

Course	Agricultural Science I
Unit	Equine Science
Lesson	Psychology and Handling
Estimated Time	50 minutes

Student Outcome

The student will identify different equine psychological traits, along with the proper handling and training techniques of the horse.

Learning Objectives

1. Recognize ways horses react to people.
2. Recognize the signs of danger.
3. Identify horse manners.
4. Identify the unique characteristics of equine vision and hearing.
5. Determine foal handling techniques.
6. Identify basic training methods.

Grade Level Expectations

Resources, Supplies & Equipment, and Supplemental Information

Resources

1. *Equine Science* (Student Reference). University of Missouri-Columbia: Instructional Materials Laboratory, 1995.
2. *Equine Science Curriculum Enhancement*. University of Missouri-Columbia: Instructional Materials Laboratory, 2003.

Supplemental Information

1. Internet Sites

- ☐ *The Basics of Horse Handling & Human Safety*. Southern Illinois University and Horsemen's Council of Illinois. Accessed June 5, 2007, from <http://www.horsemencouncil.org/pdfs/Basics%20of%20horse%20handlingW.pdf>.
- ☐ Bradley, M. *Practical Horse Psychology*. MU Extension. University of Missouri-Columbia. Accessed June 5, 2007, from <http://extension.missouri.edu/explore/agguides/ansci/g02862.htm>.
- ☐ Ground Manners. Equusite.com. Accessed June 5, 2007, from <http://www.equusite.com/articles/ground/groundHome.shtml>.
- ☐ "How Horses See." Horsewyse Magazine, 2006. Accessed June 5, 2007, from <http://www.horsewyse.com.au/howhorsessee.html>.
- ☐ *Psychology of the Horse*. 4-H Horse Project Manual. Accessed June 5, 2007, from [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/4h7933/\\$FILE/o_psychology.pdf](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/4h7933/$FILE/o_psychology.pdf).

2. Print

- ☐ Campbell, J. R., M. D. Kenealy, and K. L. Campbell. *Animal Sciences: The Biology,*

Care, and Production of Domestic Animals. 4th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 2003.

- ❑ Ensminger, M. E., and C. J. Hammer. *Equine Science*. 8th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc., 2004.
 - ❑ Frandson, R. D., W. L. Wilke, and A. D. Fails. *Anatomy and Physiology of Farm Animals*. 6th ed. Baltimore: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins, 2003.
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Interest Approach

Most people get scared when they see a horse rear up and their first reaction is to jerk down on the lead rope. Have any of you seen a horse do this? Have you seen any other unusual or aggressive behavior? What do you think caused this behavior?

Communicate the Learning Objectives

1. Recognize ways horses react to people.
2. Recognize the signs of danger.
3. Identify horse manners.
4. Identify the unique characteristics of equine vision and hearing.
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6. Identify basic training methods.

Instructor Directions	Content Outline
Objective 1 <i>Animals – horses, in particular – seem to sense how a person is feeling. If a person has aggressive feelings, the horse might react in the same manner. If the person is very nervous or timid, the horse might be jumpy and hard to handle. This makes it important for the individual to be self-confident but have respect for the horse's power.</i>	Recognize ways horses react to people. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Aggressive behaviors2. Loyalty3. Stubborn behaviors
Objective 2 <i>Safety is very important to remember when handling a horse. The handler must be aware of the signals the horse is sending. Never become overconfident and let your guard down; that is an easy way to get you and/or the horse hurt.</i>	Recognize the signs of danger. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ear positions (forward: interest, backward: anger)2. Eye positions (closed eyes with ears back: sleep)3. Tail movement (annoyance)4. Pawing the ground (dislike of something or boredom)
Objective 3 <i>Horses have their own mannerisms and quirks. Some seem easier to work with than others. Some mannerisms are instinctive, while others are</i>	Identify horse manners. Good manners Bad manners (vices) <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Barn sour – doesn't want to leave the barn or wants to get back to it

Instructor Directions	Content Outline
<p><i>learned. It is important to understand the difference between the two.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Biting 3. Bolting feed – can be discouraged by spreading the food out or placing a large, baseball-sized rock in the feed 4. Cribbing – when a horse hooks its upper teeth on a solid object, extends its neck, and sucks in air 5. Pawing – boredom 6. Shying 7. Weaving, stall walking, and wood chewing
<p>Objective 4</p> <p><i>The horse's vision creates blind spots directly in front of the nose and behind the horse. It is these blind spots that make it dangerous to walk up on horses and surprise them. When approaching a horse, always approach from the side or at an angle so it can see you coming. It is a good idea to talk to horses so they also hear you coming.</i></p>	<p>Identify the unique characteristics of equine vision and hearing.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monocular vision 2. Blind spots 3. Night vision 4. Excellent hearing
<p>Objective 5</p> <p><i>The new foal can be fun and rewarding to handle. It is important to start working with foals as soon as possible. They will be easier to handle after they learn to trust you.</i></p>	<p>Determine foal handling techniques.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sacking at birth 2. Haltering at 1-2 weeks 3. Grooming
<p>Objective 6</p> <p><i>There are probably more ideas about how to train a horse than any other topic dealing with horses. Training methods vary from trainer to trainer, and each has his/her own particular style of training. However, there are some basics involved in training a horse.</i></p>	<p>Identify basic training methods.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Patience – most important characteristic 2. Repetition 3. Positive reinforcement 4. Discipline – always prompt and never administered out of anger 5. Discipline, reward, and timing

Instructor Directions	Content Outline
Application	<p>Other activities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take a field trip to a local equine training facility and observe what methods of training they use. 2. If possible, observe the birth of a foal. Have students take note of how the foal is handled. 3. Take a field trip to a horse show and observe the horses' behavior. 4. Invite a guest speaker to class who trains or works with horses.
Closure/Summary	<p>To be able to successfully and safely handle a horse, the handler must have some understanding of the psychology of the horse. Working and training should start soon after birth. It is important that the foal gets to know and trust its handler(s) as soon as possible.</p>
Evaluation: Quiz	<p>Answers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. c 2. d 3. b 4. c 5. b 6. b 7. b 8. a 9. d 10. c 11. a 12. c 13. a 14. b