



ANIMAL
WELFARE COUNCIL

www.animalwelfarecouncil.org

Lessons about the Unwanted Horse

Lesson One

Is a Horse More Like a Cow than Like a Dog?

- Content examines horses as livestock versus companion animals, qualities of horses and benefits to them that support livestock status, horse's role as bridge animal between urban and rural culture.

Teacher Guide and Resources:

Goals

1. Learner will develop critical thinking skills.
2. Learner will increase awareness of animal agriculture.
3. Learner will develop topic specific vocabulary.

Common Core Standards

RIT.1	Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
RIT.3	Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
RIT.4	Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
RIT.6	Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
RIT.10	Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.
W.2	Write informative/ explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
W.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
W.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
SL.1	Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
SL.2	Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
SL.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Activities for This Lesson

Lesson One Herd Time:

- Exercise 1: Student will read and discuss how and why the media and popular culture anthropomorphize horses.
- Exercise 2: Student will analyze the physical attributes of horses in comparison to cows and dogs
- Exercise 3: Student will match vocabulary words and definitions

Lesson One Pasture Time:

- Exercise 1: Word-find with lesson vocabulary words
- Exercise 2: Student will conduct and report on a field exercise observation to examine animal behavior.



Is a Horse More Like a Cow than Like a Dog? - **Preparation**



ANIMAL
WELFARE COUNCIL

www.animalwelfarecouncil.org

Lessons about the Unwanted Horse

Lesson One

Background Information:

Horses in today's society enjoy a unique position which bridges the space between animal agriculture as a member of the **livestock species** and companion animals. While many horses are used on farms and ranches in the service of producing agricultural products, others are kept purely for the enjoyment and recreation of their owners. Horses are the most common livestock species housed in cities and towns. This casual familiarity sometimes leads people to think of horses' behavior as similar to the animals they deal with more often, such as dogs or cats, or to even assign human characteristics to horses. This assignment of human characteristics is known as **anthropomorphization**.

Horses have many wonderful characteristics that lend to their role in human's lives. These attributes made the species a good candidate to domesticate. **Equines** (horses, donkeys, mules, and zebras), have been adapted to perform many jobs through selective breeding. Examples range from the small Shetland pony pulling ore carts in mines, to the giant draft breeds that carried armor-clad knights, to the modern average-size ranch horse working cattle. Even with these adaptations to specific purposes, horses of all sizes have common characteristics. For example, horses have the ability to learn and adapt to perform tasks from repetitive **training**. Horses can be very docile and curious, characteristics that humans have used to teach them a wide variety of jobs. Horses' powerful muscles give them a great capacity to perform work such as carrying a rider, pulling a cart, or sled. Horses' behaviors are also defined by their nature as both **herd** and **prey** animals. Examples of the horse's nature include: herd instinct; their desire to be with other horses, their prey animal instinct; a strong **flight** response to fearful situations, and as **herbivores**; their requirement for **pasture** for **grazing**, or when kept in a **stall** in a **barn** or **stables**, **hay** and possibly **grain**.

In the centuries since horses were re-introduced to North America in the 1500's by the Spanish Explorers, their primary roles as transportation and beasts of burden have changed dramatically. As our society has become more mechanized the number of people working directly with horses has diminished. In many families, ownership of a horse may be four or five generations in the past. The first-hand knowledge of how to care for horses and how they behave is now more limited than even 40 years ago. Today many people's ideas about horse behavior are shaped by TV or in films; in some cases the portrayal of horses is realistic, but in most, the picture is highly romanticized. Hollywood presents the Lone Ranger's horse, Silver, running to the rescue at exactly the right moment, **Mr. Ed** making phone calls for Wilbur, the Black Stallion rearing in front of Alec, his rescuer, and then helping the boy onto his back, and the animated Spirit, "Wild Stallion of the Cimarron," saving the day for his mare-friend Rain. These images belie the reality of the training and camera angles (and special effects) that humans employed to create these extraordinary stories. Our great or great-great grandparents had more accurate, everyday knowledge about horses' behavior than these shows portray.

The true characteristics of horses as a livestock species earn them their classification as livestock and allow them to receive many benefits in animal agriculture. There are no penalties for horse owners who view their animals as companions; however, if the status of horses were changed from livestock to companion animal, much would be lost. The United States Department of Agriculture (**USDA**) and state departments of agriculture administer disease control programs for horses, maintain quarantine facilities, and provide disaster relief programs for ranchers and farmers following floods, fires, hurricanes, and tornadoes. Land Grant University and Cooperative Extension equine programs are supported through agriculture funding. Agricultural status also includes property and sales tax advantages to those in the business of raising horses. Humane laws for the care and management of livestock are overseen and enforced





ANIMAL
WELFARE COUNCIL

www.animalwelfarecouncil.org

Lessons about the Unwanted Horse

Lesson One

through the Department of Agriculture and State Veterinarian offices. Equine Limited Liability laws are codified in livestock related statutes. Zoning and regulation of horse / livestock properties are less complex with fewer local and state agencies involved in their management than comparable companion animal facilities.

Horses have a unique position in American culture as the species that crosses between animal agricultural settings and urban settings. Horses enjoy a positive image in America, with as many as one in three families indicating they wish to ride a horse, according to a survey done by the Horse Industry Alliance. Although kids on average are four generations off the farm, the horse still has a relevant place in many urban settings. From police work to park hack or parade mount, city people without exposure to farm animals, such as cows, pigs, sheep, or chickens, may still have opportunity to put their hands on horses. For young people with limited personal exposure to animal agriculture, learning the facts about horses can create an understanding of the common characteristics that horses share with other livestock species such as cattle and sheep or goats. Building on their knowledge of horses may help these young people better appreciate the needs and challenges of the broader animal agriculture industry.

Resources for further reading

American Association of Equine Practitioners. "Definition Of Horses As Livestock". October 05 2001, Article # 555 <http://www.thehorse.com>.

Comerford, P. M. and J.T. Potter. "Start with Safety: Horse Safety Guidelines". 2nd Edition. AYHC Education Committee, <http://www.ayhc.com>

Goodnight, Julie. "Understanding Horse Behavior" cited April 28, 2009 <http://juliegoodnight.com/questionsNew.php?id=218>.

Grice, Lindsay. "Thinking Like a Horse: How Understanding Basic Horse Psychology Simplifies Training" INFO Sheet, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; Agricultural Information Contact Centre, Northern Ontario Regional Office, www.omafra.gov.on.ca.





ANIMAL
WELFARE COUNCIL

www.animalwelfarecouncil.org

Is a Horse More Like a Cow than Like a Dog?

1. Explain to students the format of the lesson:
 - a. Introduction of topic - Characteristics of the horse as a livestock species.
 - b. Distribute Student Background handout for students to use in completing the exercises.
 - c. "Herd time" (Provide students with handouts and worksheets.)
 - d. "Pasture time" (Explain expectations for which activities will be used and how assignment will be checked.)
2. The roles of horses in modern American life include:
 - a. Horses are a bridge animal between livestock and companion animal, and between urban settings and rural agriculture.
 - b. In recreational settings, many identify their horse more as a companion animal than as livestock. In production agriculture and ranching settings, the connection to livestock may be stronger.
 - c. The American population is more urban and suburban and is showing the tendency toward "anthropomorphization" of all animals.
 - d. Describe examples of progression of horse portrayals in TV shows and movies throughout last 50 years. Prompt students with discussion questions from student handouts. Invite them to work on matching definitions with key words. (Refer to Student Handouts.)
3. Actual characteristics of horses as livestock offer the species benefits and protections as livestock:
 - a. Horses are herd /prey animals that require large spaces for exercise and forage, specialized handling skills and facilities for proper management. They have been selectively bred to serve many purposes.
 - b. Horses suffer no penalties from being treated as companion animals unless their status as livestock is changed through legislation. Horses (and their owners) benefit from horses' livestock status, through research, educational efforts, and government disease management and disaster relief programs, as well as through humane laws that are overseen by the State Veterinarian and Departments of Agriculture.
 - c. Ask students to identify cow-like and dog-like characteristics of horses and mark them on their handouts. (Refer to Student Handouts.)
4. Review how "Pasture Time" field exercise will be completed.
 - a. Explain whether the "find-a-word" exercise is to be returned completed at the next meeting or given as just a take-home. (Refer to Student Handouts.)
 - b. Explain whether the farm or ranch trip to view horses interacting will be arranged as a group activity or completed as an individual assignment. For an individual assignment, prepare a list of possible sites for students to visit and instructions for how they should work with the herd owners to view the horses interacting. Include safety instruction regarding their observation of the animals in the herd that addresses approaching the animals.





Lesson One

Answer Key ~ “Herd Time” Student Handout

- 2.** Describe the physical attributes of a horse, tally them in one of two categories, cow-like and dog-like, and then add up the characteristics that fit in each category, e.g. what does a horse eat, where are horses kept, what size is a horse, what is a horse’s main defense?

Cow-like

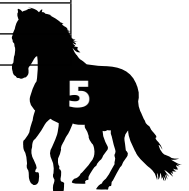
large animal
herd animal
flight animal
hooved animal
grazing animal
prey animal
herbivore
long-lived
very strong
eats hay
kept in barns or pastures

Dog-like

trainable
domesticated animal
used for work
used for recreation and sport
may be kept as companions

- 3.** Match definitions with key words:

1	Anthropomorphize	H	Attribute human form or personality to
2	Barn	G	Building for housing farm animals and equipment
3	Equine	R	Of or relating to, or resembling a horse or the horse family
4	Flight	L	Act of running away
5	Grain	Q	The seed or fruits of various cereal grasses
6	Grazing	M	Feeding on growing herbage in the field
7	Hay	N	Herbage dried and cured for fodder
8	Herbivore	A	Plant eating animal
9	Herd	E	A number of animals of one kind
10	Livestock	J	Animals kept or raised for use, pleasure or profit, especially farm animals
11	Mr. Ed	P	The talking horse
12	Pasture	O	Land or plot of land used for grazing
13	Prey	B	An animal taken by a predator as food
14	Species	F	Class of individuals having common attributes
15	Stables	K	A building in which domestic animals are housed and fed, especially with stalls or compartments
16	Stall	I	Compartment for domestic animals in barn or stable
17	Training	D	Forming by instruction discipline, or drill
18	USDA	C	United States Department of Agriculture





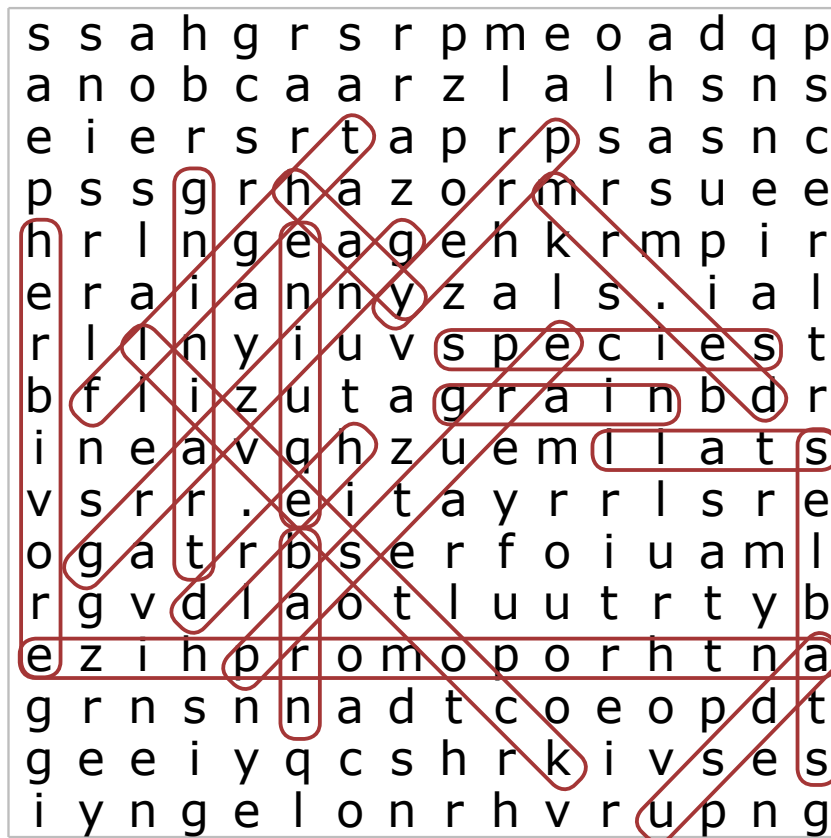
ANIMAL
WELFARE COUNCIL

www.animalwelfarecouncil.org

Lesson One

Answer Key ~ “Pasture Time” Student Handout

1. Find-a-word puzzle – key words from discussion and vocabulary:

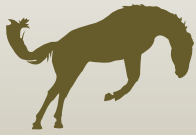




www.animalwelfarecouncil.org

Lessons about the Unwanted Horse: Lesson One Is a Horse More Like a Cow than Like a Dog?

Student Background Information



In the United States horses are classified as a **livestock species**. Many horses are used on farms and ranches to help produce food; others are kept purely for the enjoyment and recreation of their owners.

Horses are the most common livestock species housed in cities and towns. Their familiar presence sometimes leads people to think of horses' behavior as similar to the animals they deal with more often, such as dogs or cats, and to even assign human characteristics to them. Assigning human characteristics to animals is known as **anthropomorphization**.

Equines (horses, donkeys, mules, and zebras) have many wonderful traits that make them a good **species** to domesticate. Through selective breeding, horses have been adapted to perform many jobs, from the Shetland pony pulling ore carts in mines, to the giant draft breeds that carried armor-clad knights, to the modern ranch horse working cattle. Regardless of size or purpose, all horses share common characteristics. For example, horses can learn to perform tasks from repetitive **training**. Their willingness and curiosity make it easy for them to learn a wide variety of jobs. Horses' powerful muscles allow them to carry a rider or pull a cart or sled. Horses by nature are both **herd** and **prey** animals; they prefer to be with other horses (herd instinct) and demonstrate a strong **flight** response to fearful situations (prey instinct). As **herbivores** (plant eaters) they need **pasture** for **grazing**, or when kept in a **stall** in a **barn** or **stables**, they need to be fed **hay** and possibly **grain** and be given regular exercise.

For centuries, horses served as transportation and beasts of burden; however, as our country has become more mechanized, horses' roles have changed. We use horses less for work and more for recreation. Fewer people live on farms and ranches, so today many people's ideas about horses are shaped by TV or movies. In some cases the portrayal of horses is realistic, but in more cases it is not. The Lone Ranger's horse, Silver, independently runs to the rescue; **Mr. Ed** makes phone calls for Wilbur; the Black Stallion rears in front of his rescuer and then helps the boy onto his back; and Spirit, "Wild Stallion of the Cimarron," saves his animated mare-friend Rain. These stories don't show the training, camera angles and special effects humans used to create them.

Handling horses requires specialized knowledge. People who regularly deal with horses stay safe by understanding horses' behavior and having respect for their size and strength. They understand whether the horse



Lessons about the Unwanted Horse: Lesson One Is a Horse More Like a Cow than Like a Dog?

is the **dominant** (alpha, leading) or a **subordinate** (following) animal in the herd, and treat the animal accordingly; they learn horse language, like head motions, ear pinning, or threatened kicks. Safe human interaction with horses requires the human to be a leader in the horses' herd. Although the human need not be harsh to the horse, if he or she treats a horse like a dog, the results will be disappointing—and probably dangerous.

Horses' classification as **livestock** entitles them to many benefits in animal agriculture. The United States Department of Agriculture (**USDA**) and state departments of agriculture have disease control programs for horses, maintain quarantine facilities, oversee agricultural animal welfare, and provide disaster relief programs for ranchers and farmers following natural disasters. Certain equine educational programs are supported through agriculture funding. Livestock status for horses also conveys advantages to the owner in certain legal, zoning, and tax situations. Horse owners have the option to treat their horses as **companion animals** rather than as livestock; however, if the horse's **legal status** as a livestock species changes, much good for the horse and owner will be lost.

A recent survey showed that as many as one in three families want to ride a horse. The horse still does useful jobs in many cities from police work to recreation, and for many city people horses may be the only livestock species they ever interact with. For young people with limited exposure to **animal agriculture**, learning the facts about horses can create an understanding of the common characteristics that horses share with other livestock species such as cattle and sheep or goats. Knowing facts about horses may help people better appreciate the needs and challenges of the broader animal agriculture industry.

Resources for further reading

1. Comerford, P. M. and J.T. Potter. "Start with Safety: Horse Safety Guidelines". 2nd Edition. AYHC Education Committee, <http://www.ayhc.com>
2. Goodnight, Julie. "Understanding Horse Behavior" cited April 28, 2009 <http://juliegoodnight.com/questionsNew.php?id=218>.
3. Grice, Lindsay. "Thinking Like a Horse: How Understanding Basic Horse Psychology Simplifies Training INFO Sheet", Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; Agricultural Information Contact Centre, Northern Ontario Regional Office, www.omafra.gov.on.ca.



Lessons about the Unwanted Horse: Lesson One Is a Horse More Like a Cow than Like a Dog?

“Herd Time” Group Discussion



1. Talk about how human characteristics were assigned to the horse in these scenarios.

a. Lone Ranger’s horse Silver would show up on cue to advance the plot of the show, rescuing his rider from the bad guys.



photos courtesy Lone Ranger Fan Club



b. Mr. Ed talked to his owner and generally created trouble to keep the show funny.



photos courtesy Fiftiesweb

c. In the Black Stallion movies, a wild stallion bonded with a shipwrecked young boy and went on to become a great racehorse.



d. Spirit, the animated “Wild Stallion of the Cimarron,” heroically rescued his herd mate from natural disaster.



image courtesy DreamworksSKG



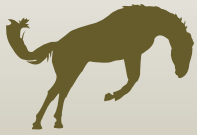


www.animalwelfarecouncil.org

Lessons about the Unwanted Horse: Lesson One Is a Horse More Like a Cow than Like a Dog?

2.

Describe the physical attributes of a horse, tally them in one of two categories, cow-like and dog-like, and then add up the characteristics that fit in each category, e.g. what does a horse eat, where are horses kept, what size is a horse, what is a horse's main defense?



Cow-like

Dog-like

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>



Lessons about the Unwanted Horse: Lesson One

Is a Horse More Like a Cow than Like a Dog?

3. Match the letter for the definition with the key word:



- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ___ Anthropomorphize | A Plant eating animal |
| ___ Barn | B An animal taken by a predator as food |
| ___ Equine | C United States Department of Agriculture |
| ___ Flight | D Forming by instruction discipline, or drill |
| ___ Grain | E A number of animals of one kind |
| ___ Grazing | F Class of individuals having common characteristics |
| ___ Hay | G Building for housing farm animals and equipment |
| ___ Herbivore | H Attributing human form or personality to |
| ___ Herd | I Compartment for domestic animals in barn or stable |
| ___ Livestock | J Animals kept or raised for use, pleasure or profit, especially farm animals |
| ___ Mr. Ed | K A building housing domestic animals, especially with stalls or compartments |
| ___ Pasture | L Act of running away |
| ___ Prey | M Feeding on growing herbage in the field |
| ___ Stables | N Herbage dried and cured for fodder |
| ___ Stall | O Land or plot of land used for grazing |
| ___ Species | P The talking horse |
| ___ Training | Q The seed or fruits of various cereal grasses |
| ___ USDA | R Of or relating to, or resembling a horse or the horse family |



Lessons about the Unwanted Horse: Lesson One Is a Horse More Like a Cow than Like a Dog?

“Pasture Time”



Field Exercises:
group activity or
independent take-
home exercise



1. Find-a-word puzzle – key words from discussion and vocabulary:

Anthropomorphize
Barn
Equine
Flight
Grain
Grazing
Hay
Herbivore
Herd
Livestock
Mr. Ed
Pasture
Prey
Stables
Stall
Species
Training
USDA



2. Visit a farm or ranch that has a herd of horses on pasture; watch how the animals interact with each other in a group. Observe without directing their behavior. What do you notice about the animals' behavior? Can you see a hierarchy among the animals? How do they react to something new or strange in their environment?

