

## Lesson Twenty-Three: Horses

### *Read-aloud: Chapter Twenty-Three*

Ever since she was a little girl, Taylor had loved horses. She had always wanted one, but their yard wasn't big enough to keep a horse in. Now that they had the goats, Taylor knew there *definitely* wasn't room for a horse - but that didn't stop her from loving horses, wishing she had one, or taking advantage of every opportunity to look at, feed, or pet any horse that she could get close to.

Uncle Ian had a number of clients who had horses, and while most of them didn't bring their horses to the clinic, sometimes Taylor was able to go with Uncle Ian on farm calls and watch him give horses vaccinations or treat them for some type of illness or injury.

One morning, as Taylor was coming in from milking the goats, Mrs. Flemming met her at the back door.

"Taylor, Uncle Ian is on the phone. He wants to talk to you. Here, I'll take that," Mrs. Flemming took the stainless steel milk bucket from Taylor and went into the kitchen to strain the milk and put it in the refrigerator.

Taylor picked up the phone.

"Good morning, Uncle Ian!" she said happily.

"Good morning, Taylor," he replied. "I just talked to your mom and she said I could ask you if you wanted to go to Fox Run Ranch with me."

"Yes!" Taylor squealed excitedly, without a moment's hesitation.

Fox Run Ranch was a farm that raised beautiful Quarter Horses. They had over a hundred horses - brood mares, several stallions, and usually at least a dozen young foals and yearlings.

Taylor thought it was one of the most wonderful places in the world.

The farm was over an hour away, so Uncle Ian didn't go there very often, and usually when he did, Taylor didn't get to go with him, so she was excited at the opportunity to go.

She thanked Uncle Ian, hung up the phone, ran into the kitchen, washed her hands and ate a banana, hugged her mom, pulled on her

sneakers, and ran over to Uncle Ian's.

Her uncle was outside, putting some bottles into the refrigerated drawers in the back of his truck.

"How did you get ready that fast?" he teased her.

Taylor grinned. "It's a secret," she told him.

He laughed. "Okay, okay, don't tell me. Just get in."

Taylor opened the passenger door and climbed up into the truck.

Uncle Ian got in the driver's seat, they both fastened their seat belts, and then they began the drive to Fox Run Ranch.

The trip seemed to take forever, but finally they pulled into a long, winding driveway, lined with oak trees.

Acres and acres of rolling pasture was fenced off with white wooden fencing. There were horses grazing along both sides of the driveway, and the landscape was dotted with several small, tidy-looking white barns.

"This place looks like it should be on a postcard," Taylor told Uncle Ian.

They parked near the main barn, and Mr. Grantland, the farm manager - a big man with a red face and a big, booming voice - came out of the barn, wiping his hands on a towel.

"Hey, doc!" he said cheerfully, shaking Uncle Ian's hand heartily, and then he said "And hello, Miss Taylor," shaking Taylor's hand more gently.

"Hi, Mr. Grantland," Taylor said.

Mr. Grantland led Uncle Ian and Taylor into the big barn, which was lined with stalls along both sides of the main corridor.

Taylor breathed deeply - she loved the smell of horses!

Uncle Ian started going from stall to stall, administering varying treatments to each of the beautiful animals that Mr. Grantland told him needed his attention.

Taylor stayed in the corridor with Mr. Grantland.

As Uncle Ian worked, Taylor started talking with Mr. Grantland about being the farm manager.

"So what do you have to do every day?" Taylor asked him.

"Well, basically I just keep an eye on all of the horses and make sure they're all taken care of and none of them are sick or injured, and if any of them need veterinary care I call your uncle. And I make sure we

always have enough feed and the supplies that we need to care for the horses, and I make sure that all the horses get checked regularly by a farrier, and I pay special attention to the pregnant mares and make sure everything's going well, and also I have to keep a close eye on the young foals and make sure they're growing properly and make sure they don't get sick."

"Wow. You do a lot," Taylor was impressed.

Mr. Grantland laughed. "Yes, it is a lot. But I love my job - I've always loved horses, ever since I was a little kid."

"Me too!" Taylor told him.

They watched Uncle Ian give an injection to a shiny-coated chestnut mare, then Taylor said, "Taking care of horses is a lot of work, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is. You need to be careful what you feed them, you have to make sure they always have water and shelter, their stalls have to be cleaned regularly, you have to make sure their hooves are regularly trimmed and shod, you have to groom them ... it's not easy. But I think it's worth it."

A beautiful dark bay horse with a white spot on her forehead stuck her head out of her stall and whinnied at Mr. Grantland.

"Hey, Raquel," he laughed and rubbed the horse's soft nose.

"See what I mean? Horses are just such awesome animals. They're worth all the effort it takes to care for them."

Taylor reached out her hand to the horse, who sniffed Taylor, then nickered softly.

Taylor petted Raquel's face, then reached up and scratched gently around her ears.

Soon Uncle Ian was finished and they had to go, but for the rest of the day Taylor wished that she had a ranch full of horses, and she decided that one day, when she grew up to be a sheep farmer, she was going to have a couple of horses as well.

## Lesson Twenty-Three: Horses

### *Researching*

Answer the following questions about horse care.

1. Is it okay to keep a horse in a stable all the time? Why or why not?
2. What is the minimum amount of land you should have to keep a horse?
3. How often should a horse's stall be cleaned out?
4. What does a farrier do for horses, and how often should a horse be seen by a farrier?
5. How often should stabled horses be groomed?
6. Does barbed wire make good fencing for horses?

## Lesson Twenty-Three: Horses

### *True or False*

Label the following statement about horse care “true” or “false.”

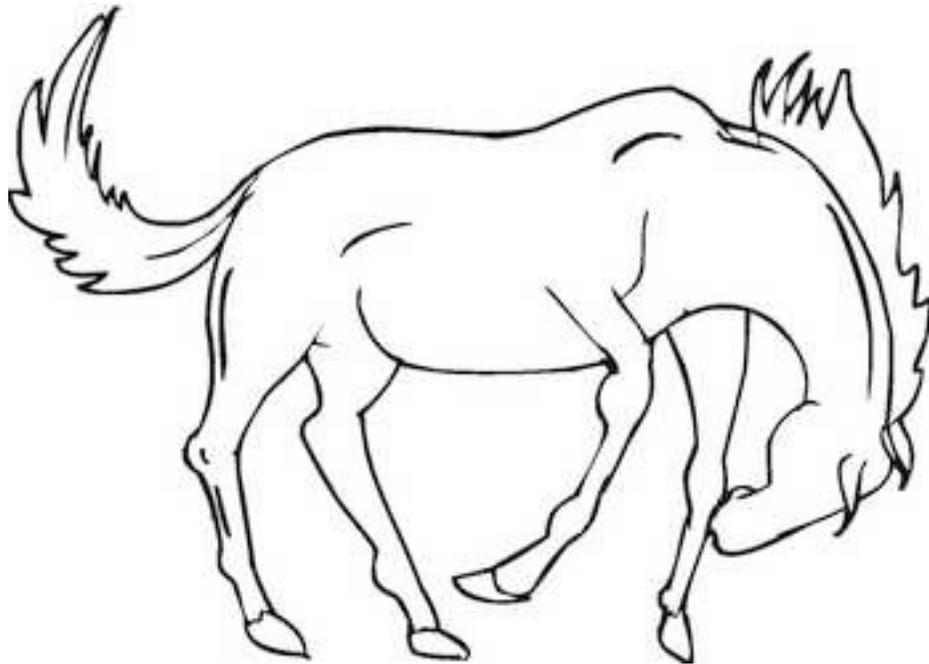
1. All horses need to eat grain every day.
2. Horses drink more in cold weather if they are given warm water.
3. Horses should never be groomed before they are ridden.
4. Horses should be bathed at least twice a year.
5. Horses should be vaccinated regularly.
6. Horses’ legs can be bandaged during strenuous activities to help prevent them from injuring themselves.



## Lesson Twenty-Three: Horses

### *Horse Colors*

Research to find pictures of horses with the following coloring: chestnut, bay, buckskin. Color the horse below in one of these colors.





## Lesson Twenty-Four: Horse Breeds

### *Read-aloud: Chapter Twenty-Four*

Taylor was extremely excited as she climbed into the back seat of her parent's car - they were going to one of her favorite places in the world!

Every year, late in the summer, Taylor and her family went to the Harrison County Fair.

The fair brought people from many miles away.

There were tractor pulls, baking contests, quilting competitions, chainsaw carvings, and a demolition derby, along with rides, games, and all sorts of delicious (and decidedly unhealthy) foods, among other things, but Taylor's favorite part of the fair was the animals.

There were beef cattle, dairy cows, goats, sheep, pigs, chickens, and, of course, Taylor's favorite - the horses.

There was a horse show every year, as well as barrel racing and a race around the racetrack by fast-trotting Standardbreds pulling little carts called "sulkies," but Taylor's favorite were the draft horses - the huge, powerful horses that competed in the horse pulls.

The most common breed of draft horses at the fair were usually Belgians, but there were always a few pairs of elegant Clydesdales, some dappled-gray Percherons, and sometimes a Shire or two.

Taylor thought the draft horses were magnificent - they were so much bigger and stronger than most other horses, and yet they always seemed so calm and gentle.

She loved watching the horse pulls - contests where farmers would hitch a pair of horses to a heavy sled loaded down with heavy weights, and see whose team could drag the heaviest sled.

"Mom, today is the day they're having the horse pulls, right?" Taylor asked her mother, for at least the tenth time, as Mr. Flemming backed the car out of the driveway.

"Yes, Taylor," Mrs. Flemming laughed. "Unless they changed the schedule and didn't tell me, the horse pulls will be this evening."

"Okay, good." Taylor just wanted to make sure she didn't miss a

chance to observe her favorite animals.

The Flemmings drove for about thirty minutes, and then they pulled into the entrance to the Harrison County Fairgrounds.

A man in an orange vest directed Mr. Flemming to a parking spot in a grassy field, and they all got out of the car and walked to the entrance gate.

Mr. Flemming purchased a ride-all-day pass for each of them, and then they walked onto the midway.

Taylor sniffed deeply. Fair food always smelled so good.

“Can I get a funnel cake?” Garrett asked. Apparently he was thinking the same thing as Taylor.

Mr. Flemming took out his wallet and gave Garrett and Taylor each ten dollars.

“You can get whatever you want to eat, but if it costs any more than that, you’ll have to pay for it yourself. Deal?”

“Thanks, Dad!” Taylor and Garrett both hugged him.

“You two can go have fun, but make sure you stay together,” he told them.

Taylor and Garrett thanked him and ran to the nearest food stand to order a funnel cake.

After they ate their funnel cake, they were thirsty, so they each got a lemonade, and then they rode a few rides. They started out on the Ferris Wheel, then they rode the Pirate Ship, and then Garrett felt sick from riding the Pirate Ship right after eating funnel cake and drinking lemonade, so they decided to go walk through the barns and look at the animals.

They walked through the cow barns, the sheep barn, and the goat barn, and then they came to the huge white building where the horses were kept.

“I guess we’ll be in here for the rest of the day,” Garrett teased his sister.

“Probably,” she grinned.

As they walked inside the horse barn, Taylor spotted Mr. Curtis, a nice older gentleman who was at the fair every year. His team of Belgian draft horses, Sam and Max, had won the horse pull last year.

Mr. Curtis always let Taylor pet his horses, and was always happy to put up with her incessant chattering about horses in general.

Taylor and Garrett said hello to Mr. Curtis, and then they stayed in the horse barn for almost an hour, petting every horse that Taylor could convince to stick its head far enough out of its stall for her to reach it.

After a while, Garrett's stomach was feeling better and he wanted to go ride some more rides, so that's what they did.

After they'd ridden everything, they rode everything again, then they met their parents for dinner (Taylor had a corndog, and Garrett got a burger that was bigger than his head) and then it was time for the horse pulls.

Taylor watched happily as Mr. Curtis' horses, Sam and Max, won the competition for the second year in a row.

After the horse pulls were over, Taylor gave Sam and Max a congratulatory pat, and Mr. Curtis gave her a peppermint candy to give to each of them.

Taylor held them out flat on the palm of her hand, and the huge horses carefully lifted them out of her hand with their soft lips, blowing gently on her hand and making her giggle.

The Flemmings rode a few more rides - except for Mr. Flemming, who got sick on everything more intense than the merry-go-round - and then Mr. and Mrs. Flemming decided it was time to go home.

Taylor and Garrett each got a bag of cotton candy to take home, but by the time they got home, most of the candy was already gone.

Taylor had a hard time sleeping that night, and when she finally did manage to fall asleep she dreamed that she was riding in a sled pulled by a pair of big black horses.

## Lesson Twenty-Four: Horse Breeds

### *Draft Breeds -Matching*

Draw a line from the draft breed on the left to the fact applicable to the breed on the right.

Clydesdale

Originated in England, generally taller than most other breeds, has more feathering around feet than other draft breeds.

Belgian

Originated in Scotland, usually bay in color, used as drum horses by the British Household Cavalry.

Shire

Generally black or gray in color, somewhat refined in appearance due to the influence of Arabian blood. Little to no feathering on the legs.

Percheron

Chestnut in color, little feathering on the legs. One of the strongest of all breeds.

## Lesson Twenty-Four: Horse Breeds

### *Ponies*

Answer the following questions about ponies.

1. What is the difference between a pony and a horse?

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2. Explain why some breeds are considered to be both ponies *and* horses.

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3. At what height is a horse generally considered too big to be a pony?

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4. List five breeds of ponies that are common in the United States.

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## Lesson Twenty-Four: Horse Breeds

### *Researching*

Find out the answers to the following questions.

1. What breed of horse is most often used in horse races?
2. How did the Quarter Horse get its name?
3. What physical trait is unique to the Bashkir Curly?
4. Is a Palomino a specific breed of horse?
5. What breed is famously used in the Spanish Riding School in Vienna, Austria, to demonstrate the *haute école* movements of classical dressage?
6. What is the Tennessee Walking Horse best known for?
7. Which American-developed breed is commonly used as a harness racer?

## Lesson Twenty-Four: Horse Breeds

### *Your Favorite Breed*

Draw a full-color picture of your favorite breed of horse. Make sure you identify which breed you have chosen.