

# Mrs. Mack Unit Study



# Mrs. Mack

Book by Patricia Polacco

Literature based unit study prepared by Cindy in BC

Lapbook printables by Ami Brainerd

---

## **Social Studies: Geography-Michigan and California**

On the first page of this story Patricia tells us that she spends her summers with her dad in Michigan. Ask your child if he/she knows where Michigan is? Look at a map of Michigan in an atlas and discuss it.

Michigan is in the Central United States. Its shape looks like a mitten. It is surrounded by four of the Great Lakes: Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Superior, and Lake Erie. You may wish to point out the other two Great Lakes: Lake Ontario.

On page 11, Patricia tells us that soon she will be going back to her mom in California for the school year. Ask your child if he/she knows where California is. Look at a map of California in an atlas and discuss it. It is in the lower west coast section of the United States. It borders the Pacific Ocean on one side with a long coastline that stretches the whole length of the state.

→ Complete From California to Michigan Map Book

→ Complete Great Lakes Map Book

## **Social Studies: History-- Appaloosa**

In the second paragraph on page 11, Patricia tell us that Apache is Mrs. Mack's horse and she is a strawberry Appaloosa. Ask your child if he/she knows how the Appaloosa got its name. *Early settlers referred to this spotted horse as "a Palouse horse" as a reference to the Palouse River which runs through Northern Idaho. Over time the name became "Appaloosa."*

Find the Palouse River on a map of Idaho and show it to your child.

The Appaloosa was introduced to North America in the early 1700's by Spanish explorers and quickly spread across North America. The Nez Perce Indians bred them in large numbers and to be fast, sturdy and sure-footed. This careful breeding aided the Indians in buffalo hunting and in war. The three-color spotting

pattern helped to camouflage the horse and to break up the horse's outline among the trees, making it difficult to see from a distance.

When settlers began flooding into the Nez Perce reservation, conflicts soon arose and the Nez Perce war of 1877 broke out. The Appaloosa helped the Nez Perce Indians elude the US Cavalry for many months before being captured. Many of the Appaloosa were killed in this battle and the breed was nearly forgotten about until recently. The Appaloosa is now one America's most prized breeds and was adopted as Idaho's official state horse in 1975.

The Appaloosa is the fifth most popular breed. An older child may wish to explore the other four popular breeds by researching and writing a paragraph on each: Quarter Horse, Paint, Thoroughbred, and Arabian.

→ Complete Horse Breeds Tab Book

---

### Language Arts: Literary Device-- Similes

Note: Begin this lesson on Monday

Have your child copy the following passage from the story. Younger children can take the whole week to copy it - one line each day. Older children should copy the entire passage each day. For the younger child just mention how the sentences start with a capital letter and end with a punctuation mark [period]. With older children, discuss the use of similes in this example. Similes are used to compare two unlike things. *The word danced is compared to the sun's movement and a bright copper penny is compared to Penny's coat color.* Ask your child if he/she can tell you a sentence of his own that uses a simile.

"Her tail was short, but she held it as if it had been "set" up for a fancy horse show. She stood there almost motionless, As the sun danced through the leaves of the overhanging tree, her coat shone like a bright copper penny."

→ Complete the Simile Three Circle Book

### Language Arts: Italics

Sometimes *italics* are used in a sentence to emphasize a word. That means the italic word tells the reader this word is important and to say it a little stronger. That is how Patricia chose to use italics in this sentence of her story. Ask your child if he/she can find the italic word in the sentence at the bottom of page 32. Have him/her practice reading the sentence aloud a couple of times. Be sure he/she emphasizes the italic word in it.

"It was at that moment that I realized that Mrs. Mack *chose* to be in Dogpatch with her horses and these kids."

### **Language Arts: Autobiography**

In this story, Patricia is telling us a true story from her childhood. When you write a true story that is about yourself it is called an autobiography. Ask your child if he/she would like to write a brief autobiography of a favorite memory.

→ After your student writes an autobiography, store it in the pocket provided.

### **Language Arts: Horse Vocabulary**

Choose some of the following vocabulary words to study.

Each day review the words briefly before reading the story. Print the words on small index cards - word on one side and definition on the other. Use them like flashcards.

filly ----- a young female horse under four years old

saddle horn ---- the big hard bump at the front of the saddle

bridle ----- usually made of leather and fits over a horse's head and ears; when the reins are attached to it, a person can control the direction of the horse

corral ---- a fenced in riding area for a horse

withers ----- the horse's shoulders

stable ---- a barn

curry comb ---- a plastic or rubber brush used to bring the dirt on a horse to the surface

reins ----- the leather straps attached to the bit

colt ----- a young male horse

hitching post (or rail) ----- what you tie the horse to while putting the saddle on

stall ----- an enclosure within the barn or stable where the horse eats and sleeps

→ Complete the New Words Mini-book

---

### **Art Appreciation: Medium**

By varying her use of sketchy pencil outlines and water colors, Patricia has created different depths of memories from her past. Look carefully at the pictures and you will notice she does not color everything in, but selectively decides what to color. Ask your child if he/she would like to draw a favorite memory and paint it in selectively like Patricia did.

### **Art Appreciation: Viewpoint**

Look at page 17 together and notice how you are looking up at Pat on the horse. Patricia chose to draw the picture as if you are standing on the ground looking up at Pat so you can feel just how big an animal Penny is.

### **Art Appreciation: Painting Horses**

Mrs. Polacco mentions two horse colors in this story - bay and buckskin. There are others too, like dun, pinto, palomino, and flea bitten grey [page 7]. Aren't these neat names to describe the colors of a horse's coat? Penny is featured on many pages in this story; she is a buckskin. Ask your child if he/she would like to try and paint a picture of Penny using just pencil outlines and water colors like Patricia did in this story. Notice how Patricia used dark rich browns to paint Penny.

---

### **Applied Math: Counting**

There are many things in this story for you and your child to count together; horses, shoes, fence rails, people, corn, patterns, etc.

### **Applied Math: Measurement Unit -- Hands**

Ask your child how he/she usually measures something. [*ruler, tape measure, yard stick*] Horses are measured in a unit called hands. They have been since Bible times. The average adult male hand was approximately 4 inches wide (not including the thumb) and so the hand became a unit of measure equal to 4 inches. The average horse is about 15 hands high. Ask your child where he/she thinks you measure a horse from. [*You measure from the withers to the ground*] Have your child practice measure various things around the house in hands. Make a chart of

his findings. And older student doing multiplication could convert various hands to inches.

### **Applied Math/Science: Speed-Gait**

Pat rode several horses. Some walked, some cantered, some trotted, and some galloped. Ask your child if he/she knows the word used to describe all these words. [*Gait. A gait is the pace that a horse moves at. A horse has four natural gaits, though some horses can do more.*] The four natural gaits of a horse are:

Walk --- the slowest pace, each foot steps individually

Trot --- a faster walk that is the horses natural pace

Canter -- a fast three-beat run

Gallop -- a full speed run [*A horse can gallop up to 42 mph in short bursts in order to escape predators*]

Read the last two paragraphs of page 29 aloud and look at the double page picture on the next pages. Have your child try a gait while you guess which one it is.

→ Complete the Horse Gaits Mini-book

Speed is the rate of motion. We can use math to help us determine how far a horse can move in a certain amount of time. For example, if a horse cantered at 30 miles per hour, how far could he travel in a half hour? A half hour is half of an hour. So if we divide the speed at which the horse is traveling (30 mph) by 2, we get that he traveled 15 miles in that half hour. Create other story problems for your student to calculate distance. You could also turn the problems around and have your student calculate the speed. For example, if the horse traveled 15 miles in one-half of an hour, how fast was the horse traveling?

### **Applied Math: Copyright**

Have your child find the copyright and determine how long ago this book was written.

---

### **Science: Horse Care**

Horses need a lot of care. Look at Patricia cleaning out a stall on page 15. She looks tired. Ask your child if he/she thinks she has cleaned the other two stall yet. And

has she curried the two horses. It is important to keep the horses stalls and the horses themselves clean as they will easily get sick if you don't.

The horses at Mrs. Mack's stable also need to be fed correctly. They need a varied diet of water, grass, apples, hay, grains, nuts and root vegetables every day. They need 8-12 gallons of water each day and three meals a day with lots of fiber [hay]. But not too much grain or the horse will get gas or colic. Mrs. Mack cared about her horses and surely made sure that the hay was of good quality - plenty of nutrients and cut and dried properly. Ask your child to list what she thinks Mrs. Mack's horse were fed each day. Did Pat, Nancy and Donnie feed them?

Mrs, Mack knew that horses liked to live in family groups in large grassy pastures. That is why had a bigger farm she took the horses to after the summer was over. There they could graze and run and just be horses.

→ Complete Horse Care Layer Book

### **Science: A Horse's Senses**

A horse relies on its five senses. Four of these senses - hearing, sight, touch and smell are very sensitive. Much more than people's. *[Taste is the fifth, less sensitive, sense]* A horse can even see in two different directions at the same time. Ask your child if he/she can do that.

Because Penny can hear and feel things that we cannot, she was startled and leaped to the left when a leaf blew in front of her. *[Penny probably heard the leaf blow across the ground in front of her. She might have even smelled the leaf with her sensitive membranes in her nose and lips].*

### **Science: Body Language**

Look together at the pictures of the different horses in this story. Ask your student how we can tell how the horse is feeling? *By paying close attention to their ears, tails and body positions. . . their body language. Our body language also tells other people how we feel.* Act out several emotions (sad, angry, tired, bored, etc.) using body language and see if your student can guess what you are feeling. Now go back through the pictures and mention the following casually as you look at the horses:

Ears pricked forward - listening, content [*cover, pages 3, 13, 17, 27, 39, 40, back cover and inside back jacket*]

Ears pricked forward and huddled together - listening, cautious - [*pages 1 and 7*]

Ears pinned back and pointing in two different directions - scared and attention divided [*page 18*]

Ears pinned back, front feet raised, nostrils flared and tail swishing-frightened [*page 28*]

Horse lying down and body limp - ill [*pages 33, 35 and 37*]

High neck and high tail - excited, eager [*pages 30 and 31*]

Nuzzles or rests head on you - friendly gesture, trusts you [*page 21*]

Nicker - friendly greeting [*pages 13, 17 and 20*]

Nay or whinny - I am hear-where are you [*page 38*]

→ Complete Body Language Flapbook

### **Science: Facial Markings**

Look at the picture of Pal on page 18. Point out the wide white stripe down the center of his face. Ask your child if he/she noticed if any of the other horses at Mrs. Mack's stable has white on their face. [*None!*] These markings have names.

Blaze - a wide white stripe down the center of the face

Star - a white patch between the eyes

Snip - a white patch between the nostrils

Stripe - a long narrow white strip down the center of the face

These markings are used to help tell horses apart. Ask your child what marking he/she thinks Pal has. [*Blaze*]

### **Science: More About Horses**

Some additional mini-books have been included for your student in the lapbook printables. Complete them, if desired. They include:

- Shoeing a Horse
- Label a Saddle
- Label a Hoof

### **Science: Simple Machines-Pulleys**



Read pages 36 and 38 aloud. Be sure to show your child the pictures after you read each page. Ask your child to narrate to you how Pat, Mrs. Mack, Doc Beck and Hap used a sling to save Penny.

---

### **Bible: James 3**

Pat worked hard to learn to ride. She had to practice every day and use several horses with different abilities as she gained experience. People have to train to ride horses, but they also have to *train* the horses. One way this is done is by putting bits in horses' mouths in order to train them; this is mentioned in the Bible in James 3:3. The verse is comparing the taming of the horse to the "taming of the tongue" -- read James 3:3-10 together and discuss. What is meant by "taming the tongue" -- why is this something we have to work hard at in order to practice/train it? What other things are compared to the tongue? (bit in the horse's mouth, ship/rudder, forest fire started by small spark, fresh water/salt water--from the same spring, etc.)

---

### **JUST FOR FUN!**

#### Cooking: Sweet Corn

Ask your child if he/she likes sweet corn. Look together at the picture on page 5 and briefly discuss how they are really enjoying their sweet corn out on the porch. *[Pat's brother, Richie, is eagerly sinking his teeth into his corn. Look at Pat's plate - she ate two! Her dad must have eaten even more because he is stretched out and leaning back on the steps and he had to loosen his belt.]* Look closely at the sweet corn with your child, do think they added butter?

Make some sweet corn together and enjoy it out on the porch just like Pat and her family did.

#### Cooking: Molasses

Ask your child if he/she has ever tasted molasses. Molasses is a thick syrup made by processing sugar cane or sugar beet. Look at page 23 and discuss how Pat was thoughtful for leaving a bag of molasses cookies each day for the trapeze artist because she knew how sad he was. Bake some molasses cookies together and put them in a bag and tie them with a nice ribbon and think of someone to give them

to.

Bake some molasses cookies this week!

### **Field Trip: Riding Lessons**

Consider signing your child up for some horseback riding lessons. Just a couple or maybe the whole summer just like Pat did.

### **Go Along: Autobiography**

*Black Beauty* by Ann Seawell

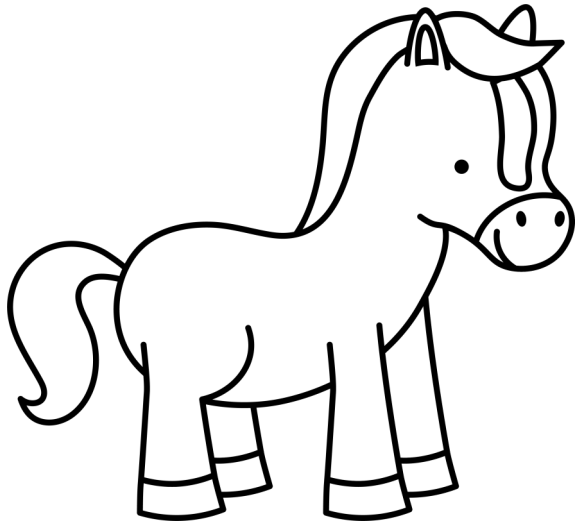
### **Career Path: Veterinarian**

Look for a book about veterinarians or visit one in your area and let your student ask questions.

---

Materials and information on this website may be used for your own personal and school use. **Material may not be shared electronically or be used for resale.**

© Homeschool Share



# Horse Breeds

Thoroughbred

REMOVE THIS AREA (Cut away so you have just a tab left)

Paint Horse

REMOVE THIS AREA

Quarter Horse

REMOVE THIS AREA

Arabian

REMOVE

Appaloosa

**Directions:** Cut out the three circles. Fold each one in half (valley folds).

Glue the back left of the first circle ("similes") to the back right of "definition" and glue the back right of the first circle to the back left of "examples"

Similes should be the cover of your book. You should be able to open it to the right as well as to the left. Glue the back of the book into your lapbook.



# Definition

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Examples

---

---

---

---

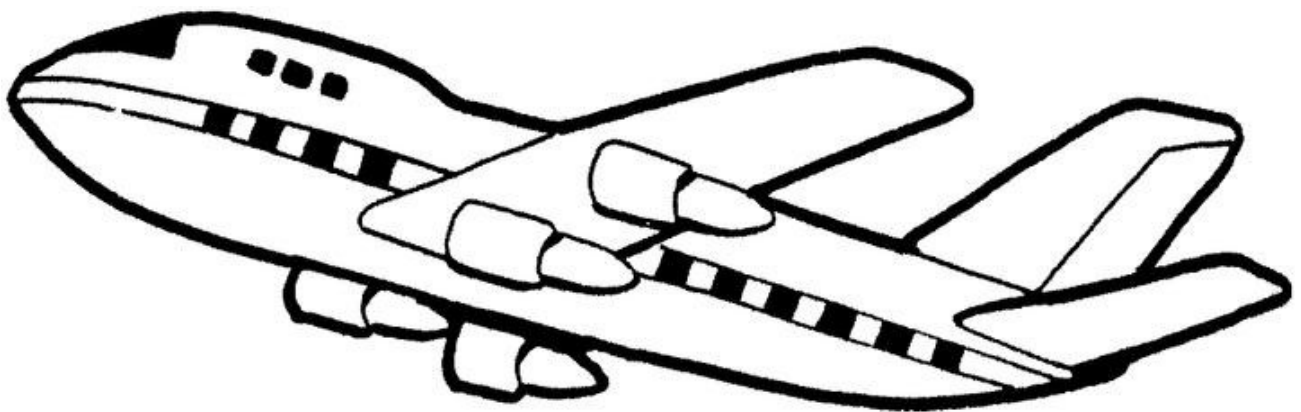
---

---

---

---

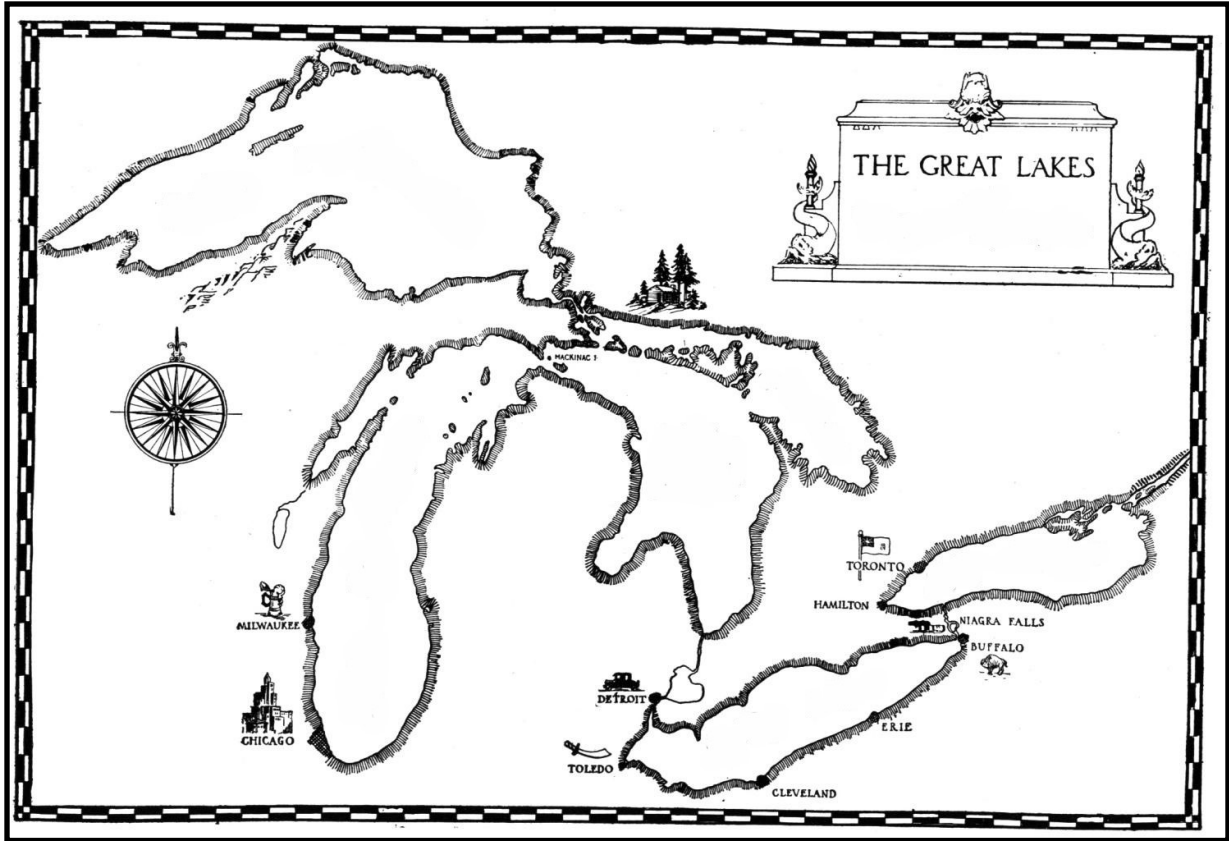
# From California to Michigan





**Directions:** Cut out the book on the previous page and fold in half. Cut out map of the United States. Let your student color/label California and Michigan. Have him draw a line connecting the two. Paste the map on the inside of the book. If desired, let your student research to find out how many miles it is between the two and let him write the distance somewhere in the book.

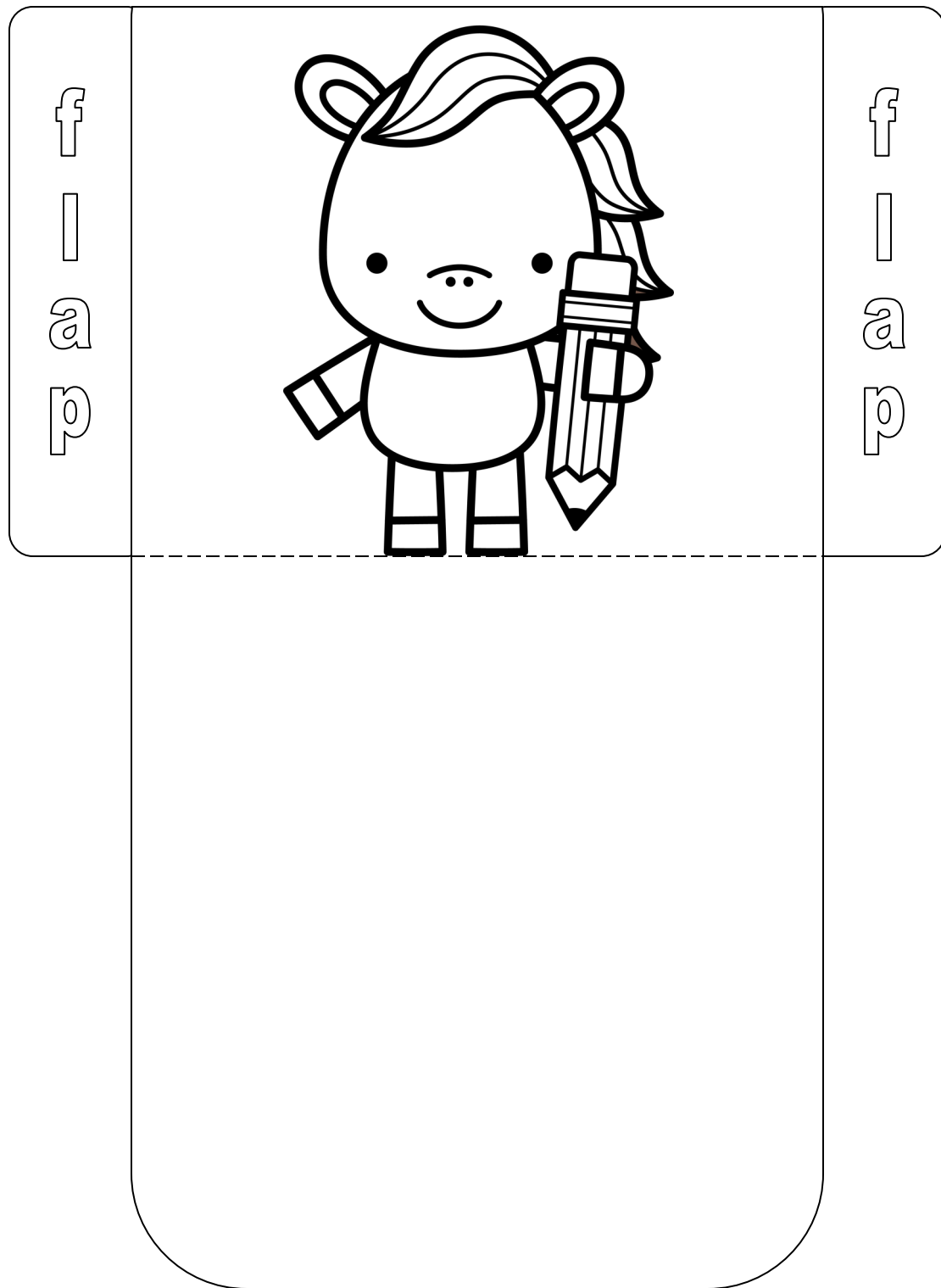




**Directions:** Label the lakes. Cut out as one piece and fold in half. Paste cover to the front and glue the back into your lapbook.

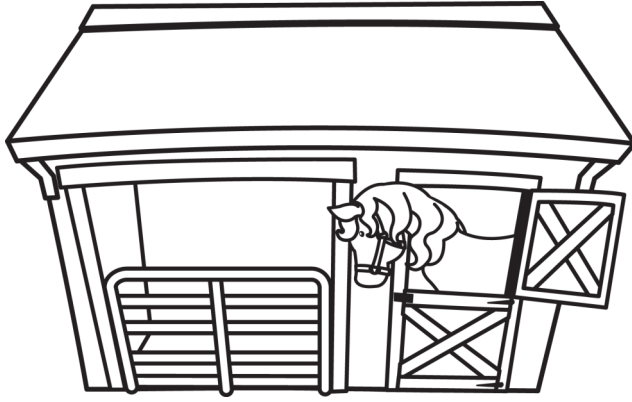
# The Great Lakes

**Directions:** Cut pocket out as one piece. Fold back up (behind the front) and fold flaps behind the back. Glue flaps to the back. Use the pocket to store student's autobiography.



Directions: Cut out rectangles. Stack together (smallest to largest) with cover on top and staple. © Homeschool Share

# Horse Care



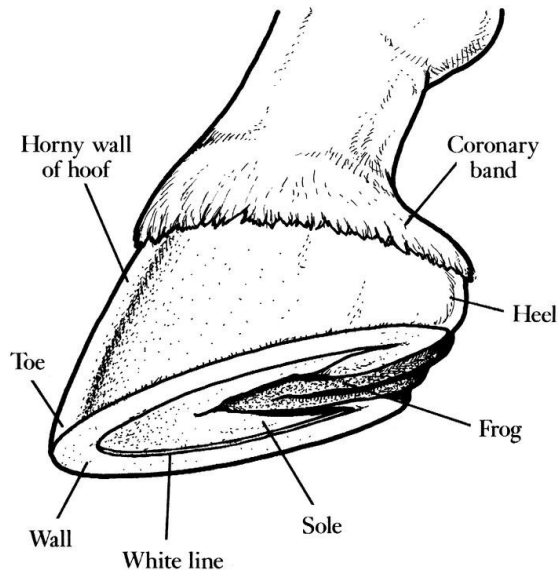
Shelter

Other

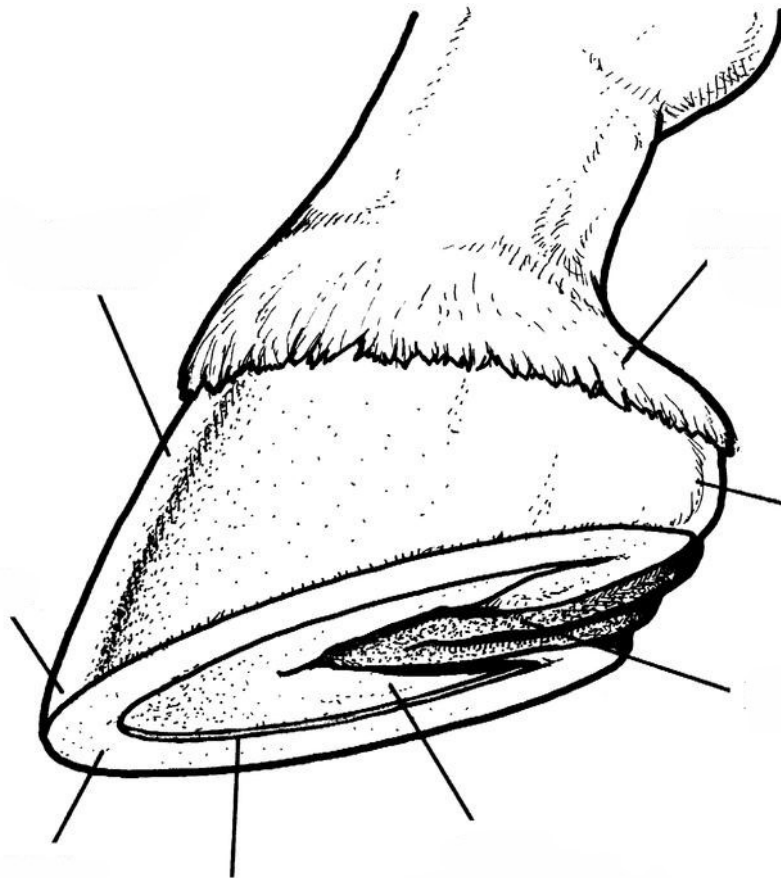
Food

# Hoof Anatomy

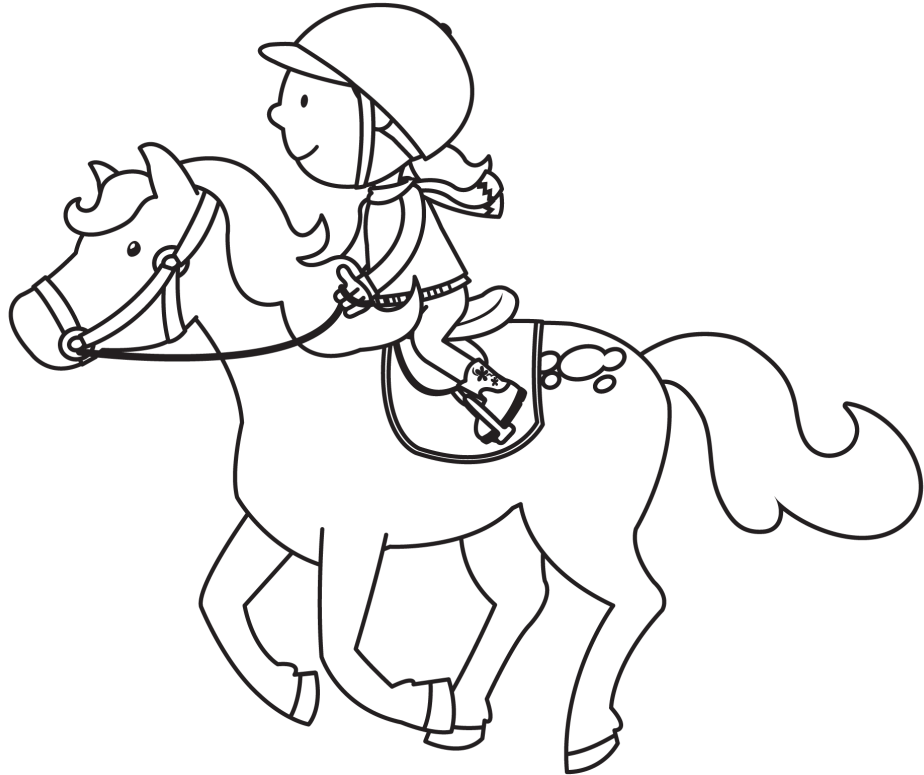


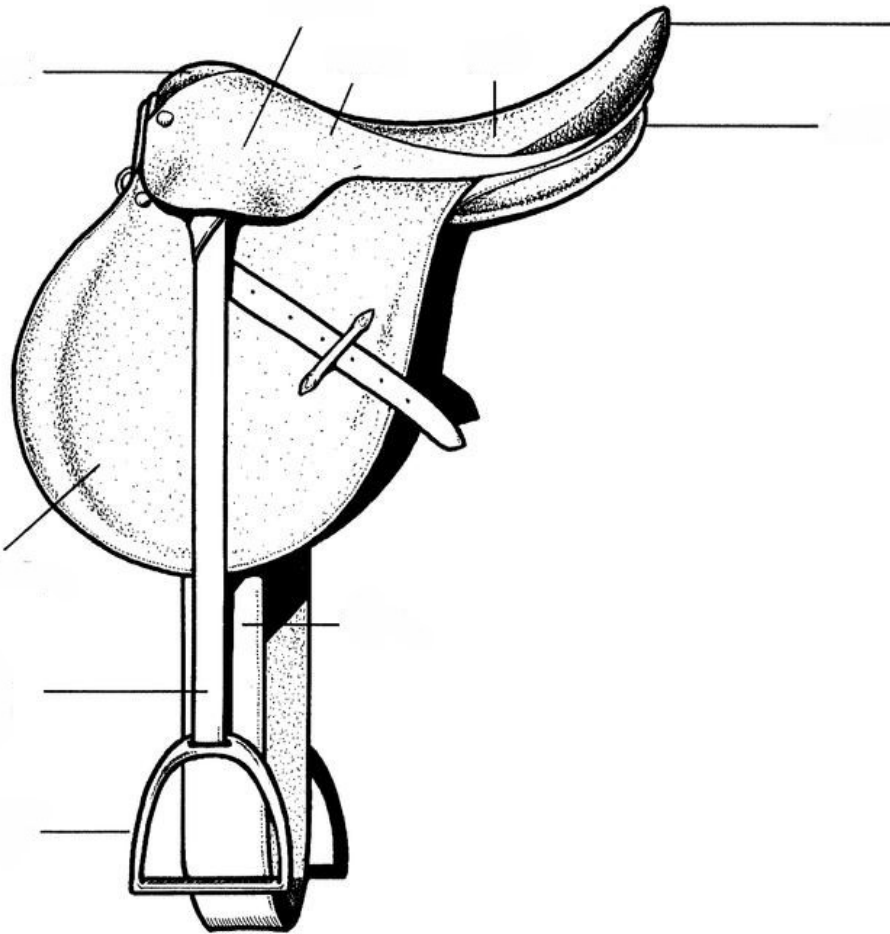


**Directions:** Cut out the book on previous page as one piece and fold in half. Let your student use the diagram above to label the horse's hoof below. Let your student glue his diagram into the book.

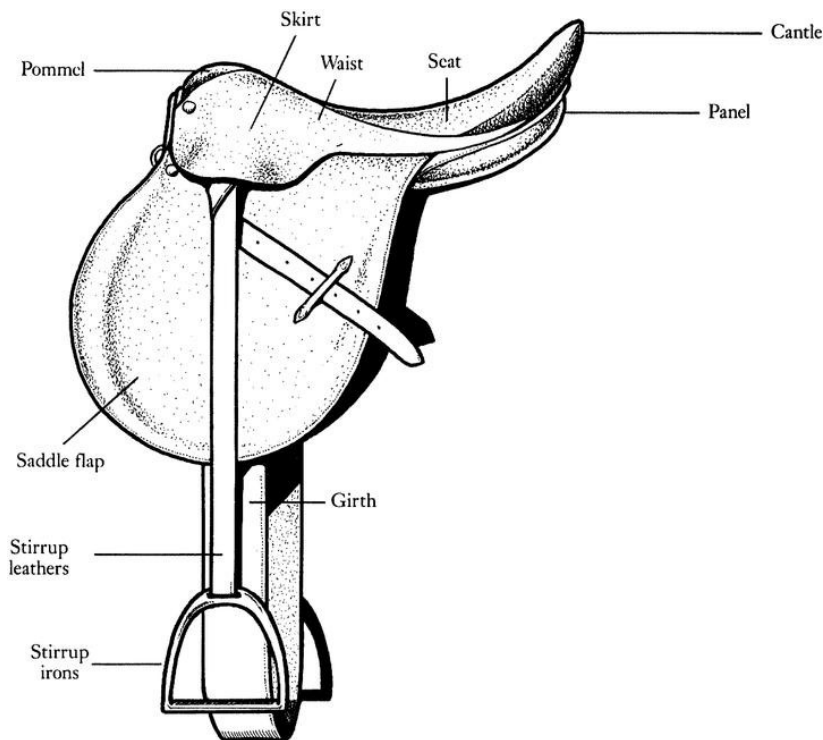


# Label a Saddle





Cut out the book on previous page as one piece and fold in half. Let your student use the diagram to label a saddle. Let your student glue his diagram into the book.



**Directions:** Cut on solid lines. Fold on dotted lines (like a pamphlet).

ears pricked forward

ears pricked forward  
& huddled together

ears pinned back and  
pointed in different  
directions

ears pinned back, front  
feet raised, nostrils  
flared, tail swishing

lying down and limp

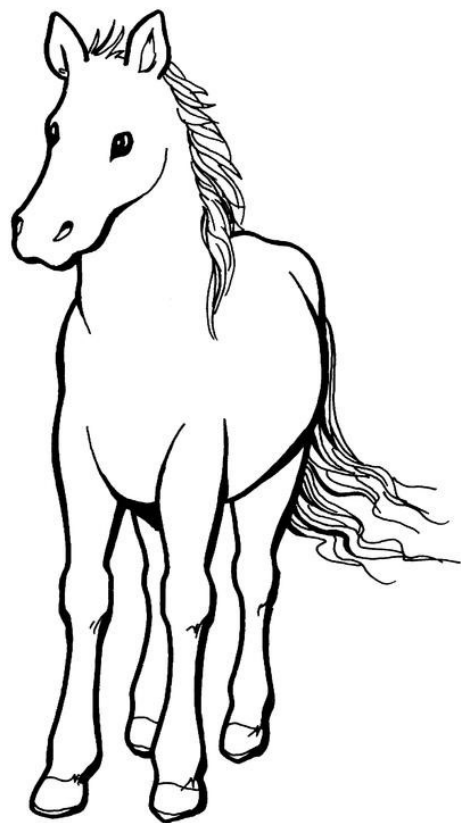
high neck and high tail

nuzzles you or rests  
head on you

nicker

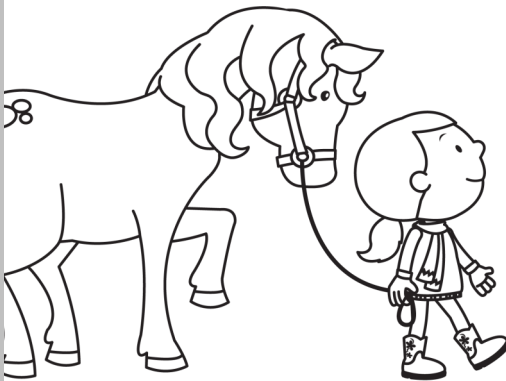
nay or whinny

# A Horse's Body Language





**Directions:** Cut on the solid lines. Write in definitions. Stack pages together with cover on top and staple on the left side.

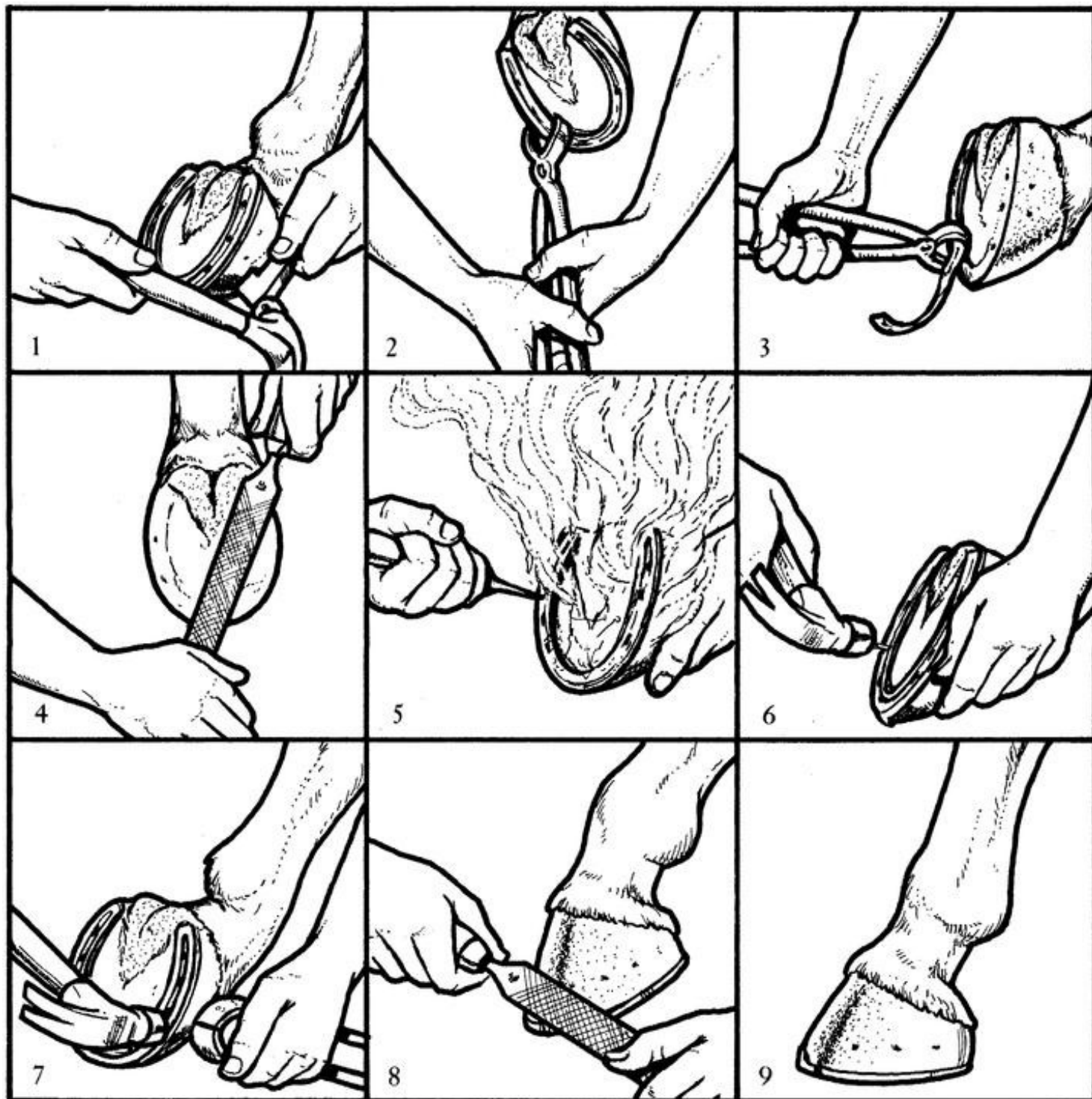
<h1>New Words from Mrs. Mack</h1> 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

**Directions:** Cut on the solid lines. Write in definitions. Stack pages together with cover on top and staple on the left side.

<p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

**Directions:** Cut apart pictures. Cut out each strip of three rectangles as one piece. Glue where indicated. Fold book like an accordion alternating folds (mountain fold, valley fold, mountain fold, valley fold, etc.). Discuss horse shoeing with your student. Go over the process as he pastes the pictures to the descriptions. Just as we need to trim our fingernails periodically, the hooves of horses need to be trimmed regularly. Shoeing is optional. Shoeing is a fascinating procedure. If you have the opportunity, watch a farrier shoe a horse.

Assemble pocket and store your accordion book in pocket.



1. First the farrier needs to remove the nails. Using the wedge-like end of a clinch cutter, the farrier taps the clinch cutter with a hammer to open the clinches. A clinch is the end of the nail that has been folded over during the previous shoeing to hold the shoe on. These clinches must be straightened back up in order pull the nail through the hoof wall. Once they are straight, the farrier will use the pincers to pull the nails up through.

2. Once the nails have been removed, the farrier can remove the old shoe with the pincers.

3. The shoe is completely removed. Any nails not previously removed, can now be taken out.

glue to the last rectangle on the back of the first strip

4. The farrier then takes a rasp and files the hoof and sole, taking care that the foot is flat. The farrier will then trim the excess growth of the hoof (not shown). This is about the same as using an Emory board to file down your fingernails.

5. This picture shows steam coming off the shoe. For hot shoeing, the horseshoe is held against the hoof while hot. This will show the farrier needs to make adjustments in the shape of the shoe. Once the farrier is satisfied with the shape, he will place it in cold water to cool it and then place it on the hoof to begin securing it.

glue to the last rectangle on the back of the first strip

6. The farrier nails the shoe in place, using about seven nails. The nail is placed in the shoe and nailed at a slant through the hoof and toward the outer part of the hoof. This does not hurt any more than using a toenail clipper on your toenails.

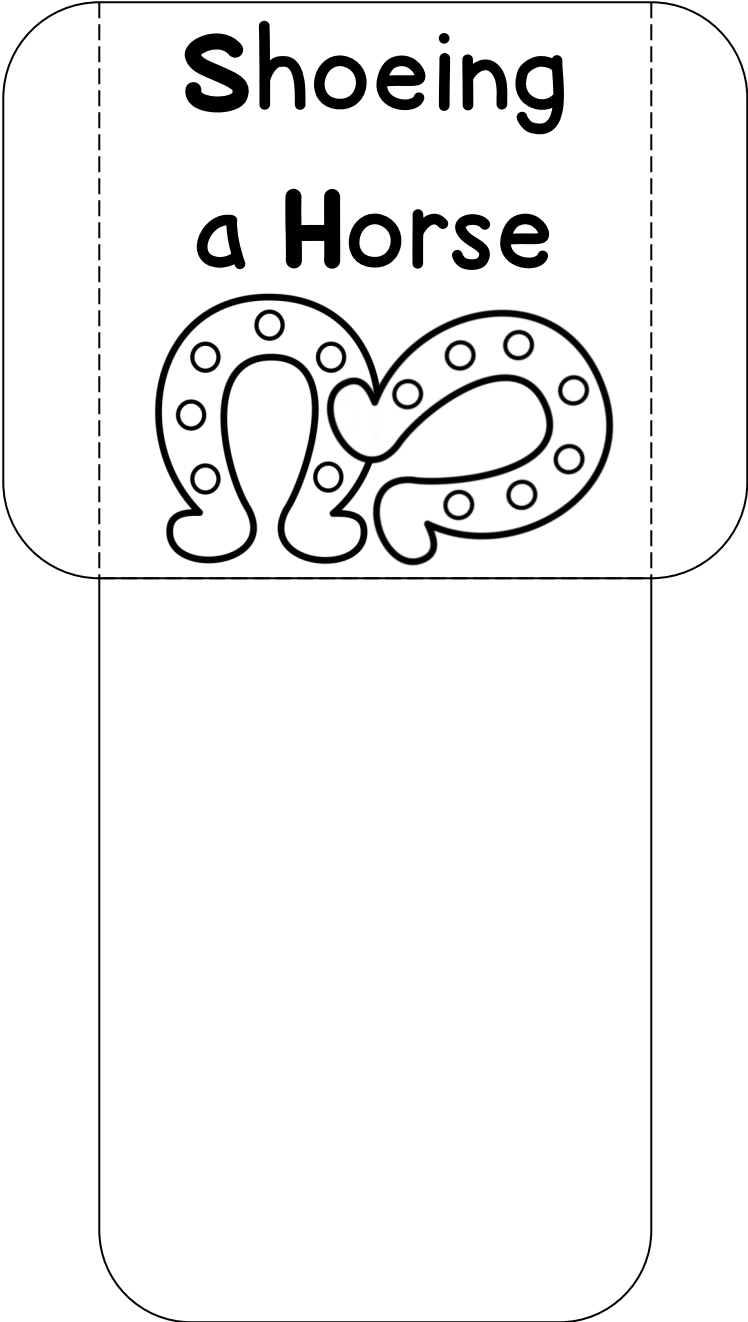
7. Then, using the pincers and a hammer, farrier bends the nails over. These are the clenches mentioned earlier.

glue to the last rectangle on the back of the first strip

8. A rasp is then used to file the nail ends down to ensure they will not catch on anything.

9. This picture shows the hoof after it has been shod.

**Directions:** Cut pocket out. Fold back flap up and wrap side flaps around the back and glue down. Glue the back of your pocket into your lapbook.





Walk



Canter



Trot



Gallop



**Directions:** Cut out each shape (cut along solid black lines; do not cut any gray lines). Fold each book in half on the dotted lines (four small books and one large book). Glue the back sides of the small books into the inside of your large book. Your student should write a definition for each gait in the appropriate book.

# Horse

# Gaits



## Terms of Use

This product may be used for your own classroom or personal use. It may not be shared as a pdf file, on the web, or in any other way. It should not be recreated or duplicated. © [www.homeschoolshare.com](http://www.homeschoolshare.com)

## Clipart and Font Credits

