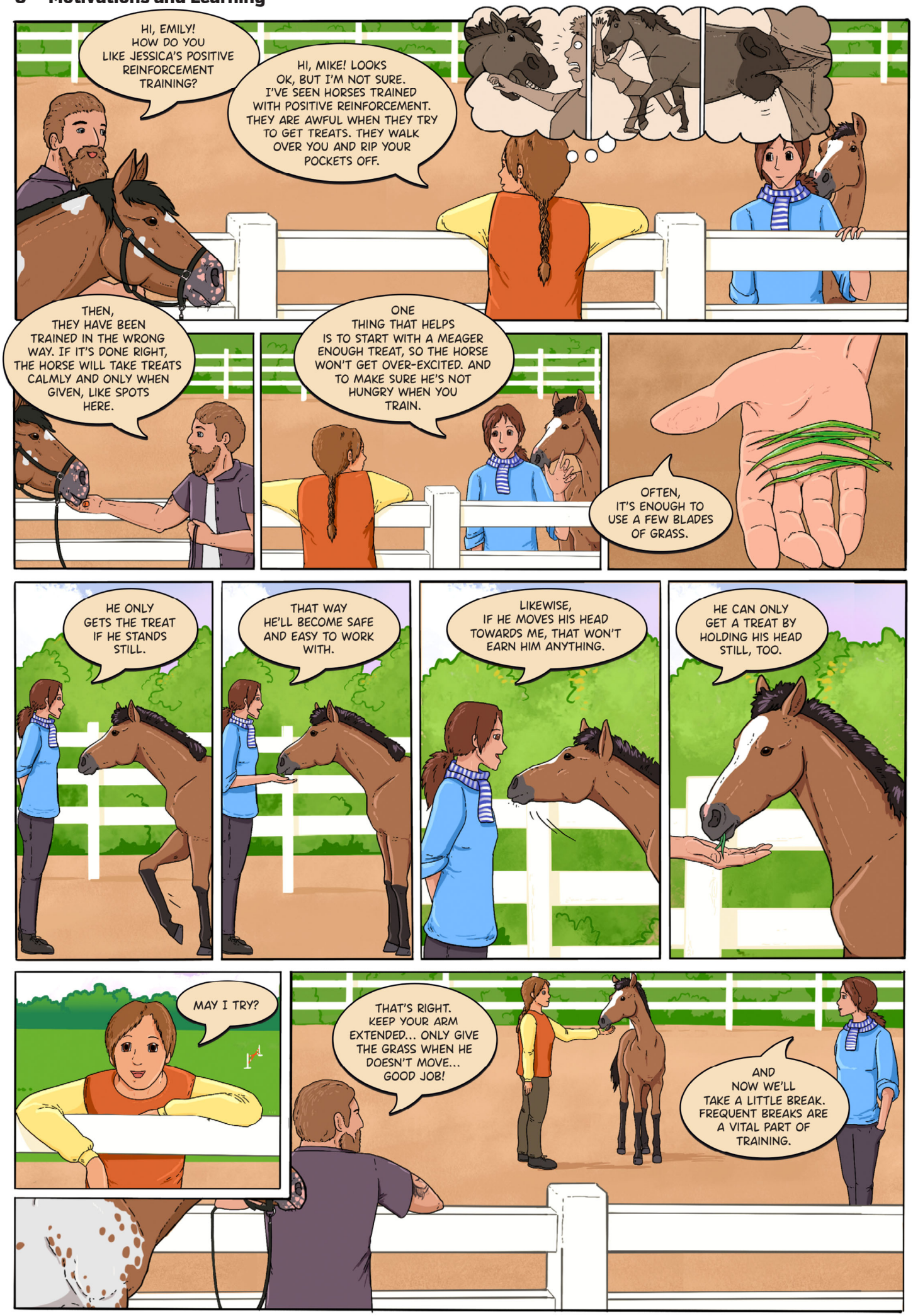
HI, EMILY! HOW DO YOU LIKE JESSICA'S POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT TRAINING?
HI, MIKE! LOOKS OK, BUT I'M NOT SURE. I'VE SEEN HORSES TRAINED WITH POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT. THEY ARE AWFUL WHEN THEY TRY TO GET TREATS. THEY WALK OVER YOU AND RIP YOUR POCKETS OFF.
THEN, THEY HAVE BEEN TRAINED IN THE WRONG WAY. IF IT'S DONE RIGHT, THE HORSE WILL TAKE TREATS CALMLY AND ONLY WHEN GIVEN, LIKE SPOTS HERE.
ONE THING THAT HELPS IS TO START WITH A MEAGER ENOUGH TREAT, SO THE HORSE WON'T GET OVER-EXCITED. AND TO MAKE SURE HE'S NOT HUNGRY WHEN YOU TRAIN.
OFTEN, IT'S ENOUGH TO USE A FEW BLADES OF GRASS.
HE ONLY GETS THE TREAT IF HE STANDS STILL.
THAT WAY HE'LL BECOME SAFE AND EASY TO WORK WITH.
LIKEWISE, IF HE MOVES HIS HEAD TOWARDS ME, THAT WON'T EARN HIM ANYTHING.
HE CAN ONLY GET A TREAT BY HOLDING HIS HEAD STILL, TOO.
MAY I TRY?
THAT'S RIGHT. KEEP YOUR ARM EXTENDED... ONLY GIVE THE GRASS WHEN HE DOESN'T MOVE... GOOD JOB!
AND NOW WE'LL TAKE A LITTLE BREAK. FREQUENT BREAKS ARE A VITAL PART OF TRAINING.