2023 Instructor's Bag of Tricks
Unmounted Games and Activities

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Why Unmounted Lessons?
- 1) Perfect for poor weather conditions for riding
- 2) Teaches the importance of communication with the horse on the ground
- 3) Creates an option for larger groups
- 4) Great way to teach invaluable lessons such as what and what not to feed a horse!

Why Unmounted lessons continued
- 5) Allows you to stay organized with less rescheduling of lessons
- 6) Keeps you prepared for impromptu lessons in the event of lameness or injury of the horse.
Can you achieve these goals?

- 1) Make unmounted lessons fun and allow hands on experience
- 2) Help parents and students see the value of unmounted lessons
- 3) Relate to horsemanship skills
- 4) Communicate as clearly and simply as possible
- 5) Encourage flexibility and perseverance

Goals continued –

- 6) Have the game or activity be part of the lesson plans goals and objectives.
- Ex: working on reading, math, following instructions, getting creative, building confidence, social interaction

Example of Lesson Plan template

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Lesson plan:
Student: _____________________ Horse: __________
Date: ________________

Objectives:

1. __________________________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________________________

Short term goals (to achieve in 2-4 weeks):

1. __________________________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________________________

Long term goals (to achieve in 1-2 years from now):

1. __________________________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________________________

Objective: What is the focus on teaching to meet the student’s goals?

_____________________________________________________________________________________

Warm-up Exercises to use:

1) ___________________
2) ___________________
3) ___________________
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(include riding skill, vehicle, tools such as poles, cones, obstacles, etc.)

(include measurement - example: 5 repetitions, 45 attempts, 5 each direction, etc.)

Ring setup (if applicable or ride in arena):

Example References:

1. ___________________
2. ___________________
Lesson Plan template continued

- Parts of the horse learned

1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________
4. ______________________________
5. ______________________________

- Grooming tools (name & description & purpose)

- Parts of equipment learned

1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________
4. __________________________
5. __________________________

- Other topic:

1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________
4. __________________________
5. __________________________

Game: ______________________________________________________

Objectives: __________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

Observations (what to work on, what was done well, what needs improvement)

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

Let the Activities Begin!
Painted Pot Party

- Use clay pots of different sizes, craft sticks, feathers or boa, google eyes, paint and glue
- Have the students paint their horse or pony

Scavenger Hunts

- Examples of items:
  - Horse that has a star on its forehead
  - A purple bucket
  - Stall nameplate that says “Oscar”
  - A blue saddle pad
  - A pink ground pole
  - Henry’s English bridle
  - Find the oats, alfalfa or grass hay

Scavenger Hunts

- Make these learning experiences
  - 1) Talk about the item first and what it is
  - 2) Ask questions, like “where do you think we could find this?” Depending upon student’s ability, try to stay away from questions that only require a “yes” or “no” answer.
Making Horse Treats
- Baking or non-baking items
- The learning experience:
  - Measurements
  - Patience
  - Working together
  - Following instructions
  - How to properly give a horse a treat!

Paint the Pony or Horse
- Learning Experience:
  - Painting with colors – Learning colors
  - Following instructions – Cleaning up
  - Social interaction

Dress Up Day
- Elves for Christmas
- Halloween costumes
- Easter bonnets or bunnies
- St. Patrick’s Day
- Learning experience:
  - Working quietly and safely around animal
  - Follow instructions
  - Socialization
  - Having fun!
Holiday parties

Labeling the horse
- Use pony or use a student (with a horse mask)
- Have labels made with names of horse parts
- Students puts labels on the matching part

Bean bag balance
- Put a bean bag on top of the student's helmet and walk and trot around
- Goal is to keep the bean bag in place
- Learning experience:
  - Riding smooth and balanced
  - Holding head in proper position
Lead horse, pony or mini through obstacle course

- Learning experience:
  - Leading
  - Communication with the horse or pony
  - Following instructions
  - Physical agility

Design an obstacle course

- Use toy horses or models with the accessories such as jumps, poles, etc.
- Learning experience:
  - Teaches creativity
  - Can discuss length of strides at different gaits
  - Ask questions, will the horse be walking or trotting
  - Get your students to think “purpose”

Red light, green light

- Learning experience:
  - Leading the horse or pony
  - Safety with others in the arena
  - Watching your surroundings
  - Following instructions
Chuckle time – you know when the horse poops or farts and all the kids giggle?

Follow the Leader

- Use real horse, stick horse or have a student be the horse, and one be the leader
- Learning experience:
  - Safe distance between horses
  - Following instructions
  - Staying focused and aware
  - Life skills – both leaders and followers are needed in life
- Make sure they are both leader & follower

Magazine Scavenger Hunt

- Find a chestnut horse
- Find a horse going through water
- Find a horse with a blaze
- Learning experience:
  - Horse colors and markings
  - Horse trail obstacles
- Simply go over the items before the “hunt” and incorporate those in your instructions to “search for ……”
Pin the tail on the Donkey

- Self explanatory
- Learning experience:
  - Social interaction
  - Coordination
  - Balance
  - Fun

Stick pony lessons

- Learning experience:
  - Introduction to various horse sports
  - Pattern practice
  - Learning gaits and movements
  - Following instructions
  - Patience with practice

Pony Pictionary

- Needs: pictionary cards, dry erase board, markers, eraser, time keeping device, scorekeeping supplies
- Learning experience:
  - Parts of the horse
  - Parts of tack
  - Grooming tools
  - Parts of hoof
  - Horse sports
Read a Book

- Read a book next to horses or the horses.
- Learning experience:
  - Comprehension & understanding
  - Listening skills
  - Relaxation

[Image of books]

Make a homemade hand scrub

- Learning experience:
  - Teaches cleanliness
  - Teaches that horses get dirty and we get dirty

After making the hand scrub, keep it in the barn for use when they are done with lessons.

[Image of hand scrub]

Teaching Cues & Soft Hands

- Team of two – one person is the horse and one is the “rider”
- The “horse” is wearing a blindfold or special “sunglasses” (how a horse sees things) and a halter or bridle with reins
- The rider uses the reins to tell the horse to stop and go and turn (no human words) The rider can “cluck” or “kiss” to the “horse”.

[Image of teaching cues]
Teaching Cues & Soft Hands con't

- Learning experience:
  - How to use cues softly
  - Use of proper pressure
  - Communicate with another
  Practice turning by setting up cones to weave around them

Blindfold Game

- Use a blind fold and have students identify various tools or items used with horses.
- Learning experience:
  - Talk about each item and what is its purpose
  - Sensory – takes one sense away to concentrate on another
  - Trust

BraidFest

- Teach how to braid a mane or tail.
- Use twine string for practice
- Learning experience:
  - Following instructions
  - Coordination
  - Sensory tool
  Can also use rope and Make their own belts!
Carrot Toss Quiz

- Flash cards with horse related questions. If answered correctly, place a carrot in a bucket.
- Learning experience:
  - Have fun taking quizzes
  - Practice what we have learned
  - Gain a measureable idea of what our students have learned
- The horses get to eat the carrots!

Bucking Bingo

- Make up Bingo cards with horse picture or horse related words. Either call out the item or show a corresponding picture of the item. Cut out horse shoes or use buttons to cover their squares.
- Give them a horse treat or carrot or apple to give to their favorite horse.

At the end of a lesson

- Always ask the students:
  - What did you learn about today?
  - What did you do well?
  - What would you like to improve?
Where to find ideas and resources used for this presentation

- Path Instructor Education Guide 2019
- Activities for Therapeutic Horseback Riding Lessons, A LessoninTR.com Collection 2017 by Cynthia Linsenbardt and contributors
- Certified Horsemanship Association Riding Instructor and Trail Guide Manual
- http://www.lessonsintr.com/
- https://theequineimpact.com/tag/lesson-ideas/

Additional resources

https://horsesenselearninglevels.com

https://horsesoftheozarkhills.com/15-mounted-unmounted-activities-for-kids/

https://horseridinglessonplans.com/subscripttion/

Additional resources

How to Give Unmounted Horsemanship Lessons on Rainy Days
- https://pethelpful.com › horses › Unmounted-Horsemanship...

A Great Idea: Unmounted Activities For Rainy Days Strides
- https://www.unpadjital.com › publication

unmounted lesson plans - equestrian - LiveJournal
- https://equestrian.ljub.org.com › ...

29 Horse Camp Activities That Are Fun For Kids and Adults
- https://www.helpfulhorsehints.com › horse-camp-activit...
Thank you for attending!

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