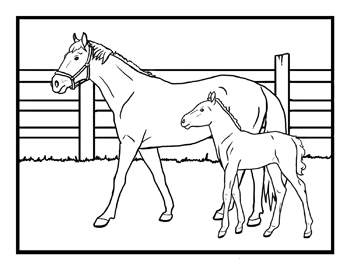
**Horse Lesson**

**Concept Objective:** Horses, use and care

**Time:** 40-45 minutes

**Setting:** Indoors

**Activities:** Discussion: Horse Facts, Parts of a Horse, and Horse Care and Considerations; What Does a Horse Eat?; Horse Puppet; How Tall is a Horse?; Trail Mix



**Materials Needed:**

Measuring Tapes

Pencils

Worksheets

Paper Bags (lunch size)

Scissors

Glue Sticks

Crayons

Plastic Horse Models

Horse Brush for demo

Horse Food Pictures

Paper

Tape

**Procedure:**

1. Discuss horses, history, how to act around a horse, and Horse Care Considerations.
2. Look at the Parts of a Horse page and discuss.
3. Do the What do Horses Eat? Activity.
4. Make Horse Puppets.
5. Make Horsetail Bookmarks
6. Optional activities: Horse Trail Mix and How Tall is a Horse Activity.

**Background for Educators:**

Horses have been useful animals for thousands of years. The horse has served human beings as a very important tool in progressing with the times. It was once stated, “history was written on the back of a horse.” Horses were a fixture of many ancient civilizations. Horses enabled faster communication, travel, proved excellent allies in war and helped to transform agriculture.

Here are some fast facts about horses for young children:

* A male horse is called a stallion.
* A female horse is called a mare.
* A young male horse is called a colt.
* A young female horse is called a filly.
* Ponies are small horses.
* There are over 350 breeds of ponies and horses.
* Horses walk, trot, canter and gallop.
* Horses live in pastures and stables
* Looking at a horse’s teeth will reveal its age.
* Horses are herbivores; their diet consists mostly of grass and hay.
* A horse can drink about 10 gallons of hours a day.
* Horses communicate through their facial expressions. Horses display changes in mood through their ears, eyes and nostrils.
* Horses can sleep both lying down and standing up.
* Horses can run shortly after birth.
* Domestic horses have a lifespan of around 25 years.
* Horses have been domesticated for over 5000 years.
* Horses are herbivores (plant eaters).
* Horses have bigger eyes than any other mammal that lives on land.
* Because horse’s eyes are on the side of their head they are capable of seeing nearly 360 degrees at one time.
* Horses gallop at around 44 kph (27 mph).
* The fastest recorded sprinting speed of a horse was 88 kph (55 mph).

**Early Years**

A horse under the age of 5 is known as a colt if male, and filly if female. "Foal" is a term that normally describes a newborn or very young horse.

A thoroughbred horse is considered 1 year old or a "yearling" on January 1--no matter when during the previous year it was actually born. The movements of 12-month-old horses still lack coordination and their legs are still long compared to the body, but this is the time in their life cycle where their body is beginning to fill out.

**Middle and Late Years**

The middle years are the time period in a horse's life cycle when it is 5 to 10 years old and fully formed. After this are the late years, when circulation might be reduced and joints might be-come puffy, normally slowing horses down.

**Behavior Around a Horse**

**Never Go Behind the Horse**

Tell the children to never go behind a horse unless they give it a huge distance of safety. Edu-cate them as to the reason why. Explain that a horse cannot see directly behind them and that a sudden, or even slow, movement behind them can startle them and cause them to kick. Have a horse on hand to show a safe distance from the rear and also show them the size of the horse's foot and how badly it would hurt to be kicked by one.

**No Sudden Movements, Please!**

Children tend to become very active when excited. It is important that they show some restraint when they are around horses. Screaming and flailing children are not safe around horses, even well-trained ones. Again, have a horse on hand to show them the difference between sudden movements and slow, deliberate ones. Showing them the horse's reaction rather than just telling them about it makes a big difference. Children are very visual and need these aids to help remember.

**Please Don't Pat My Nose**

Contrary to popular belief, horses do not like having their noses stroked. Their nostrils are in-tensely sensitive, and a person coming at them with a hand to their nose is the equivalent of a stranger coming towards you and wanting to touch your mouth and face in greeting. Instead, show them the "hello" place for a horse, which is where his neck meets his shoulder. By touching and caressing him there, a person is saying "hello" to a horse in familiar body language. This makes a difference in how the horse receives you.

**Horse Care and Considerations**

Like any companion animal, horses require care. Horses, however, need a lot more care than dogs, cats or goldfish. If you’ve always wanted a horse, it’s important to understand both the financial and time commitment required for horse ownership.

Owning a horse is a financial investment and buying a horse is just the first step. You’ll need at least 1.5 of land per horse for turnout, and it must be properly fenced both to contain your horses and keep them from harm. In some parts of the country, you’ll need to keep predators such as coyotes, wolves and mountain lions out of the paddock.

Horses in their natural state are grazing animals. They nibble on grass throughout the day, receiving a steady stream of fodder and water. Because they don’t regulate how much food they eat and will gorge on feed if they have access to a lot of it, you have to provide food in measured intervals twice daily. You also have to make sure that horses always have a supply of fresh, clean water.

If your horse is kept inside a stall, he must have clean footing underneath. You can’t let manure or waste build up. This can provide a breeding ground for flies, as well as ruin you horse’s hooves and health. Daily stall cleaning is a must to ensure your horse’s health and happiness.

Horse care also means caring for the stable and tack, which includes the saddle, bridle, halter, lead rope and blankets. Leather should be conditioned and cleaned regularly to keep it soft, supple and comfortable for your horse. Blankets and saddle pads should be laundered so mud and sweat don’t build up on them, causing your horse skin discomfort.

Other stable chores include sweeping dust and manure from the aisles and removing cobwebs from the ceiling and light fixtures. Stable cobwebs collect dust from hay and shavings and can become fire hazards.

Regular vet checks are important for the health and wellbeing of your horse. All horses need vaccinations and regular deworming. Vaccination recommendations vary based on age, the amount the horse travels and location, so it is best to consult with your veterinarian. Worms can cause weight loss, poor coat and colic. It is best to have your veterinarian perform a fecal egg count test and advise you on which dewormers to use throughout the year. It is equally important to minimize your horse’s exposure to parasites. Proper management entails not putting too many horses on too little land, rotating pastures if possible, and removing manure regularly.

Horses are social animals who are physiologically most sound when they have the ability to roam and interact with other horses. Of course, not all horses thrive in 24/7 turnout and not all horse owners have access to large areas of land. If your horse is stalled, be mindful of providing him socialization and enrichment opportunities, and provide daily turnout if possible. If your horse does live outside, make sure he has access to a safe shelter at all times.

Unless it is very wet and windy, horses tolerate cold much better than heat and humidity. On hot and humid days, it is important to provide your horse with plenty of fresh water, minerals and access to adequate shade. In extreme heat, use caution and limit forced exercise. Likewise, during extreme cold weather, make sure your horse has access to shelter and the ability to protect himself from moisture and wind. Some horses may require a waterproof blanket for additional warmth.

Hooves should be trimmed every six to eight weeks by a qualified farrier. Depending on your horse’s activity level, the environment and his body type, your horse may need shoes. Your farrier will be able to recommend the best course of action to keep your horse’s hooves strong and well-balanced.

Horses’ teeth grow continuously. Uneven wear can lead to sharp points and edges that cause pain and difficulty chewing. A horse’s teeth should be checked once or twice a year and “floated” (filed to make them smoother) by a veterinarian. Dental problems, from painful points to rotting teeth, may cause difficulty chewing or “quidding,” which occurs when food falls out of the mouth. Other signs of dental disease may include foul breath, undigested hay in the stools or discomfort from the bit or noseband. Dental disease can lead to choke (esophageal blockage), colic and weight loss.

**Typical Daily Horse Chores:**

* Feed horses hay and/or grain morning and night.
* Clean and refill water buckets morning and night.
* Muck out stalls morning and night. Mucking means picking out the manure and urine spots.
* Replace fresh bedding.
* Check and pick out hooves daily.
* Remove blankets in the morning and replace in the evening during winter months.
* Spray horse with fly spray or insect repellant morning and evening during summer months.
* Turn your horse out daily for exercise so he can walk around, stretch his legs, roll and get some fresh grass and sunshine.
* Exercise your horse at least several times a week by riding him in the ring, on a trail or lunging him, which is exercising him on a long rein.

All of this may seem like a lot of work. It is – but it’s a labor of love to someone who has always dreamed about owning horses or ponies. How to care for a horse means learning not just how to groom your horse, but also how to care for all of their basic needs.

**What Do Horses Eat?**

*Materials*

Laminated Photos of Horse Foods

Tape

Paper

1. It is important for horses to eat a healthy diet. Talk with the students how they should eat a healthy meal with the right amount of fruits, vegetables, protein, grains and dairy. Horses also need to eat a meal with the right amount of forage and grains.
2. Talk about forage. Forages are leafy green plants that can be found in hay and your horse’s pasture. Hay is normally found in square bales or big round bales. Forages are the fruits and vegetables in our meals. It’s important that horses eat good quality hay. Hay should be green, free of any dust or mold, and have lots of leaves! Pick out of the pictures what could be forage for a horse.
3. Talk about grains: Grain is seeds from plants that are grown in farmers’ fields that can be used to feed horses. We eat grain in bread, granola bars, oatmeal, noodles and rice. There are many different types of grains that horses can eat. Pick out of the pictures what could be forage for a horse.
4. Create a horse diet. Have students make some horse meals. Have them mix up the photos and tape them onto the paper. Some feeds for horses

**Horse Puppets:**

*Materials*

Horse Puppet Template

Paper lunch bags

Glue

Scissors

Crayons

1. Have the students color the template and then cut them out, assisting them if needed. The bag can also be colored to match their template.
2. Demonstrate how to glue the horse’s nose to the bottom edge of the bag, the eyes, ears, and hair to the bag ‘face,’ and the tongue under the flap of the bottom of the bag. Make sure that the tongue section shows when the bag is flat.
3. Demonstrate how to glue the legs to the back of the bag.
4. You can add an optional yarn tail to the back of the bag if you wish. Tape 4-5 strands of yarn together and tape to back.

**Horse Trail Mix:**

This clever treat contains items that represent the foods horses eat.

Ingredients: Mini shredded wheat, dried apples, corn nuts, and cheerios

Instructions Mix a cup of each ingredient into a bowl. The mini shredded wheat represents hay, the dried apples represent apple treats, the cheerios represent oats, and the corn nuts are the corn. Dish out a small amount to each child and have a discussion about the foods that horses eat.

Qr code

Description automatically generated

Diagram

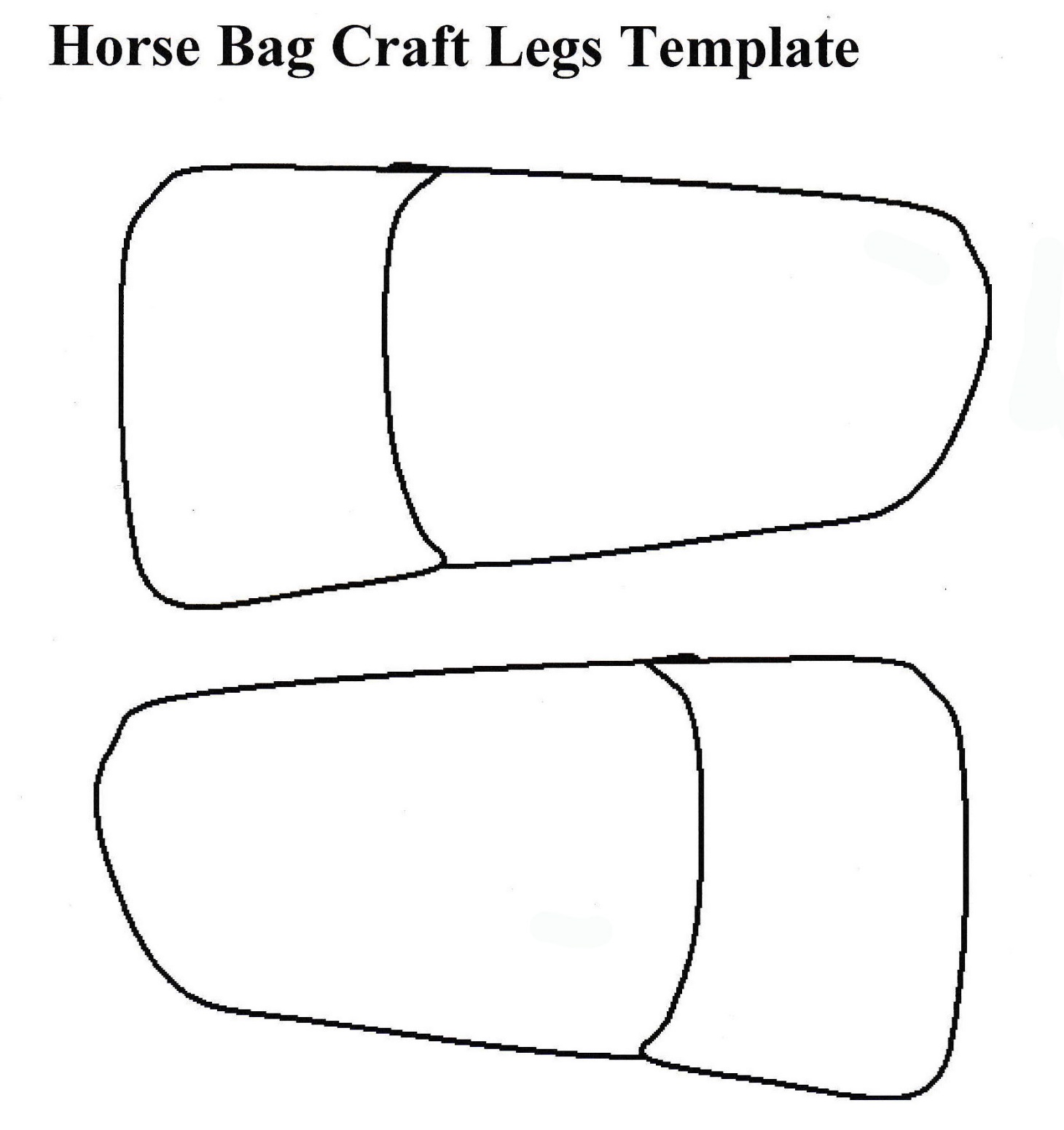
Description automatically generated

A picture containing letter

Description automatically generated

Shape, circle

Description automatically generated



Diagram

Description automatically generated