Professional Member Resources

Thank you for joining Pony Club as a Professional Member. Mounted and unmounted lesson plans will provide tools for building an instructional program based on progression of skills in riding and horse care along with equine knowledge. Pony Club IQ offers current horse health care topics written by reputable equine veterinary professionals in an organized format.

As a Professional Member, you may purchase educational packages which fit your unique needs, providing access to comprehensive resources to help teach basic horse care, riding skills, and equine science topics to your students. Packages include Achievement Badge workbooks and guides for Horse Management and riding skills. Introductory level certification materials, which includes a complimentary e-membership for your students, end-of-year teacher and student materials.

Even if you have no previous affiliation to Pony Club you will be able to use these exceptional materials in your day to day instruction.

Lesson Plans

Mounted and unmounted lesson plans have been organized by broad topics and are designed to help students master horse management and riding and increase general horse knowledge. Lesson plans can be modified and adjusted to teach students at every skill level.

Access Lesson Plans
Lesson Topic: Taking Vital Signs

Objective of Lesson: To teach students vital signs of the horse and how to check them.

Needed:
· A few quiet school horses
· Thermometer
· Lube (water based)
· Cotton
· Stopwatch
· Stethoscope
· Pen and paper to record vitals

How the lesson is explained
· It is good to know your horse’s vital signs, so you know what is normal.
· Every horse or pony is different but temperature, pulse and respiration have normal ranges.
· Explain where each vital sign is taken and the normal ranges.

How to demonstrate the lesson:
Use a quiet school horse to demonstrate. Explain why a good digital thermometer is much more effective than a mercury thermometer (mercury is dangerous and toxic if a glass thermometer breaks). Explain where the points on the horse where the pulse can be taken are. Explain how the pointer finger and middle finger together are the best way to get an accurate pulse since the human thumb can actually give you the human pulse.

Explain how to take the temperature (99-101°F). Explain what to do if a horse gets anxious. Explain why a good digital thermometer is much more effective than an old mercury thermometer (mercury is dangerous and toxic if a glass thermometer breaks).

Take pulse (36-44 beats per minute). Show the different points on the horse where the pulse can be taken. Explain how using the pointer finger and middle finger together are the best way to get an accurate pulse since the human thumb can actually give you the human pulse.

Explain how a stopwatch is used, counting beats for 15 seconds and multiplying by 4. Take respiration (8-16 Breaths per minute). Explain it is most accurate to use a stethoscope, but that watching the horses sides can also be effective. Use the same time (15 seconds) and count using a stopwatch, then multiply by 4.

How students will apply and practice what they are learning in this lesson:
Students can practice what they have learned on their own horses or school horses. If practicing as part of a class, have students divide in pairs or groups of 2-4.

How the lesson is reviewed and wrapped up:
Students can use this information to keep their own horses vitals for health purposes.

Reference:
Lesson Topic: Warm Up - Mounted

Objectives of Lesson:

1) Demonstrate mount’s warm up routine for everyday work, 2) discuss students’ warm up—both rider and mount.

How the lesson is explained:

- What happens at the beginning of a lesson or ride?—warm up
- Why is this important?—to get the horse warmed up, supple
- What sorts of things do you work on in your lessons and schooling sessions and/or movements and criteria for your competition level?
  - Figures
  - Contact
  - Forward movement
  - Balance
  - Rider position & effective
- Components of a good warm up
  - Variety—change
  - Moving on and off the rail
  - Not running into other riders

How to demonstrate:

Riders will ride for themselves as they experiment under the instructor’s guidance as their ride progresses.

1. Have rider(s) go out and take 5 minutes to demonstrate their warm up for flat, start with warm up exercises and walk.
   - Discuss the first aspects of the warm up:
     - How is the horse responding to the environment?
     - Did rider choose the exercises they did (help them with the answers if they say “what my instructor/trainer told me”)
     - How is the horse feeling—left to right? Front to back? Response to leg, hand, seat?
   - Have rider(s) go out again for another 5 minutes working at the trot.
     - Discuss more of the warm up:
       - Is the horse still listening?
• Are transitions between walk and trot smooth? Responsive? Balanced? Explain how to feel all of those.

• Have rider(s) go out again for a final 5 minutes working at the trot and canter to experiment with directions and transitions.
  o Discuss the final parts of the warm up.
    ▪ Are transitions between trot and canter smooth?
    ▪ Is there a better or worse direction for the mount?
    ▪ Is the rider staying balanced and secure at all three gaits? What can they do to improve?

• End of warm up/transition to “work” questions:
  o What did the rider struggle with?
  o What needs more work in position or balance?
  o Assist the rider in coming up with key points to work on, awareness of the aids and position, and their balance and security going.

How students will apply and practice what they are learning in this lesson:

Students will actively do the lesson, talk about it, and set the parameters for what they work on moving forward. The instructor would assist them in building the warm up as they add skills to their riding.

How the lesson is reviewed and wrapped up:

Students will critique their warm up in discussion with the instructor who will ask questions and guide the discussion. As the ride moves on to the bulk of a typical hour long lesson, the instructor can refer back to the warm up and how the beginning work affects the later work. Future lessons on this subject will solidify and build the student’s knowledge and plan for a warm up, as well as giving them confidence in the discussion.

References: