



HorseSense Learning Levels

LEVEL UP QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Rainbow

QUESTIONS and ANSWERS for each page in the STUDY GUIDE

Page 5 - Mounted Safety

- What kind of clothing should we wear when we're riding?**
Riders wear long stretchy pants or leggings; close fitting shirt; boots with a smooth sole and a heel.
- Why are boots with a smooth sole and a heel important when you're riding?**
Boots will keep your feet from sliding through the stirrups.
- Why is it a bad idea to wear loose, dangling jewelry when you ride?**
Jewelry that is loose could get caught on your tack and hurt you.

Page 6 - Mounted Safety

- Why should you always wear a helmet, every time, every ride?**
Your helmet will protect your head if you fall off the pony.
- How can you tell that your helmet is sitting level on your head?**
Your helmet should sit over your eyebrows, not above your forehead.
- How can you tell if your helmet fits tightly enough?**
It should be tight enough that your eyebrows wiggle when you lift the brim up and down.
- How can you tell that your helmet's chin strap is adjusted correctly?**
It should be adjusted so the chin strap touches your skin, and can't come off.
- Why must you remember not to eat or to chew gum when you are mounted on your pony?**
If your pony gets startled and moves suddenly you could choke on any gum or candy in your mouth.
- If you have long hair, why should you pull it back before you ride?**
Long hair could get caught in your tack, so always pull it back into a PONY TAIL!

Page 7 - Unmounted Safety

- When you walk up to touch your pony, what part of his body is the safest for you to approach?**
Approach your pony at his shoulder or neck.
- What might happen if you approach a pony from in front of his face or behind his tail and startle him?**
He might get scared and try to run away or kick you.
- Can your pony see you if you stand directly behind his tail?**
No - he can only see you if you stand far in front of him or stand by his side.
- What does it mean when your pony's ears are pricked forward?**
It means he's alert and listening.
- What does it mean when your pony's ears are splayed and droopy?**
It means your pony is bored or sleepy.
- What should I do when your pony pins his ears against his head?**
He's warning you that he's mad, so you should move a safe distance away.

Page 8 - Unmounted Safety

- Why should you keep a hand on your pony's body while you're working around him, grooming him or tacking up?**
If you keep a hand on your pony's body while you're grooming and tacking up he will always know where you are, even when he can't see you.
- How should you safely walk around your pony's hind end?**
Put your hand on him first, then keep your hand on him as you walk very closely around him.

Page 9 - Hoof Care

- Why is it important to clean your pony's feet before every ride?**
Your pony's feet must be cleaned to make sure there are no rocks lodged in his feet that would make it difficult for him to carry a rider.
- What does it mean to "pick out" a pony's feet?**
When you "pick out" a pony's feet you use a hoof pick to remove dirt and rocks from the bottom of his feet.

- It's important to clean around your pony's frog before you ride -- where is the frog located?**

The frog is on the bottom of your pony's feet.

Page 10 - Grooming

- Why is it important to groom our pony before every ride?**

Grooming will remove the dirt and sweat that could rub under your pony's tack and cause sores.

- How should you move a currycomb so that it loosens dirt on your pony's body?**

Move the currycomb in small circles.

- Why is it a bad idea to use a currycomb on your pony's face or legs?**

Your pony's face and legs are sensitive and the currycomb might hurt him.

- What grooming tool has stiff bristles to sweep away loose dirt and dust from your horse's body?**

Use a dandy brush to sweep away loose dirt and dust from the horse's body.

- Which brush is soft enough to use on your pony's sensitive face and legs?**

Use a body brush on your pony's face and lower legs.

Page 11 - Tack

- What is "tack"?**

The tack is all of the equipment we use to ride and to lead our horses.

- Show me the piece of tack we call a "saddle". Which is the girth? Which is the bridle? Which is the saddle pad?**

(use real tack or a photo or illustration)

- What two items of tack do you use to lead and tie your pony safely?**

Use a halter with a lead rope to lead and tie your pony safely.

Page 12 - Tack

- You are tacking up for a ride: what goes on your pony first, the saddle or bridle?**

The saddle goes on first; the bridle is always the LAST thing you put on the pony before you ride.

- What is a "stirrup"?**

A stirrup is piece of tack that attaches to the saddle to hold our feet in place.

- What do we call the big strap that buckles around the pony's belly and holds the saddle on his back?**
The girth is the big strap that holds the saddle onto the pony's back.

Page 13 - Tack

- When putting on the bridle, where do you put the reins?**
Reins go over the pony's head to keep them off the ground while you put on the bridle.
- What is a "bit"?**
A piece of metal that is attached to the bridle and the reins; the bit goes in the pony's mouth. We can use the bit to tell the pony to turn or stop.
- When tacking up or leading your pony, is it VERY dangerous to let the reins hang down or touch the ground. What could happen?**
Your pony could step on the loose reins and get caught; it will hurt his mouth and could scare him.

Page 14 - Ground Handling

- When you lead your pony, you should look straight ahead -- not back at your pony. Why?**
Looking ahead tells your pony where to go.
- When leading your pony by the reins, it is important to hold one hand under the bit, and use the other hand to hold the reins. Is it okay to wrap the reins around your hand?**
No - the reins should be folded so that they do NOT wrap around your hand.
- If you are leading your pony and he gets too close to you, how can you tell him to move away?**
Flap your elbow like a chicken.

Page 15 - Mounted Safety

- You and your pony are all tacked up, standing in the arena, ready to ride. What must happen before you can mount on your pony?**
Your instructor must do a safety check to make sure you, your tack, and your pony are all safe for riding.
- What is a "safety check"?**
Your instructor will check both you and your tack to make sure that everything is securely fastened and safe for riding.
- What could happen if your pony's girth is too loose?**
If your girth is loose your saddle could slip and you could fall off.

Page 16 - Mounted Safety

- What does it mean to "mount" your pony?**
When you mount your pony you climb on his back for riding.
- What is a "mounting block"?**
A mounting block is short, sturdy block with stairs that you can climb to help you mount your pony.
- Sometimes your instructor helps you mount by holding your leg and lifting you into the saddle. What do we call this?**
When someone helps you mount by holding your leg they "give you a leg up."
- When mounting your pony, you put your left foot in the stirrup and swing your right leg up and over the back of the saddle. Why should you be careful to sit down gently?**
Sit gently in the saddle so that you don't hurt the pony's back and scare him.

Page 17 - Flatwork Skills

- When you ride in a good balanced position you are like a 'tower of blocks'; show me your good riding position.**
(eyes up and looking ahead; hands down; elbows bent; heels down; and head, shoulders, hips and heels all lined up)
- There are two reasons why is it important to ride with a good balanced position, with your head, hands, seat, legs, and feet all in the correct places. What are they?**
A correct riding position keeps you safe and makes your pony's job easier and more comfortable.
- Show me what "diver toes" look like. If you ride with diver toes, do you have a good balanced position?**
When your toes point down - with your heels up - it tips your body forward so that you are NOT in a good balanced position.
- Show me what a "chair seat" looks like. If you ride in a chair seat, do you have a good balanced position?**
Pushing your legs too far forward and leaning back in your seat like you are sitting in an easy chair will make it hard to keep your pony moving forward; if you ride like this you are NOT in a good balanced position.
- Show me what a "stiff elbows" look like. If you ride with stiff elbows, do you have a good balanced position?**
Holding your arms straight, with no bend in your elbow, will hurt your pony's mouth and make it hard to control him, and is NOT a good balanced position.

- Show me what "conductor hands" look like. If you ride with conductor hands, do you have a good balanced position?**

If you ride with your hands held up high above the saddle, like a conductor waving a baton, it will hurt your pony's mouth and make it hard for you to control him; this is NOT a good balanced position.

- Show me what "perching" looks like. If you perch when you ride, do you have a good balanced position?**

Perching, or squeezing with your knees when you ride, will tip your body forward so that you are NOT in a good balanced position.

Page 18 - Flatwork Skills

- When you hold the reins correctly, where should your thumbs point?**

Your thumbs should point up towards the pony's ears when you hold the reins.

- Which is better: holding the reins high above the saddle, or holding the reins low over the pony's withers?**

Reins should be held low, just above the pony's withers.

- What might happen if your reins are too long?**

Holding reins that are too long could let you lose control of your pony.

- What might happen if your reins are too short?**

Holding reins that are too short could hurt your pony's mouth.

Page 19 - Flatwork Skills

- Why do you start your ride with warm-up stretches?**

Warm-up stretches will help your muscles get loose so your body moves easily when practicing your riding skills.

- Can you name one warm-up stretch you might do when riding?**

Windmills, ear touches, tail touches, toe touches, stirrup stands, Around the World are all examples of warm-up stretches.

- When you are doing warm-up exercises, your instructor holds your pony while you go "Around the World". What does this mean?**

To go "Around the World", take your feet out of the stirrups, lift one leg and turn your body sideways in the saddle, then turn backwards, then turn sideways on the opposite side, then around to the front again.

Page 20 - Flatwork Skills

- Your pony can't understand what we mean when we talk to him using words. How can you tell the pony what you want him to do?**
We use signals - called aids - to talk to our pony with our seat, hands, legs, and voice.
- What signals do you give to tell your pony to walk forward?**
Sit tall in the saddle, look ahead, and squeeze with your legs to tell your pony to go forward.
- What signals do you give your pony to tell him to stop?**
Tell you pony to stop by tightening your tummy muscles and sitting deep and still, then squeeze your fingers on the reins, and say "Whoa" in a low voice.

Page 21 - Flatwork Skills

- When you want your pony to turn, what is the very FIRST signal you give him?**
Turn your head and look in the direction you want him to go.

Page 22 - Jumping Skills

- When riding in your lesson, your instructor asks you to move into "two-point" or "jumping" position, which is how we ride over ground poles. Show me your two-point position.**
(Hands forward and holding some of pony's mane; heels down; seat just a few inches above saddle; knees and hips bent; shoulders over your knees.)

Page 23 - Jumping Skills

- If you look down at the ground poles when practicing your jumping position, what might happen?**
Looking down while you're riding will tip your body forward, and you might fall off.

Page 24 - Gaits and Movement

- What do we call it when our pony is moving with a fast, bouncy jogging motion?**
When your pony moves at a fast, bouncy jog we call it a "trot".
- Which is faster, a walk or a trot?**
A trot is faster than a walk.

Page 25 - Mounted Safety

- Why is it important to cool down your pony at a walk after you ride him?**
If his muscles don't cool down they could get sore or he could get sick.

- Your pony is warm and sweaty after you untack him. What can you do to help him get cool and clean?**

Use a wet sponge, a wet brush or a hose to wash off the sweat, then scrape the water off his body with a sweat scraper.

Page 26 - Feeding and Nutrition

- Can you name two foods that make good treats for your pony?**

Carrots, apples, peppermints, and horse cookies are all acceptable treats for most ponies - but make sure you ask first!

- Why should you ALWAYS ask permission before giving a horse a treat?**

Some horses have special rules about feeding, or may have to eat their treat in a bucket. Too many treats can teach a pony to push and bite.

- Show me the safe way to offer your pony a treat. What might happen if you don't keep your hand flat?**

Your hand should be flat and still; if not, your pony might accidentally bite your fingers.

Page 27 - Stable and Facility Mgmt.

- Our ponies can't take care of themselves - they need us to take care of them. Can you name three things your pony needs us to do every single day?**

He needs to be fed every day, with grass or hay (he might need a little bit of grain); he needs fresh, clean water at all times; he needs a salt block in his stall and paddock; he needs his stall and paddock cleaned EVERY day.

Page 28 - Pony Parts and Anatomy

- Your pony has lots of special names for parts of his body. Can you name 5 pony parts and tell me where they're located?**

(any 5 from Pony Parts chart)

Page 29 - Breeds and Breed Types

- We call different types of horses "breeds". What breed is your pony?**

(correct breed: quarter horse, appaloosa, paint, thoroughbred, arabian, morgan, grade, etc.)

Page 30 - Colors and Markings

- Horses come in many different colors. What color is your pony?**

(correct horse color: chestnut, Palomino, black, pinto, brown, roan, bay, Appaloosa, gray, etc.)

- Does your pony have any markings? Where are they located?

(location of markings - correct name of marking isn't required)

Page 31 - Horse ID

- When we measure a pony's height, we count the number of hands (4 inches) from the ground to his withers. How many hands tall is your pony? Is he officially a horse or a pony?

(answers will vary - equines under 14.2 hands are ponies)

Page 32 - Horse ID

- Your pony is a gelding - does this mean a boy horse or a girl horse?

He's an adult male.

- Your pony is a "mare" - is that a girl or a boy horse?

She's an adult female horse.