good friend
 - G Matthew has hurt Tommy's feelings
 - H Matthew cannot forgive Tommy
 - J Matthew is jealous of Tommy

Use “Hello, Old Paint” (pp. 9–10) to answer questions 17–28.

17 When the author finally found the paper with the bank’s phone number on it, it was difficult to read because —

- A the paper was wet
- B the handwriting was poor
- C the author could not see well
- D the seller had made a mistake

18 Read the following dictionary entry.

bounce \ˈbaʊn(t)s\ *v* **1.** to cause to rebound after striking a surface **2.** to dismiss from employment; fire **3.** to present an idea to another person for comments or approval **4.** to be returned by a bank because of a shortage of money

Which definition best matches the use of the word *bounced* in paragraph 1?

- F Definition 1
- G Definition 2
- H Definition 3
- J Definition 4

19 Paragraphs 5 and 6 are mainly about —

- A how much trouble the animals had become
- B how the author rationalized the sale of her pets
- C how angry the author was with the buyers of Cricket and Sassy
- D why American saddlebreds are lovable horses

20 The author had good memories of Cricket and Sassy because —

- F they were gifts from the author’s husband
- G the author and her husband rode Cricket and Sassy frequently
- H Cricket and Sassy participated in the author’s wedding
- J the author had raised the animals from birth

21 What caused the author’s primary conflict?

- A She couldn’t ride Sassy.
- B She didn’t have enough money.
- C She missed her friend Billy.
- D She regretted selling her pets.

22 In paragraph 12, the author was —

- F nervous
- G tired
- H frustrated
- J timid

- 23** Which lines show that the author was beginning to question her decision to sell Cricket and Sassy?
- A** *I ask her how Cricket and Sassy are doing, and she says, "Great!" Nothing more.*
 - B** *What do they think, I'm an idiot or something? I stomp into the house.*
 - C** *"Well, Cricket, friendships take work," I'll say. "That's all there is to it."*
 - D** *But the check bounced! Isn't that strange? I mean, is there a message here?*

- 24** What sort of tone does the author create in this selection?
- F** Reflective
 - G** Comical
 - H** Mysterious
 - J** Unemotional

- 25** The reader can conclude that the people who bought Cricket and Sassy —
- A** were new to the neighborhood
 - B** did not manage money well
 - C** had other horses of their own
 - D** were not kind to their horses

- 26** In paragraph 8, the sentence "I wish she had said more" shows —
- F** how much the author missed Cricket and Sassy
 - G** the rudeness of the buyer toward the author
 - H** that the author feared the animals might have been ill
 - J** that the buyer was too busy to talk with the author

- 27** How did the author persuade herself that she had made the right decision to sell her animals?
- A** She recognized that the money from the sale would help her family.
 - B** She told herself that the animals were better off with the new owners.
 - C** She accepted Billy's opinion that she had made a wise choice.
 - D** She admitted that the buyers were responsible businesspeople.

- 28** Based on paragraph 18, the reader can conclude that —
- F** friends are not very important to the author
 - G** the author will resume her friendship with Billy
 - H** animals are more important to the author than people
 - J** the author will give Cricket and Sassy to Billy

**Use “A Horse for Matthew” and “Hello, Old Paint” (pp. 4–10)
to answer questions 29 and 30.**

29 Which theme do both selections address?

- A** Family members can be wise and supportive.
- B** Never conduct business with friends.
- C** Fear is a damaging emotion.
- D** Friendships are worth preserving.

30 The reader can conclude that the authors of “A Horse for Matthew” and “Hello, Old Paint” —

- F** write only about events that have actually happened
- G** see similarities between horses and people
- H** understand the business of breeding horses
- J** have written extensively about animals

Use the visual representation on page 11 to answer questions 31–33.

31 The magazine’s publishers probably intend for the cover photograph to illustrate —

- A** the importance of telephone communication
- B** the difficulty of apologizing to friends
- C** the positive aspects of friendship
- D** the challenges of finding time to spend together

32 The publishers of this magazine want readers to believe that it can —

- F** strengthen reading skills
- G** increase volunteerism
- H** prevent arguments
- J** improve friendships

33 Which of the following articles would best fit the primary purpose of the magazine?

- A** “Why I Can’t Talk to My Mom”
- B** “Sisters—The Real Best Friends”
- C** “Friendly Relations Between Governments”
- D** “How to Break Up with Your Boyfriend”

DIRECTIONS

Answer the following questions in the space provided on the answer document.

- 34 In “A Horse for Matthew,” what do Matthew and Sundance have in common? Explain your answer and support it with evidence from the selection.
- 35 What did the author of “Hello, Old Paint” learn from her experience? Explain your answer and support it with evidence from the selection.
- 36 How is the bond between humans and animals important in both “A Horse for Matthew” and “Hello, Old Paint”? Support your answer with evidence from **both** selections.

BE SURE YOU HAVE WRITTEN YOUR ANSWERS
ON THE ANSWER DOCUMENT.

