

One Pony Too Many

A Reading A-Z Level K Leveled Book
Word Count: 436

Connections

Writing

Do you think the narrator made the right decision at the end of the story? Write a paragraph explaining your thoughts.

Science and Art

Research to learn more about Shetland ponies. Create a poster with a picture and at least three facts about them.

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LEVELED BOOK • K

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Written by Jessica Malordy
Illustrated by Katy Betz

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Focus Question

Why is one pony too many
for the family in the story?

Words to Know

bills
foal
responsibility

shaggy
Shetland pony
stocky

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Correlation

LEVEL K

Fountas & Pinnell	J
Reading Recovery	17
DRA	18



I didn't expect the trip to Mr. Ferris's farm to turn out the way it did. I saw his ponies as soon as we got out of the car. They had **shaggy** manes and **stocky** legs. I patted one over the fence.

"She's a **Shetland pony**," Mr. Ferris explained. "She may be small, but she's full grown."



Do You Know?

A pony is not a baby horse. In fact, ponies are horses' short, stocky cousins! There are many different kinds of ponies. Shetland ponies come from the Shetland Islands in Scotland.





“Why is she small if she’s grown up?”
I asked.

“Shetland ponies come from a cold,
rocky place,” Mr. Ferris explained.
“It made them small and tough.”

“Like me!” I said.

“Lots of kids learn to ride on
Shetland ponies,” Mr. Ferris added.

My mom and dad exchanged
looks. We were just here to visit.
I wondered if this might be my
chance to get a pony.





"Can we take her home? I'll do all the chores!" I pleaded.

"She's Mr. Ferris's pony, son," my dad replied.

"A pony can teach a boy **responsibility**," Mr. Ferris said.
"Consider her a gift!"

That's how we got Buttercup.
I could not thank Mr. Ferris enough.
I hugged my mom and dad.





At first, Buttercup fit right in. Our house is on the edge of town, and we have a big fenced yard. Together, my dad and I turned our shed into a barn.

It was my job to feed and brush Buttercup. In return, I got to ride every day after school.

One morning, Buttercup was gone!

Our neighbor Mrs. Kumar found her. Buttercup had jumped our fence and was eating her prize roses.

“We’re so sorry,” my mom said as we dragged Buttercup home.





Then Buttercup began eating oats faster than we could get more. My dad was not happy about that.

The biggest surprise came when her **foal** was born! None of us were expecting him. He was cute, but as he grew he became twice as bold as his mama.

Every morning, I had to search our neighborhood for both of them. I didn't like that much—and neither did Buttercup and her foal.



“Mom, Dad, I have something to tell you,” I announced.

They looked up from the table. They were doing **bills**, trying to figure out how to keep paying for everything the ponies needed.



“Mr. Ferris said having a pony would teach me responsibility,” I said. “He was right. I love Buttercup, but now I know—two ponies are one pony too many. Actually, one pony is one pony too many!”

That's how we ended up giving Buttercup and her baby back to Mr. Ferris. Luckily, I'm still learning to ride . . . but now our ponies live on a farm, where they belong.



Glossary

bills (<i>n.</i>)	written statements that tell how much money is owed for items or services (p. 13)
foal (<i>n.</i>)	a newborn or young horse or pony (p. 12)
responsibility (<i>n.</i>)	the quality of being reliable and trustworthy (p. 8)
shaggy (<i>adj.</i>)	covered with long, messy hair or fur (p. 3)
Shetland pony (<i>n.</i>)	any of a strong breed of pony that has short legs and a thick coat (p. 4)
stocky (<i>adj.</i>)	thickly built; short and strong (p. 3)