



Lessons about the Unwanted Horse

Introduction

The face of animal welfare is being shaped by factors including the separation of production agriculture from consumers and the anthropomorphization of companion animals by the general population. These trends and the influence of animal rights ideology are creating real changes in the United States regarding industry practices for the traditional use of livestock. A new category of horses has emerged, the "Unwanted Horse," that is now the focus of much discussion; as their numbers surge in a time of economic hardship in this country, the need is great to educate the public in general, and horse owners specifically, about the issue from a factual and historical perspective. The AAEP (American Association of Equine Practitioners) defined unwanted horses as "horses which are no longer wanted by their current owner because they are old, injured, sick, unmanageable, fail to meet their owner's expectations (e.g., performance, color or breeding), or their owner can no longer afford them." The Animal Welfare Council developed this set of lesson plans to provide tools and resources to assist horse industry youth leaders and agriculture teachers to explain this trend and its impacts on horses and animal welfare.

Animal Welfare Council members support the use of animals in recreation, entertainment, industry and sports. The organization is dedicated to advancing the responsible and humane use of animals in these activities. Visit <http://www.animalwelfarecouncil.com> for more information about the Animal Welfare Council.

This six-lesson program guides students through key elements contributing to the rise of unwanted horses in the United States, with the goal of stimulating understanding and potential solutions for the issue. Each lesson includes a teacher's guide with goals, background material, resources for further reading, presentation outline, hand-outs in reproducible format for the students, and a re-enforcing group or independent activity that can be completed either as part of the lesson or as a field exercise. The lessons may be presented in series, as might be used in traditional classrooms or home schooling programs, or independently in youth activity settings such as 4-H, Girl Scouts, or Boy Scouts. A bonus lesson has been included as an overall evaluation tool with questions that can be used in a Jeopardy-style quiz game.



Objectives:

These lesson plans use activities grounded in standards and benchmarks to help learners acquire, integrate and apply knowledge. This is accomplished by having participants **do** an activity to create an experience with the information introduced in the lesson, then **share** their reactions to that information publicly (herd time), reflecting on how it is relevant to them, then **apply** the knowledge to their lives through the field exercises (pasture time). The overall objective for the learner will be to examine trends and impacts being brought to bear on the larger horse industry by the “Unwanted Horse” phenomenon. Individual topics use exercises that can be applied to building skills for the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) standards, including the areas of Agriculture Education, Civics, Economics, Geography, History, Language Arts, Life Skills, Mathematics, and Science.

Target Audience: The lessons plans are suggested for youth 10-12 years of age. The materials could be presented to an older audience with adjustments in presentation tone and expectation for more in-depth discussion in the herd time and pasture time activities.

Materials included re-enforce key information and encourage student interaction:

Teacher’s Guides:

- Content summary
- Learning goals
- Background information
- Resources for further reading
- Presentation outline
- Answer keys for each student handout game, worksheet, and vocabulary builder

Students Handouts:

“Herd Time” Group Discussion:

- Discussion questions
- Games, worksheets, and/or vocabulary builders

“Pasture Time” Field Exercises:

- Activity description with suggested resources
- Games, worksheets, and/or vocabulary builders



Lesson Series Evaluation Game: This cumulative group activity is an interactive 7th session for the group to demonstrate the knowledge they acquired through Lessons About the Unwanted Horse as an overall series.

You can choose to add:

- DVD / Computer player to view resource materials on DVD or the internet
- Live horse(s) for demonstrations
- Photos of horses from trade journals or magazines
- Model horses to enhance your presentation
- Booklets and other resources

Delivering your Lessons about the Unwanted Horse

- Step 1.** Review the entire session. Begin by familiarizing yourself with the Lessons about the Unwanted Horse background information. Look for ways to use the reference materials. Draw on your group's experience.
- Step 2.** Deliver the Lessons about the Unwanted Horse Lesson Plan Outline to your group. This point by point document covers the key information for the group to use in their activities and learning process.
- Step 3.** Pass out visual aids, handouts, and other supporting material for the lesson.
- Step 4.** Encourage your group to have fun discussing the Herd Time questions and activities.
- Step 5.** Explain to the group how the Pasture Time questions and activities will be completed (individually or as a group) and what the expectations for completion of the activities will be.
- Step 6.** Provide multiple opportunities for your group to demonstrate their knowledge by checking for understanding in the discussion. Allow the group to check their work with answer keys for worksheets and games.
- Step 7.** Evaluate what your group has learned using questions found in the evaluation game.

