

# Breeds of the World



Horse and rider going over jump  
ID# 992.07.1236

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



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Two Percheron horses  
ID# 991.26.0921



Tennessee Walking Horse  
ID# 992.07.1233



# European Breeds

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

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

**Draft horses** are used on farms or for pulling carts, wagons, and coaches. These farm and transportation horses are very tall and bulky (some even reaching higher than 19 **hands!**). The horses' massive size is essential to lugging heavy loads on difficult land. Draft horses are typically used by farmers, carriage companies, and merchants.

On the other hand, smaller, more compact horses are used in equine sports and for racing. These horses were bred by wealthy men in order to provide them with different hobbies and sports. Sport horses tend to be mid-sized (around 16 hands). Racing, dressage, and show jumping are just some of the equine disciplines and sports developed by wealthy Europeans.



Clydesdale horses pulling a wagon. ID# 991.26.0141





# Key Breeds of Europe

Collin, the  
Clydesdale\*

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



Beamer, the  
Lipizzaner\*



An Austrian breed, the **Lipizzaner** is used for equine riding and driving disciplines. The Lipizzaner was bred for sport and show. The horse is used by the famous Spanish Riding School in Vienna, and it takes part in riding school performances like dressage. The Lipizzaner is an average of 15 to 16 hands high.

Funny Cide, the  
Thoroughbred\*

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



# North American Breeds

While European breeds tend to have one dominant purpose, North American breeds were bred to fulfill a variety of tasks. The Spanish reintroduced the horse to North America only in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century after the animal became extinct centuries before. In order to fulfill the transportation and farming tasks of the new European settlers, horses were bred to be not only strong but also fast.

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



Morgan horse ID# 992.07.270

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



# Key North American Breeds

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



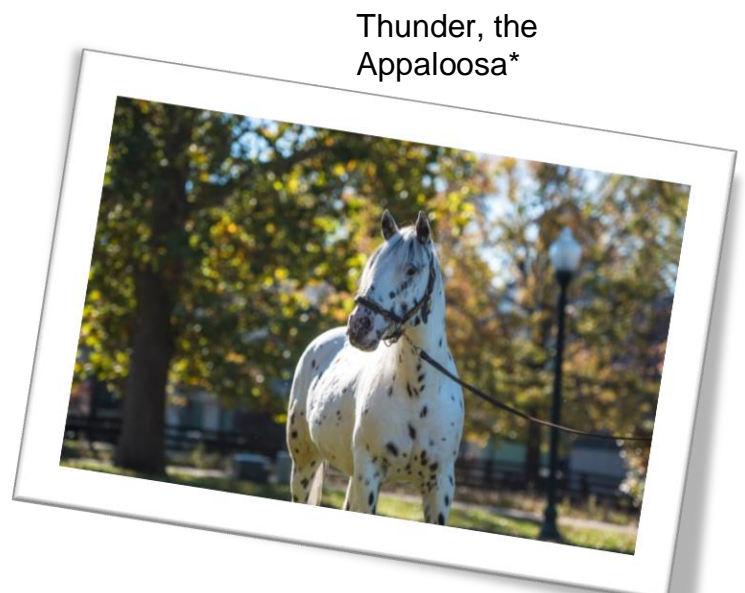
Spinner, the American Quarter Horse\*



Sneaky, the Morgan\*

An American breed, the **Morgan** is a sturdy horse that is known for its ability to perform many tasks. Developed in the eighteenth century from one sire, Figure, and named for breeder Justin Morgan, the Morgan horse can haul heavy items, do farm work, race, and perform in a show ring. Morgans average between 14.1 to 15.3 hands high.

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



Thunder, the Appaloosa\*





# Asian Breeds

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

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



Arabian horse ID# 992.07.271

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

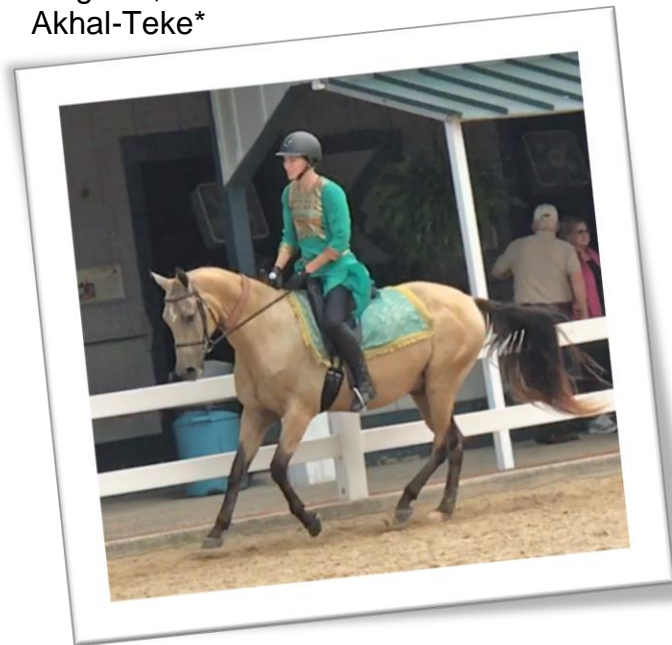
# Key Asian Breeds

Rafiq, the Arabian\*

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



Magnatli, the Akhal-Teke\*



A breed from Turkmenistan, the **Akhal-Teke** is a great horse for long distances and desert conditions. The horse needs little water while traveling over an extended period of time. It is also a very elegant horse and is used in different equine disciplines. It is an average of 15 to 15.3 hands high.

Toufan, the Marwari\*



The **Marwari** is an Indian breed known for being very tough with a great amount of endurance. The Marwari needs little food and is capable of traveling long distances. Once a warhorse that helped fight enemies on elephants, the breed is now used as a riding or farm horse. It is known for its unique ears that curve inwards, the tips of the ears sometimes even touching. The Marwari has an average height of 14 to 15.2 hands.





# Cross Breeding

Cross breeding is a method in which different types of horse breeds are bred together to create very unique and special horses. Some will become recognized breeds, such as the Appendix (Thoroughbred X Quarter Horse) and the Shire Sport Horse (Shire X Thoroughbred). And while some are still really good combinations, a recognized breed will not always be the result.

The Kentucky Horse Park has quite a few cross bred horses. Most of them are located in our Mounted Police Barn, where the crosses are actually sought after and play an important role. These mounted police horses are typically a crossing between two opposite types of horse breeds. One of them is usually a lighter breed, such as the Thoroughbred, for their agility and lightness. The other is usually a heavier draft horse breed, such as the Shire, Percheron, or Clydesdale, which provide their size and stature along with their more laid back and calm attitude. A prime example of a police horse cross breeding is our Mounted Police captain's mount Oliver. Oliver is a cross between the American Paint Horse, the Thoroughbred, and the Shire. Here Oliver receives the agility and lightness of the Paint and the Thoroughbred. These attributes help him to maneuver through crowds a little easier, be quick, and jump when necessary. The Shire in him provides size for crowd control, and a calm and brave attitude. The Paint also adds a little flashiness to his coat; make sure to note the black and white painted pattern. Horses similar to Oliver can also excel in other jobs, such as dressage, jumping, eventing, and are typically great with children.



Oliver: Paint X Thoroughbred X Shire Cross, Mounted Police Horse\*

## Vocabulary

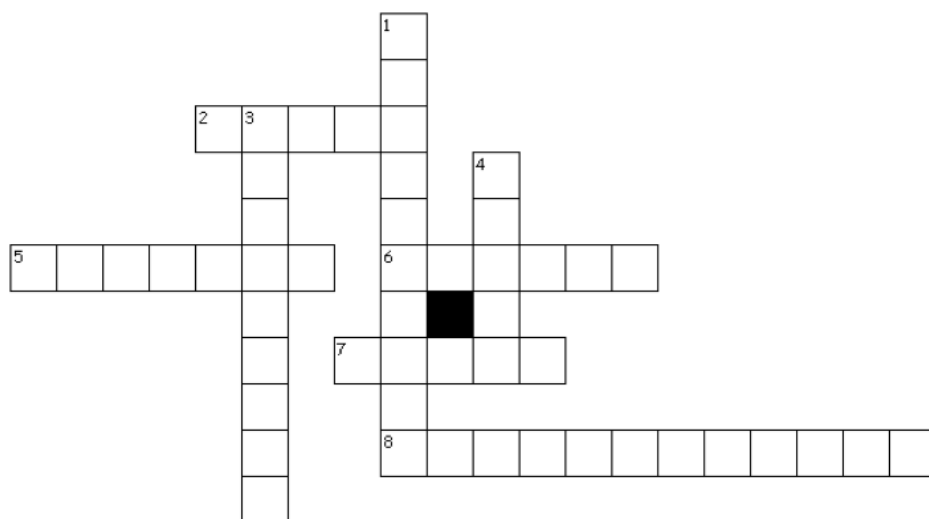
1. **Breed:** a group of animals that has traits that distinguish it from other groups of animals in the same species.
2. **Draft Horse:** a heavy horse used in heavy tasks like farm work and transportation.
3. **Equine Sports:** various activities involving horse and human teams; this includes activities like racing, show jumping, and polo.
4. **Hands:** the unit of measurement for horses in which 1 hand is equal to 4 inches; the horse is measured from the ground to the withers (the base of neck). This is used for all horse breeds except for miniature horses, which are measured by inches. Miniature horses typically average 34-38 inches.

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



# Crossword Puzzle!

Complete the crossword puzzle below using the vocabulary words and the names of horse breeds in this packet.



## Across

2. A horse capable of living in difficult environments
5. Often used as a warhorse, this is the oldest pure breed in the world
6. The environment of many Asian horses with limited resources
7. A type of measurement for horses
8. Activities like racing and polo

## Down

1. This Scottish breed is used on farms
3. The horse was bred by the Nez Perce Indians
4. Horses that are different from each other because of their traits

Crossword courtesy of [discoveryeducation.com](http://discoveryeducation.com).

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## Writing Prompt: Reflection

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

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

