

Minnesota

2020 Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts

LESSON

Building a Theme About Humane Care

Black Beauty

TEACHES

4.1.4.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a story, drama or poem from details in the text.

WHY THIS EARNS THE STANDARD

Students determine a theme about humane care and support it with evidence from the story.

The canonical lesson that follows is unchanged. This cover is an additive curriculum-placement layer.

TumbleTA | Tumbleweed Press Inc. | Corrected build 2026-09-09

TUMBLETA | GRADE 4 ELA | STANDALONE SKILL LESSON

Building a Theme About Humane Care

Black Beauty

20 minutes

OBJECTIVE

State a theme about humane treatment and support it with evidence from two different parts of the text.

STUDENT PRODUCT

A theme statement with two evidence-reasoning pairs.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What does the story suggest patient, humane care can do?

TEXT FOCUS

Moments involving guidance, nourishment, gentleness, trust, fear, or recovery.

LESSON SEQUENCE

1. Select two moments | 3 min Choose two different examples of humane or harmful treatment.
2. Name the shared idea | 4 min State what the examples suggest about treatment.
3. Theme | 5 min Write the idea as a complete statement about care and its effects.
4. Support | 6 min Explain how each moment contributes.
5. Check | 2 min Do not turn the theme into a plot summary.

TEACHER KEY / EXPECTED THINKING

The story suggests that patient, humane treatment builds trust and recovery, while harsh treatment causes fear, pain, and lasting harm.

LOOK FOR

- States a complete theme.
- Uses evidence from two parts of the text.
- Explains effects rather than only naming treatment.

TumbleTA | Grade 4 ELA | Canonical standalone skill lesson