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Selling the Horse

by Don Juan Manuel

Before You Read

Before you read "Selling the Horse," go over the words below. Make sure you know what each word means. This will help you when you read the story.

smart: knowing a lot. People who are *smart* know a lot.

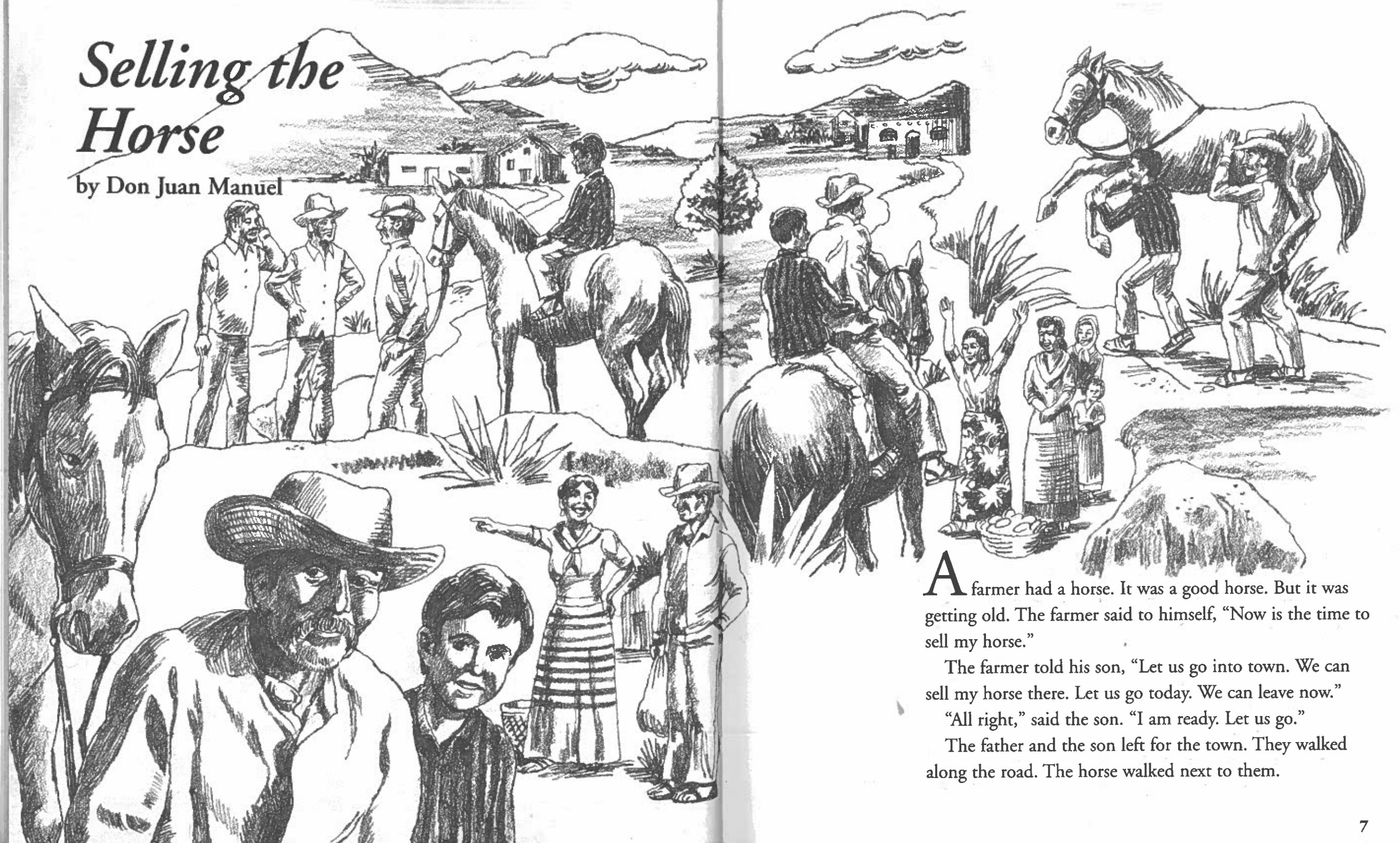
weak: not strong. Someone who is *weak* may fall down.

carry: to hold a thing and move it along. Mom asked me to *carry* the baby.

tired: needing rest or sleep. When you are *tired*, you want to rest.

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A farmer had a horse. It was a good horse. But it was getting old. The farmer said to himself, "Now is the time to sell my horse."

The farmer told his son, "Let us go into town. We can sell my horse there. Let us go today. We can leave now."

"All right," said the son. "I am ready. Let us go."

The father and the son left for the town. They walked along the road. The horse walked next to them.

Some people were coming down the road. The people were **returning** from the town. The people saw the farmer and his son. They saw the horse. They began to laugh.

The farmer said, "Why are you laughing at us? What is so funny?"

A man told the farmer, "You are not very smart. You are walking to town. So is your son. The horse is walking with you. You should *ride* on the horse. Or your son could ride. Why do you walk when you could ride?"

The farmer looked at his son. "What do you think, son?" he said.



"The man is right," said the boy.

"Well, then," the farmer said. "You can ride on the horse."

So the boy got on the horse. They went along that way. The boy rode on the back of the horse. The farmer walked next to them.

Soon they met some more people. The people looked at the farmer. They looked at the boy on the horse.

"Farmer," said a man. "You are old. You have worked hard for years. Your son is young. *You* should ride on the horse. You should let the boy walk. That is the right thing to do."

The farmer thought about that. Then he said, "All right."



So the boy got off the horse. The farmer climbed onto the horse. And they went along that way.

Soon they met more people. A woman said, "Farmer. This is **wrong**. Your son is young. He is weak. He is too weak to walk into town. You should let your son ride on the horse. He should ride with you."

So the boy got on the horse. The father and son *both* rode on the horse. And they went along that way.



Near town they met some more people. The people looked at the farmer and his son. They saw that the father and son were both riding the horse.

"Just look at that!" said one man. "See that poor horse. See how tired he is. He is an old horse. He cannot carry the farmer and his son. Oh, that poor horse!"

So the farmer and his son both got off the horse. They picked up the horse. They **lifted** him up high. They put him on their backs. And they carried the horse into town that way.





In town, people saw the farmer and his son.

“Look!” someone called out. “Look at this farmer and his son. They are *carrying* a horse!”

Everyone began to laugh.

The farmer and his son put the horse down on the ground.

The farmer turned to his son. The farmer said, “Son. What does this show?”

“I do not know,” said the boy.

The farmer said, “It shows that you can never make everyone happy!”

TELL ABOUT THE STORY.

Put an X in the box next to the right answer. Each answer tells something (a *fact*) about the story.

1. The farmer wanted to
 - a. buy a horse.
 - b. sell his horse.
 - c. give his horse away.

2. A woman said the boy should ride because he was
 - a. weak.
 - b. good.
 - c. in a hurry.

3. The farmer and his son came into town
 - a. on the horse.
 - b. walking next to the horse.
 - c. with the horse on their backs.

4. When the farmer and his son got to town, people
 - a. laughed at them.
 - b. did not see them.
 - c. told them to go away.

END EACH LINE.

Finish the lines below. Fill in each empty space with one of the words in the box. Each word can be found in the story. There are five words and four empty spaces. This means that one word in the box will not be used. The first word has been done for you.

A long time ago horses were very small₁. The first horses were only one to two feet ₂. But horses have gotten much bigger over the ₃. Many horses are six feet tall ₄.

years	small
	laugh
today	high

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SHOW WHAT WORDS MEAN.
The words below are printed in **dark letters** in the story. You may look back at these vocabulary words before you answer the questions. Put an X in the box next to the right answer.

- The men were returning from town. The word *returning* means
 - a. looking at.
 - b. coming from.
 - c. buying from.
- The farmer climbed on the horse. The word *climbed* means
 - a. got up on.
 - b. fell down.
 - c. talked about.
- She said he was wrong to ride on the horse. Something that is *wrong* is
 - a. very good.
 - b. too old.
 - c. not right.
- They lifted the horse onto their backs. The word *lifted* means
 - a. picked up.
 - b. pushed away.
 - c. tried hard.

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THINK ABOUT THE STORY.
Here is how to answer these questions. First think about what happened in the story. Then work out the right answers. This is called *critical thinking*.

- In town, people laughed at the father and son because they were
 - a. talking to the horse.
 - b. feeding the horse.
 - c. carrying the horse.
- Which one is right?
 - a. The son did not ride on the horse.
 - b. The father did not ride on the horse.
 - c. The farmer did what people told him to do.
- The farmer wanted to sell the horse because it
 - a. kicked a neighbor.
 - b. was no longer young.
 - c. had trouble walking.
- At the end of the story, the farmer must have felt
 - a. tired.
 - b. worried.
 - c. happy.

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SPOT PARTS OF A STORY.
Stories have **characters**, a **plot**, and a **setting**. (See page 3.) Put an X in the box next to the right answer.

- What happened first? (**Plot**)
 - a. A woman said the boy should ride.
 - b. The father and son left for town.
 - c. They put the horse on their backs.
- What happened last? (**Plot**)
 - a. The father and son picked up the horse.
 - b. The father rode on the horse.
 - c. The son rode on the horse.
- Which best tells about the farmer? (**Character**)
 - a. He listened to many people.
 - b. He did not listen to anyone.
 - c. He did not like his son.
- Where does the story take place? (**Setting**)
 - a. on a farm
 - b. in and near a town
 - c. in a big city

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THINK SOME MORE ABOUT THE STORY.
Your teacher might want you to write your answers.

- Many people told the farmer what to do. If you were the farmer, what would you have done?
- Why did the farmer say, "You can never make everyone happy"?
- Do you think the farmer sold his horse? Why?

Write your scores in the box below. Then write your scores on pages 122 and 123.

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