

Breeds of the World



Horse and rider going over jump
ID# 992.07.1236

*This packet is intended for older middle school students and young high school students.



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Two Percheron horses
ID# 991.26.0921



Tennessee Walking Horse
ID# 992.07.1233



European Breeds

Horses have been a part of life in Europe for thousands of years in many ways. They have been used in important jobs like work, transportation, sport, and war.

Today, European horse breeds are typically used for specific tasks. The horses are either used in **equine sports** or for work. Rarely will a draft (work) horse be used to compete in **equine sports** or a sport horse be used for work in agriculture or transportation.

Draft horses are used on farms or for pulling carts, wagons, and coaches. These farm and transportation horses are very tall and bulky (some even reaching 18 **hands!**). The horses' massive size is essential to lugging heavy loads on difficult land. **Draft horses** are typically used by farmers, carriage companies, and merchants.

On the other hand, smaller, more compact horses are used in **equine sports** and for racing. These horses were bred by wealthy men in order to provide them with different hobbies and sports. Sport horses tend to be mid-sized (around 15 **hands**). Thoroughbred racing, dressage, and show jumping are just some of the equine disciplines and sports developed by wealthy Europeans.

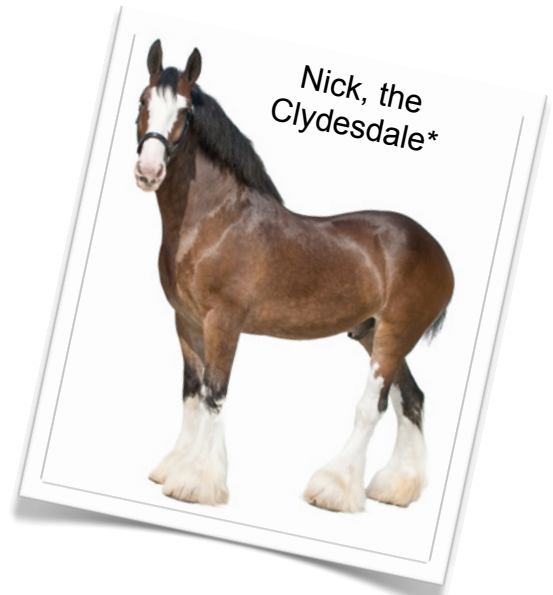


Clydesdale horses pulling a wagon. ID# 991.26.0141

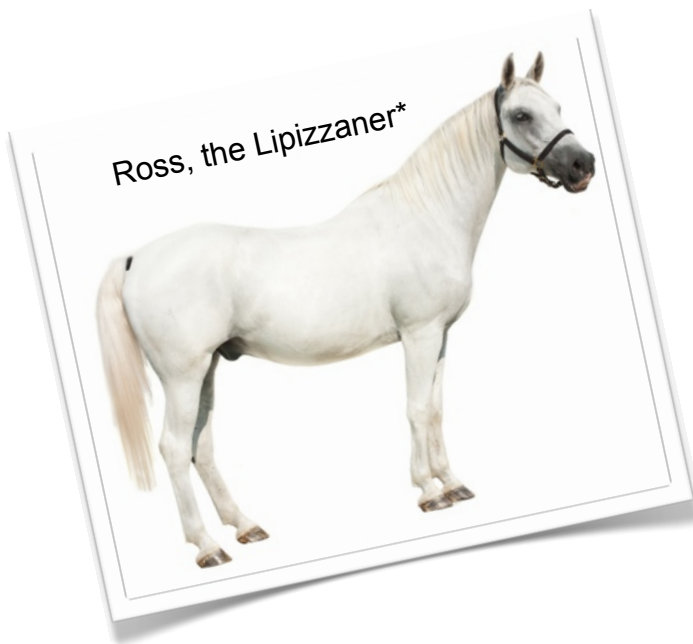


Key Breeds of Europe

The **Clydesdale** is a heavy draft horse used in farm work and the transportation of heavy loads. This breed was developed in Scotland in order assist farmers and miners in the Scottish mines. It has heavy feathering on its lower legs, and it is a very large horse averaging around 16 to 18 hands.



An Austrian breed, the **Lipizzaner** is used for equine disciplines and is occasionally a carriage horse. The Lipizzaner was bred for sport and show. The horse is used by the famous Spanish Riding School in Vienna, and it takes part in riding school performances like dressage. The Lipizzaner is an average of 15 to 15.2 hands high.



The **Thoroughbred** was developed by wealthy Englishmen who wanted a speedy horse for racing. This sport horse is known for its quickness and its elegance. It stands around 16 hands high.



North American Breeds

While European breeds tend to have one dominant purpose, North American breeds were bred to fulfill a variety of tasks. The horse was only reintroduced to North America by the Spanish in the 14th century after disappearing mysteriously centuries before. In order to fulfill the transportation and farming tasks of the new European settlers, horses were bred to be not only strong but also fast.

Plantation owners developed some of the North American breeds of horses. These men needed sturdy, fast horses to ride while surveying their land. These horses were also used for traveling as they were easy and comfortable to ride for long periods of time over the vast colonies.



Morgan horse ID# 992.07.270

Other horse breeds were developed for travel and work. Horses such as the Morgan, though only standing around 15 **hands**, could pull incredible amounts of weight. These horses were also known for their endurance and speed, which made them attractive horses for transportation.



Key North American Breeds

The **American Quarter Horse** can be used for all types of activities like ranch work or leisure riding. A speedy breed, the horse was developed by early Southern colonists and is known for its fast quarter-mile sprints. Before Thoroughbred racing became popular, the American Quarter Horse was the popular race breed. After the Thoroughbred replaced it, the horse was used for cow herding and short distance travel. Today, it is the most popular breed in America, and it stands 14 to 16 hands high.



Spinner, the American Quarter Horse*



Sneaky, the Morgan*

An American breed, the **Morgan** is a sturdy horse that is known for its ability to perform many tasks. Developed in the eighteenth century from one sire, Justin Morgan, the horse can haul heavy items, do farm work, race, and perform in a show ring. Morgans are typically 15.2 hands high.

Bred by the Nez Perce Indians, the **Appaloosa** has a distinct spotted coat and is an average of 14 to 16 hands. It is a good saddle horse and can be used for show and stock work. It has unique features in addition to the coat pattern including mottled skin and striped hooves.



Herby, the Appaloosa*



Asian Breeds

The Asian breeds of horses have been shaped by the environment rather than by human interaction and breeding. They tend to be tough and **hardy**, meaning that they survive well in harsh conditions with little resources like food and water. Additionally, these horses are known for their ability to travel far distances over long periods of time.

Many of these horses are native to the **steppes** of Asia, an area with extensive grasslands. Some of these grasslands, especially in colder climates, tend to have few resources for the horses. The vast, harsh environment of the Asian steppe has led to the development of a **hardy** horse able to travel over long distances.



Arabian horse ID# 992.07.271

From the Middle East comes one of the most significant horse breeds, the Arabian. The Arabian has influenced many horse breeds throughout the regions of the world. Characteristics like the Arabian's beauty, intelligence, and endurance are sought after in establishing other horse breeds.



Key Asian Breeds

The **Arabian** is the oldest pure breed in the world. This elegant and intelligent horse is known for its endurance over long desert journeys. It was often used as a war horse, and it is prized for its beauty and speed. They are usually 14.2 to 15 hands high.



Dartagnon,
the Arabian*

A breed from Turkmenistan, the **Akhal-Teke** is a great horse for long distances and desert conditions. The horse needs little water while traveling over an extended period of time. It is also a very elegant horse and is used in different equine disciplines. It is an average of 15 to 15.1 hands high.



Kuma, the
Akhal-Teke*

The **Marwari** is an Indian breed known for being very tough with a great amount of endurance. The Marwari needs little food and is capable of traveling long distances. The horse is can be used for farm work, and it is known for its unique ears that curve inwards, the tips of the ears sometimes even touching. The Marwari has an average height of 14 to 15.2 hands.



Zubeida, the
Marwari*



Additional Resources and Activities

Vocabulary

1. **Breed:** a group of animals that has traits that distinguish it from other groups of animals in the same species.
2. **Draft Horse:** a heavy horse used in heavy tasks like farm work and transportation.
3. **Equine Sports:** various activities involving horse and human teams; this includes activities like racing, show jumping, and polo
4. **Hands:** the unit of measurement for horses in which 1 hand is equal to 4 inches; the horse is measured from the ground to the withers (the base of neck).
5. **Hardy:** strong and tough, capable of living in harsh conditions.
6. **Steppe:** an environment like a prairie or grassland that is typically flat with limited resources.

*See the Horse Breeds Vocabulary Packet for a list of horse breeds and their description.



LJ, the Shire Sport Horse*

Cross breeding

Cross breeding is a method in which different types of horse breeds are bred together so as to create very unique and special horses.

The Kentucky Horse Park has a cross bred horse that is a Shire Sport Horse named LJ. LJ is a cross between a Shire horse (a large **draft horse**) and a Thoroughbred. LJ's combination of breeds gives him the speed of a Thoroughbred with the added size of a draft breed. This makes him a big, athletic horse. He can then be used in equine sport events like dressage, cross country, and eventing.

*Horses are at the Kentucky Horse Park at the Horses of the World Barn. Breed photos courtesy of Jim Shambhu, Kentucky Horse Park.



Cryptogram!

Now we are going to solve a puzzle using the clues below. First, complete the key above the puzzle. Each letter has a corresponding number. For example, **O** is the **fourth letter** in the alphabet. After filling in the key, solve the puzzle to learn about horse breeds in the world!

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
	19						24						25	4		14			13						

O N				O		T H			O				H							
9	5	12	6	4	25	22	4	8	13	24	5	21	4	9	15	17	24	3	26	5

N		Q		H O			B									
11	25	6	14	11	5	24	4	9	22	5	19	9	5	5	17	22

Cryptogram courtesy of discoveryeducation.com.

Writing Prompt: Reflection

Take some time to reflect on the differences in horse breeds around the world. On a separate sheet of paper, write a reflection on the following prompt.

What makes each region's horse breeds unique? What do you think is significant about the way Asian horse breeds have developed compared to European and North American horse breeds? Why? Begin your paper with a main idea and use evidence from this packet to support your opinion. Be sure to ask your teacher how long this reflection should be.