

Horse Sampler – Junior

There is more to horses than just jumping on to ride. In this badge you will explore a few of the many facets of the horses at Camp Sycamore Hills.

Steps:

- 1) Make New Friends
- 2) The Color of Friendship
- 3) What Goes In Must Come Out
- 4) In Your Hands
- 5) Gymkhana

Purpose:

When I've earned this badge, I will have sampled many different aspects of horses.

Step 1 - Make New Friends

Horses have social groups similar to humans. They have their own personalities, ways of expressing emotions and communicating with each other. The best way to make new friends is to learn how to talk to them.

- A)** From a safe spot, watch a group of Camp Sycamore Hills horses for at least 20 minutes. Observe the horses for different behaviors, and think about what you see. Do you recognize behaviors from your troop or your class? Is there a leader, a bully or a quiet one in the group? Record your observations and discuss what you saw and what surprised you about the behaviors.

AND/OR

- B)** Learn how to read their body language and how to 'speak' horse back. In an arena or pen, ask a horse to move from one place to another without touching him (or his halter) and without using your voice. Try asking for forward movement, stops, and turns. If you have a group of people, ask a horse to go through a small obstacle course or into a box marked on the ground. If you have a large group, try it with more than one horse.

Step 2 – The Color of Friendship

Horses come in all shapes and sizes, from different places and in all different colors, just like people. These things make people unique, and they make horses unique, too!

- A)** How do you tell the difference between a chestnut and a bay? What is that golden color called? What is the difference between a paint and a pinto? Learn about the colors of horses represented in the barn. Then go on a colors scavenger hunt! How many horse colors does the herd at Camp Sycamore Hills have?

OR

- B)** Ever wonder why a Quarter Horse is called a Quarter horse? That could be a question you answer as you learn about different breeds of horses. Choose four breeds you met at Camp Sycamore Hills, and find out where they originated. Explain some special features for which each breed is known. Which of those breeds do you think would suit you best and why?

Step 3 – What Goes In.....

You've heard the old saying... 'what goes in must come out'. That is true for every living creature on our planet. But what does a horse eat?

- A)** Horses need a balanced diet just like people. Discover what kinds of foods are available for horses. What are some of the differences in those foods? Look at the differences in protein, fat and sugars in at least two different types of commercial feeds for horses. Using the nutritional information included on the feedbag, determine how much protein, fat and sugars are contained in one pound of feed.

OR

- B)** The food a horse eats is digested and processed into important nutrients that keep a horse healthy. But what about what comes out? Learn what is actually in manure, and help muck out a stall to keep it clean and fresh.

Step 4 – In Your Hands

Hundreds of years ago, horses were controlled by simple leather thongs around their heads or necks. Today, we use bridles with bits to control our horse. But how does a bit actually work?

- A)** Different horses need different types and styles of bits. Learn about at least three different types of bits and the differences between those bits.

AND

- B)** Play the Bit Game! With a partner, practice steering using different bits with reins to see how much pressure it takes for your “horse” to feel your instructions. One partner will be the “horse” and one the “rider.” The “horse” holds both hands out in front with her thumbs up and holds the bit between her index fingers and thumbs, while the “rider” stands behind the “horse” and holds the reins as if she is riding. While playing the Bit Game, think about why a horse should never be tied with the bridle reins.

Step 5 – Gymkhana

Gymkhana is a word for an event where participants play many different kinds of games. There are many different games that can be played on horseback, from horse-specific games, like barrel racing, to games you can play on foot such as Shadow Tag!

- A)** Learn about some common types of games on horseback, such as barrel racing, pole bending or even ‘tag’. Under supervision of an instructor, try playing these games. Remember, all of these games can be done at a walk and are still exciting. Don’t forget to cheer for your teammates!

OR

- B)** Learn about three common games played in Tennessee on horseback. This can include competition games like barrel racing or sport games, like polo. Use your artistic skills and draw a diagram of how the game is played. Share your new ‘games book’ with your group!

Congratulations! You have earned the *Horse Sampler* badge! You can add this badge to your Journeys. You might collect ideas for a Take Action project involving horses, or think about some of activities that interested you in this badge and explore them further for your aMUSEment.

Service:

Now that I’ve earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Helping Brownies or Daisies learn about horses and safety.
- Volunteering my time at an equine rescue and help with barn chores like feeding or mucking.