PATH Intl. Registered Instructor
On-Site Workshop Manual

This manual is intended for use by persons interested in gaining more knowledge about becoming a riding instructor for persons with disabilities. It is expected that the procedures or practices described in this manual will be carried out by trained and qualified evaluators, according to the recognized standards and established guidelines of PATH Intl. and in the field of therapeutic riding. No warranty, expressed or implied, is made regarding the content of this manual by its authors, editors, reviewers, contributors or sponsors.

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Introduction
Introduction

Welcome to this instructor workshop! We hope that you will embark on this learning experience with an open mind and a thirst for new knowledge and ideas. If you have any questions, please ask the faculty.

Meet the faculty:

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Purpose of the Workshop:
The purpose of this workshop is to provide the participants with knowledge of basic components that are utilized by successful, entry level therapeutic riding instructors. The participants will be given the opportunity to synthesize and apply this knowledge in role play and hands-on sessions.

The participants will be provided with information concerning:

• Registered Level Criteria
• Disabilities
• Teaching Techniques
• The Therapy Horse
• Equipment
• Volunteers
• Mounting and Dismounting

Participants will be provided with hands on participation in:

• Formulating and Writing Lesson Plans
• Developing Task Analysis
• Determining Progression
• Evaluating Rider Posture
• Practice of “Whats,” “Hows,” and “Whys”
• Evaluating Horses
• Role Play Lessons
Code of Ethics for Instructors

Preamble:
This Code of Ethics sets forth ethical principles for PATH Intl. Certified Instructors. The exercise and preservation of the highest standards are vital to the responsible discharge of obligations, activities and services provided by PATH Intl. Certified Instructors. These principles include professional competency, integrity, honesty, confidentiality, objectivity, sound judgment, public safety and professional compliance. The guidelines expressed in the Code are not to be considered all inclusive of situations that would evolve under a specific principle, nor is the failure to specify any particular responsibility or practice a denial of the existence of such responsibilities or practices.

Principle 1: Professional Competency
PATH Intl. Certified Instructors will demonstrate ability to instruct individuals with disabilities commensurate with their level of certification attained.

Principle 2: Integrity
PATH Intl. Certified Instructors will demonstrate integrity, honor and morality by respecting the rights, dignity and well-being of all individuals and animals.

Principle 3: Honesty
PATH Intl. Certified Instructors will demonstrate honesty and truthfulness at all times.

Principle 4: Confidentiality
PATH Intl. Certified Instructors will demonstrate confidentiality by respecting the rights of privacy of all individuals involved in the operating center.

Principle 5: Objectivity
PATH Intl. Certified Instructors will demonstrate objectivity and fairness by interacting with individuals in an impartial manner.

Principle 6: Sound Judgment
PATH Intl. Certified Instructors shall accept responsibility for the exercise of sound judgment when interacting with individuals and animals.

Principle 7: Public Safety
PATH Intl. Certified Instructors shall promote public safety by abiding by PATH Intl. Standards and Guidelines.

Principle 8: Compliance
PATH Intl. Certified Instructors will remain in good standing with the annual PATH Intl. Compliance Process for instructors.
The Buck Stops Here

The riding instructor is in charge of the riding lesson and along with the role comes great responsibilities. Two terms that come to mind are liability and risk.

- Liability is concerned with responsibility or obligation to make good on a loss or damage.
- Risk is the chance of injury, damage or loss. Horseback riding is considered a risk activity.

When a person becomes a riding instructor, he or she assumes responsibility to provide a safe and effective learning experience for all involved. The instructor should be proactive, not reactive. In other words, the instructor should seek out knowledge and strive to improve instructor skills instead of simply reacting to situations.

To determine your current knowledge, use the registered instructor criteria checklist. Check the criteria that you feel you are proficient in. The unchecked criteria indicate areas that you can work to improve your knowledge or skills.

The instructor is responsible for the safety of riders, horses, volunteers and anyone else at the riding lesson.

What are some of those responsibilities?
- Conduct Tack Checks
- Mounts & Dismounts
- Continuing Education

Can you list more responsibilities of the registered instructor?

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

REMEMBER. It is the instructor’s ethical responsibility to follow the standards of the industry and the instructor criteria.
Paperwork, Please!

As much as we all cringe at the thought of more paperwork, it is a fact of life that pen and paper are a crucial part of a professional’s life. Record keeping is a must for therapeutic riding instructors for the following reasons.

- Accountability
- Continuity
- Data accumulation
- Reliability
- Organization
- Validity
- Reference

As a certified riding instructor at a PATH Intl. Center, you may be responsible for handling many different pieces of important paperwork including:

- Rider and client evaluations
- Rider and client progress records
- Rider and client registration papers
- Attendance forms
- Liability release forms
- Photography consent/non-consent forms
- Rider health histories
- Emergency medical treatment forms
- Physician’s statements
- Atlantoaxial Instability verification
- Incident/Accident reports
- Written documentation on screening horses
- Horse health records
- Horse scheduling records
- Volunteer registration papers
Understanding Therapeutic Riding

Therapeutic riding uses equine-oriented activities for the purpose of contributing positively to the cognitive, physical, emotional and social well being of people with disabilities. Therapeutic riding provides benefits in the areas of therapy, education, sport, and recreation & leisure.

Therapeutic Riding Classifications
The following classifications reflect the primary fields of therapeutic riding and their different approaches. An integrated approach to therapeutic riding uses the therapeutic benefits in all four fields; however, each can be practiced as a specialty.

Therapy
Equine activities are used as a form of therapy to achieve physical, psychological, cognitive, behavioral and communication goals. The therapy is provided by a licensed/credentialed health professional*. The use of the horse involves a team approach among licensed/credentialed health professionals, therapeutic riding instructors and clients. The client may be treated in a group or on an individual basis directly by the health professional.

Knowledge of the principles of classic hippotherapy is considered essential for all licensed/credentialed health professionals who provide direct therapy treatment using the horse. Such health professionals also integrate the treatment principles of their professions into the equine activities used in a treatment setting.

Several health professions, including Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology and Psychology, have developed specialized forms of treatment using the horse within those professions. These include, but are not limited to, Classic Hippotherapy, Hippotherapy, Developmental Riding Therapy, and Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy.

Education
Equine activities are used to achieve psycho-educational goals for people with physical, mental and psychological impairments as well as to provide the individual with skills in the sport chosen (such as riding, driving or vaulting). The emphasis is to incorporate cognitive, behavioral, psychological and physical goals into the program plan while teaching adapted riding, driving or vaulting. The horse is a strong motivator for accomplishing these goals.

Therapeutic riding instructors, educational specialists and licensed/credentialed health professionals are involved in the design and implementation of the programs. The frequency of consultation with educational specialists and health professionals is determined on an individual basis.

Sport
People with physical, mental and psychological impairments can participate in sport activities – adapted as needed – with the horse. These activities include riding, driving and vaulting as forms of therapeutic recreation and competition. Activities are directed toward the acquisition of skills leading to the accomplishment of specific horsemanship goals. By learning skills needed for the sport, therapeutic and recreational goals are also achieved.

Therapeutic riding instructors are primarily responsible for the design and implementation of the program. Licensed/credentialed health professionals, educational specialists and recreational therapists may assist the instructor in a variety of ways, and they are generally involved on a consultative basis.

Individuals have the option of participating in a therapeutic riding program or pursuing their equine activities independently.
Recreation and Leisure
People with physical, mental and psychological impairments may use equine activities – adapted as needed – as a recreation and leisure experience. The emphasis is on an enjoyable and relaxing experience that provides additional therapeutic benefits in the areas of socialization, posture, mobility and an overall improved quality of life. Individuals may participate in horse-related activities to their maximum ability in an atmosphere of support, structure and socialization for the primary purpose of the intrinsic enjoyment of the activity.

Therapeutic riding instructors and recreational therapists are primarily responsible for program development. Licensed/credentialed health professionals and educational specialists are generally involved on a consultative basis.

*“Licensed/credentialed health professionals” refers to physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, physicians, nurses and rehabilitation specialists. Health professionals providing direct service “therapy” through equine activities should have additional specialized training in the use of the horse as a component of treatment in their respective area of expertise.”
Registered Instructor Certification Criteria

PATH INTERNATIONAL

Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International
Registered Instructor Certification Criteria

RE. EQUINE MANAGEMENT

RE.1.0 PATH Intl. Standards
   ______ RE.1.1 Know and implement PATH Intl. Standards and their interpretation for horse care, maintenance, and usage
   ______ RE.1.2 Know and implement PATH Intl. Standards and their interpretation regarding the use of safety equipment and adapted equipment

RE.2.0 Breeds/Colors/Markings/Parts of the Horse
   ______ RE.2.1 Identify a horse by age, color and markings, breed characteristics, height and weight
   ______ RE.2.2 Know the parts of the horse

RE.3.0 Horse Senses and Behavior
   ______ RE.3.1 Know the characteristics of the senses of the horse
   ______ RE.3.2 Know the characteristics of horse behavior
   ______ RE.3.3 Know how the senses of the horse and horse behavior affect the safety of the riding setting
   ______ RE.3.4 Identify stable vices including cribbing, weaving, biting and kicking, wood chewing

RE.4.0 Feeds and Feeding
   ______ RE.4.1 Know feed requirements of the horse including: hay, salt and minerals, grain, feeding intervals, water
   ______ RE.4.2 Recognize signs of poor quality feed

RE.5.0 Stable Management
   ______ RE.5.1 Identify appropriate protection for horses including: fly masks and bonnets, shelter, fly repellents
   ______ RE.5.2 Know horse manure handling methods for sanitary conditions of stall & turn out areas
   ______ RE.5.3 Identify bedding materials
   ______ RE.5.4 Identify potential stall hazards

RE.6.0 Health and Sickness
   ______ RE.6.1 Know and recognize the signs of:
   behavior change rabies heat stroke
   colic ringworm stress
   good health thrush dental problems
   laminitis weight loss infectious diseases
   ______ RE.6.2 Know and recognize when a horse is unsound
   ______ RE.6.3 Identify normal ranges and how to take TPR (temperature, pulse, respiration)
   ______ RE.6.4 Describe deworming, vaccination, hoof and teeth care programs
   ______ RE.6.5 Know first aid treatment for wounds

RE.7.0 Grooming
   ______ RE.7.1 Identify and explain the use of grooming tools including:
   curry comb mane or tail comb hard brush or dandy
   shedding blade soft brush and body brush sponges
   hoof pick sweat scraper
   ______ RE.7.2 Know how to give a horse a bath
   ______ RE.7.3 Know how to cool down a horse following a work session
   ______ RE.7.4 Know how to clip a horse for maintenance including:
   bridle path muzzle fetlock
RE.8.0 Tack and Tacking
______ RE.8.1 Identify and know the purpose, use, and function of:
  bits: snaffle and curb                  adapted equipment                  bitless bridles
  breast plates and collars             bridles                             safety stirrups
  saddles: english and western          safety helmets                       saddle pads
  surcingles                            bareback pads
______ RE.8.2 Know the parts of English and Western saddles and bridles
______ RE.8.3 Know how to tack a horse
______ RE.8.4 Select and evaluate equipment needs for riders and horses including:
  type of saddle and bridle             how saddle affects rider position
  how bridle and saddle affect horses   adapted equipment
______ RE.8.5 Know how to fit tack to horses and riders
______ RE.8.6 Know how to educate team, including riders and volunteers, in the use of the equipment
______ RE.8.7 Know and demonstrate tack cleaning, care, and maintenance

RE.9.0 Unsoundness and Blemishes/Form to Function
______ RE.9.1 Recognize the difference between a blemish and an unsoundness
______ RE.9.2 Identify and describe the foot falls and beats of the:
  walk                           trot or jog     canter or lope

RE.10.0 Selection and Training
______ RE.10.1 Explain the characteristics of a therapy horse
______ RE.10.2 Know how to train a horse to accept:
  leaders and sidewalkers             ambulation aids                     mounting ramps and blocks
  game equipment                      mounting procedures
______ RE.10.3 Recognize the need for a conditioning and maintenance program for therapeutic riding horses including:
  longeing                            schooling                           record keeping

RH. HORSEMANSHIP

RH.1.0 Horsemanship Preparation and Safety
______ RH.1.1 Know and demonstrate the following:
  haltering and leading               tying a safety knot
  grooming and tacking                proper riding attire

RH.2.0 Mounting and Dismounting
______ RH.2.1 Know and demonstrate:
  mounting and dismounting from ground or mounting block/ ramp
  how to assist a rider during mounting and dismounting
  an equipment check prior to mounting
  stirrup adjustment prior to mounting

RH.3.0 Position
______ RH.3.1 Know and demonstrate a secure seat and correct alignment at all gaits
______ RH.3.2 Know and demonstrate correct position, posture and alignment at the:
  walk-free walk and working walk      trot (sitting) or jog
  trot-posting                         canter or lope
  two point at the walk and trot or jog walk and sitting trot or jog without stirrups
  rein-back                            
______ RH.3.3 Know and demonstrate shortening and lengthening reins
RH.4.0 Gaits
   RH.4.1 Know and demonstrate:
      walk-free walk and working walk  canter or lope on correct lead
      trot or jog-sitting  reinback
      trot-posting on correct diagonal  change of diagonals at the trot
   RH.4.2 Know and demonstrate light contact for all gaits
   RH.4.3 Know and demonstrate straightness of the horse during all gaits
   RH.4.4 Know and demonstrate control of the horse at all gaits
   RH.4.5 Know and demonstrate the following transitions:
      walk to trot/jog  canter/lope to walk  walk or trot/jog to canter/lope
      walk to halt  trot/jog to walk

RH.5.0 Aids
   RH.5.1 Know and demonstrate the following natural aids:
      hands  seat  legs  voice
   RH.5.2 Identify and know the purpose of spurs
   RH.5.3 Know and demonstrate appropriate use of the following artificial aid: crop
   RH.5.4 Know and demonstrate the following rein aids:
      leading/opening  neck rein  direct rein
   RH.5.5 Know and demonstrate the following leg aids:
      both legs at the same time  leg at the girth
      alternating leg aids  leg behind the girth

RH.6.0 Movements
   RH.6.1 Know turn on the forehand
   RH.6.2 Know and demonstrate bending a horse through corners and on circles
   RH.6.3 Know and demonstrate half halt or check

RH.7.0 Ring Figures
   RH.7.1 Know and demonstrate the following ring figures:
      change of rein  half circles  circles
      serpentine  figure eight

RH.8.0 Exercises and Games
   RH.8.1 Know and demonstrate mounted rider exercises at the walk and trot or jog
   RH.8.2 Know and demonstrate riding without stirrups at the walk and sitting trot or jog
   RH.8.3 Know and demonstrate ground poles at walk, trot or jog, and two point
   RH.8.4 Know and demonstrate design and set up of obstacle course
   RH.8.5 Know and demonstrate proper spacing of ground poles
   RH.8.6 Know how to longe a horse

RI. INSTRUCTION

RI.1.0 Horsemanship Preparation and Safety
   RI.1.1 Instruct the following:
      grooming and tacking  tying and safety knot
      haltering and leading  proper riding attire
      proper spacing when leading or riding in a group
   RI.1.2 Orient student to facility, stable rules, and safety rules
   RI.1.3 Select horse for individual riders according to:
      behavior  movement quality  temperament
      height  size
RI.1.4 Instruct a group lesson of two or more riders
RI.1.5 Know and implement PATH Intl. Standards and their interpretation regarding lesson area

RI.2.0 Mounts and Dismounts
RI.2.1 Instruct the following:
mounting and dismounting from ground or mounting block
how to assist a rider during mounting and dismounting
equipment check prior to mounting
stirrup adjustment prior to mounting
independent, partially assisted, fully assisted mounts from the ground, block and ramp

RI.3.0 Position
RI.3.1 Instruct correct position at the:
halt canter or lope walk-free and working walk
two point at walk and trot (sitting) or jog rein-back
trot-posting
RI.3.2 Instruct lengthening and shortening of reins

RI.4.0 Gaits
RI.4.1 Instruct:
walk-free walk and working walk trot (sitting) or jog
trot-posting on correct diagonal canter or lope on correct lead
change of diagonals at the trot
RI.4.2 Instruct light contact at all gaits
RI.4.3 Instruct straightness of the horse at all gaits
RI.4.4 Instruct the following transitions:
walk to halt trot/jog to walk walk to trot/jog
canter/lope to walk walk to trot/jog to canter/lope walk to canter/lope

RI.5.0 Aids
RI.5.1 Instruct the following natural aids:
hands seat legs voice
RI.5.2 Instruct the appropriate use of the following artificial aids: crop
RI.5.3 Instruct the following rein aids:
leading/opening neck rein direct rein
RI.5.4 Instruct the following leg aids:
both legs at the same time leg at the girth
alternating leg aids leg behind the girth

RI.6.0 Ring Figures
RI.6.1 Instruct the following ring figures:
change the rein figure eight circles half circles

RI.7.0 Exercises and Games
RI.7.1 Instruct mounted rider exercises at the walk and trot or jog
RI.7.2 Instruct riding without stirrups at the walk
RI.7.3 Instruct riding over ground poles at walk, sitting trot or jog, and two point
RI.7.4 Instruct riders through an obstacle course
RI.7.5 Utilize appropriate games in the riding setting
RI.8.0 Ground and Stable lessons
   RI.8.1 Instruct ground stable management lessons that are within the knowledge requirements of the Registered Instructor level

RT. TEACHING METHODOLOGY

RT.1.0 PATH Intl. Standards and Information
   RT.1.1 Know and implement PATH Intl. Standards and their interpretations regarding student forms
   RT.1.2 Know PATH Intl. services available to the instructor
   RT.1.3 Locate information about PATH Intl. Standards and Accreditation process
   RT.1.4 Know PATH Intl. Instructor Certification Program
   RT.1.5 Know and practice emergency procedures
   RT.1.6 Know the location of the phone and emergency numbers

RT.2.0 Record Keeping
   RT.2.1 Verify that the student forms are complete and updated for students that the instructor teaches
   RT.2.2 Interpret student forms and apply the information to the riding setting
   RT.2.3 Write and maintain progress notes on riders
   RT.2.4 Complete incident report as needed
   RT.2.5 Comply with confidentiality requirements regarding students

RT.3.0 Lesson Plans
   RT.3.1 Assess rider skills and determine goals and objectives for each individual rider
   RT.3.2 Develop a lesson plan to achieve the goals and objectives
   RT.3.3 Choose activities and skills suitable for the objective of the lesson

RT.4.0 Teaching
   RT.4.1 Know and demonstrate teaching skills applicable to the Registered Instructor level, to include:
      teaching a riding skill
      safe and effective mounting and dismounting procedures
      flexibility and adaptability in pursuit of stated teaching objectives
      teaching to level of student's emotional learning, physical and cognitive ability
      fairness and consistent in applying standards of behavior
      shows genuine interest in all students
      progress towards independence
      effective use of volunteers
      appropriate games and exercises
      appropriate praise
      adapts and corrects equipment
      provide “whats”, “hows”, “whys”
      flexibility of teaching techniques
      posture corrections
      progression of equitation skills
      rapport
      teaching at individual rider’s level
      teaching environment
      giving clear and concise instructions
      control of class
      ring presence
      safe spacing and procedures
RT.4.2 Possess instructor attributes, to include:
- common sense
- ethical
- organized
- patience
- positive attitude
- knowledge of subject at instructor skill level

RT.4.3 Meet annual continuing education requirements for the Registered Instructor (20 hours, current CPR and first aid, maintain PATH Intl. membership)

RT.5.0 Methods
- RT.5.1 Know that riders learn in different ways
- RT.5.2 Use simple behavior management techniques to maintain class control
- RT.5.3 Work with instructional team (instructors, therapists, volunteers, students, families and care providers) including:
  - develop rapport
  - assign volunteers to riders
  - provide direction to leader and sidewalkers during lesson
  - provide feedback to team members
  - reward team members
- RT.5.4 Identify dysfunctional behavior

RD. DISABILITIES

RD.1.0 Human Anatomy
- RD.1.1 Identify parts of the human skeleton including:
  - clavicle
  - cranium
  - femur
  - fibula
  - humerus
  - pelvis
  - radius
  - scapula
  - tibia
  - ulna
  - vertebrae
- RD.1.2 Know the following movement terminology:
  - abduction
  - extension
  - rotation
  - adduction
  - flexion

RD.2.0 Disabilities
- RD.2.1 Know precautions and contradictions to therapeutic riding.
- RD.2.2 Know definition, causes, characteristics and teaching management for rider’s disabilities that the instructor teaches.
- RD.2.3 Locate information pertaining to all disabilities.
- RD.2.4 Self-evaluate instructional capabilities, facility environment, horse and personnel to determine riders that can be accepted as students.
- RD.2.5 Know the benefits of therapeutic riding.
- RD.2.6 Know the realms of therapeutic riding.
- RD.2.7 Know and demonstrate handling techniques for mounting, dismounting, postural alignment.
- RD.2.8 Know and demonstrate good body mechanics during mounting and dismounting.
A therapeutic riding instructor organizes, implements, facilitates and evaluates the interaction between horses and people with disabilities.
Posture & Alignment
Posture

Posture refers to the habitual or assumed alignment and balance of the body segments while the body is standing, walking, sitting or lying. (See Figure A.)

- In the able-bodied person, good posture radiates a positive self image, while poor posture (slouching) often reveals a poor mental image.
- Good posture and physical fitness are closely associated. The body must be in good physical condition to resist the constant pull of gravity and to maintain erectness.
- Musculature involved in correct posture must be balanced to hold the bones and joints properly.
- Faulty alignment can cause undue strain on supporting muscles and ligaments, which leads to early fatigue, muscle strain and progressive displacement of postural support. In extreme cases, the position and function of vital organs (especially those located in the abdomen) can be affected adversely.
- Physical disorders can prevent good posture.

The body must also be in balance in the lateral plane as viewed from either front or back. Viewed from the back, the spinal column should show a straight vertical line that divides the body in half symmetrically. A deviation occurs when this vertical line becomes single “C” curve or a multiple “S” curve. Such deviations are coupled with the following body adjustments: (See Figure B.)

- One shoulder higher than the other
- Head tilts to one side
- Hips not level
- Weight carried more on one leg than the other

**Figure A. Posture Characteristics**

**Correct Posture**
- Head up, chin in, eyes ahead, head balanced above the shoulders with the tip of the ear directly above the point of the shoulders.
- Shoulders back and easy, chest up
- Lower abdomen in and flat
- Slight and normal curves in the upper and lower back
- Knees easy
- Weight balanced with toes pointed forward

**Fair Posture**
- Head forward slightly
- Chest lowered slightly
- Lower abdomen in but not flat
- Back curves increased slightly
- Knees back slightly
- Weight a little too far back on the heels

**Poor Posture**
- Head noticeably forward, eyes generally down
- Chest flat or depressed
- Shoulder blades show winged effect
- Abdomen relaxed and prominent
- Back curves exaggerated
- Knees forced back in back-kneed position
- Pelvis noticeably tilted down
- Weight improperly distributed
Rider Conformation

By Wendy Warner

Reprinted with permission from the Horsemen’s Yankee Pedlar, January 1991.

Volumes could be written on proper position, body control, and the balance of the rider, without overdoing it. A true rider-trainer always strives to refine and improve his aids and his body’s coordination to enhance communication. This requires a constant analytical outlook.

When we discuss the position and the effect of the rider, it’s necessary to analyze body types. People fall into many different categories and therefore require different approaches for corrections. Few people are blessed with perfectly proportioned bodies, natural balance and coordination. We all need to overcome weaknesses or deficiencies in our position. It’s not unusual that as one area of the body is addressed and corrected, another part rears its ugly head! The process goes on. Even Alois Podhajsky, former director of the Spanish Riding School of Vienna, once stated he fought a continuing battle with the placement of his uncooperative right leg.

If your neck positions your head out in front of your body, you will automatically struggle with alignment and balance. Only if your head remains on the same plane as a straight back, does it not interfere. To a certain extent, this can be corrected, but individual conformation determines to what degree.

Riders with large or long torsos and short legs have the added disadvantage of being top-heavy. People were not ideally designed for riding. The taller or larger the upper body, the more control is required in maintaining balance and following the horse’s movements subtly. These riders must work extra hard to remain unobtrusive.

Shoulders that round over and fall in front of the body cause your arms to lose the ability to maintain a consistent, sensitive feel with the mouth. This posture also encourages your elbows to come away from the body, which in turn caves in your chest. The upper back now is usually rounded as well, which allows the head to drop down in front of the body. Of course, the alignment and the balance suffer.

Let’s get back to the arms. Whether they are positioned out in front of the body because of a shoulder problem, or due to habit, the rider must now carry this weight, since they no longer hang naturally from the shoulders. Try this yourself. Sit or stand erect, rotate your shoulders back then down, maintaining a good relaxed posture. Now with your elbows at your side, carry your hands as if you are holding reins. Easy. Now slightly round your shoulders and carry your arms in front of and away from your body pretending to hold reins.

If you assume this position for a while, you will notice your arms growing heavy. This will produce tension in the muscles of the upper arms, back and chest. Also, the elbow in this position can’t function as a soft, motion-absorbing joint, therefore the hands become stiff and lack a sensitive, fluid connection to the mouth. For the most part, the shoulder-arm problem can be corrected with determination and constant discipline.

Riders with short arms usually find correct placement more difficult. The tendency is to straighten the arm and carry the hands low. This creates a stiff connection to the bit, again losing the elbow joint’s function. To keep the line unbroken from the elbow to the bit, their hands must automatically be carried higher than a long-armed person, and this is more difficult.

The sway, or hollow-backed person struggles with proper positioning of the pelvis. Automatically, the crotch is driven deeper into the saddle. The seat bones find less depth, therefore less of a base for balance and feel. The ability to drive or retard with the seat falls out through the abdomen. There are exercises to help improve much on the posture, but again they are limited by the rider’s structural form.

Short legs, especially accompanied by heavy, round thighs and calves are far from ideal. This type of leg tends to rotate the knees and feet outward, encouraging the use of the back of the leg, rather than the inside. When this happens, the seat bones may pinch together, creating a narrower base of support in the saddle. The wider sprung the horse’s ribs, the more exaggerated its effect on the rider’s position.

This type of conformation is best suited with a narrow or slab-sided horse to allow the legs to drop down to
gain some length. Short legs can make balance and aiding problematic, especially with a top heavy torso. Yet, I think of Barney Ward, well known in the jumper ranks, who has anything but an ideal shape for riding. He certainly has not let his build hamper his success. I also have seen long, flexible coordinated bodies with less determination and drive fall short of what they could achieve. So much in riding is mind over matter.

Assuming the rider has a basically correct position without conformational encumbrances, he still must overcome other issues. If a rider is stiff or tense anywhere, no matter how correct he may sit, then both the horse’s communication to the rider and his to the horse is impaired. Stiffness can be handled by a qualified person pinpointing those areas to the rider, then offering exercises to help release the muscles and joints in question. Tenseness, on the other hand, must be addressed through the mind. If you relax your mind, your body relaxes too. Horses, being the sensitive creatures they are, quickly pick up on the rider’s mental and physical shortcomings.

For years I ran a lesson program with great school horses. I knew these animals and their reactions inside and out. They were my valuable assistants. When a new student came, I’d place him on my best teacher. This horse would sort out his problems and strengths in no time. I knew when the rider would tighten or relax in particular areas by his reaction. A great variety of people learned on the “schoolies.” It was amusing to see the different ways these horses rode, depending on the student’s attitude and style. I learned plenty, too!

The following is a list of exercises that you may find helpful in straightening, strengthening and supplying your position. Remember, never force an exercise. Ask your body, then allow it to happen. Gradually expect more cooperation from the different parts of your body. Mentally visualize the exercise and what you expect to gain from it. Always keep the end result clear in your mind. Make certain you practice these exercises on quiet, willing horses and start at the halt. When you are comfortable, practice at different gaits. Most exercises work best if you drop your stirrups and cross them over the horse’s neck.

1) Begin with the head. Sit tall and stretch up. Close your eyes and make little head movements in all directions until you find the exact spot where it’s most natural to balance. Now, with complete relaxation, there should be no desire for your head to fall in any direction. At that point, it is in balance and its weight (about 2 lbs.) will travel throughout the spinal column down into your seat. When the horse in motion, your head must make subtle movements to maintain this balance.

At the halt, allow your head to drop down as far as it will go while still keeping your neck straight. Feel the gentle stretch in your neck, back and shoulders. Then, let the head softly tip back, and notice the feel in your chest and neck. Allow one ear at a time to be lowered to the shoulder, stretching the opposite side of the neck. If you feel tension in your jaw, open and close your mouth several times and make big smiles and small O’s with your lips. Finish by repeating the first exercise, then stretch your neck longer when your head is balanced and aligned.

2) Shoulder circles are great for loosening tight, rounded or hunched shoulders. One at a time, rotate your shoulders up, back and down in a circular motion. Try and let the movement be fluid and continual. After alternating the shoulders several times, try both shoulders together, growing taller in your spine as you do. Avoid rotating your shoulders up then forward as this encourages you to round your back and sink in the chest. If you carry your shoulders correctly, but tend to clamp your arms to your sides, pretend you have tiny bird eggs in your armpits. You must keep them warm, but not crush them.

3) Arm rotating is an extension of the previous exercise. This is most effectively done with the fingers out straight and circling forward, up, then back to encourage opening of the chest. Circle one arm at a time, slowly, and follow your hand with your eyes and head. This helps relax the neck. Make sure your arm is directly in front of you, brushing the ear and then down behind you. As you perform this you should feel your rib cage lifting, making it easier to fill your chest with air.

4) If you tend to collapse a hip, sit crooked or drop a shoulder, your leg on that side will shrink up, becoming shorter than the other. This exercise is great at the halt, walk or canter. Lift the arm on that side straight up toward the sky, fingers outstretched.

The key is that the arm must not bend at the elbow and the upper arm must be in line with your ear and not forward at your cheek. With the arm in this position, the stretch will travel down your whole side,
dropping the seat bone deeper into the saddle. This will release and extend that leg. The arm will become
tired, but don’t let it come away from your head. Continue as long as possible, then switch arms. If you do
this at the canter, you will enjoy a deeper, more following seat.

5) If your horse is agreeable, and you are in a safe area, tie your reins in a knot at about the withers and rest
the knot there. For “Torso Turning,” place your hands on your hips, slightly toward the back or straight
out to the sides, palms up. As always, make certain your back is straight and your head is centered over
your shoulders, which must stay level. Turn your chest and head as far to the left as you can go without
involving your hips and legs. In other words, separate your body parts. Face front again, and turn to the
right. Take a look at your legs. If the opposite one creeps back or the one on the turning side comes
forward, then you are locked. Shake out the legs and try again. Turn as far as possible until the legs get
involved, keeping your seat bones down. Practice this until you can separate the movements and still get a
good stretch.

6) “Torso to Neck” looks for a stretch, again, independent of the legs. Take one arm and fold it across your
body just under your chest. Keeping your legs in a correct position, close the angle of your upper body
touching your chest to the mane, eyes straight ahead, them come up right. Do this several times without
stiffening or allowing legs to slip back out of position (even a tiny bit!). Then try touching the horse’s poll
with your fingers.

7) “Toe Touching.” With one hand on the hip, take the other and again close the body angle, eyes looking
forward, bending down to touch your toes. Each time return to your upright position. Practice several
times on each side at the halt or the walk. As you reach down, make sure neither leg slips back.

8) At the halt or walk, keeping a straight back, seat bones down into the saddle, bend one leg grabbing
the instep with your hand. Now bring your heel as close to your buttock as possible pointing your knee
straight down. Try and place your thigh perpendicular to the ground. Feel a good stretch in these muscles.
Resist the urge to bend forward, round the back, or displace the seat bones. Repeat, alternating sides, each
time expecting a greater stretch. This exercise helps eliminate the “chair seat,” and will bring your legs
more in line with your body.

9) “Alternate Leg Swinging” is great for unlocking the hip joint. Sitting deep in the saddle with relaxed
buttocks muscles and a soft back, slowly swing one leg forward and stretch the other back. Make sure the
swing happens from the hip and not the knee. The leg swinging back is the more important one to focus
on. As you do this exercise, concentrate on the seat and torso staying quiet and independent. Try and find
the balance point for your seat bones.

If your horse is nervous or excitable, he may not be suitable. Many of the exercises can and should be done
in front of a mirror. This way you can check your alignment and position. In all exercising and riding, your
breathing is an important factor. If you hold your breath, the body automatically tightens. As a result, muscles
can’t release and allow for flexibility. Therefore, sensitivity is hampered.

Think of breathing with your entire body. Imagine all parts being opened, and let the breath reach all the way
to your fingertips and toes. When you exhale, remember to still carry your rib cage up and opened. Be aware
of your horse and your body, but project your mind and energy out and away.

We have seen horses with big hearts conquer the world even though they have less than desirable
conformation. Many riders lack ideal proportions and structure. I can’t stress enough the actual irrelevance of
that. In riding, dance, and art people overcome mental, physical and structural shortcomings through sheer
determination. Many even excel!
Body Position

By Wendy Warner
Reprinted with permission from Horsemen’s Yankee Pedlar, December 1990.

You should find that the leg yield not only works for suppling and engaging, but is also a great help for the horse who is still tight and head high. The leg yield movement lengthens the muscle on each side of the body alternately as the opposite hind leg steps further under, toward the horse’s center of gravity. The stretching and engaging helps release the muscles in the top line, from poll to tail. Almost without fail, several good steps in both directions will reward the rider with a better stride, a lower head and a more relaxed frame. Your ability to achieve this will improve only with practice.

Remember, riding school figures and leg yields are advantageous for any kind of horse in any style of riding.

This article is concerned with something very important to all of us as riders—our body! That’s right—our position and seat in the saddle are our main sources of communication with the horse. Everything we do with our bodies, voluntary or involuntary, while mounted affects our horse in some way. The most successful horse and rider combinations are those where both personalities are compatible, not necessarily similar. Regardless of the breed, a good horse is a good horse. He is your best and most gracious teacher. Riding becomes a much less frustrating task with a suitable horse.

Back to the body. Your position, and how you sit, and to what level you can coordinate your aids and body parts will influence the horse. A nervous or overly energetic person would be a bad match on a high-strung horse; as would be a laid back, mellow person on a lazy, dull mount. Swapping these pairs would actually be more productive.

Regardless of your style of riding, even if your sole interest is in pleasure hacking on Sunday afternoons, you should learn how to ride your horse in balance. This means you are in a posture that maintains your own body, working in sync with that of your horse. Only then are you able to influence your horse as to your decisions in the most unobtrusive way. All good riding strives for this: maximum performance with minimum struggle.

Imagine a flawless hunter round on a 3-foot, 6-inch course. Any bold horse with an aggressive rider can jump a big fence. But to negotiate a course where rider and horse meet every fence at the same comfortable distance, bascule evenly over the obstacle, land balanced and forward, continuing on to the next jump with even, relaxed strides, takes some pretty advanced riding.

How about a dressage test or a reining pattern brilliantly performed? This only happens with a skilled rider using a near-complete awareness of body use and mental communication. Not only is the rider responsible for his body, but its influence over the horse as well.

These different styles all have their own posture for the correct seat, yet they all aim to produce a rider who sits supple, balanced and in control. The reason to sit correctly is not just to look good; it’s to give aids and convey feelings to the horse effectively and easily.

If a rider sits out of balance, such as 1) leaning in, or out, dropping a shoulder, or 2) placing the seat too far back in the saddle, with the legs out in front, then the rider is not balanced, left to right, or front to back. Does that concept ring a bell? Think about it. It’s pompous to expect our horses to progress in their training and not to discipline ourselves in our own training. After all, we are both athletes needing progressive development.

If I want to sit on a young or green horse or one who is not very strong in the back, then I would carefully sit in the saddle with my shoulders directly over my hips. I would lighten the weight in the saddle by positioning my legs, stirrups on the long side, directly under my hips. If my muscles are relaxed then I can allow the weight to travel down my legs, and out my heels. In this posture, the horse feels my weight and body encumbrances to a much lesser degree.

The way you can judge is to imagine your horse disappearing from under you. Would you be able to land
upright on your feet? Yes, if you were maintaining a straight line—ear, shoulder, hip and heel.

I’m not saying this is the only balanced position. A good hunt seat rider usually sits with the shoulders a bit in front of the hips. In other words, the angle between the thigh and the torso is smaller, yet the chest and head are lifted and carried up. The lower leg is also positioned in advance of the hip (unlike the previous position) as well as a shorter stirrup. Is this a balanced position? Of course it is. If that horse were taken out from under the rider, he could maintain that position on the ground without falling forward or backward. Correct Western equitation also requires a balanced position. To sit in balance with your horse makes life easier for both of you.

Just as horses are better or more able in one direction than the other, so are we. At an early age, we demonstrate an affinity for being right- or left-handed, though some clever people are ambidextrous. One side of your body is stronger and more cooperative than the other. Once you find your limits, it is your riding obligation to develop both sides of your body to make them equally strong, flexible and coordinated.

This is just what we desire for our horse. As you progress toward this ideal of positioned control, you become better able to guide and signal your mount, be it an overly sensitive horse or one not sensitive enough. You should always strive to refine your coordination and the use of the aids. You can change your horse’s way of traveling, as well as his mental attitude. What you get is obedience, with a happy horse, and that equals art.

A valuable place for self-education is a horse show. Attend well rated shows so you have a chance to observe quality horses and riders. A great spot is the warm-up area. When you see a tense horse, study the rider. Is the posting rhythm even or uneven? Is there tension or softness in the elbow joints, the wrist, hips, knees and ankles? See if the rider is level in his shoulders. Does he tend to lean in, dropping a shoulder, collapsing a hip? Does the rider seem to have a solid control over his own body, or is he at the mercy of the horse’s movements?

A rider with excessive body movement or tension in his joints and muscles is giving the horse all sorts of unnecessary signals. A horse can deal with this several ways. The nervous, forward going horse usually becomes more nervous, tense and quick. A lazy horse learns to block out the rider’s excessive signals as well. This type of riding can turn a quiet horse into a thug and an energetic, willing horse into a jerk. Unfortunately, because of insensitive and incorrect riding, both types of horses are dubbed in the negative. A horse cannot produce clean, clear movements with balanced, relaxed steps, unless the rider can maintain control of his own body.

Now look for the rider who appears balanced, soft and supple. Even if the horse seems tight and wired for action, with a good rider, the warm up should progress, producing a more relaxed stride and frame. This is an experienced, tactful rider. Observe the arms, elbow joints and hands. Most likely they are elastic and allowing, within the contact. Each time the rider rises and sits to the trot, the elbow joint must open and close. Now find the good horse who regardless of weather conditions, rider problems or congestion in the warm-up area, just goes along, in an even stride, with a pleasant expression. That horse, regardless of shape, size or color, is worth $1 million.

Always study the riders you know to be top notch. Examine their positions and effectiveness. Imagine your own body doing the same. Try and feel what their muscles and joints are experiencing.

Don’t just single out the shows of your own type of riding. Observe other styles as well. There is much to be learned from all.

I had the privilege of riding some excellent reining horses recently. Until then, I didn’t realize how correctly trained and balanced these horses were. They have to be able to perform sliding stops, spins and changes. I discovered how much finesse and balance the good reiners have and put into their horses. So long as I remained tall, strong in my back and balanced, performing a good spin on a schooled horse took no more than a light rein on the side of the neck and relaxed rhythmical bumps from the lower leg. Many of these principals and ideas I took home and incorporated into my own riding program.

Let’s take a body on horseback and discuss the different parts from top to bottom. The head, for example, can do all sorts of things to cause trouble. Some people ride with their heads popped out in front of them.
Automatically they become out of balance. The head weighs more than you think. You may see these riders with excessive head bobbing at the sitting trot; again, unnecessary movement.

There are those who cock their head. They ride with one ear lower than the other. Not only is the head out of balance, but now another place in the body is crooked as a result. If you really want to get picky about it, when things are out of alignment, then additional and wrong muscles come into play.

Another biggie is crooked shoulders. You will often see riders making a turn, or a circle, falling in and dropping their posture. This encourages the horse to be incorrect. Once again a dropped shoulder usually results in a collapsed hip. This is a seat bone with little effectiveness. Some people drop their heads and chests, and discourage the horse from moving in big, easy strides. The dropped chest and round shoulders negate the impulse for forward movement but, more importantly, turn the seat and lower back into less effective driving or retarding aids.

Regardless of riding style, the rider must stretch tall and open the chest and mind. Learn to feel your seat bones in the saddle. You may not always need them, but when you do, make sure you get them down, and are able to feel them separately. The placement of your legs and length of stirrup depends on the style and level you are riding. Hip joints must be relaxed, as well as knees and ankles. If any of these joints are tight or locked, the rider is never quite able to sit deep in the saddle. The upper body may be top heavy and insecure.

Next, the arms and hands. These are a tell-tale sign. The elbows should be carried at the sides or slightly in advance of the body. The shoulders should not come forward to follow the arms. They are only functional when rotated back and hanging evenly in line with the chest. To walk a horse on contact, the rider’s arms must maintain a soft feel through the rein with the horse’s mouth. Regardless of where the head goes, the connection should not be broken. In order for this to happen the shoulders and elbows must be relaxed, with wrists and fingers supple. Each time a horse takes a step forward in the walk, the head bobs down as if to meet it. The elbows must give in order to follow.

Once again, in the posting trot, the way to maintain a light contact is in the ability of the elbow joint to open and close as you rise up and down with the rhythm. If this fails to happen, the hands go up and down with the body, with every stride. Imagine the jabs the horse is receiving in the mouth. Wrists can easily become fixed. This would break the softness to the mouth. Relaxed fingers are needed, too.

At all times you need to have independent, isolated use of body parts. Any aid given must not be negated by an involuntary usage of another part of the body. So who said it was easy? Correct, sensitive riding can be thought of as a combination of yoga and ballet.

It may be very difficult to understand and visualize how you sit. Many times I’ve made corrections in students’ positions only to have them say they had no idea they were doing that. I know I’ve been corrected by instructors and have been amazed that I was sitting crooked (leaning or tensing) as I was unable to feel it. One of the most beneficial teaching tools is the video camera. If you have the opportunity to be filmed during a riding session, watch the tape many times to pick up problems and decide on solutions. Remember, when you make a change in your position, it will always feel awkward until your body adjusts. Good riding is not without struggle.

I will always work to improve my position. Any students I take must constantly strive to do the same. Only then are we taking on the responsibility to improve ourselves and in turn advance our horses. It’s a shame to see riders at more advanced levels with weak or incorrect positions. It’s as if the homework was pushed aside to dive into the fun stuff. They may ride well but never as proficiently as they could with correct posture.

Riding is a very humbling endeavor. Once you feel secure with your own horse, take the initiative to ride other horses when the opportunity arises. Gather as much information and new ideas as possible. Always question your position, your balance and relaxation when aids aren’t answered properly.

Horses cannot jump large fences in good form, race barrels well, execute balanced extended trots, flying lead changes, rein backs or sliding stops unless they are taught to be balanced by a balanced rider. The better the position, the greater the degree of coordination and precision the horse can achieve.
Compare the two talented riders on the same horse. The rider with the edge on body control will bring out a better performance. Take an average rider on a super horse, and super rider on an average horse. I would bet on the second pair. Why? A talented, hard working rider can produce great things with an average but willing animal.

What does this mean to you? It means you don’t need expensive and fancy. You can take your good “Ol Joe,” work harder, refine your own skills and that of your horse and end up with a very impressive package, without bank payments!

The Correct Balanced Seat and Posture

The points of alignment from A to B give the basic upright position
Horse & Tack

PATH INTERNATIONAL
Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International
Selection of the Horse for EAA

Selection of the ideal therapy horse is important to ensure rider safety, provide quality therapeutic movement, and meet the needs of the riders to be taught.

The Ideal Therapy Horse:

1. Is sound of leg, wind and eye (to assure quality movement and good behavior)
2. Is between the height of 14.2 and 15.3 h. (to allow for horse-like movement and not be so tall that mounts and sidewalking are inconvenient)
3. Is a variety of widths for the different clientele served (narrow, wide and average width of horses is useful)
4. Has rhythmical movement with even length of stride
5. Demonstrates good temperament (must like people)
6. Has a high level of tolerance to external influences (i.e. wind, sudden movements, loud noises, surprises)
7. Is willing to learn and adapt to new situations
8. Has a minimal flight response in conjunction with a dependence upon the human leader
9. Shows empathy for the riders they serve
10. Is any breed that fits the bill
11. Ranges in age from 6 to into their 30's, but a horse best suited to enter a therapeutic riding program should be between 7 and 15 to ensure maturity and longevity in the program
12. Is in good health, free of vices and ailments that would cause high maintenance in the stable management department

Management of the Therapy Horse

1. The therapy horse needs to be kept happy and healthy (due to the generally slow work done by the average therapy horse). It is necessary to include additional training outside the program hours to enhance the fitness level of the therapy horse and address mental boredom problems
2. Program hours should be monitored and recorded to ensure the therapy horse is not accidentally overworked (maximum three consecutive program hours is recommended or less by observation of the horse’s behavior or physical condition)
3. The therapy horse must be provided with the nutritional feeding program that suits its size, weight, temperament and present behavior
4. The therapy horse must have adequate clean grooming utensils to maintain healthy feet and coat
5. The therapy horse must be provided with adequate shelter and bedding that will protect him from the elements and encourage him to lie down
6. The therapy horse must be provided with tack that fits, causes no injury or harm to the horse and also sits in a balanced manner on the horses back to promote good posture in the riders with disabilities
7. The therapy horse must have regular required inoculations, deworming and blacksmith procedures to enhance the health and well-being of the horses
8. The therapy horses need to have training programs in addition to their program hours to ensure continued education, mental stimulation, and increased fitness
Evaluation of Equine Conformation  
By J.T. Potter, Ph.D.

Desirable conformation of horses is extremely important in nearly every facet of the horse industry. Horses shown in halter classes are judged entirely on conformation, while horses exhibited in various performance classes are evaluated to varying degrees on conformation as well as performance. The relationship of form to function has been well documented, in that a given conformational trait precipitates a given pattern of movement. Balance, structural correctness, muscling, quality, sex/breed character, and way of going/travel are the main factors considered when evaluating conformation.

**Balance** is evaluated in four ways. First, when viewing a horse from the side, visually divide the horse into thirds, considering three relative lengths of the shoulder, midpiece and hindquarter. These lengths will be equal if the horse is balanced from this view. In addition, the length of the neck will be approximately equal to the length of each third, and the length of the head should equal these measurements or be slightly shorter. Secondly, when observed from the profile (side view), the depth of the horse’s heartgirth should be equal to the length of the leg if the horse is correctly balanced. Differences are expected and will be observed according to breed in this respect. For example, Thoroughbreds generally are somewhat longer in the length of leg as compared to the depth of the heartgirth. Thirdly, the height of the horse at the withers should be the same as the height at the hip. Finally, the width of the horse’s shoulders when viewed from the front should be the same as the width of the hindquarter when viewed from the rear.

**Structural correctness** is critical to the usefulness and longevity of the horse. In the evaluation of structural correctness, observe the horse from the front, side and rear. From the front, the horse’s front leg should come out of the middle of the shoulder and form an imaginary straight line through the upper leg, knee, lower leg and hoof. Variations that could be observed include offset knees, turning out at the toe (splay-footed), or turning in at the toe (pigeon-toed). From the side, an imaginary line should begin at the middle of the shoulder and bisect the leg to the ground. Knees that are in front of this line (buck knees) or behind the line (calf knees) are variations in structural correctness from this view. It is also important to evaluate the length and slope of the shoulder, and the way in which the shoulder ties into the withers. The slope of the pasterns should approximate the slope of the shoulder (will approximate 45 degrees) in most cases, and these angles will greatly affect length of stride and the ability to absorb concussion.

Next, evaluate the length of the back in relationship to the length of the under line, with a shorter, stronger back being preferred. The length and slope of the croup are also important determinants of structural correctness, in that a horse with a long and relatively level croup will typically have a longer stride. Structural correctness in the hind leg is evaluated from the side by drawing an imaginary line from the point of the buttocks, with the line falling down the back of the hind leg. Hocks with excess angle (sickle-hocked) or too little angle (post-legged) are variants that you can evaluate from this view. From the rear, the line is dropped from the center of the buttocks and should bisect the hind leg to the ground. Deviations observed in this view include hocks outside the line, inside the line (cow-hocked), and toes that turn out (splay-footed) or in (pigeon-toed).

**Muscling** is typically evaluated in the chest, forearm, shoulder, hip, stifle and gaskin. *Quantity* and *quality* of muscling are very important in this evaluation. Quantity of muscling refers to the actual mass of muscle that is observed, whereas quality of muscling refers to the way in which the muscle ties into the legs and the amount of definition and expression of muscling that a horse possesses. Definition of muscling observed by separation of the major muscle groups, giving the muscle a chiseled appearance, and looks similar to the type of muscling seen in a competitive body builder. Muscling in the chest is best evaluated by observing the width of the chest and evidence by an inverted “V” when viewed from the front. As the quantity of muscling in the chest decreases, the chest appears to be flatter. The forearm should exhibit both length and bulge, giving evidence of both quality and quantity of muscling. The horse with the longer, tapering forearm that lies lower into the area of the knee will typically be longer strided, as opposed to the horse with a short, bunchy forearm. In the shoulder and hip, observe definition and separation of muscling, as heavier muscled horses will exhibit bulge to the shoulder and hip as well. In addition, the hip should be long and tie low into the gaskin. From the rear view, a horse with adequate muscling in the stifle will exhibit a great deal of
width in this area, and the stifle will be the widest part of the horse from this view. Horses that are lighter
muscled in the stifle will be wider at the point of the hip. The gaskin should possess both volume and length.
Circumference of the inside and outside gaskin should be symmetrical, and the gaskin should be long and
tie in low at the hock. As with the forearm, the longer, more tapering gaskin will usually provide for a longer
stride as opposed to the shorter, bunchier gaskin.

**Quality** refers to the overall appearance of the horse, and is evaluated usually in the head, neck,
derunderpinning (legs), and degree of refinement that a horse possesses. The head should be refined with large,
expressive eyes that are set to the outside of the head. Eyes that are in this position allow the horse a greater
field of vision, as opposed to the horse that has smaller eyes that are set closer together. The head should be
relatively short from eye to muzzle, and the bridge of the nose should be flat and clean, with the exception
of the Arabian and, in some cases, the Morgan, which will have more of a “dished” appearance in the face.
The muzzle should have a chiseled appearance, and the nostrils should be of adequate size. The neck should
tie in smoothly into the withers and high into the shoulder at the base of the neck. The throatlatch and neck
should be small and clean to allow for greater suppleness and flexibility in the neck. The legs should be clean
and free of blemishes or protrusions that might affect the horse’s ability to perform. Finally, the amount of
bone (substance) that a horse possesses should be in accordance to breed. For example, expect a draft horse
to be much larger boned that an Arabian.

**Sex character** is defined as masculinity in the male and femininity in the female. Masculinity in a stallion
is seen by observing a bold, expressive jaw. Also, stallions are typically somewhat crestier in the neck, and
are generally heavier throughout. Mares, which are very feminine, generally have a flatter, more refined
appearance to the head, long and slender necks, and present an overall more refined, petite appearance.

Horses differ in appearance due to **breed character**. For example, as previously discussed, Arabians
typically have a dished appearance in the face. Morgans are generally more “up-headed” when compared
to the Quarter Horse. Thoroughbreds are usually taller and lighter muscled overall when compared to other
breeds. Knowledge of conformation traits specific to the breed being evaluated is very important in correctly
evaluating the many different breeds of horses.

The way in which a horse travels is highly correlated to conformation. In selecting horses, one should first
evaluate the conformation of the horse and then observe the movement of the horse at both the walk and
trot. A horse that is balanced and structurally correct would be expected to track fairly straight with an
adequate length of stride. Likewise, horses with structural problems would travel in a manner consistent with
their conformation. For example, a horse that is in at the knees and splay footed would be expected to travel
close in front or “wing in.” A horse that is in at the toe should travel wide or “paddle.” Further, horses that are
shorter and straight-shouldered, steep in the pasterns, or short in the hip would be expected to travel with a
shorter, rougher stride as opposed to horses with a more desirable conformation in those areas.

In summary, conformation in the equine is evaluated by balance, structural correctness, muscling, quality, sex
caracter, breed character and way of going. It is important to evaluate each area critically with equal emphasis
in order to select the superior horse that will accomplish its intended task.
Conformation

When viewed from the front, the evaluator should be looking for the horse’s:
- Width of chest
- Correctness of legs
- Spring of rib
- Head
- Depth of body
- Symmetry

When viewed from the rear, the evaluator should be looking for the horse’s:
- Muscle definition
- Correctness of legs
- Depth of body
- Symmetry
When viewed from the side, the evaluator should be looking for the horse's:

- Balance and symmetry
- Length and thickness of neck
- Length and lie of topline
- Length of bone in the legs
- Depth of body
- Joint angles
- Correctness of legs
Movements and Gaits

A horse’s conformation will affect its “way of going”. Horses should be observed in motion from the front, from the hind, and from the side at all gaits as well as on a bend.

With the horse in movement, the evaluator should be watching for:

- Unsoundness
- Way of going
- Footfalls on two tracks
- Freedom of movement and bend
- Frame

The therapy horse should have three distinct gaits: walk, trot, and canter. The therapy horse needs to be able to square at the halt to provide a symmetrical base up support for the rider. In addition, the horse’s ability to square while being mounted is very important to the horse’s well-being. Other gaits, such as those seen in saddlebreds, walking horses, etc., are based on a four beat. Instructors using horses with these gaits should have a thorough understanding of the kinesthetics related to that movement.
All gaits should be initiated by the hindquarters
The walk is a rhythmical four-beat lateral gait
The trot is a rhythmical two-beat diagonal gait
The canter is a three-beat gait with a diagonal pair
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Equipment
The Horse’s Side of Saddle Fit
By Bonnie Kreitler
Reprinted, with permission, from The Chronicle of the Horse, Friday, June, 21, 1991 and from the author.

Saddle fit involves two points. On the top side, the tack must fit the rider. On the bottom side, it must fit the horse. It doesn’t take long for a rider to figure out whether a particular saddle is comfortable for his anatomy, but the horse often has little say in the matter.

Riders and trainers move their favorite saddle from horse to horse with aplomb, trusting that pads of different shapes and thicknesses will smooth out the differences from one horse’s back to another. They ignore the fact that the original function of a saddle pad was to keep the underside of the saddle clean, not to bridge any gaps between the horse’s back and his tack.

The Ideal Fit
An English saddle’s fit is a combination of the shape of its tree over the horse’s withers and the shape of the stuffed panels that support the tree, commented Caroline Delgrosso of County Saddlery, Woodbine, MD. The tree must be the correct width to fit the horse’s shoulders and withers. The panels must spread the rider’s weight out over the greatest possible area and conform to the horse’s anatomy so that the saddle sits firmly on his back.

The head of the saddle tree, which forms the pommel, is reinforced across the horse’s withers by a metal plate. The ends, or points, of this metal plate sit in small pockets on the saddle’s sweat flaps. If the saddle’s head is either too wide or too narrow for the horse’s back, weight gets concentrated on these metal points and, even though they are tipped with flexible leather to “soften” them, they dig into the horse’s shoulders. Saddlers sometimes refer to “short” or “long” points to indicate how far down along the horse’s shoulder these points reach. The head of the saddle should clear the horse’s withers by the width of two fingers when there is weight in the saddle. There should be a clear channel from front to back as you look down the horse’s spine from the rear.

The panels on the underside of the saddle must be of the correct length and shape to fit the curve of the horse’s withers, Delgrosso emphasized. They should lie smoothly against the horse, just behind the edge of his shoulder blade, without any gaps between his shoulders and the underside of the saddle.

Viewed from the side, the deepest part of the saddle should appear parallel to the ground with the cantle slightly higher than the pommel. Check the relationship between the pommel and the cantle. If the pommel is higher than the cantle and the seat appears to run uphill, the tree is too narrow and the rider will be thrown off balance toward the cantle. If the cantle is considerably higher than the pommel and the seat looks like it’s running downhill toward the pommel, the tree is probably too wide and the rider’s weight will slide forward onto the pommel.

Saddle Fit Checkpoints
Len Brown of Brown’s Performance Saddles in Nevada, Mo., became a crusader for proper saddle fit after he and his wife, Lisa, rode 3,000 miles in 7 1/2 months in 1982. Along the way, the Browns learned lessons about saddle construction that became the nucleus of their company, founded in 1984.
Don’t use any saddle pad when checking for fit, Brown advised. When trying a saddle on speculation from a tack shop, use a thin towel to keep it clean. Be sure to put the saddle on the horse’s back in the proper position. “Most people put their saddle too far forward,” said Brown.

This creates several problems. First, the points of the metal strap reinforcing the head in an English saddle’s tree prevent free movement. Second, the center of the saddle is no longer in the center of the horse’s back. It runs uphill toward the pommel, the rider slides back toward the cantle, and out comes a pad to compensate.

Since the shoulder blade will come back as much as three to four inches when the horse moves, the points of the saddle should lie just behind its rear edge when he is standing, Brown said. This positions the girth properly about a hand’s width behind the horse’s elbow. At saddle-fitting clinics throughout the country, Brown shows riders how to tell if the horse’s back and the saddle they’re using are compatible.

With the girth fastened, check the following:

- The pommel should clear the horse’s withers by at least the width of two fingers.
- There should be a clear, open channel down the gullet or middle of the saddle when viewed from the rear.
- The panels should appear to be the same width and thickness when viewed from the rear of the saddle.
- The panels should sit firmly alongside the horse’s withers and shoulders without any gaping. Turn the horse’s head from side to side and check the shape and fit of the panels on each side. Slide a hand under the saddle along the horse’s shoulder; there should not be extreme pressure from the points of the metal strap across the pommel.
- Viewed from the side, the deepest part of the seat should appear parallel to the ground with the cantle slightly higher than the pommel. The seat should not appear to run uphill or downhill.
- Reach under the flaps to check whether the panels make firm contact in the middle of the horse’s back, under the seat. There should be the same amount of pressure here as along the shoulders or toward the cantle.

After these points have been checked from the ground, sit in the saddle and ask a friend to recheck the above points of fit. Weight should not affect the way the saddle rests. Pay particular attention to whether or not a hand is squeezed by the saddle’s points. If a hand doesn’t slide easily under the panels, neither will the horse’s shoulder.

Leave a hand under the panel while someone lifts the horse’s front leg or walks him forward a few steps to see if the points dig into the hand. If the pressure is too much for you, it will be too much for the horse’s shoulder muscles. Finally, move around in the saddle to find a balanced point and determine whether this position can be held comfortably without leaning forward or backward or gripping to the saddle to maintain it.

**Consumer Options**

Even when buying a saddle “off the rack,” riders don’t have to settle for a less-than-custom fit, said Delgrossos. Most English saddle manufacturers offer a variety of tree widths that can be combined with various panel shapes in hundreds of ways to suit a particular horse.
Formed panels made of thick sheets of felt, foam, or sponge or a combination of these materials either fit a horse or they don’t. Their shape can’t be altered by a saddler. Hand-stuffed panels, however, can be reshaped.

Delgrosso also advised buyers to check the degree of adjustability built into stuffed panels. If the panels are skimpy, changes on the underside of the saddle can involve costly replacement of the entire panel. If the manufacturer used enough leather to make allowance for alterations, adding or removing panel stuffing will be a simple job costing less than $100. A saddler can add to or take away panel stuffing in the withers, back or cantle areas to achieve a custom fit. Delgrosso also pointed out that the metal plate reinforcing the saddle’s pommel can be squeezed or stretched to help fit the horse a little better.

Delgrosso commented that a new or restuffed saddle will not produce instant miracles for a sore back. It needs time to heal. Taking time to check the fit of a horse’s saddle is not only humane, but it also makes common sense. The payoff comes in better movement, a happier frame of mind with fewer behavior problems and resistance, fewer days out of training, lower vet bills, and a longer useful life for the horse.
Symptoms of Back Soreness

1. Saddle will not hold position
2. Rider cannot easily maintain his/her position on the horse
3. “Dry spots” under the pad
4. A hollowing of the muscle alongside the withers
5. White hairs under the saddle
6. Swelling, either temporary or permanent, after removing the saddle
7. Hidden scars that can be palpated deeply in the muscles
8. Sway back top line
9. “Splinting” of the back
10. Misbehavior
11. Pain reaction from gently palpating 3-4 inches on either side of the backbone
Equipment for Therapeutic Riding

“What equipment will we need?” is a question frequently asked by those starting operating centers. This section helps to answer the basic questions. Keep in mind that many instructors improvise for their own situations. Also, be sure to read the PATH Intl. Center Standards & Accreditation Manual for specific policies regarding some equipment.

You may not always need specialized equipment. However, eventually you will need to accommodate some special needs. In choosing equipment, the overriding standard is safety. The following checklist provides excellent guidelines for when and why special equipment is used:

- Appropriate equipment should be used on an individual basis.
- It must not be attached to the rider and horse at the same time.
- It should not restrict or interfere in any way with the rider’s balance, movement or contact with the horse.
- It should not cause the rider discomfort or embarrassment.
- It should not cause the horse discomfort or risk of injury.

The therapist and instructor will also determine the use of special equipment at the initial rider assessment. These are:

- The type and extent of the disability. Is it a stable, progressive or improving condition?
- The age, health, weight and height of the rider.
- The rider's knowledge, experience and reaction to horses, the instructor and volunteers, etc.
- The frequency, length and form lessons will take.
- The type, width, height and variety of mounts ridden.
- The inevitable extra cost involved.

CLOTHING

Riding: Practical and economic considerations may make it impossible for riders and their families to invest in formal riding attire. However, make every attempt to assist riders in acquiring riding breeches or jodhpurs, if riding English style. Chaps and/or jeans are preferable for Western riding. Riders subject to skin breakdown or pressure sores need to be careful of leg seams. Often, breeches are better than jeans and silk long underwear or pantyhose can help. “Looking the part” may improve a person’s self-assurance and self-esteem. Tack stores often donate slightly outdated breeches/jodhpurs and chaps, as do members of 4-H clubs, pony clubs and other riding associations. Publicize your need in their newsletters—you will gain good public relations, good friends and equipment too!

Vaulting: When vaulting (or not riding in a saddle), riders should wear comfortable, loose-fitting pants or sweatpants that allow free movement.

General: Jeans and other trousers should be loose enough to allow the rider to sit comfortably. There should not be a tight crease or pressure across the hips, upper thigh and abdomen. Sweatpants work very well. However, in cold weather sweatpants should be worn over long underwear for added warmth. You can even purchase them with protective suede-like padding—just like regular breeches—from tack stores. Jackets should not be too long. The rider should not be able to sit on the back of the jacket. Zip, button or snap jackets closed when riding. Loose, flapping jackets can distract horse and rider.

Instructors: The instructor’s clothing should be appropriate for the weather but also be neat and professional. Secure long hair and avoid wearing jewelry (such as dangling earrings and bracelets) that can catch on tack or be pulled at by riders.

FOOTWEAR

Riding: Sneakers should be avoided. If used, remove the rubber stirrup pads. Build an inventory of used riding boots, English or Western style, for loan to riders who cannot acquire boots. Ankle high paddock boots, jodhpur boots or lace-up walking shoes are easier for those with movement impairments. High English or
Western boots work well for those with good mobility of the legs. Make footwear available for loan only, as small feet grow.

**Vaulting:** Sneakers are acceptable because they are more comfortable for the horse. However, sneakers should not be worn in stable area.

**BRACES**
Riders may wear short leg-braces when they ride because they help support the ankle and do not interfere with the horse. When a rider rides without stirrups, consider removing the short leg-braces so the lower leg can easily contour to the horse.

If the rider has sensory problems where the brace contacts the skin, remove the brace after riding and check the skin for red marks or abrasions. If no problems are apparent, instruct the rider to monitor these areas at home.

Long leg-braces are usually removed prior to riding because they may interfere with leg contact on the horse. However, if the rider is using stirrups and his ankle or knee is unstable, the braces may be necessary. Observe skin precautions.

**HEADGEAR**
Refer to the *PATH Intl. Standards & Accreditation Manual* for an explanation of which helmets are approved by PATH Intl.

**Helmet Fit**
It is best to fit the helmet to each individual before purchasing. For the best fit, PATH Intl. recommends that riders and their families consider the purchase of their own helmets when financially feasible.

If individual purchase is not possible, riding instructors should read the helmet owner manuals to understand each helmet manufacturer's individual features and fitting recommendations.

A helmet that doesn't fit correctly can cause undesirable changes in posture and balance—the very things you are trying to remedy. Consider:

- What if the helmet is sitting too far back on the rider’s head?
- What if the helmet is pushed to one side with the brim off center?
- What if the helmet covers the rider’s eyes?
- What if the helmet is too big or too snug?
- Or, what if the rider is irritated by the chin strap?

It is important to understand that the posture and balance of your rider will be directly affected by the fit of the helmet. To better understand how an ill-fitting helmet can affect balance, get a helmet and a horse and follow these steps:

- Put the helmet on, sliding it into position from back to front. Let it sit on the back of your head. Proceed, first at a walk and then at a sitting trot, around the ring. How do you feel?
- Now pull the helmet too far forward, so the front of the helmet is resting on your eyebrows. Again, walk and trot. How does that feel?
- Try tipping your helmet to the left or right and walk and trot. Notice what happens to your seat bones in the saddle. Is your weight evenly distributed? Do you feel balanced?
- Now hold the brim of your helmet in one hand and twist the whole hat so it is off center. What does that do to your feeling of good body alignment?
- Next, try all of the above with a helmet that is too small and that you have had to squeeze onto your head. Comfortable? How about your balance and posture now?
- And the helmet that is too large? How does that feel to you, especially at the sitting trot?
- Finally, review all of the above blindfolded (with a leader). The blindfold will allow you to concentrate even more.
A properly fitted helmet should be snug. When introducing a helmet to a rider, have the rider wear it for a few minutes to be sure it isn’t so snug that it gives him a headache. After five minutes, remove the helmet. If there are marks on the rider’s forehead, try the next larger size. Some helmets come with spacers—pieces of foam with sticky or hook-and-loop tape backs, which aid in fit.

The well-fitted helmet should stay on the head when harnessed without rocking or moving. Have the rider bend down at the waist and shake his head. With the manufacturer’s suggested adjustments, the helmet should feel secure to the rider.

Some helmets have inside suspensions—four pieces of woven tape joined by a string, or a piece of cloth with draw lace fed through a tunnel of fabric. These mechanisms adjust how close the hat will sit to the top of the rider’s head. Don’t count on this feature for protection. It is intended to raise the helmet above the ears. If you use the suspension for comfort, you will need to adjust it every time you use the helmet.

If the helmet harness has laces at the back of the neck, check them frequently. This feature is designed to keep the cap from coming down in front and breaking the nose if the rider is hit from behind. Try these fitting steps with your next session of riders:

- Place the helmet on the head sliding it front to back. Allow it to rest so there are two fingers between the eyebrows and the edge of the helmet.
- Make sure the helmet is centered correctly and fasten the chin strap. Depending on the recommendation of the manufacturer, the chin strap can be worn on the point of the chin, or under the jawbone. Just be sure it’s tight enough so the helmet doesn’t slip off in a fall.
- If there is a laced harness at the back, undo it before fitting the helmet and re-adjust it after the helmet is on. Place the harness below the small bump at the back of the rider’s head. If the harness is U shaped, adjust the neck or chin strap firmly so the helmet doesn’t rotate on the head when pushed up at the front or back edge.
- Ask the rider how the helmet feels. For the rider whose head is a difficult size, try placing self-adhesive sanitary napkins inside the helmet at the trouble spots.
- Practice fitting a helmet on a colleague.

Remember that no matter what type of helmet you choose for your rider, one that fits properly and is comfortable will provide the ultimate in safety. It also gives your rider a “head start” on his lesson!
**REIN HANDLES**

To control the horse with one hand, the rein handle allows direct reining as well as neck reining. Buckles are needed on both sides of the reins to allow for shortening and lengthening of the reins.

**TETHER**

From the rein to a breast plate will keep the reins within reach should the rider drop the handle for any reason.

**LADDER/Loop Reins**

For a rider who cannot grip a traditional rein, the entire hand can be slipped through the leather loop, allowing pressure from the wrist to control the horse. The series of loops allows the rider to “climb the ladder” to shorten or lengthen as needed. **Caution:** The loops must be large enough to allow the hand to slip out easily in an emergency. Again, a tether is recommended in case the rein is dropped.

**Cuff Rein**

Using the Velcro® quick-release loop around the wrist, a rider with no gripping ability can control the horse without losing the reins. Several snaps along the rein allow repositioning of the cuff for lengthening and shortening as well as an added safety release point.

**Ladder Rein**

With the ladder rein, the rider with limited dexterity has control using gross hand motor skills only. A tether is recommended in case the rein is dropped.

Courtesy of Equest Therapeutic Horsemanship, Dallas, Texas
RAINBOW REINS
To teach proper use of the reins, the instructor can direct a rider to “hold in the green” or “hold in the red”. The rider can then feel an appropriate response to their aids and have a guide for proper positioning.

HAND HOLD
To channel reins for a rider whose handling of the reins tends to be high due to spasticity or whatever, channeling the reins through a hand hold can maintain a more natural line from the bit. Note: A completely natural line may not be feasible. The more acute the angle of channeling, the more severe the pressure on the bit.

POMMEL SUPPORT
For riders lacking upper body stability, the PVC pipe support can be attached to a Western saddle horn to provide a weight-bearing surface.

FOAM WAIST-ROLL
The large, soft foam roll offers comfortable support and upper body stability. It is held in position by a belt passed through the roll and around the rider’s waist. (The belt can also be used by sidewalkers to aid upper body control.)

WAIST BELT
This is a belt that the riders wear which allow the sidewalkers to render support, or for the instructor to use during the mounting process.

HARNESS
The harness has hand holds on the waist belt of the harness, and the straps help stabilize the waist belt and distribute the pressure over the shoulders.
VESTS
A custom made vest will allow the rider more trunk support from sidewalkers, while distributing the pressure around the trunk and shoulders. The handholds are higher on the vest than the harness.

WESTERN SADDLE
A western saddle can give a rider more support with the deep seat, cantle and fork. It may be difficult to mount some riders with high tone because of the horn.

CLOSE CONTACT JUMPING SADDLE
This English saddle provides maximum feel of horse and rider while minimizing stress to the rider’s adductors and hips.

ALL PURPOSE JUMPING SADDLE
A saddle with a moderately deep seat and knee rolls. It will offer more support than a close contact saddle.

DRESSAGE SADDLE
With the long and deep seat, this saddle will encourage correct, balanced position and offer more support to the rider than a close contact jumping saddle.

AUSTRALIAN STOCK SADDLE
A saddle that can provide a deep seat, high cantle, and thigh supports for a rider who needs a saddle with more support.
ENDURANCE SADDLE
An English type of saddle with more padding on the seat, and a higher cantle. A comfortable saddle that distributes the riders weight over a larger area of the horse’s back.

VAULTING SURCINGLE OR DOUBLE HANDED SURCINGLE
Used over a bareback pad or over the pommel of an English saddle. This surcingle has two handles.

ANTI-CAST SURCINGLE or SINGLE HANDED SURCINGLE
Also used over a bareback pad or the pommel of a saddle. It has a single center positioned handle.

NATURAL RIDE
This combines the features of a bareback pad and the anti-cast surcingle. The hand hold is lower than on the surcingle and is solid so can be utilized better by leaning on it rather than by holding on to it.

SEAT SAVERS
Padded seat cover which reduce stress on seat bones, help in preventing pressure sores and increase rider comfort. They are made of fleece, gel, or closed cell foam. English and Western styles are available. Full saddle fleece pads are also available.

RUBBER BANDS
To assist a rider who cannot keep their feet in stirrups due to spasticity, lack of sensation, etc. The rubber bands afford security with a quick-release capability in case of emergencies.
PEACOCK STIRRUPS
Stirrups that have a quick-release rubber band on the side will allow the rider's foot to come out in case of a fall. The safety feature should always face away from the horse when positioned on the rider's foot.

DEVONSHIRE BOOTS
A hooded stirrup with a closed platform that prevents the rider's foot from moving too far forward.

“S” SHAPED STIRRUPS
Stirrups that have a safety feature of a curved outside bridge that will allow the rider's foot to fall free from the stirrup if a fall should occur. The safety feature should be positioned away from the horse when positioned on the rider's foot.

“QUICK-OUT” STIRRUPS
These stirrups have a safety feature where the outside bridge will release when pressure is applied, while at the same time, lifting the foot up from the platform.
Disabilities

PATH INTERNATIONAL
Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International
People First

There has been much controversy concerning appropriate language to use when referring to someone who has a disability. The current acceptable language is to refer to the person first and then the disability. For example “people with mental retardation”, not “the mentally retarded.”

The terms, *impairment, disability, and handicap* often cause confusion. Helander, Mendis, and Nelson (1988) described the relationship of the three terms as the “disability process starts with an impairment, that leads to a disability, and that may in turn lead to a handicap.”

Bullock and Mahon (1997) further clarify these terms:

**Impairment:** is a descriptive term referring to loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure or function. The loss or abnormality may result from disease, genetic disorder, accident or environment.

**Disability:** is any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or way considered normal function. An impairment causes a functional challenge which is then a disability.

**Handicap:** is a disadvantage for a person that either limits or prevents the fulfillment of a role that is normal for that person. Usually a handicap is social in nature and has external causes. It affects relations with peers and society. It can be caused by lack of opportunities, environmental barriers, or social attitudes. Most handicaps can be lessened or eliminated.

In a “people first” approach it is best to look at a person’s *characteristics* or how the disability manifests itself, not the *label* of the disability. Labels refer to the names we give disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, mental retardation, multiple sclerosis, etc. We often need to refer to the labels in order for people to share common information. However, when we look to provide therapeutic horseback riding, it is best to look at the characteristics or manifestations of the person in order to design the best program for the individual. Examples of characteristics include hyperactivity, cognition problems, high or low tone, behavior concerns. Different labels (or disabilities) share many common characteristics.


The Animal School - A Parable

Once upon a time the animals decided they must do something decisive to meet the increasing complexity of their society. They held a meeting and finally decided to organize a school.

The curriculum consisted of running, climbing, swimming, and flying. Since these were the basic behaviors of most animals, they decided that all the students should take all the subjects.

The duck proved to be excellent at swimming, better, in fact, than his teacher. He also did very well in flying. But he proved to be very poor in running. Since he was poor in this subject he was made to stay after school to practice it, and even had to drop swimming to get more time to practice running. He was kept at his poorest subject until his webbed feet were so badly damaged he became only average at swimming. But average was acceptable in the school and nobody worried about that....except the duck.

The rabbit started at the top of his class in running, but finally had a nervous breakdown because of so much makeup time in swimming...a subject he hated.

The squirrel was excellent in climbing until he developed a psychological block in flying class, where the teacher insisted he start flying from the ground instead of the tops of trees. He was kept at attempting to fly until he became muscle-bound and received a “C” in climbing and a “D” in running.

The eagle was the school’s worst discipline problem. In climbing class he beat all of the others to the top of the tree, but he insisted on using his own method of getting there. He received an “F”.

The gophers stayed out of school and fought the tax levies for education because digging was not included in the curriculum. They apprenticed their children to the badger and later joined the ground hogs to start a private school offering alternative education.

So the animals held another meeting and criticized the failure of education to produce successful members of society.

*Taken from “Training the Teacher as a Champion” by Joseph K. Hasenstav and Connie Corcoran Wilson. Published by Performance Learning Systems, Inc. of CA. © 1989.*
Disability Involvement Terms

Monoplegic: Involves one limb
Hemiplegic: Involves one side of the body
Paraplegic: Involves both legs
Diplegic: More involvement in the legs
Quadriplegic: Involves all four limbs
Triplegic: Involves three limbs, usually leaving one non-involved arm

Definition of Muscle Tone

The postural response to gravity
Readiness of muscle to be active
Response to quick stretch
Tension present in resting muscle
Physical Disabilities

Conditions which restrict or limit the ability to perform a daily physical activity in the manner or way considered normal or typical. Physical disabilities are primarily characterized by abnormalities in:

1) **Muscle Tone** – The degree of tension in the resting muscle. Abnormal muscle tone may exist in the following disabilities:

- **Hypertonic** – Increased muscle tone
  - Spastic Cerebral Palsy
  - Traumatic Brain Injury/Acquired Brain Injury
  - Cerebral Vascular Accident (CVA/Stroke)
  - Multiple Sclerosis
  - Spinal Cord Injury
  - Spina Bifida

- **Hypotonic** – Decreased muscle tone
  - Ataxic, Athetoid or Hypotonic Cerebral Palsy
  - Traumatic Brain Injury/Acquired Brain Injury
  - Down Syndrome
  - Multiple Sclerosis
  - Spinal Cord Injury
  - Spina Bifida
  - Mental Retardation

2) **Range of Motion (ROM)** – Range of motion within a joint. Limitation may be due to inflammation, disturbance or abnormality in the bone mass or structure. Limitations in range of motion may also be as a result of contractures secondary to a disability where hypertonicity is present. Decreased ROM may be present in the following disabilities:

- Arthritis, Amputation, Arthrogryposis, Dwarfism, Cerebral Palsy, Traumatic Brain Injury, CVA/Stroke

3) **Compromised Motor Function** – A decreased ability to perform motor activities. Compromised motor function may exist in the following disabilities which are progressive and/or are disorders of the autoimmune system:

- Cystic Fibrosis, Muscular Fibrosis, Muscular Dystrophy, Multiple Sclerosis, Guillain-Barre Syndrome, Friedrich’s Ataxia

**Autoimmune** disorders are diseases in which the body produces disordered immunological responses against itself.

**Progressive** disorders are disorders that worsen with time.

*(NOTE: Decreased motor function can appear in many disabilities described in this book which are not progressive.)*
Management of physical disabilities in the therapeutic riding setting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Possible Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Hypertonicity  | - Use a narrow to medium based horse with rhythmic gaits  
|               | - Mount first (unless fatigue is an issue)  
|               | - Use sidepull, hackamore or reins to halter rather than bit  
|               | - Use bareback pad with surcingle or close contact. English saddle for comfort and input from horse  
|               | - Consider use of Devonshire boots or rubber bands to hold feet in stirrups  
|               | - Evaluate need for longer warm-up  
|               | - Avoid forcing limbs into position, allow horse’s motion to reduce tone, then reposition and check stirrups  
|               | - Align pelvis to a neutral position first  
|               | - Encourage correct head/neck alignment to promote balance and facilitate use of arms/upper trunk  
|               | - Progress from straight lines with low impulsion to circles with more impulsion  
|               | - Track away from weaker side (if hemiplegic)  
| Hypotonicity  | - Select a medium to wide based horse with “trappy” (choppy) gaits  
|               | - Use a saddle that offers support, ex: Western, Australian Stock Seat, Dressage, Endurance  
|               | - Consider use of Devonshire boots or rubber bands  
|               | - Stabilize flaccid limbs (as needed)  
|               | - Stimulate weight shift/balancing reactions  
|               | - Use irregular rhythm/transitions to normalize (improve) tone  
|               | - Move limbs against gravity in lesson activities  
|               | - Be cautious of joint dislocation  
| Fatigue  | - Mount last/dismount first  
|           | - Consider rest periods (as needed)  
|           | - Select horses with flat profile gaits  
|           | - Maintain awareness of temperature as temperature may decrease endurance  
|           | - Check with rider/caregiver regarding hormone and medication changes  
| Flaccid limb  | - Leg  
|               |  • Rubber band foot to stirrup  
|               |  • Use balanced covered stirrups  
|               |  • Secure stirrup to girth  
|               |  • Dressage whip (to replace leg aid)  
|               |  • May need a horse responsive to voice commands  
|               | - Hand or arm  
|               |  • Horse trained to neck rein  
|               |  • Rein handle for grip  
|               |  • Rein tether to saddle  
|               |  • Neck strap on horse to stabilize hand  
|               |  • Belt around body & arm to stabilize arm  

Management of physical disabilities (continued):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Possible Adaptations</th>
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</table>
| Joint discomfort          | - Be aware of flare ups, as riding may be contraindicated  
- Remove stirrups – eliminate stress on joints  
- Provide long warm-up – never force an affected joint  
- Select horse with smooth gaits  
- Avoid fatigue  
- Use rest periods (as needed)  
- Focus on alignment and posture to take stress off joints  
- Select narrow base horse that is light-sided or responsive to voice commands  
- Select comfortable saddle/tack  
- Use a seat saver                                                                 |
| Balance difficulties      | - Work with the weaker side to the outside, toward the rail, to encourage stretching and strengthening  
- Progress to tracking with weaker side on inside of turns to provide challenge, build awareness of balance  
- Select bilateral activities to work both sides of the body  
- Progress from straight lines to circles, and from large circles to smaller circles  
- Focus on alignment and posture  
- Train the use of the rider’s eyes, seat and upper trunk to assist physical balance in the transitional movement  
- Select medium to wide base horse to normalize tone (horse width must accommodate the rider’s hip ROM) |
| Delayed righting response | - Assign trained volunteers as needed  
- Choose steady horse with gradual transitions  
- Prepare the rider for transitions and activities in advance                                                                                   |
| Progressive disabilities  | - Challenge the mind rather than the body, ex: Dressage tests, Western trail obstacles, horse training theory, etc.)  
- Focus on fun and socialization  
- Consider other options – driving, horsemanship, etc. as needed                                                                                  |
| Exacerbation of any disorder | - Be aware of flare ups, as riding may be contraindicated  
- Avoid extreme temperatures  
- Increase amount of exercise very slowly                                                                                                              |
| Asymmetrical posture & alignment | - Focus on progressive approximation  
- Use task analysis to build toward success  
- Work proximal to distal (from the body core toward the limbs)                                                                                   |
| Other considerations      | - Skin irritation/breakdown  
- Incontinence  
- Use seat saver  
- Use seat saver, bareback pad                                                                                                                    |
Cognitive Impairments:
A discrepancy between chronological age and cognitive maturity; typically characterized by low IQ scores and aberrant social skills.

Disabilities where a cognitive impairment may be seen:

- Developmental Delay
- Mental Retardation
- Fragile X Syndrome
- Down Syndrome and a myriad of other genetic disorders
  A Syndrome is a group or pattern of symptoms that together are characteristics of a specific condition, disease or the like.
- Autism - low functioning
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Cerebral Vascular Accident (CVA/Stroke)
- Cerebral Palsy (some cases)

Learning Styles: We all receive, assimilate and recall new knowledge differently, thus our teaching styles should cater to ALL styles of learning. If possible, provide as much hands on learning as possible, as this is the most effective way to learn. Remember; work at the rider’s competency level, not below it.

- Auditory Learner: Learn through hearing the spoken word
- Kinesthetic Learner: Learn through doing; an interactive, hands on approach
- Visual Learner: Learn through visual stimulus

Management of cognitive impairments in the therapeutic riding setting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Possible Adaptations</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Delayed processing time (including auditory processing)** | - Make directions brief and clearly stated  
- Give time to process directions  
- Use visual and kinesthetic cues to aid processing  
- Ask questions to ensure understanding |
| **Anxiety and fear** | - Acknowledge and be respectful of fear  
- Determine the basis of/reason for the anxiety/fear  
- Develop trust  
- Assign horse and tack that will offer support, ease anxiety  
- Assign volunteer support as needed  
- Do not over-challenge. Work within comfort zone until fear/anxiety is lessened  
- Provide structure and consistency  
- Use skill progression |
| **Impaired balance and decreased body awareness** | - See notes on hypotonia in Physical Disabilities section  
- Progress slowly  
- Use task analysis to determine appropriateness of activity and how best to progress the individual rider  
- Teach rider to self-correct when off-balance by practicing moving from off-center to center; feeling weight even on seat bones; lengthening legs and looking to horizon |
| Impaired sense of safety/judgment | - Provide close supervision at all times  
- Establish clear boundaries  
- Identify off-limit areas clearly  
- Review safety measures when working with horses  
- Establish routines to be followed  
- Provide volunteer support as required |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Short attention span | - Maintain active engagement  
- Provide hands on learning opportunities  
- Increase proprioceptive input to increase engagement  
- Keep waiting to a minimum  
- Gradually add planned waiting time to teach patience  
- Keep class moving  
- Try teaching to smaller groups whenever possible  
- Keep class close to you |
| Impaired memory | - Use repetition and consistency  
- Provide visual cues – cards, diagrams, demo riders  
- Track goals and progress  
- Include movement and kinesthetic input to aid memory |
| Low self-esteem | - Promote success  
- Provide compliant and well trained horse to the skills being taught  
- Build on ability and strengths  
- Maintain dignity of the student at all times  
- Teach to age and competency level, not below  
- Provide encouragement, applaud accomplishment, celebrate progress  
- Encourage independence when appropriate and ready |
| Decreased problem solving | - Use task analysis to determine appropriateness and difficulty of an activity for a particular rider  
- Encourage problem solving in gradual steps  
- Give options, allow them to choose  
- Use Q and A  
- Design and execution of obstacle courses can be good exercises for these riders  
- Encourage other fun activities along with riding skills  
- Allow rider to make mistakes (within limits of safety) and learn from them |
| Difficulty sequencing or organizing a task | - Use visual cue cards for routine based learning  
- Allow time for processing/organizing  
- Focus on motor planning of a task; use task analysis to improve success  
- Supplement auditory cues with visual and kinesthetic as needed  
- Progress from one step instructions to multiple steps based on student’s accomplishments |
Learning Disabilities:
Learning disabilities and associated disorders are characterized by the compromised ability of the brain to receive, process, analyze or store information. The IQ may be normal or high and their academic achievement may be lower than expected on the basis of his/her intellectual potential. The method of teaching and communicating information will determine the effectiveness of learning.

Types of Learning Disabilities:
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)
- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Dyslexia
- Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia

Management of learning disabilities in the therapeutic riding setting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Limited focus/ distractibility    | - Mount on a horse with “trappy” (choppy) gaits that will provide lots of input or movement  
|                                   | - Maintain active engagement                                                        |
|                                   | - Keep the class moving, but be careful not to over-stimulate                       |
|                                   | - Make frequent changes in gait, direction                                           |
|                                   | - Vary tone of voice to maintain engagement                                          |
|                                   | - Teach to all learning styles; use multi-sensory teaching methods                  |
| Impulsivity                       | - Maintain close supervision at all times                                            |
|                                   | - Review safety measures when working with horses                                    |
|                                   | - Train volunteers appropriately                                                    |
|                                   | - Choose appropriate, tolerant horse                                                |
| Difficulty with change/ transitions | - Teach the transition as a skill (i.e.: dismounting, run up stirrups)              |
|                                   | - Limit change until trust is established – work with the same volunteers, the same horse, etc. |
|                                   | - Utilize a very structured lesson with a consistent plan                            |
|                                   | - Use music as a tool for transitions                                               |
|                                   | - Incorporate the use of schedules to help riders transition                        |
| Compromised receptive language    | - Teach to all senses – use visual and kinesthetic cues to supplement verbal cues   |
|                                   | - Use demo rider or classmate to show a task                                        |
|                                   | - Use icons, sign language or other augmentative communication tools                |
|                                   | - Train volunteers to assist with communication                                      |
Management of learning disabilities (continued):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Possible Adaptations</th>
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</table>
| **Compromised expressive language** | - Give the student icons or other augmentative communication tools  
- Have parent or caregiver present if student cannot express pain, discomfort or frustration  
- Train volunteers to assist with communication |
| **Behavior management issues** | - Teach to the student’s learning style  
- Listen to your student  
- Review task analysis to determine if over-challenged or under-challenged and plan accordingly  
- Establish clear boundaries of behavioral expectations and their consequences  
  – follow through  
- Provide clear and simple directions  
- Set clear goals and the steps to achieve them  
- Be consistent  
- Create a positive tone  
- Redirect behavior and engage student in riding skill |
| **Low self-esteem** | - Plan for success  
- Focus on strengths and build on them  
- Value and applaud effort  
- Express realistic goals and how to achieve them  
- Involve rider in goal setting  
- Provide horse that is well trained to riding skill being taught  
- Use specific praise |

NOTE: There are a variety of disabilities in addition to those mentioned above where Learning Disabilities are also present, although this may not be the rider’s primary diagnosis. Use your best detective skills to assess your rider’s way of learning and then get to know them through trial and error, teaching to each learning style.

*Tell me and I will forget;  
Show me and I may remember;  
Involve me and I will understand.*  
~Chinese proverb
Language Impairments:
The loss or impairment of speech (expressive) and/or the inability to understand speech (receptive).

Disabilities where language impairment may be seen:
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Cerebral Vascular Accident (CVA/Stroke)
- Cerebral Palsy
- Autism

Types of language impairments:
- **Aphasia:** Loss of the ability to produce and/or comprehend spoken language
- **Apraxia:** Loss of the ability to execute or carry out movements for speech
- **Alexia:** Loss of the ability to read
- **Agraphia:** Loss of the ability to write
- **Agnosia:** Loss of the ability to recognize objects, persons, sounds, shapes, or smells

Management of language impairments in the therapeutic riding setting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Possible Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-verbal</strong></td>
<td>- Use augmentative communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Develop mutually understandable cues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Utilize skill progression to clarify rider’s progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide clear, concise verbal instruction supplemented with visual demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Praise effort and reinforce regularly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Have parent or caregiver present if rider cannot express pain, discomfort or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>frustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Train volunteers to assist with communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impaired speech</strong></td>
<td>- Communicate with rider in a relaxed manner if you do not understand what they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>have said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Encourage simple verbal responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Listen with interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Plan for talk time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Model correct language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Expand vocabulary with horse related terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide writing tools if appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perseveration</strong></td>
<td>- Redirect by asking questions, starting a new activity, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Be understanding and have appropriate expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Use suitable environmental management to prevent or reduce its occurrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Set reasonable limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Delayed processing time or</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>slowed response</strong></td>
<td>- Speak clearly and look at rider when you speak to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Allow time for processing/organizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Use descriptive words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide rider with a vocabulary list of horse related terminology to increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide rider with a vocabulary list of horse related terminology to increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vocabulary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sensory Processing Disorders (Sensory Integration Dysfunction):
Inability of the brain to process information brought in by the senses (vision, touch, smell, hearing, taste), especially through the additional vestibular, tactile or proprioceptive senses. This manifests itself as poor motor planning, poor sensory regulation or both.

- **Vestibular system (V):** the sensory system that provides awareness of body position in relation to gravity. Head position is crucial for this sense as the receptors are located in the inner ear.
- **Proprioceptive system (P):** is the sensory system that tells our bodies where we are in space through the information that we receive through our muscles, bones and tendons.
- **Tactile system (T):** is the sensory system that receives information (i.e. pressure, movement, vibration, temperature and pain) through the receptors in the skin and hair.

Sensory Integration Dysfunction is its own disability with its own diagnostic criteria and can exist solely as a diagnosis or in conjunction with other diagnoses, such as (but not limited to):

- Autism
- PDD/NOS
- Developmental Delays
- Genetic anomalies, such as chromosomal deletions
- In-utero drug exposure
- Cerebral Palsy

Typical presentation = there is no typical presentation.
However, some of the more common issues are as follows. Please note that this is just a limited list of some of the more common presentations with suggested adaptations. The key with this population is using keen observation skills, communicating with the parents to determine existing strategies and flexibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Sensory System</th>
<th>Possible Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypersensitive to light touch</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>- Avoid light touch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(resists helmet, sensitivity to rein texture, etc)</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide deep pressure if appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Adapt equip as necessary, i.e. use smooth reins vs. rainbow rains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravitational insecurity</td>
<td>V, P</td>
<td>- Take it slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(presence of a great fear of falling)</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide stirrups, a supportive saddle, short statured horse with wide base of support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Avoid inverted head /backwards positions*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impulsivity/ sensory seeking behavior</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>- Provide supervision at all times; appeal to visual learners with visual cues (stop signs) and kinesthetic learners with tactile cues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Prepare/train volunteers thoroughly. Provide “heavy work” opportunities (i.e. carrying saddle, pushing wheelbarrow) before mounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide with sensory input (early trot, stop/start, change of directions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased body awareness</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>- Provide horse with concussive gait; change tack (ride on bareback pad, incorporate stirrups), change the horse’s movement and/or ground surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty with transitions</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>- Inform student of planned activities through a schedule board utilizing words or picture symbols (PECS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Sensory System</td>
<td>Possible Adaptations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Easily distracted | all | - Provide simple one step instructions; decrease visual, auditory stimulation  
- Keep class size small, increase/vary/change input from horse to increase attention |
| Self-stimulating behaviors (hand flapping, jumping, spinning, etc.) | V, P | - Movement  
- Change ground surface area to proprioceptive input, incorporate half halts/school figures  
- Monitor arousal level closely. Too much input can be excitatory |
| Auditory defensiveness (covering ears) | auditory | - Remove offensive sound  
- Provide sound deafening ear phones  
- Provide simple 1-step directions  
- Check echo in arena, provide echo reducing background music or change environment |
| Decreased gross motor planning and coordination | P, V | - Hand over hand with new learning for manipulating tack, changing positions on the equine  
- Minimize/simplify verbal input |
| Uncomfortable with position changes on horse, particularly backwards/inverted head. May appear pale and sweaty. | V | - Return to forward position and avoid backwards/inverted positions* |
| Poor visual/spatial processing | Vision, P | - Use caution with change of footing/ground surface when ambulating  
- Allow extra time to navigate in new areas  
- Provide hand held assist as appropriate  
- Be vigilant when student rides independently |
| Difficulty processing auditory input | auditory | - Use written cues, encourage eye contact in combination with tactile cues as tolerated  
- Be aware that repeat instructions can lead to overload |

* In the presence of gravitational insecurities or other significant vestibular processing difficulties (as evidenced by a freeze, fight or flight response or other visceral reactions, such as sweating, pale, respirations), DO NOT force the child/adult to mount. A therapy consult may be needed to address this sensitive issue.
**Hearing Impairments:**
A hearing impairment is a physical impairment causing hearing deficit, and should not be confused with other auditory processing difficulties. *For tips on riders who have difficulty processing auditory information, see the Learning Disabilities review.*

When a rider’s primary disability is deafness or a hearing deficit it is important, first and foremost, to give visual cues and stay centered in the arena so the rider can always find you for safety. Establishing a means of communication is also extremely important. Provide an interpreter or learn the rider's system of communication so you can teach an in-depth, effective lesson and get valuable feedback from the rider.

As with many other disabilities, a hearing impairment can be a primary or secondary diagnosis. Some disabilities where there may be loss of hearing in addition to the primary diagnosis:
- Cerebral Palsy
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Cerebrovascular Accident (CVA)

**Management of Hearing Impairments in the EAAT setting:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Possible Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Varying frequency loss vs. deafness** | - Determine the type and degree of hearing deficit. Plan teaching techniques accordingly  
- Determine whether the rider has had a hearing deficit from birth or whether it is acquired  
- Determine if the hearing loss is progressive |
| **Communication challenges** | - Determine how the rider communicates at home, at school, etc. Teaching techniques may include:  
  - Lip reading  
  - Sign language  
  - Communication board  
  - PEC’s system/Icons (Picture Exchange Communication System)  
- Train volunteers to assist in communication  
- Establish a sign for emergency procedures  
- Use other riders for visual demonstration  
- Monitor hearing aids for noise, static, dislodgement, on/off |
| **Frustration** | - Establish an effective means of 2-way communication  
- Determine degree of involvement in balance, vestibular processing, sensitivity level of other senses and utilize task analysis  
- Teach to strengths, plan for success  
- Ride with the student, or use another rider as an example of correct position, use of aids, etc.  
- Use of an arena mirror can provide effective visual feedback  
- Speak slowly and distinctly even when utilizing other means of communication  
- Face the rider when speaking  
- Inform other riders and volunteers in the class about hearing impairment for safety and understanding  
- Encourage independence  
- Teach from the center of the arena so rider knows where to look for direction/assistance |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Possible Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Balance issues**          | - Determine level of vestibular involvement  
- Be aware that rider may experience dizziness  
- Assign medium to wide base, steady horse and supportive tack (Western saddle or deep seat Dressage)  
- Assign volunteers as needed  
- Choose exercises that develop awareness of center and even distribution of weight  |
| **Fear**                    | - Acknowledge fear  
- Assign volunteers as needed for sense of support  
- Challenge only to ability level  
- Let the rider set the pace of advancement |
| **Social/behavioral issues** | - Establish clear expectations  
- Be consistent  
- Offer a structured environment and class  
- Be aware rider may have difficulty expressing feelings; communication system must be effective  
- Be aware rider may say “yes” to questions for ease when, in actuality, he really does not understand |
| **Decreased rhythm**        | - Assign horse with very rhythmic, well-defined gaits  
- Emphasize “feel” of horse’s movement at all gaits (may start on lunge line when introducing new gait) |
| **Safety concerns**         | - Consistently monitor rider in the barn environment |
Visual Impairments:
A visual impairment is a physical impairment causing vision loss or total blindness and should not be confused with other visual processing difficulties. *For tips on visual processing deficits, refer to the Learning Disabilities review.*

- When a rider’s sole disability is visual impairment, it is important to remember that you are his/her eyes in the barn and arena. Safety considerations must be thoroughly planned and any unnecessary obstacles must be removed from the activity site. Walk the rider around the entire barn and arena on foot until he/she is quite familiar with the surroundings. A person with no visual memory (blind from birth) will need a more detailed orientation.

While the rider is on horseback, he/she should be inside a closed arena, or on a lead/lunge line. Orient the rider to the arena and count the horse’s strides down each side of the arena at the walk, at the trot, and at the canter as appropriate to skill level.

As with many other disabilities, a rider can be visually impaired in addition to another diagnosis. Some disabilities where there may be loss of vision in addition to the primary diagnosis:

- Cerebral Palsy
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Cerebrovascular Accident (CVA)
- Diabetes

Management of Visual Impairments in the therapeutic riding setting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Possible Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited visual field vs. blindness</td>
<td>- Determine extent of vision. Adapt teaching techniques accordingly. Consult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>professionals from other settings as to techniques and strategies that may be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>transferred to the riding environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Determine if blind from birth or acquired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Determine if “legally blind” which indicates some functional vision is present,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>versus totally blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited visual field</td>
<td>- Map out arena kinesthetically and in writing if appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Consult professionals as to size and contrast (of colors) for visuals around the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>arena (bigger vs. smaller, black on white, white on black, fluorescent colors,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with/without border, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide and practice emergency procedures and evacuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pair with horse who is comfortable being close to the wall (or sometimes too close)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Challenge appropriately and encourage independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Have volunteers stand in corners to help with accuracy of figures and staying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on the rail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blindness</td>
<td>- Map out arena kinesthetically (walk and feel on foot, then on horse)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Stay in one place when teaching so the rider can find you (center of arena)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pair with horse who is comfortable being close to the rail (or too close)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Work with other riders to help keep safety spacing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Use auditory markers or “living letters” to delineate different ends and side of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the arena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Watch for barn safety and have all participants trained to use the same words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to warn of danger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Challenge appropriately and encourage independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Watch for vestibular issues (loss of balance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Possible Adaptations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Fear                         | - Orient rider to environment – both barn and arena  
- Speak directly to the person  
- Give precise directions  
- Keep area free of obstacles  
- Remain in center of arena for orientation; let them know if you are changing position in the arena  
- Mount on med/wide base horse, steady with no surprises  
- Maintain a consistent volunteer team who can act as their eyes in the arena and barn areas  
- Use other senses – let them touch the horse and saddle before mounting  
- Focus on listening skills  
- Select a medium to wide base horse  
- Consider starting with a Western or deep seat Dressage saddle for security  
- Consider using a bareback pad or surcingle to help rider develop feel for horse’s movement and effective balancing reactions  
- Design activities to improve balance  
- Use other senses to illustrate center (buttons of shirt align with the mane)  
- Focus on proper alignment and position  
- Allow the student to feel the position of a rider who is sitting in correct alignment on the horse. (Choose an appropriate volunteer who understands and accepts this learning process)  
- Provide proprioceptive input – trot, 2-point, etc., as appropriate  
- Encourage use of reins  
- Give time for motor response  
- Teach rider to feel rhythm and beat of each gait  
- Help identify and control mannerisms  
- Use appropriate augmentative techniques/devices, if indicated  
- Select a consistent volunteer team to communicate and act as their eyes in the arena  
- Plan for success  
- Focus on abilities  
- Work toward independence  
- Ask permission before helping  
- Encourage to ask for assistance  
- Speak freely – okay to use words like look and see |
Emotional or Behavioral Impairments:
The inability to function (or behave) in a manner that is acceptable to society or not appropriate for a particular setting.

Disabilities where emotional or behavioral impairment may be seen:
- Anxiety Disorders
- Depressive Disorders
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders
- Personality Disorders
- Psychosis
- Schizophrenia
- Autism
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Techniques for improving behavior:
- Shaping – reinforce approximations of behavior
- Chaining – reinforce individual appropriate responses
- Modeling – teach appropriate behaviors to be imitated
- Prompting – give verbal, physical or gestural cues
- Fading – gradual removal of technique or cues
- Token economy – system of tokens for good behavior
- Contract – a document signed by both teacher and student
- Extinction – ignore unwanted behavior
- Reinforcement – reinforce acceptable behavior
- Response cost – loss of privilege or token
- Time out – no more than 1 minute for each year of age
- Reprimand – be firm and consistent with ramifications
- Positive practice – practice the correct behavior

Mental Illness or Neurological Brain Disorders
To work with students with these diagnoses (Psychoses, Schizophrenia, etc.) a program should have a certified Mental Health Professional at least on a consulting basis. It is recommended they be on site whenever these students are participating in therapeutic riding.

Management of emotional/behavioral impairment in the therapeutic riding setting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Possible Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Aggression/abusive behavior  | - Be pro-active – Set ground rules and make sure rider, parent, caretaker understand consequences clearly  
|                              | - Follow through with consequences without becoming emotional (firmness without anger)  
|                              | - If rider is intentionally abusive to horse, volunteer, instructor, self, end the mounted part of the lesson immediately  
|                              | - Teach empathy for the horse                                                       |
| Impulsivity                  | - Maintain close supervision at all times  
|                              | - Review safety measures when working with horses                                   
|                              | - Train volunteers appropriately                                                    
|                              | - Choose appropriate, tolerant horse                                               
<p>|                              | - Include “heavy work”                                                              |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Possible Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional instability</td>
<td>- Anticipate mood changes and re-direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide a “quiet place” for self-calming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn</td>
<td>- Use same horse and volunteers each week to build relationship and confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Encourage development of horse-human bond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually inappropriate</td>
<td>- Set limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Address inappropriate behavior calmly, do not ignore it unless it is attention-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>seeking behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teach a socially acceptable variation of the behavior or language (i.e it is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not appropriate here and now, but it might be acceptable under other circumstances.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor social skills</td>
<td>- Encourage appropriate interaction with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Model proper social behavior such as greetings with eye contact, use of names,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shaking hands, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulative behavior/ negative attention-</td>
<td>- Give controlled choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seeking behavior</td>
<td>- Allow independent riding when possible so that horse provides immediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cause-effect learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustration/low self-esteem</td>
<td>- Provide appropriate challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Create success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Listen carefully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teach problem-solving techniques</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Intake Assessment
Intake Assessment Worksheet

Before accepting a potential rider into your program, a thorough assessment is essential to be sure you can truly benefit that student. Do you have the appropriately trained horses, staff and volunteers? Can you meet their specific needs/goals with your given facility, herd and instructors/therapists? This worksheet lists many of the questions that could/should be answered when conducting that assessment.

1) Information Needed:
The following information can be very valuable when determining the suitability of a participant for your program, determining their scheduling flexibility, evaluating volunteer needs and/or their level of independence. It gives a picture of the person as a whole.

Name: _________________________________________________________________________________________________
Evaluation Date: _________________________Screened By: _______________________________________________
Date of Birth: ____________________________Age at Evaluation: __________________________________________
Reviewed Medical History and Physician’s Release: Yes No Date: ______________________
Photo Taken: Yes No
Diagnosis: _____________________________________________________________________________________________
Height: _________________________________________Weight: ____________________________________________
Ambulatory Status: ______________________________________________________________________________
Adaptive Equipment Required: ____________________________________________________________________

Medical History/Comments:
Surgeries (include dates): _______________________________________________________________________________
Medications: ___________________________________________________________________________________________
Precautions/contraindications: ___________________________________________________________________________
Seizures: ___________________________________Type: ___________________________________________________
Other Therapies (type and frequency): ___________________________________________________________________

Family Information:
(In group home/lives with parents/has siblings, etc.)

_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

80 | PATH Intl. REGISTERED INSTRUCTOR ON-SITE WORKSHOP MANUAL
2) Assessment Procedure
As simple a task as having a potential rider try on a helmet can provide an excellent opportunity to evaluate how they will handle themselves in class. They will be demonstrating: how they follow directions; if they process verbal directives; if they cooperate; if they accomplish the task without assistance or need hand over hand; if there are aberrations in range of motion and/or muscle tone can be observed; if they can balance while accomplishing the task, etc. List below other tasks that might reveal valuable information related to the skills to be assessed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Task Assigned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Skills:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye contact:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows commands:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention span:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction with others:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognition:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention span:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colors:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shapes:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distractibility:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving skills:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oral Motor/Language skills:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lip closure:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drooling:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receptive:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive technology:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Sensorimotor:

**Sensory Impairments:**
- Vision (acuity, tracking, field cuts, perception, defensiveness)
- Hearing (hearing aids, defensiveness)
- Tactile (hypersensitivities/ hyposensitivities, defensiveness)
- Vestibular
- Proprioceptive

**Body Awareness:**

**Postural Security:**

**Coordination:**
- Fine motor:
- Gross motor:

**Crossing Midline:**

**Hand Dominance:**

**Grasp and Release:**

## Range of Motion:

**Upper extremities-right:**

**Upper extremities-left:**

**Lower extremities-right:**

**Lower extremities-left:**

## Strength:

**Upper extremities-right**

**Upper extremities-left**

**Lower extremities-right**

**Lower extremities-Left**
- Upper trunk
- Lower trunk

**Postural Alignment:**

**Comments:**

## Tone:

**Upper extremities:**

**Trunk:**

**Lower extremities:**

**Reflex activity:**

**Comments:**
3) How in-depth need an assessment be?
Some of the tasks listed below may appear to have little relationship to therapeutic riding. Perhaps they would be more appropriately evaluated by a therapist. Discuss how the ability to perform each might manifest in a therapeutic riding setting and how an instructor who is not a therapist could assess them.

**Functional Mobility:**
- Floor to stand:
- Pull to stand:
- Single limb stance:
- Ambulation on level surface:
- Ambulate on uneven surface:
- Stair climbing:
- Inclines:
- Transfers:
- Sitting:
- Standing:
- Gait:

**Activities of Daily Living Status:**
- Dressing:
- Feeding:
- Grooming:
- Self feeding:

**Behavior:**
- Impulse control:
- Frustrations:
- Motivators:
- Behavior plan:

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

4) What other information would be helpful?
This is your assessment. What else do you need to know to make a responsible decision on accepting this rider into your program?

Other Relevant Information:

5) The plan
This is the summary, where the decision is made, the real reason for doing the assessment. It should state whether or not the applicant should be accepted and why. If accepted, it should include recommendations for placement in the schedule and guidance for the instructor who will be planning that first lesson.

**Rider's Goals:**
1. 
2. 
3.
Family Goals:
1.
2.
3.

Rider Strengths:
1.
2.
3.

Rider Weaknesses:
1.
2.
3.

________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Recommendations

Activity Type: (circle appropriate activity)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hippotherapy</th>
<th>Riding skills</th>
<th>Vaulting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Horse Type: _____________________________________________________________

Leader: ____________________________ Number of Sidewalkers: ________________________

Mount: ____________________________ Dismount: _________________________________

Tack and Equipment: _______________________________________________________

Helmet size: ____________________________

Short-term goals
1.
2.
3.

Long-term goals
1.
2.
3.

Other comments:

Evaluator signature: ____________________________ Date: _________________________
Volunteers

PATH INTERNATIONAL

Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International
Volunteer Training

THE IMPORTANCE OF WELL TRAINED VOLUNTEERS
• Volunteers are the backbone of any therapeutic riding program.
• A well-trained volunteer is safe, effective, and enhances the quality of the therapeutic riding program, while making the lesson enjoyable.
• Volunteers fulfill many areas of a program including leaders, sidewalkers, board members, fundraising personnel, special event personnel.
• Volunteers bring additional benefits to the therapeutic riding program through their outside contacts with regards to volunteers and financial sources.

ORGANIZATION OF THE VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION
a) Introduction and welcome
   • Include: what does your program do, what benefit does it bring to the riders, volunteers and community and a general overview of how it operates, why the organization needs volunteers and general job descriptions
   • Introduce the staff, those conducting the orientation and attendants of the orientation
   • Hand out any educational written materials and forms they may need to fill in to enable them to volunteer.
   • Inform the volunteers about the expected time commitments and needs of the program

b) Practical segment in the barn
   • Tour of the facility
   • Include a demonstration of leading, securing the horse safely (quick release method), grooming, tacking and equipment adaptations

c) Practical segment in the riding area
   • Safety procedures in the arena, i.e. spacing and paying attention
   • Include: what to expect in class, how to warm up the horse for class, how to line up correctly, tack check, leading, mounting and dismounting, sidewalkling, spotting, the body and logistics of a lesson

d) Role play a class situation
   • Roles of the volunteers to include, leading, sidewalkling and spotting
   • Mounting and dismounting in a mock class situation
   • Be informed about emergency and incident procedures

e) Practical segment in the barn
   • Untacking, putting the horse away

f) Question and answer period and commitments to the program are made
IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS

- Instructors should provide continuing education for the volunteers.
- Volunteers need to have continuous recognition, provided in such a ways as daily, monthly and annually.
- Volunteer recognition and appreciation can be daily in class through awards nominations and newsletter publications.
- The objective of the orientation is to get an educated commitment to volunteering in your program, increase volunteer's knowledge about the program, and know volunteer expectations.
- Instructors must assess the volunteers’ skills and assign them to the appropriate tasks, riders and horses.
- Base all decisions on the safety of the riders, volunteers and horses.
- Corrections must be made in a positive manner.
- Continuing education classes are a good idea to improve the skill level of the volunteers.

THE DO’S AND DONT’S OF VOLUNTEER TRAINING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO</th>
<th>DON’T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>have them participate actively</td>
<td>leave them unsupervised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>familiarize them with the paperwork</td>
<td>allow them to break or bend the rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encourage questions</td>
<td>expect them to be perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encourage their ideas and input</td>
<td>use them as personal servants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teach to the skill and knowledge level of the group</td>
<td>put them in situations they do not know how to handle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>let them know how important they are and that they have a huge impact on the program</td>
<td>put them or their horse or rider in danger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHY DO PEOPLE VOLUNTEER

People volunteer for a number of reasons!
- People are looking for opportunities for self growth.
- People are preparing for paid employment (gaining experience and new skills).
- People volunteer to get a sense of accomplishment.
- People network while volunteering.
- People are looking to give back to their communities.
- People volunteering feel needed and want to have fun during their spare time.
- People enjoy working with horses and people with disabilities.

Can you think of more?

1. __________________________________________
2. __________________________________________
3. __________________________________________
4. __________________________________________
The Role of the Leader
By Susan F. Tucker

One of the most challenging duties that can be assigned to a volunteer is that of horse leader. A leader’s first responsibility is the horse, but he must also consider the sidewalkers, making sure there is enough room along the fence and around obstacles for them to pass.

An effective leader pays close attention to the rider’s needs as well as to where the horse is going. This reinforces the rider’s attempts to control the horse. However, you should not execute an instruction for the rider before he has time to process the information and make an effort to comply. Sometimes it may be appropriate to walk into the corner and stand until the student figures out what to do.

Avoid the temptation to talk to the rider or sidewalkers. A rider may get confused by too much input and not know who’s in charge. (Instructors often make terrible leaders because they can’t keep their mouths shut!)

Figure A depicts a few faults common among leaders. Here is a leader grimly marching along–head down, one hand on the lead snap, the other inside the coiled end of the rope–dragging a strung-out horse. In a battle with a horse, you lose. You must get the horse to cooperate. Walk along side the horse, about even with his eye. This helps keep him in a proper frame, which is more beneficial for everyone.

Talk to the horse; most of them know whoa, walk and trot, or can learn the words. Watch where you’re going and what’s happening around you. Do not walk backward to look at the rider. It’s dangerous for everyone and the horse isn’t eager to follow someone who can’t see where he is going.

Figure B shows the correct position for leaders. The lead shank is held with the right hand 6 to 12 inches from the snap, allowing free motion of the horse’s head. This is more therapeutic to the rider and less irritating to the horse. The tail end of the lead should be looped in a figure-eight in the left hand to avoid tripping on it. Never coil the rope around your hand. That could end a close relationship with your fingers!

Use short tugs rather than a steady pull to keep a lazy horse moving. The horse can set himself against a steady pull, but tugs keep him awake. Move out, about 1,000 steps per 15 minutes, to provide the most therapeutic benefit.

When you halt for more than a few seconds, stand in front of the horse with your hands on the halter’s cheek pieces (if the horse permits), or loosely hold the lead or reins. Standing in front is a psychological barrier for the horse and he will stand more quietly than if he has an easy chance to move out. If you like your thumbs, don’t put them through the snaffle or halter rings.

If the worst happens and there is an accident, stay with the horse. There are other people to care for a fallen rider. The situation could easily become more dangerous if there are loose horses running around the arena. Move your horse as far from the fallen student as possible and keep calm. Listen for the instructor’s directions.

These suggestions can help you control your horse, be a good aide to a rider and be a valuable assistant to an instructor. You will provide real therapeutic input to your rider, as well as make it safe for him to have fun riding.
Effective Sidewalking
By Susan F. Tucker and Molly Lingua, RPT

Sidewalkers usually get the most hands-on duties in therapeutic riding. They are directly responsible for the rider. As such, they have the capability to either enhance or detract from the lesson. In the arena, the sidewalker should help the student focus his attention on the instructor. Try to avoid unnecessary talking with either the rider or other volunteers. Too much input from too many directions is very confusing to anyone, and to riders, who already have perceptual problems, it can be overwhelming. If two sidewalkers are working with one student, one should be the designated talker.

When the instructor gives a direction, allow your student plenty of time to process it. If the instructor says “Turn to the right, toward me,” and the student seems confused, gently tap the right hand and say, “Right,” to reinforce the command. You will get to know the riders and learn when they need help and when they’re just not paying attention.

It’s important to maintain a position by the rider’s knee. Being too far forward or back will make it very difficult to assist with instructions or provide security if the horse should trip or shy.

There are two ways to hold onto the rider without interfering. The most commonly used is the arm-over-the-thigh hold. The sidewalker grips the front of the saddle (flap or pommel depending on the horse’s size) with the hand closest to the rider. Then the fleshy part of the forearm rests gently on the rider’s thigh. Be careful that the elbow doesn’t accidentally dig into the rider’s leg.

Sometimes pressure on the thigh can increase or cause muscle spasticity, especially for riders with cerebral palsy. In this case, the therapeutic hold may be used. Here, the leg is held at the joints, usually the knee or ankle. Check with the instructor or therapist for the best way to assist. In the (unlikely) event of an emergency, the arm-over-the-thigh hold is the most secure.

Avoid wrapping an arm around the rider’s waist. It is tempting, especially when walking beside a pony with a young or small rider, but it can offer too much and uneven support. At times, it can even pull the rider off balance and make riding more difficult. Encourage your student to use his own trunk muscles to the best of his abilities.

If the instructor chooses to use a transfer belt on your rider, be very careful not to pull down or push up on it. As your arm tires it’s hard to avoid this, so rather than grip the handle firmly, just touch your thumb and finger together around it. This puts you in position to assist the rider if needed, but you will neither give unneeded support nor pull him off balance. When you are ready for relief for your arm, ask the leader to move into the center to stop. Then trade sides, one at a time, with the other sidewalker. If the rider has serious balance problems that warrant a transfer belt, two sidewalkers should be used.

During exercises, pay attention to the student. Sometimes volunteers forget that the riders are to do the exercises and the sidewalkers are to reinforce and assist. The same applies to games. Don’t get so competitive that your rider doesn’t get to use his skills because you do it for him in an effort to win.

The ultimate goal for therapeutic riding is to encourage the rider to stretch and grow. You are right at his side, so help the instructor to challenge him to the best of his ability.
Safety Belts

At one time in therapeutic riding, each new rider received a belt to wear during a lesson. The original purpose of the belt was to have something for the volunteer to grab (instead of the rider’s clothing) in case of emergency or to help stabilize a rider with poor balance.

However, we have discovered how detrimental the weight of a volunteer’s arm can be when it is attached to a belt. Therefore, try to wean your riders away from belts whenever possible. If the rider feels more secure with the belt on, instruct the sidewalker to use it only in emergencies.

Replacing the safety belt is the “arm-over-the-thigh” hold. The sidewalker grips the front of the saddle (flap or pommel depending on the horse’s size) with the hand closest to the rider. The forearm rests gently on the rider’s thigh. The sidewalker should be careful that his elbow doesn’t accidentally dig into the rider’s leg.
Volunteer Job Description Worksheet

Job Title: ____________________________________________________________

Supervised By: ______________________________________________________

General Description of Duties (indicate major functions): ______________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Specific Job Responsibilities (list major tasks and standards of performance): _______________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Conditions of Assignment (location, time required, degree of supervision and support, etc.): _______________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Qualifications, Training and Preparation for Assignment (list knowledge, skill and attitudes needed for job):

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Volunteer/Staff Information Form and Health History

General Information
Name: _____________________________________________________________ Date: ______________________
Address: _______________________________________________________________________________________________
Employer/School: ______________________________________________________________________________________
Work Address: _________________________________________________________________________________________
Date of Birth: ____________________________ Phone: (H) ______________________ (W): ____________________
Parent/Legal Guardian Name and Address: _______________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________
How did you learn about the program? __________________________________________________________________
Recent Medical Tests: Last Tetanus Shot: _____________ Tuberculosis Test + - Date: ___________

Health History
Please describe your current health status particularly regarding the physical/emotional demands of working in a therapeutic riding program. Address fitness, cardiac, respiratory, bone or joint function, recent hospitalization/surgeries, or lifestyle changes.
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________
Allergies: ______________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________
Medications: ___________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________
Check which areas you are interested in:
☐ Program ☐ Horse Handling ☐ Stable Management ☐ Facility Repairs
☐ Special Events ☐ Horse Show ☐ Special Olympics ☐ Trail Rides
☐ Administration ☐ Public Relations ☐ Grant Writing ☐ Volunteer Recruitment
☐ Photography/Video ☐ Fundraising ☐ Newsletter ☐ Future Planning
☐ Budget & Finance

I understand that the information provided above is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I know of no reason why I should not participate in this center’s program.
Signature: ____________________________________________ Date: _____________________________

(volunteer/staff: signed in presence of center staff)
Volunteer/Staff Information Form and Health History
Page 2

Name: _________________________________________________________________________________________________
Address: _______________________________________________________________________________________________
Date of Birth: __________________________________ Phone: ______________________________

Photo Release:  
☐ I DO  
☐ I DO NOT  
consent to and authorize the use and reproduction by __________________________________________________
(PATH Intl. center) of any and all photographs and any other audio/visual materials taken of me for promotional material, educational activities, exhibitions or for any other use for the benefit of the program.
Signature: _________________________________________________________Date: __________________________

Background Information
Have you ever been charged with or convicted of a crime?  Y  N  Please explain ________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________

I, __________________________________ (volunteer/staff), authorize ____________________________ (center)
to receive information from any law enforcement agency, including police departments and sheriff’s
departments, of this state of any other state or federal government, to the extent permitted by state and federal
law, pertaining to any convictions I may have had for violations of state or federal criminal laws, including but
not limited to convictions for crimes committed upon children.

I understand that such access is for the purpose of considering y application as an employee/volunteer,
and that I expressly DO NOT authorize the PATH Intl. center, its directors, officers employees or other
volunteers to disseminate this information in any way to any other individual, group, agency, organization, or
corporation.

Signature: _________________________________________________________Date: ________________________
(volunteer/staff)

Current Driver’s License  Y  N  License Number ________________________ State ______________

Confidentiality Agreement
I understand that all information (written and verbal) about participants at this PATH Intl. center is confidential
and will not be shared with anyone with the express written consent of the participant and their parent/
guardian in the case of a minor.

Signature: _________________________________________________________Date: ________________________
(volunteer/staff)
Teaching Techniques

PATH INTERNATIONAL

Professional Association of Therapeutic
Horsemanship International
The Therapeutic Riding Instructor

Registered: A PATH Intl. Registered Certified Instructor is able to conduct a safe, basic equestrian lesson to individuals with disabilities.

Advanced: A PATH Intl. Advanced Certified Instructor is knowledgeable in horsemastership and understands disabilities and their relationships to therapeutic riding. He/she is able to conduct safe, challenging, and therapeutically effective lessons.

Master: A PATH Intl. Master Certified Instructor has a thorough knowledge of horse care and horse handling. He/she is a balanced, sensitive rider who has considerable experience teaching and who demonstrates a deep understanding of the relationship between specific disabilities and horseback riding. The master instructor is a mentor who demonstrates leadership in the therapeutic riding industry.

Characteristics and Qualities of an Effective Riding Instructor

1. Knowledge of horsemanship, disabilities, and the relationship between the two
2. Safety as top priority
3. Patience and understanding
4. Sense of humor
5. Organized
6. Presents a well planned and structured lesson
7. Remains flexible
8. Able to communicate horsemanship knowledge to students
9. Demonstrates positive listening skills
10. Modifies instruction to accommodate students needs
11. Able to incorporate creativity and enjoyment into lessons
12. Able to adapt and apply riding skills to the level of rider
13. Provides feedback and corrections
14. Clarity of explanations
15. Positive communication skills including use of eye contact, appropriate vocabulary, volume of voice, and ability to rephrase explanations
16. Uses How's and Why's
17. Motivates students
18. Fosters independence
19. Professionally dressed
20. Teaches to the different learning styles
21. Punctual
22. Adheres to confidentiality
23. Uses criticism constructively
24. Uses appropriate praise
25. Adheres to PATH Intl. Standards
The Mentor
By Bonnie Perreault

There are some inherent risks to being a teacher. It makes no difference if your classroom is a hallowed hall or a riding ring; you are still an educator, instructor, trainer, tutor, or whatever you may like to be called. Preferably, we should all remember that we are mentors, and that carries quite a burden, if one wishes to acknowledge the fact.

In Greek mythology, Mentor was the loyal friend and advisor of Odysseus and teacher of his son, Telemachus. In the English language, the word mentor means: a wise loyal advisor, a teacher, a coach.

As instructors of children and teenagers (and even young adults), we have the power to shape character and to mold lives. This ability has to be given top priority in all our actions. It is not an easy task for those who decide, to live up to the name of Mentor. One has to recognize how their influence is going to be important, and set standards of deportment for themselves as well.

In children especially, the instructor is looked upon as a role model. The instructor has to conduct themselves with this in mind, but at the same time convey the fact that none of us are infallible. More influence is brought to bear on a young mind by an admired teacher than by the parents of that child. It is something a parent may find hard to admit, but it is a simple fact of life. An instructor who is aware of their inherent influence can help mold a child’s future actions by helping to instill the seeds of self-worth and character through their guidance.

There is nothing to compare to the smile on a child’s face the first time that they have been able to accomplish some task, such as tacking up his pony all by himself. No one can take away those feelings of accomplishment. From this beginning will be built the foundation of the child’s self-esteem.

Working with horses develops an individual's feelings of compassion and caring for others. There are few recreational sports that put a person in such close proximity to another creature's feelings and needs. Teaching a child how to care for a horse and all about the responsibilities that go along with it will help determine how they will deal with other similar responsibilities later on in life.

Good sportsmanship is a learned trait. It isn’t easy to lose, but we all will, at some point in our lives, at some endeavor. To learn how important our actions are in how we “play the game” is the job of our coaches, our mentors. These individuals have to be able to instill the desire to win, but not without also teaching the graces of how to accept defeat or failure. To help guide a young mind to put goals in perspective, and help them achieve those goals is a wonderful experience. There is no monetary price that can be put on this type of education, it can’t be bought.

An instructor has the power to guide people in their handling of their minds and bodies. To some this may seem fanciful, but I think it is safe to say that we all have probably experienced this type of guidance. The teacher who is capable of instilling the desire to learn, to explore, and to reach inside for that extra effort. The coach or trainer who tries to instill in their pupils a respect for their bodies, so as not to abuse themselves.

The fact that many educators, in many fields, choose to close their eyes to the problems that are robbing our young people of their adult health is in itself a shame. To become involved means to make a commitment, one which may make all the difference to someone in need of help. Sometimes all it takes is just that little extra attention that some individuals need to help them get a better hold of their lives.

Today’s world is not an easy one in which to grow up. The idyllic days of the 60’s are long gone. To read about the problems of drug abuse, alcohol abuse and the suicide rate in youngsters, is not easy. However, it is very easy to simply try to ignore these problems, and let someone else try to do something to help change things. We also live in a society where “end gaining” is far more important than the “means whereby.” Material gains are so important to some, including instructors of horsemanship.

At a seminar given for dressage instructors, the participants were asked what attributes constitute a good instructor. The answers were: knowledge, understanding, sensitivity, patience, ability to communicate,
imagination, creativity, open-mindedness, professionalism, manners, honesty, humor, humility, flexibility and organization. This is not an easy list to live up to, we all have our shortcomings. Another attribute of a good instructor is commitment, which constitutes a deep love for their work and the willingness to meet the challenges of their work and to admit that they never stop learning, and never stop caring. This is the mark of the true teacher, the mentor.

Structuring Your Class Lesson

Six vital parts of a lesson
- Preparation
- Explanation
- Demonstration
- Application
- Correction
- Repetition

A good lesson is safe, fun, and effective!

Preparation
When considering what the preparation of a lesson encompasses, the instructor must think about two separate aspects. First, the lesson itself must be developed and put in writing. This process is referred to as “preparing a lesson plan”. The second aspect is the physical preparation of those things that will be needed for use in the lesson.

Lesson Plans: Lesson plans must be written to facilitate safety, organization, and effectiveness and to ensure continuity and progression of riding skills. The lesson plan should incorporate all six parts of the lesson listed above, including “Preparation”. In the lesson plan, the term preparation addresses the physical aspects of the lesson. There is no one set format for a lesson plan that an instructor must follow. Many samples are available and the instructor should experiment with several until one is found that fits the instructor’s style and is comfortable to use. The instructor may also create a lesson plan format that works better for his/her personal use as long as the plan includes all six parts of the lesson. The lesson plan should not be written word for word as a person would write an important speech, but rather should only include brief reminders of important information that must be conveyed.

All lesson plans should include a space at the end for evaluating the lesson and making suggestions for change or improvement in the plan. The records of each student that participated in the lesson should include information of the success of the student during the lesson or comments on the skills that the student needs to work on or review. Once lesson plans are developed the instructor should keep the plans in a file for reuse. An additional benefit of a lesson plan file is that in the event the instructor cannot teach a lesson for any reason, a substitute can step in and teach the planned lesson and the students education will continue and not be interrupted.

Physical Plan: After the lesson has been prepared on paper the instructor must prepare for the lesson just before the students arrive. The “preparation” segment of the lesson plan should include those things necessary to do before the students arrive. Horses should be assigned to students, tack that is appropriate for the skill being taught should be decided upon, and equipment and teaching aids that the instructor included in the lesson should be ready and waiting by the arena. The assigned horses should be ready for the student (not running loose in the pasture) and visual aids should be in place. For instance, the instructor may be planning on teaching the serpentine and a visual aid might be to place cones at the points where the student should begin and end the turn and they should be in place before students arrive.

Part of the preparation for the start of the class must be a safety check. The safety check includes examining the environment, the arena, the horse, the equipment on the horse, the rider and riding attire, and the horse and rider combination.

Since all lessons should progress from the “known to the new”, the instructor might want to review the previous lesson, work on improving the riders’ position, or other known skill while the students are warming up the horses.
**Explanation**
The explanation portion of the plan should be very short and include the goal of the lesson. The instructor should not keep the students sitting on their horses while a long drawn out lecture is given. Both the students’ and horses’ attention will wander during a long drawn out explanation. When attention is lost the possibility of a hazardous situation developing is higher. Normally the instructor will end the previous class by telling the students what they will learn at their next lesson. If not, the explanation should include the topic and telling the student “why” they are being taught the skill. The rest of the “explanation” of the lesson should cover the high points of how the goal can be accomplished. The student will be much more receptive to working on any skill if they know why it is necessary to learn. The instructor might want to plan two or three additional ways of explaining how to reach the goal. If a student doesn’t understand an explanation after the instructor explains it twice the same way, it will probably do no good to explain it the same way a third time. There is a reason why the explanation is not clear to the student, so alternative methods of explanation must be used by the instructor until the student reaches an understanding of what is expected.

**Demonstration**
The demonstration portion of the lesson plan should include who will give the demonstration and what, when and how the demonstration will be done. If possible, the demonstration should be performed by an assistant instructor and should occur while the instructor is giving the explanation. This reduces the amount of time that students and horses are standing before they do what they are paying the facility to do – ride. The explanation will be much more effective if the students can see what they will be doing at the same time as they listen to the explanation. If a riding course is to be used, as in a trail or jumping lesson, the person doing the demonstration ride should ride the course for the students. It is very important that the rider and horse doing the demonstration have mastered the skill so that the students see the correct “picture”. A picture is only worth a thousand words if it is the correct picture!

**Application**
The instructor has completed explaining the class to the students and they have seen someone demonstrate the skill in a correct manner. They are now ready to apply what they have learned in the lesson up to that point. The instructor’s lesson plan should include all of the “how’s” that the student will be learning during the application segment of the lesson to reach the instructor’s objective for that day. Even the “how” to get the students safely moving on the rail. Riding patterns for the lesson should be diagramed in the lesson plan.

**Correction**
During the application segment the instructor has walked all of the riders through the new skill and has seen the student accomplish the new skill a couple of times individually. It is now time to allow the students to practice their new skill as you watch and make corrections to individual performances. It is important that the students receive praise for what they do correctly and well. There are hundreds of ways to tell each one that the job was well done, and a good instructor will take the time to learn and use them. The instructor can always find something to compliment a student for even if it has nothing to do with riding, such as telling the student that you like the way he/she smiles! The instructor should not ever embarrass or humiliate a student! Sometimes it is best to correct a fault with the entire class by telling them all to remember to correct the problem. Telling students they are doing well when they are not just to say something positive will just create more problems for the student. Practice does not make perfect unless it is perfect practice. A rider can practice something the wrong way for a very long time and in the end that rider will just be doing it “perfectly wrong”.

**Repetition**
A rider can learn most of the mechanics of a new skill with the first attempt. That skill has not been mastered until the rider has performed it over and over again. This segment allows for all of the information given to the students during the explanation and demonstration segments to be reviewed thoroughly and become a part of the rider’s skills. Each successive repetition of the skill should become better. This is also the time when the students are tested on what has been taught to them by asking them questions. If the students cannot answer the instructor’s questions, the instructor should obviously change the method being used to teach the skill.
Planning for Success
Secrets to Making Your Riding Lessons More Effective
By Lorrie Renker

Planning is an essential part of teaching riding. Without planning, the instructor does not know where the rider is going nor how the rider will get there. Unfortunately, many instructors react to situations during riding lessons, instead of following a clearly established direction. Careful planning lays the groundwork for successful evaluation.

Identifying goals and objectives for each rider is the first step to successful planning. Goals and objectives are not the same; in fact, they are very different and it is extremely important to understand the difference.

Goals
Goals are broad and long range. They provide the big picture and help the instructor know where the rider is going - the Destination. Goals are developed in a systematic manner. Before deciding on goals, it is necessary to conduct an initial assessment of the rider to determine strengths and weaknesses. Whenever possible, it is important to obtain rider input when determining goals. If the rider wants to ride Western and compete, then those wishes should be considered and implemented if possible. Joint development of goals provides the rider with ownership of the Destination. When goals are specifically identified and written down, the instructor and rider are more likely to reach the goals.

Goal development is a continual process and goals are defined and redefined as needed. Goals are written with the following components in mind:

1. Past experience and achievement of the rider
2. The rider's current level of performance through assessment
3. Rider's input and preferences (often times neglected)
4. Possibility and practicality of the chosen goal
5. Priority needs (i.e. need to get on the horse before learning to turn)
6. Amount of time that will be devoted to the goal
7. Instruction related to the goal

Objectives
Consider objectives the Road Maps to the Destination. Objectives are the logical, systematic breakdown of the steps required to reach the identified goals. Objectives must be specific and consistent with the goals. The more knowledgeable the instructor is in understanding riding skills, the more adept the instructor will be at breaking down the skills into the proper sequence and related clusters (task analysis). Breaking down the skills helps determine the objectives needed to reach the goals.

Objectives are often written as “behavioral objectives” because they describe the behavior of the rider. Objectives should describe observable and measurable behavior. The use of action words (such as name, identify, demonstrate, choose, show, or select) helps make the objectives measurable. Words open to many interpretations (such as know, appreciate, understand, or believe) are difficult to measure and should be avoided when writing objectives. Objectives should specifically identify what is an acceptable performance. This can be tricky when riding skills can be so subjective. With some objectives, it is easier to identify acceptable performance - for example “the rider will post on the correct diagonal one time around the arena.” In this example, it is easy to determine if the rider is successful. Identifying acceptable performance for correct use of the rider’s seat can be more difficult.

Objectives should also include a description of the conditions. In the case of the riding lesson, the condition is usually assumed to be that the rider will be riding a horse in an enclosed, supervised area. The condition may differ if the rider goes on a trail ride.
Writing clear objectives takes practice. Determining how many objectives are needed for each student and for each lesson plan can be tricky. A long list of objectives is not necessary and usually fewer objectives are needed when the learner is more advanced.

**Domains of Learning**

When writing goals and objectives, it is helpful to realize that there are three domains of learning: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Cognitive domain concerns knowledge and intellectual skills. Affective domain stresses values, feelings, attitudes and personality development. Psychomotor domain concentrates on physical abilities, mind and body interaction. Goals and objectives should be written across all three domains. Analyzing learning in all three areas will help the instructor clarify instruction. A good instructor can use goals and objectives in one domain to achieve goals or objectives in another domain. For example, if a student likes to ride (affective domain), the instructor uses that motivation to teach two-step commands (cognitive domain) or posting trot (psychomotor domain).

**Lesson Plans**

As goals and objectives are identified for individual riders and groups of riders, it is helpful to write lesson plans. A beginner instructor or an instructor who tends to direct rather than teach needs to practice writing detailed lesson plans. The experienced instructor may simply jot down a few notes, but can always fall back on writing detailed lesson plans if a skill becomes troublesome. To develop an effective lesson plan, the instructor must:

- Understand the subject or particular skill that is being taught
- Be able to determine the scope and sequence of the lesson
- Be able to select appropriate teaching strategies
- Be able to relate the instruction to the particular students

Lesson plans enable the instructor to state exactly what is to be taught and how. PATH Intl. offers a sample lesson plan format to assist the instructor in writing effective lesson plans. There is a variety of lesson plan formats that the instructor can use according to needs and personal preferences. The important thing is that the instructor provides a detailed plan that follows the *Road Map to the Destination!*

**Evaluation**

Constantly evaluating and tracking progress is essential to ensuring success. Evaluation provides quality control to the lesson program. The instructor should develop a method for keeping a written record of progress. The record can be in the form of a skills checklist, diagrams, progress notes or whatever works for the particular instructor.

Progress notes recorded after each lesson can be extremely helpful when evaluating whether a student achieved a goal or objective. Progress notes can provide a method for accurately logging when parts or entire goals or objectives are achieved. Taking a few minutes to jot down an entry for each student after each lesson is a good practice for instructors.

Implement a method to obtain observations from volunteers. For example, designate a central place where volunteers can make pertinent remarks about lessons and students. Volunteers are at a different vantage point than the instructor, and that vantage point often reveals interesting data. Reviewing this recorded information can help an instructor identify trends and problem areas that can be corrected in the future.

It is good practice to provide written feedback to schools, parents, guardians, students, etc., to keep them informed of a student’s progress. This practice lends credibility to the lesson program. When writing notes or evaluations, always write in the positive and not the negative. For example, write “John needs to work on keeping heels down,” instead of “John does not keep his heels down.” To check on the tone of the written notes, review the notes several weeks later and pretend to be the rider’s parent.

Remember that the better the planning, the better the chance for success. It may take a little extra time to establish goals and objectives, write lesson plans, and record progress, but the riders will likely benefit.
LESSON PLAN

Lesson plans enable the instructor to state exactly what is to be taught and how.

Instructors can use a variety of lesson plan formats according to needs and personal preferences.

Operating Center: ______________________________________________________ Class ID#: __________________________

Instructor/Therapist: ______________________________________________________________________________________

Objective of the Lesson: What are you going to teach in this lesson? The objectives should be consistent with the goals. Each rider can have individual goals and objectives that can be different from, but supported by, the objective of the lesson. The objective of the lesson is what is happening in this specific lesson.

Teacher Preparation/Equipment Needs: What is needed for this lesson? Does the lesson call for an obstacle course? If so, what specifically is needed? The instructor can make sure the necessary equipment is at the ring prior to the lesson. If some piece of equipment is not available, the instructor can then make a substitution or change the lesson BEFORE the riders are in the ring.

Lesson Content/Procedure: What will be happening in this lesson? This should be detailed enough that if the instructor is sick, a replacement instructor could pick up the lesson plan and teach the lesson. The procedure should be outlined in the sequence that it will be presented in the class. The content and procedure can be in paragraph form, outline form, or steps written in brief phrases or sentences.

Summary and Evaluation: How did this lesson turn out? What are the strong and weak points? Were the objectives achieved? Did any problems occur that would necessitate that the lesson be modified in the future? Are there any recommendations for individual riders for the future? This is the only section that is completed after the lesson.
Lesson Plan

Date: April 18, 1995

Class time: Midnight - 1:30 a.m.

Riders: Horses:
1. Paul Revere Sterling
2. Lady Godiva Lucky
3. General Patton Favory Africa
4. Alexander the Great Bucephalus

Objective:
- The Rider will maintain the sitting trot from Boston to Concord, two times both directions
- The Rider will walk over ground poles in the 2-point position without losing balance 2 out of 3 times

Teacher Preparation:
- Water arena
- Braid yarn in one braid in horse’s mane for reference point to indicate placements of the hands during the two-point position
- Four poles in center of arena 3 feet apart
- Two cones set up, one at the end of the arena, the other ¾ the way around the arena. One labeled Boston, the other labeled Concord

Procedure:
1. Riders will groom and tack with one on one volunteer assistance
2. Mounting order:
   - Alexander
   - Lady Godiva
   - Paul Revere
   - General Patton
3. Warm-up exercises at the walk:
   a. Shoulder rotations 10 each direction
   b. Six count leg lift 5 times
   c. Two-point sit ups 10 times
4. Review of skills:
   a. Walk 15 circles both directions
   b. Walk to halt transitions, at least 2
   c. Sitting trot one by one down the long side of arena
5. New skills:
   a. Reverse by turning down the center line and walking over poles in the two point position.
   b. Trot from Boston to Concord, first individually, then as a group, both directions.
6. Wrap up activity:
   a. Relay: 2 teams of 2
      Team 1: Paul and Gen. Patton
      Team 2: Lady Godiva and Alexander
      Sitting trot to barrel, walk around barrel, and over 2 ground poles in the 2 point position.

Assessment:
1. Hardly a man is now alive who remembers that famous day and year!
2. Actually, all the riders need more emphasis on looking up over the poles.
3. Yarn helped hand position
Lesson Plan

Instructor/Therapist: _____________________________________________________________________________

Objective of Lesson: (What are you going to teach in this lesson? Objectives must be written in terms that describe observable behavior that can be measured)

Teacher Preparation/Equipment Needed:

Lesson Content/Procedure: (Include sequence of lesson. How will you conduct the lesson? What will be included?)

Summary and Evaluation: (How do you feel the lesson went? Strong points? Weak points? Did you meet the objectives? Suggestions for future.)
Lesson Reflection

An instructor should constantly strive to improve teaching ability. One way to do that is through reflection. The instructor takes the time to reflect on what has been taught, how the lesson progressed, what things worked and what things didn't, how can the lesson be improved, what the instructor's strengths and weaknesses are, etc. A good instructor always looks for ways to improve. A good place to start is through self-evaluation of the riding lesson. This can be accomplished through role play, videotape, mentoring and evaluation by another instructor or by simply reflecting.

The following questions can help an instructor reflect on a lesson:

1. Is the lesson plan complete?
2. Is the lesson plan realistic?
3. Did the lesson follow the plan?
4. Is the instructor audible?
5. Did the instructor demonstrate a positive attitude?
6. Did the instructor demonstrate a good rapport with the team?
7. Did the instructor appear in control of the class?
8. Did the instructor demonstrate knowledge of horsemanship?
9. Did the instructor demonstrate knowledge of disabilities?
10. Did the instructor demonstrate knowledge of equipment?
11. Did the instructor direct appropriate positional corrections of riders and whats, hows, whys?
12. Did the instructor communicate clearly?
13. Did the instructor use appropriate praise?
14. Is the lesson safe?
15. Were the volunteers well trained and used effectively?
16. Were the teaching techniques selected appropriate for the riders?
17. Were the games and exercises selected appropriate for the riders?
18. Did the instructor demonstrate good organization skills?

Add seven more questions that you feel are important to reflect on:

19. ______________________________________________________________________________________________________
20. ______________________________________________________________________________________________________
21. ______________________________________________________________________________________________________
22. ______________________________________________________________________________________________________
23. ______________________________________________________________________________________________________
24. ______________________________________________________________________________________________________
25. ______________________________________________________________________________________________________
Goals and Objectives

Goals
Broad, general statements of projected achievement

Objectives
Specific and student centered. What will the student learn in this lesson?

Objectives must answer three questions:
1. What conditions? What equipment or resources will the students be given or denied during testing and evaluation?
2. What performance? What will the students know or do at the end of the session?
3. What criteria? Measurable standards used to determine what was learned.

Sample Equestrian Goals
1. Will increase self-esteem and assertiveness
2. Will learn parts of the horse
3. Will demonstrate motor control skills

Sample Equestrian Objectives
1. The Rider will maintain the horse in the correct position one time around the arena
2. The Rider will correctly label three parts of the horse
3. The Rider will demonstrate how to correctly halt the horse 3 out of 5 times
Skill Progression  
Contributed By Lili Kellogg

An effective instructor will use skill progression when teaching riding. This is a systematic building of skills upon a foundation. It is teaching skills in an order that will advance the riders most effectively and to the best of his ability. There are many “systems” of teaching riding, but after much thought and consideration, as well as with experience, individual instructors will compile and design their own system, one that works best for themselves and their students.

Great care and consideration needs to be given to system development. Ask yourselves questions such as:
- Should I teach a figure-8 before a serpentine, or should I teach a serpentine before a figure-8? Why?
- Should I teach a circle before a half-circle, or vice versa?
- Which order of skill progression will help the students become more effective riders or develop a more solid foundation?

There are no right or wrong answers. However, effective instructors will have reasons why one skill is introduced before another. And it may change from one student to another, or from one horse to another or due to the circumstances.
Skill Progression Exercise

Number each set of skills in the order that you would teach them in. Then support your “system” by explaining why.

**EXERCISE A**

- ___ walk
- ___ turn on the forehand
- ___ canter from the walk
- ___ two - point trot
- ___ circle
- ___ posting trot
- ___ canter from the trot
- ___ sitting trot
- ___ riding on contact
- ___ halt

**EXERCISE B**

- ___ pivot
- ___ diagonals
- ___ simple lead changes
- ___ serpentines
- ___ lope
- ___ figure-8
- ___ leads
- ___ flying lead changes
- ___ posting trot
- ___ rein-back
Task Analysis
By Lorrie Renker

Task analysis is the breaking down of a task or skill into components or elements. The better the instructor understands the task or skill, the easier it is to determine the appropriate components. For example, if the instructor does not know how to execute a shoulder in, then task analysis can not be successfully completed. If the instructor has never evaluated how to perform a posting trot, then it will be difficult to break the skill down into helpful components. If an important component is left out, then the task or skill may not be successfully accomplished.

It is not necessary to write a task analysis for every riding skill, but essentially, instructors perform a task analysis in their heads every time they teach skills. Task analysis helps the instructor look at the components of the skill with a critical eye and helps identify and correct rider problems.

The following is a sample of a task analysis for a right turn. The components can vary depending on the level of the rider. It is helpful to include a cue or comment section for definitions or helpful hints.

Each of the components contributes to successful completion of a right turn. If there is a problem with one of the components, the turn may not be correctly executed. For example, if the rider looks down, body position, weight shift and direction can be affected.

Correcting that component may become an objective (i.e. “Rider will complete a right turn with eyes up and looking toward the direction of the turn, 95% of the time”). Breaking the skill down into components helps the instructor understand and correct the problem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Cue or Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hold reins correctly</td>
<td>Prompt if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Identify right rein</td>
<td>Remind look up, turn head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Look in direction of turn</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Weight shift</td>
<td>R leg at girth, L leg behind girth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Apply leg aids</td>
<td>Adjust length and pressure if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Direct rein</td>
<td>Prompt if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Maintain body position</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. End direct rein</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. End leg aids</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. End weight shift</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Look to forward direction</td>
<td>Remind look up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Task Analysis

Task Analysis as defined by Howell, Kaplan, and O’Connell (1979) “is the process of isolating, sequencing, and describing all of the essential components of a task.”

Why would you use task analysis when teaching riding?

1. _____________________________________________________________________________________
2. _____________________________________________________________________________________
3. _____________________________________________________________________________________
4. _____________________________________________________________________________________

There is no one way to perform a task analysis. Each task can be broken down into as much detail as necessary depending on the objective or the level of the rider as long as the breakdown is logical and sequential. There are three phases of a task analysis:

- Identify the terminal objective
- Detail the specific task step sequence
- State pre-requisite skills

List three examples of tasks and a prerequisite skill for each task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Prerequisite skill</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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It is helpful to indicate the level of assistance that the rider may need in order to complete the task or parts of the task. Levels of assistance can include:

- Physical prompt
- Hand over hand guidance
- Tactile prompt
- Gestural prompt
- Verbal prompt
- Independent

In order to learn a skill, it is often necessary to break down the skill into small parts (a parts to the whole concept). Riders with learning problems may need the skill broken down into very minute detail. Riding instructors should practice conducting task analysis using the Task Analysis Form on the next page.
**Task: Correct Way to Hold Reins**

1. Identify reins
2. Extend arms and hands in front of body, palms down
3. Lower hands to reins
4. Grasp reins
5. Put hands together
6. Turn thumbs up (separating slightly)
7. Raise hands slightly off horse’s neck
8. Raise head and straighten trunk

**Task: Backing**

1. Halt horse
2. Take contact on horse’s mouth by: shorten reins and/or close fingers on reins
3. Lighten weight on seat bones by tipping pelvis slightly forward
4. Apply leg pressure evenly with both legs and say “back”
5. If horse moves forward, decrease leg pressure and pull back gently on reins
6. End rein and leg pressure as horse takes a step back
7. Repeat as needed to get correct number of steps
8. To end task: sit on seat bones. release leg and rein pressure/contact and say “whoa”
# Task Analysis Data Sheet

**Student Name:**

**Task:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Analysis</th>
<th>Cue or Comment</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
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</table>

**Key:**
- **P** - Physical Assistance
- **H** - Hand Over Hand Guidance
- **T** - Tactile Prompt
- **G** - Gesture
- **V** - Verbal Prompt
- **I** - Independent
Whats, Hows, and Whys

The use of Whats, Hows, and Whys make the difference between effective and ineffective teaching.

**What:** What the instructor is going to teach (ex: diagonals). What will the student do? (ex: post on the correct diagonal from C to A)?

**How:** How will the student post on the diagonal? This is the meat of the lesson! The instructor must have knowledge of the subject matter to have student success.

**Why:** Why does the student need to learn the task (ex: achieve diagonals)? What is the relevance of the task (ex: keep the horse and rider balanced during turns)? Knowledge of the subject matter makes it easier to explain the whys.

An example of a what, how, and why:

**Stopping the Horse**

**What:** At the letter C, stop your horse

**How:** Close your fingers gently on the reins, sit tall, and use the voice command “whoa”. Remember to sit up and not lean back.

**Why:** You use your hands gently on the reins because you do not want to hurt the horse’s mouth. The horse should be relaxed and willing to stop. If you pull hard on the horse’s mouth he can become uncooperative.

It is easy for a riding instructor to fall into the routine of simply telling the rider what to do. This is similar to a traffic cop. The riding instructor should always strive to include the hows and whys in every lesson. Often the difference between a good riding instructor and a poor riding instructor rests on the use of effective hows and whys. A quote by Levine (1989) supports that thought: “The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains.”

Complete the following to teach the transition to trot

**What:**

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

**How:**

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

**Why:**

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________
Learning Styles

Characteristics of the Auditory Learner
- Remember what they hear better than what they see.
- Has limited attention to visual tasks.
- May have poor handwriting.
- Respond better in class when hearing, rather than reading.
- Love to have stories read to them with a lot of expression.
- Tend to memorize well and remember spoken words and ideas.
- Often surprise their friends by knowing all the words to songs. They also enjoy rhythmic and musical activities.
- Are talkative. They may share jokes, amuse peers with tall tales and drive parents to distraction with incessant chatter.
- Might have poor visual memory, reversing letters p and q, b and d, n and v.

Auditory Learners Learn Best When They...
- Talk through the steps of a task, and learn how to think, spell and say syllables out loud.
- Choose oral over written reports.
- Listen to books on tape.
- Ask you or their teacher to tape books or chapters of books.
- Hear information in the classroom first, then read the related material and, finally make up their own story about the material.
- Make sure the teacher knows they need to hear the assignment as well as see it on the blackboard.
- Use travel games to give their memory a workout. One simple but effective game is, “I’m going on a trip and on my trip I will take...” Each person repeats the proceeding items and adds one more. Car rides are also perfect times for auditory learners to recite multiplication facts.

Characteristics of the Visual Learners
- Retain what they see better than what they hear.
- Respond better when you show them things rather than tell them.
- May seem to ignore verbal directions.
- May say “What?” or “Huh?” often.
- Seems to misunderstand often.
- Asks for questions or instructions to be repeated, frequently in different words.
- May frequently have a “blank” expression on face, or may seem to daydream during classes that are primarily verbal.
- May have poor speech, in terms of either low vocabulary, poor flexibility of vocal patterns, or articulation.
- Loves books, pictures and puzzles, and are attracted to colors.
- Have very good visual recall, and can remember where they placed a toy days earlier.
- Are noticeably quiet in class.
- May watch the expression on your face when you speak or read to them.
- Are detail oriented and generally keep their rooms tidy.
- Have a hard time remembering the order of the alphabet unless they recite it from the beginning.
Visual Learners Learn Best When They...
- Use many visual aids - color coding, charts, maps, graphs, flashcards, highlight markers, photos.
- Take advantage of visual gifts. During museum visits, for example, they can build-critical thinking skills by comparing and contrasting paintings and objects.
- Watch the facial expressions of people who are reading to them.
- Have plenty of books and magazines around the house.
- Read materials first, then attend a classroom lecture.
- Play educational computer games and other games that encourage strategy and critical thinking, such as chess, Scrabble and Concentration.

Characteristics of Kinesthetic Learners
- Tend to be well coordinated.
- Like to touch things.
- Thrive with hands-on activities such as arts and crafts, science, and building projects.
- Enjoy taking objects apart and putting them back together.
- Learn best by experiencing their environment, they love field trips.
- Don’t mind taking notes.
- Learn concepts well through manipulating-anything that they can hold and change, such as Legos or three-dimensional plastic numbers.
- May become frustrated when learning abstract symbols. They might have a tough time understanding a teacher who says “two plus two equals four.” But they’ll grasp the concept easily if the teacher shows them four marbles.
- Need movement; can’t sit still long.

Kinesthetic Learners Learn Best When They...
- Tap out syllables and numbers.
- Draw letters or numbers with crayons on a washable vinyl place mat. Then, they can trace the letters or numbers with raisins or macaroni.
- Review facts in combination with a physical activity. For example, might ask them to recite the names of the presidents while bouncing a ball or riding a stationary bike.
- Color-code vowels and consonants in spelling words, write facts in the air.
- Use a lot of three-dimensional learning aids, such as flashcards. Might spell out words on the refrigerator using magnetic letters. Then ask the children to scramble and unscramble the letters.
- Turn theory into practice, instead of memorizing $2 + 3 = 5$, can learn the concept by using five marbles or five popsicle sticks.
- Play movement-orientated games such as “Where in the World is Carmen San Diego?” and board games with movement. Twister, for example, helps young children learn colors.
A Well Executed Riding Lesson Will Teach All Three Learning Styles

- The horse teaches to the kinesthetic learner
- The instructor teaches to the auditory learner
- The demonstrator and other students in the class teach to the visual learner
Teaching Techniques

1. Organization of the Lesson
   a) Preparation (previous instruction, warm-up, lesson plan, introduction)
   b) Explanation (short, clear and understandable terms)
   c) Demonstration (show as well as tell – some people understand better visually)
   d) Application (students try it out, apply instruction)
   e) Correction (correct any mistakes positively after showing and explaining the right way)
   f) Repetition (practice until students know and can execute new technique; review)

2. Progression
   a) Lessons should move from the known skills to new skills
   b) Lessons should move from simple to complex
   c) Build a strong foundation with specific “how to” instruction and sufficient repetition before moving on and building on that foundation
   d) Start where the students are, never assume that they ought to know
   e) Observe carefully and evaluate often

3. Communication skills
   a) Get their attention (halt the class, use voice, dramatic gesture, etc.)
   b) Keep it simple successfully (KISS)
   c) Be specific (tell exactly how and what to do)
   d) Be concise (don’t clutter the lesson, don’t interject negative points)
   e) Be sure you are understood (use questions and answers to analyze the degree of knowledge understood)
   f) Repeat and review main points to make sure they are understood and retained
   g) Use positive reinforcement and appropriate, sincere praise
   h) Use visual aids (i.e. chalkboard, pylons, demonstrations etc.)

Rules of Thumb When Conducting Classes!

1. When placing riders in a group lesson, take into consideration the like-goals and abilities of the riders
2. Anyone assisting or teaching the riders need to be aware of their needs, therapeutically and from a safety perspective
3. Be aware of any processing problems and be patient
4. Use modeling as a teaching tool, whenever possible
5. Repetition is a useful teaching tool
6. Use task analysis
7. The instructor must realize the limitations of each rider
8. Use visualization techniques to enhance the riders’ understanding
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANINGFUL EXPLANATIONS</th>
<th>POOR EXPLANATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Be sure of the purpose of the explanation before you start.</td>
<td>1. Don’t give an overload of information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Use reference points during the explanation.</td>
<td>2. Don’t use a textbook form of organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Be conversational and informal during explanations of new ideas.</td>
<td>3. Don’t use circulatory reasoning and explanations to weaken theory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. KISS – keep it simple successfully.</td>
<td>4. Don’t leave explanations unfinished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Make explanations as graphic as possible.</td>
<td>5. Don’t get into the habit of trying to explain with just verbal guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Use analogies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Structure explanations to focus on one task at a time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECTIVE PRAISE</th>
<th>INEFFECTIVE PRAISE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is delivered contingently.</td>
<td>1. Is delivered randomly and or unsystematically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Names the specific accomplishment.</td>
<td>2. Rewards mere participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Shows spontaneity and follow through.</td>
<td>3. Provides no information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Provides information about the student’s progress.</td>
<td>4. Compares the student to other students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Orients students toward a better appreciation of their own task related behavior and problem solving.</td>
<td>5. Encourages students to expend effort on the task for external reasons – to please parents, for example.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Recognizes noteworthy effort or success.</td>
<td>6. Intrudes into the ongoing process, distracting attention from task relevant behavior.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING</th>
<th>INEFFECTIVE QUESTIONING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ask questions first, then call the students name.</td>
<td>1. If you call the student’s name first then you eliminate the rest of the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ask a question that can be answered rather specifically.</td>
<td>2. Questions such as “What about colors?” is too broad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ask a question that will require just one person to answer.</td>
<td>3. Blanket questions such as “How many want to trot?” May result in multi-responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ask questions that are thought provoking.</td>
<td>4. Questions that answer “yes” or “no” don’t stimulate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Techniques Using Progression from Stability to Mobility

1. Horses gait and movement – walk – trot – canter
   • minimal movement to maximum movement

2. Support given physically to riders from the sidewalkers
   • trunk – pelvis – thigh – lower leg – ankle
   • leader and two sidewalkers - leader and one side walker – leader – leader as a sidewalk – independent

3. Gradation of exercises: most stable position = erect posture + hands on pommel + feet in stirrups
   Gradations:
   • feet supported by stirrups to feet out of stirrups
   • hands on pommel to letting go with one hand
   • to both hands off briefly
   • both hands off with exercises
   • briefly
   • both hands off with exercises

4. Schooling figures
   • straight lines to curves to circles
   • large figures to small figures

5. Independent on the horse
   • no control by the rider
   • on lead but learning to guide the horse
   • off the lead but guiding the horse
   • independent off the lead and unassisted

6. Riding Surface
   • smooth and level and inside
   • gradual hills and outside

Levels of Assistance While Teaching

1. Physical prompt
2. Hand over hand
3. Tactile prompt
4. Gestured prompt
5. Verbal Prompt
6. Independence
Managing Inappropriate Behaviors

The information in this fact sheet is adapted from Managing Inappropriate Behaviors in the Classroom, by Thomas C. Lovitt.

Are there ways to prevent misbehavior?
The atmosphere in the riding session influences the student. The environment should be appealing and stimulating. You might want to try varying the arena set-up and your session schedule to prevent boredom in both the instructor and the students. The instructor needs to let students know specific do's and don'ts.

Make it clear as to which behaviors are expected around horses and which won't be tolerated, and why. Then you must consistently reinforce the desired behaviors. Ignore, if you can, the undesirable behaviors, or find a method to eliminate them.

What about establishing rules?
If you make too many rules, students can become confused or frustrated and ignore them. Establish only the necessary rules and specify the consequences for not following them.

How can instructors increase student motivation?
One approach is to make one activity contingent on another. Tell the students that if they perform well in one task, such as halting, they can earn time in one favored activity, such as a game. Certain privileges, such as mounting first at the next session, can also be made contingent on performance.

If a student is having difficulty with one task, have him serve as a tutor to another student in that same skill, dependent upon the older child’s satisfactory performance. For example, if a student hasn’t quite mastered a satisfactory change of rein, have him explain the process to a newer student.

What about token economies?
This approach, in which students are given a mark for rewards redeemable at a later time, can help students learn. However, token economies are usually costly. In addition, results of research investigating whether or not performance is maintained after the system is removed have been discouraging.

How can we decrease unwanted behavior?
Instructors can reward a student when a specified behavior does not occur. Also, offer reward or praise when the undesirable behavior occurs below a designated frequency or duration level. Differential Reinforcement of Other behaviors (DRO) is a way to decelerate a behavior when behaviors other than the target behavior are systematically reinforced.

Overcorrection is another possibility. Instruct students to correct the inappropriate behavior and execute the act within a natural sequence of events. For example, if a child mouths the reins, tell him “no” and require him to wipe his lips with a washcloth each time he puts the unhygienic leather in his mouth.

Satiation involves actually giving a student more of the event that the instructor ultimately wishes to eliminate. A classic example of this technique involves a hospital resident who hoarded towels. The staff gave her towels—up to 60 per day—until she voluntarily returned most of them and ceased the hoarding.

What role does punishment play in a riding session?
Punishment can be defined as a technique that retards the frequency of a behavior when the punishment is given contingent on that behavior. When used appropriately, reprimands, frowns, reminders and other subtle expressions can serve as very effective punishment.

There are some possible disadvantages of punishment. Its effects may overgeneralize, eliminating more behaviors than originally intended. Or the student might associate the technique with the person who administered it, causing ill feeling toward the instructor.

Can I take something away to decrease unwanted behaviors?
Instructors can take away the opportunity to obtain reinforcement, attention, or a portion of some event contingent on target behavior. These three procedures are also known as timeout, extinction, and response cost.
Timeout can involve physically removing a student – ask them to come to the center and halt while the session continues – for a short period of time. Extinction of the problem behavior may be accomplished by ignoring tantrums (as long as the student or those around him are not in danger). Ignoring behavior is a withdrawal of attention. Taking away tokens or points for disobeying rules is an example of response cost.

**If an instructor can’t concentrate on each student’s problems, is there a group method that will work?**

- **Independent group contingencies.** Each student receives the same consequence for stated behavior, as in staying after class for out-of-seat behavior. Although easy to administer, this approach does not take into account individual student differences.

- **Dependent group contingency.** The same consequence is given to all members of a group. In order to receive the consequence, a selected member must perform at or better than a specified level. One student’s behavior can influence the group’s consequence. This approach can improve peer group behavior at the same time. A program in which a student accumulates free time for the entire class by on-task behavior may encourage fellow students to support his appropriate activity and not engage him in off-task interaction.

- **Group consequence, contingent on group.** The entire class is considered as one group. An example is making free time dependent on appropriate behavior: an individual’s inappropriate activity reduces the entire class’s reward. This approach might be effective when several individuals are behaving inappropriately. However, repercussions might occur if group members feel unduly punished due to the behavior of an individual student.

**What are some general guidelines for managing inappropriate behavior?**

- Examine the events that maintain students’ behavior.
- Keep data to determine whether or not an approach is working. Compare behavior during baseline and treatment phases.
- Consider a variety of techniques.
- Combine approaches to be more effective. For example, a teacher might praise appropriate behavior while ignoring inappropriate behavior.
- Concentrate on teaching new behaviors and deal with inappropriate ones only to the extent that they interfere with the individual’s or group’s learning.
Anger in Young Adults with Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities are constantly reminded of their disabilities in our society. Society tends to see the disability before the person. Consequently, frustration and anger are common in many young adults with disabilities. The following letter was written by a young man with cerebral palsy who was studying to be a lawyer. He wrote the letter to a counselor who was concerned about a 7-year-old client’s anger at having cerebral palsy.

“I would like to add my own observations based on my perspective as an adult with cerebral palsy who was once an angry 7-year-old. When you stop to think of it, the anger the child feels is not unreasonable. Adults tend to overlook the fact that being able to walk and talk properly is much more important to a 7-year-old’s satisfaction with life than it is for an adult. It may seem very unfair to the child to have been singled out for this problem. Furthermore, the adults around the child seem powerless to correct the problem.”

“Indeed, the child’s anger may be a reflection of the disappointment that the adults around him feel. The anger may be self-directed. I’m guessing at this child’s feelings, based on my own experience and those of other people I have known who have this condition. The important thing is that the anger is interfering with the child’s development. “

“In your letter [to me], you talk about teaching the child to accept the disability. Frankly, I think the notion of acceptance is overrated. Many of the people I know who have cerebral palsy and who have succeeded in becoming independent and contributing members of society are quietly angry. The difference is that they’ve learned to use their anger in constructive ways.”

“Your priority challenge as a counselor may be to help this child channel the anger away from self and others and toward the challenges presented by the disability. It may help the child to know more about cerebral palsy and about people with cerebral palsy.”

“It’s important that the child knows that there are people in this world who have as much and more difficulty with walking and still manage to lead satisfying lives. It would be even better if the child could meet some adults with cerebral palsy who are living in the community, and learn more about the activities that people with disabilities can enjoy.”
Exercises and Games

The benefits of exercises in a therapeutic riding program include stretching muscles, enhancing flexibility, improving balance, developing strength and relaxing and limbering areas of the body. Here are some important points:

1. The leader should stand toward the front of the horse facing the rider. The sidewalkers must be attentive to the rider and assist as necessary and as directed.
2. Do no harm. Make sure that exercises are not harmful to the rider and do not aggravate his condition. A thorough knowledge of the disability is required.
3. Set exercise goals for each rider. Goals should be designed with the rider's specific needs in mind.
4. Exercises should address the whole body, not just the arms and upper torso.
5. Exercises can be performed during movement, not only at the halt. Advance from doing an exercise at the halt to doing it at the walk and so on.
6. Make exercises progressive. Break an exercise down into interesting components, adding a new component, until the whole exercise can be performed with good results.
7. Quality of movement is an important factor in any exercise. It is not enough that Johnny circled his arms. Were his arms in as normal a position as possible for him? Were the circles as good as he could make them? Was the movement beneficial for him? Did the exercise challenge him to stretch just beyond his present level?
8. Allow sufficient time for the rider to process the instruction and act on what has been asked of him.
9. Volunteer assistants should be trained to help riders perform exercises correctly. Show volunteers how to facilitate each movement so the student understands and can feel his body move properly.
10. Be creative. You can bet that if you are bored doing an exercise, your students are bored, too. Create something fun!

A physical therapist can work with the therapeutic riding instructor to help design appropriate exercises for each rider. The therapist can also educate the instructor about the best way to teach an exercise. What kind of movement do you ask for? What kind of movement might be harmful? What is each student's potential and limit?

The exercise portion of a lesson need not be long, nor always come in the same sequence. But it should be safe, beneficial and challenging to the rider.

General Exercise Principles

1. Exercises performed on horse back encourage balance and suppleness that permits the student to follow the horse's movements at all paces. Exercises help develop independent use of individual parts of the body resulting in the student achieving a better seat and greater control of the horse.
2. Exercises are developed to improve flexibility, strength, endurance and posture as well as to prepare the body and mind for the lesson activities or to learn a new skill.
3. Perform all new exercises at the halt then progress to the walk once the student can perform them correctly.
4. Perform movements slowly during the learning phase and watch for the effect on posture and position in the saddle.
5. Encourage rhythm and fluidity of movement.
6. Keep in mind the student's abilities and limitations.
7. Give the student time to perform the exercises correctly.
8. Encourage quality of movement, not just half-hearted attempts by the student.
9. Assist student as needed using visual cues (demonstration), verbal cues or tactile (touch) cues. Sidewalkers need to be informed of the student's abilities and how much help to provide.

Games

Games can be used for a variety of reasons:

1. To reinforce a riding skill, such as halting the horse to complete an activity.
2. To practice a physical skill or sensory exercise. For example, have the rider take a ring from a volunteer by reaching across midline.
3. To learn or practice educational components. For example, if a rider is working on recognizing letters, instruct him to locate the letters in the arena.
4. To learn or practice horse knowledge.
5. Games can also be used in stable management or the classroom. Use the horse as a motivator. You can incorporate horse knowledge in all school curriculums. For example, spelling horse parts or calculating the height of a horse in hands from inches.

**Ring Figures**

- Circle
- Change of Rein across the Diagonal
- Serpentine
- Change of Rein Through the Circle
- Figure - 8
Mounting

PATH INTERNATIONAL
Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International
Mounting Considerations for Riders with Disabilities

Considerations for Choosing the Mounting Technique

1. Rider’s disability and involvement
2. Rider’s height and weight
3. Size of horse
4. Size, strength and training of volunteers
5. Available facilities
6. Least stressful for horse and rider. Rider must feel in control and be relaxed
7. Maintain dignity
8. Each rider must be considered on an individual basis. Tailor each mount to rider

Mounting Principles for Instructors

1. Use back support with wheelchair transfer
2. If you’ve never done a wheelchair transfer with a particular student, transfer them to a barrel before you transfer them to a horse
3. Keep your feet shoulder width apart
4. Lift with legs and abdominals, NOT YOUR BACK!
5. Stay in close proximity with rider
6. Keep your head up
7. Stay relaxed
8. Move fairly slowly. Stay in control
9. Tell the rider how the mount or transfer will be performed, prior to mounting. Listen to their input
Mounting Ramps

The necessity for an center to have mounting equipment cannot be over emphasized. Your particular needs will be dictated by your rider population. If you have riders who use aids for mobility and can’t negotiate steps, a mounting ramp is advisable. If these riders are small enough that you can safely do a one- or two-man lift from the ground, you may do without a ramp.

Before you think of reasons not to have a ramp, however, remember a goal all centers have: to increase the independence of riders with disabilities. When a rider is an active participant in the mounting – perhaps independently legging over or doing his own chair-to-saddle transfer – many therapeutic objectives are being met. Construction of the ramp warrants planning. It should be of a height adequate for all the horses that will be mounted from it. A ramp is generally higher than a block. You will not have the rider use the stirrup to mount from the ramp. If you have a gradual rise to the ramp, it may be possible to mount riders from locations along the ramp – this gives you a variety of heights to work from. Some ramps have a lower platform a short way down from the top platform.

The ramp should be constructed so that the instructor or sidewalker can walk down the ramp as the horse departs. There should be no railing beside the horse and the gradient of the slope should encourage independence from the riders, not too steep that those with crutches or electric wheelchairs can’t maneuver themselves. An off-side barrier is desirable to encourage the horse to enter and remain straight. Ideally, another ramp on the offside can be used by riders who may need to mount from the right. Electric wheelchairs tend to have the driving mechanism on the right, making it desirable to transfer from the left side of the chair onto the horse – an offside mount.

If not a second ramp, a mounting block is helpful, as it places the volunteers at a level that allows better leverage to assist the rider’s mount. A wall or fence should never be used as the offside barrier.

The ramp should be located in a location convenient to, but not within, the working area of the riding arena. Ramps located in the arena can hinder full use of the arena. Portable ramps are alternative.

Two ramping arrangements are possible:

- Place two ramps about 28 inches apart so the horse can be led between them for mounting.
- Place a block about 18 inches high (preferably with steps on both ends) parallel to one ramp. This block serves as a boundary for the horse and allows the side helper to assist in the mounting process.

A mounting block should be part of every center that does not have a ramp. Mounting using a block is better for horses, saddles and your backs. It also encourages a rider to be more independent getting into the saddle, and the walk up a properly constructed block is itself therapeutic.

The ramp should be designed and constructed of materials of a strength and size to accommodate the participants, personnel, equipment and activities for which they are used. Blocks should be of solid construction, stable and finished against your particular weather conditions. Thickness of surfaces should be at least 7/8 inches and 2 x 4’s should be used for supports. The rise of each step should not exceed eight inches, less if indicated by rider needs. Steps should be wide enough for two to walk up and deep enough for the full foot length. A ‘stopper’ that keeps the foot from slipping through under the next step is desirable. The platform needs to be large enough to comfortably accommodate two adults and allow freedom of movement. The height should be suitable to horses and enable riders to leg over with minimum assistance. The rider should never place a foot into a stirrup that is below platform level. Some type of railing away from the horse may be indicated to further rider independence.

As with ramps, the block should be located outside the working area of the arena and allow a few straight strides on the depart. Place the block to enable the instructor or sidewalker to walk down the steps as the horse walks out.

**Does Your Mounting Ramp Meet ADA Standards?**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which became law Jan. 26, 1992, is designed to ensure equal opportunities to individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment, public accommodations,
transportation, state and local government services and telecommunications. In doing so, the act addresses accessibility issues for public facilities, including ramps.

The design, construction or alteration of facilities must conform to the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) or with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (ADAAG).

The ADAAG standards advise that ramp slopes “between 1:16 and 1:20 are preferred. Most ambulatory people and most people who use wheelchairs can manage a slope of 1:16. Many people cannot manage a slope of 1:12 for 30 feet (9 m).”

However, the formal standards read: “The least possible slope shall be used for any ramp. The maximum slope of a ramp in new construction shall be 1:12. The maximum rise for any run shall be 30 inches (760 mm).”

Landings are required at the bottom and top of each ramp and ramp run. “The landing shall be at least as wide as the ramp run leading to it. The landing length shall be a minimum of 60 inches (1525 mm) clear. If ramps change direction at landings, the minimum landing size shall be 60 inches by 60 inches (1525 mm by 1525 mm).”

A handrail on one side is recommended, with a curb on the other side to prevent the rider’s foot from slipping off. The diameter of the handrail must be 1-1/4 inches to 1-1/2 inches. If it is adjacent to a wall, the space between the wall and the bar must be 1-1/2 in. Ramps and landings with drop-offs shall have curbs, walls, railings or projecting surfaces that prevent people from slipping off the ramp. Curbs shall be a minimum of 2 inches (50 mm) high.

If space or other limitations prohibit you from meeting the above specifications, the ADAAG standards have an “Equivalent Facilitation” notation, which states: “Departures from particular technical and scoping requirements of this guideline by the use of other designs and technologies are permitted where the alternative designs and technologies used will provide substantially equivalent or greater access to and usability of the facility.”

PATH Intl. recommends that you obtain a copy of the ADAAG as well as accessibility regulations set by your state before you design, construct or alter your facility. For more information about ADA or a free copy of the ADAAG (Appendix A to 28 CFR part 36) contact: U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Coordination and Review Section, P.O. Box 66118, Washington, DC 20035-6118, (202) 514-0301, (202) 514-0381 (TDD).
Demo Lessons

PATH INTERNATIONAL

Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International
### Registered Instructor Riding Video Evaluation Form

**Please Note:** PATH Intl workshop candidates do not have the correct form in the PATH Intl workshop manual. **Please** feel free to **print this form** and hand it to candidates at the workshop or you may notify them at the workshop that their form is incorrect and give them the corrected numbers and criteria numbers verbally.

Based on the Registered Instructor Horsemanship Criteria, score this rider from 0 to 4 in the following areas:
- **0** - Not demonstrated
- **1** - Insufficient
- **2** - Below standard
- **3** - Meets standard
- **4** - Exceeds standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>@ Walk</th>
<th>@ Trot/ Jog</th>
<th>@ Canter/ Lope</th>
<th>During transitions</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Warm-up RH.8.1</td>
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<td>2) Posture &amp; alignment RH.3.1, RH.3.2</td>
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<td>3) Light contact/control RH.4.2, RH.4.4, RH.3.3, RH.6.3</td>
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<td>4) Straightness of horse RH.4.3</td>
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<td>5) Effective natural aids (i.e.: hand, seat, leg) RH.5.1</td>
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<td>6) Bending through corners and on circles RH.4.3, RH.6.2</td>
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<td>7) Following seat &amp; hand RH.3.1, RH.4.2 RH.5.1, RH.5.4</td>
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<td>8) Smooth transitions RH.4.5</td>
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<td>9) Diagonals/leads RH.4.1</td>
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<td>10) Halt RH.4.5</td>
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<td>11) Backing RH.3.2, RH.4.1, RH.4.3, RH.4.4, RH.5.5</td>
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<td>12) Dismount RH.2.1</td>
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</table>

**TOTAL:**   

13) Did they demonstrate all required components of the pattern? ______ Yes ______ No  
If no, please comment: __________________________

14) Would you be comfortable requesting the sitting trot without stirrups? ______ Yes ______ Nov  

**Riders must accomplish a minimum score of 95 to pass plus a “yes” for completion of all required components. An average rider at this level (all 3’s) would score 108; a below average rider (all 2’s) would score 72.**
**Able-Bodied Riding Lesson**

The purpose of this lesson is to clarify both riding and teaching requirements at Registered and Advanced Certified Level.

The Lead Faculty will teach a riding lesson to 2 participants (preferably one Western and one English rider). Both riders must be capable of riding at canter/lope on an unfamiliar horse and must be within the weight limits of the horses provided. This lesson will be conducted in an open clinic style, allowing for input, questions, and discussion as needed. Workshop participants who are not riding will observe, take notes, and prepare questions and suggestions for the discussion. Riders must be open-minded and willing to take some constructive feedback on their riding skills.
Lesson Role-Playing at PATH Intl. Workshops

When conducting workshops for instructors, several organizations use practice teaching sessions incorporating condensed lessons in which peers are used to role-play various types of students. This is a very efficient and popular method of practicing safety management, teaching techniques, knowledge, and class control without a novice instructor endangering actual students. The mock scenario allows the persons selected to be the instructors to focus on their lesson with the knowledge that if they were to make an error, the role-playing student can leave their “role” and help themselves out of a bad situation.

Prior to the first role-play, the participants will be divided into groups and assigned a teaching topic for a lesson. The Teaching Topics sheet will contain the topic to be taught, the class scenario, and a graph for assigning duties. (Sample on following page.)

The groups will be given time to meet and select their own roles for the lesson. Then each group should collaborate and write a lesson plan for the class and prepare to demonstrate the lesson. This will be a condensed lesson and should be treated as such when preparing the lesson plan. The person selected or volunteering as the instructor will actually teach the lesson. The remainder of the group will assume the role of the parts that they are to act out. At the end of the lesson the faculty will lead a discussion critiquing the lesson.

Developing the lesson to facilitate role-playing

The faculty will be responsible for setting the parameters within which the mock students must stay while playing the role of students. The lesson plan becomes very important in the success of a condensed lessons that will be taught at a workshop, so plan carefully. At this workshop the lesson will be developed by the entire group. Each group team will have thirty (20) minutes to mount all of the students, teach the assigned skill for the lesson, and dismount the riders. The lesson plan for the class which involves role-playing must include:

- **Type of disability for each student**
  The types of disabilities that you will have in your lesson will be assigned to you by your faculty.

- **Riding ability of class**
  The level of riding ability will probably be determined by the teaching objective assigned to your group by the evaluators. For instance, a beginning rider would not be attempting the canter. 
  *Example* for first trot: This is a class of beginning level riders.

- **Skills and knowledge previously mastered by students**
  Simply state the skills that the student needs to have accomplished before teaching the first trot. 
  *Example:* This class has good control at the walk, can ride circles, and can reverse at the walk. Today the class will learn to trot for the first time.

- **Anything that occurred in the lesson prior to the point where you are opening your lesson**
  Since this is a condensed lesson, you will have to organize your time efficiently to teach the skill assigned. The mock instructor would have already performed a safety check of the tack, rider, and environment and mounted the riders. In an hour lesson, the instructor would then normally warms up the horse, rider and volunteer team, review previously learned material (especially the stop) and then start the “meat” of the lesson, the trot. In the condensed lesson the instructor would state these things as “givens”. 
  *Example:* We have warmed up, reviewed the walk and correct riding position, and practiced the stop. We are now ready to experience the trot for the first time.

Role playing is vital for the participants to practice their teaching abilities. Role-playing by mock students will help the mock instructor, not cause problems. If a mock instructor is teaching the correct riding position and all of the students are sitting on their horses in ideal position, the instructor will have nothing to teach and therefore cannot demonstrate teaching skills to the evaluators. This is the same principal as, “For every action there is a reaction.” The instructor candidates must “see” an action by a student before they can correct the situation.

**Helping instructor candidates who are teaching through role-playing**

The way the participants who are mock students role-play will allow the faculty to see the depth of knowledge of disabilities of the persons doing the role-playing as well as the abilities of the mock instructor. The mock students must create teachable moments through role-play.
• **Assume the level of ability and level of riding ability stated in the “givens”**
  *Example:* Role-play, to the best of your knowledge, the physical or emotional characteristics that are part of the disability that you have been assigned.

• **Assume one specific personality and one learning type**
  Students seldom have every bad habit or fault. The mock students should each select one or two problems to act out and one personality to assume. It is not fair for one mock student to keep changing personalities during the same class.
  *Example:* A mock student is very shy and sensitive to correction in front of peers, always holds the reins too high, and reacts emotionally when corrected.

• **“Do’s” for the role-playing student**
  • Assist the mock instructor in demonstrating his/her skills by engaging in realistic situations.
  • Be your assigned level of ability
  • Ride at your assigned level of riding ability, creating bad habits within that level for correction by the mock instructor
  • Respond appropriately to the manner of the instructor. If the instructor corrects your problem or behavior in a way that would correct the actions of a student in your role, respond to the instructor. If not, do not respond
  • Follow the instructor’s directions explicitly when attempting to perform the skill being taught so that the evaluators recognize whether the instruction and methods used are correct

Throughout the role-playing lesson segment the mock students must do their part to make the lesson realistic.

There are a few situations where the faculty would stop the class during a lesson
• When the riders become unsafe in a way that will soon lead to an incident and the mock instructor is not addressing the issue
• If role-playing becomes disruptive, excessive and unrealistic
• If a real emergency takes place and the mock instructor does not see and/or address the issue
Appendix
Lesson Plan

Instructor/Therapist: ____________________________________________________________________________________

Objective of Lesson: (What are you going to teach in this lesson? Objectives must be written in terms that
describe observable behavior that can be measured)

Teacher Preparation/Equipment Needed:

Lesson Content/Procedure: (Include sequence of lesson. How will you conduct the lesson? What will be
included?)

Summary and Evaluation: (How do you feel the lesson went? Strong points? Weak points? Did you meet the
objectives? Suggestions for future.)
# Lesson Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class: ____________________________</th>
<th>Date: ____________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor: _______________________</td>
<td>Time: _____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapist: ________________________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Horse</th>
<th>Tack</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Sidewalk(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Task Analysis Data Sheet

Student Name: _________________________________________________________________________________________

Task: __________________________________________________________________________________________________

Key:
P - Physical Assistance    H - Hand Over Hand Guidance    T - Tactile Prompt
G - Gesture               V - Verbal Prompt            I - Independent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Analysis</th>
<th>Cue or Comment</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# HORSE EVALUATION FORM

## Name of horse

### Description of horse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of horse</th>
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</table>

## Conformation analysis

### Good conformation features

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<th>Good conformation features</th>
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</table>

### Poor conformation features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor conformation features</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Shape and size of the horse

### Describe shape

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Describe shape</th>
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</table>

### Describe size

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<th>Describe size</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Horse suitability

### Suitable for riders with disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suitable for riders with disabilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Unsuitable for riders with disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unsuitable for riders with disabilities</th>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Movement analysis

### Description of horse’s movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of horse’s movement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Behaviors observed

### Good behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good behaviors</th>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</table>

### Poor behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor behaviors</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Key:

Shape – wide, narrow, average, well sprung

Size – under 14 h.h., 14.2 – 15 h.h., 15.1 – 15.3 h.h., over 15.3 h.h.

Movement – lateral, anterior/posterior, rotational, minimal movement, average movement, greater than average movement
### Skill Progression Exercise

Number each set of skills in the order that you would teach them. Then support your “system” by explaining why.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXERCISE A</th>
<th>EXERCISE B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>____ walk</td>
<td>____ pivot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ turn on the forehand</td>
<td>____ diagonals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ canter from the walk</td>
<td>____ simple lead changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ two-point trot</td>
<td>____ serpentines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ circle</td>
<td>____ lope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ posting trot</td>
<td>____ figure-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ canter from the trot</td>
<td>____ leads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ sitting trot</td>
<td>____ flying lead changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ riding on contact</td>
<td>____ posting trot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ halt</td>
<td>____ rein-back</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consult a lawyer to ensure this form meets your state’s regulations. Take this form to your local Emergency Room to ensure that all pertinent information is present.

**Participant’s Profile**

Name: _________________________________________________________________________________________

Disability: ______________________________________________________________________________________

Ambulatory Status: ______________________________________________________________________________

Adapted Equipment Required: ______________________________________________________________________

Mounting/Dismounting (method, number of volunteers): ______________________________________________

Helpers required (indicate gait assistance needed: update as needed):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Assistance</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Gaits</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Gaits</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Gaits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leader and 2 sidewalkers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader and 1 sidewalker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Riding Position (describe): __________________________________________________________________________

Riding Skills (indicate gait task is completed: update as needed):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Gaits</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Gaits</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Gaits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holds reins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holds handhold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to control horse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to halt from the...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to circle at the...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rides without stirrups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Able to maintain half seat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Able to post at the...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Knows diagonal or lead</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to steer over cavalletti</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to jump a crossbar</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Rider can walk ___________________ sitting trot ______________ posting trot ___________________ canter __________

Horse recommendations __________________________________________________________________________

(Write any additional comments on reverse side)

*Gaits Key: W - walk; ST - sitting trot; PT - posting trot; C - canter
Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment Form

☐ Participant ☐ Staff ☐ Volunteer

Name: ___________________________________ DOB: _____________ Phone: ______________

Address: ________________________________________________________________________________

Physician’s Name: _________________________ Preferred Medical Facility: _________________________

Health Insurance Company: ________________________________ Policy #: _______________________

Allergies to Medications: __________________________________________________________________

Current Medications: _______________________________________________________________________

In the event of an emergency, contact:

Name: ___________________________ Relation: ________________________ Phone: ________________________

Name: ___________________________ Relation: ________________________ Phone: ________________________

Name: ___________________________ Relation: ________________________ Phone: ________________________

In the event emergency medical aid/treatment is required due to illness or injury during the process of receiving services, or while being on the property of the agency, I authorize ___________________________ to:

(Center’s Name)

1. Secure and retain medical treatment and transportation if needed.
2. Release client records upon request to the authorized individual or agency involved in the medical emergency treatment.

Consent Plan

This authorization includes x-ray, surgery, hospitalization, medication and any treatment procedure deemed “life saving” by the physician. This provision will only be invoked if the person(s) above is unable to be reached.

Date: ___________________________ Consent Signature: ____________________________________________

(Client, Parent or Legal Guardian) 
Signed in presence of center staff

Non-Consent Plan

I do not give my consent for emergency medical treatment/aid in the case of illness or injury during the process of receiving services or while being on the property of the agency. In the event emergency treatment/aid is required, I wish the following procedures to take place:

________________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________ Consent Signature: __________________________________________

(Client, Parent or Legal Guardian) 
Signed in presence of center staff

A COPY OF THE COMPLETED MEDICAL/HEALTH HISTORY SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO THIS FORM.
Emergency Information

Hang this card near the telephone

This Phone Number is ______________________________________

This Address is ___________________________________________

Directions are ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Police ________________________________________________

Fire ____________________________________________________

Doctor _________________________________________________

Ambulance _____________________________________________

Veterinary _____________________________________________

Other _________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Prepared by:

For: PATH INTERNATIONAL

Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsework International
An occurrence is any unusual event. It may, or may not result in an injury to a participant, staff member or horse. Any occurrence that results in medical treatment should be phoned into the center’s insurance company within 24 hours, whether or not a claim is made. Forms should be filled out the same day, including a narrative of what happened, with signed statements/reports from any witnesses or participants in the occurrence. Written forms should be sent to the insurance company, with a copy saved in the center’s files.

**Center Occurrence Report**

Name of Involved: ________________________ Date: _______________ Time: ____________

Address: __________________________________________________________________________

Phone (H): ___________________________ (W): ________________________________

Information about the occurrence:

Location: __________________________________________________________________________

Situation: __________________________________________________________________________

Witness: __________________________________________________________________________

Address: ___________________________ Phone: ________________

Witness: __________________________________________________________________________

Address: ___________________________ Phone: ________________

Witness: __________________________________________________________________________

Address: ___________________________ Phone: ________________

(Please use additional forms for signed statements from witnesses/additional parties involved)

Description of Occurrence: __________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

Environmental Factors: ______________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

What Injuries Were Incurred?

___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________
What treatment was administered for injuries: __________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
Who was contacted? (indicate time/date, i.e. family, doctors, vets): _________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
Follow-up calls/contacts: _______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
What will be done to prevent this type of occurrence in the future? (this section does not need to be completed prior to sending to the insurance company): ___________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
In your opinion, will a claim be filed?            Y                   N
Signature of person filling our form: _______________________________ Date: __________________
Title: _______________________________ Center: _______________________________
Signature of Center Director: _______________________________ Date: __________________
Participant’s Consent for Release of Information

I hereby authorize: ___________________________________________________________

(person or facility)

to release information from the records of: ________________________________DOB: __________________

(participant’s name)

The information is to be released to: ____________________________________________

(center or therapist’s name)

for the purpose of developing an equine activity program for the above named participant. The information to
be released is indicated below:

☐ Medical History

☐ Physical Therapy evaluation, assessment and program plan

☐ Occupational Therapy evaluation, assessment and program plan

☐ Mental Health diagnosis and treatment plan

☐ Individual Habilitation Plan (I.H.P.)

☐ Classroom Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.)

☐ Psychosocial evaluation, assessment and program plan

☐ Cognitive-Behavioral Management Plan

☐ Other: ______________________________________________________________________

Signature: _____________________________________________________________________ Date: __________________

Print Name: __________________________________________________________________

Relation to Participant: __________________________________________________________

Please send materials to: ________________________________________________________
Suggested Reference Manuals

EQUESTRIAN / HORSE

Lameness in Horses, Adams, O.R.


The Instructor’s Manual, British Horse Society (1977)

Mounted Games and Gymkhanas, British Horse Society (1977)

CHA Manual


Horses and Horsemanship, Ensminger, M.E. (1969)

Horses, Evans, Warren (1989)

Horse Conformation, Green, Ben K. D.V.M.

Grooming to Win, Harris, S. (1991)

Horse Gaits, Balance, and Movement, Harris, S.E. (1993)

The Complete Book of Horse Care, Hawcroft, T. (1983)

Lungeing the Horse and Rider, Inderwickj, S. (1977)

First Aid for Horses, Kellon, E. (1990)

The Older Horse, Kellon, E. (1986)

Cavaletti, Klimke, R. (1969)


Merck Veterinary Manual, Merck and Co.


How to be your own Veterinarian, James, R. D.V.M. (1985)

Horses in Health and Disease, Naviaux, J. (1978)

The Complete Training Horse and Rider, Podhajsky, A. (1967)
The Riding Teacher, Podhajsky, A. (1973)
Western Horse Behavior and Training, Miller, R. (1975)
Thinking Harmony with Horses, Hunt, R. (1978)
Centered Riding, Swift, S. (1985)
The Tellington-Jones Equine Awareness Method, Tellington-Jones, L.
The Manual of Horsemanship, British Horse Society
Horse Control and the Bit, Roberts, T.
Running a Stable as a Business, MacDonald, J.
The Natural Rider, Wanless, M.
Riding with Your Mind, Wanless, M.
The Riding Instructor's Manual, Wright, Gordon

THERAPEUTIC RIDING

Riding for the Disabled, Britton, V.
The Reins of Life, Davies, J.
Riding for Rehabilitation, Bauer, J.
Therapeutic Riding, Medicine, Education and Sports, Heipertz, W.
The Horse, the Handicapped, and the Riding Team, Engle, B.
Horseback Riding for the Hearing Impaired, Hulsey-Chickering, R.
Aspects and Answers, Joswick, Kittredge, McCowan, McParland, Woods
Guide to Therapeutic Groundwork, Leff, M.
It's Ability That Counts, McCowan, I.
The Therapy Horse, Spink, J.
Developmental Riding Therapy, Spink, J.
MEDICAL

Handling the Young Cerebral Palsied Child at Home, Finnie, N.R.

The Components of Normal Movements During the First Year of Life and Abnormal Motor Development, Bly, L.

Grays Anatomy

The Anatomy Coloring Book

Physicians Desk Reference

The Origin of Intelligence in Children, Piaget, J.

Sensory Integration and the Child, Ayres, J.

DSML m- 4th Edition

Frames of References, Mosley

INTERNET RESOURCE

National Organization for Rare Disorders, www.rarediseases.org

EDUCATION

The New Adapted Physical Education, Seaman, J.

The Attention Deficit Disorder Intervention Manual, McCarney, S.

The Learning Disability Intervention Manual, McCarney, S.

The Teachers Guide to Behavioral Interventions, Cummins Wunderlich, K.

Succeeding Against the Odds, Smith, S.

“How Difficult Can This Be”, Videotape, Lavore, R.