



## An Introduction to horse handling and behaviour

### How to complete this activity:

You can work through this exercise with a group or as an individual, but each individual must submit a copy of the completed worksheet.

Save a copy of this PDF document on the Desktop of your computer before you start work (or you may lose your data!).

You need to complete each activity sequentially, in the order that they are presented in this file. Do not jump ahead.

For some activities, you will be asked to record your answers to the questions by typing them into this file. You should save this PDF file each time you complete one of these questions, to make sure that your work does not get lost

We have provided some suggested resources to help you answer the questions. Feel free to use other resources as well (and let us know if you find good ones!)

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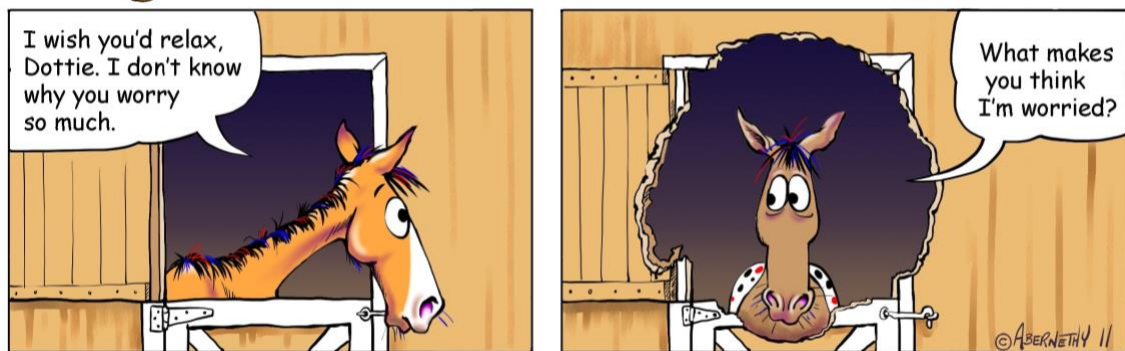
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## Equine Handling

Equids, including horses, mules and donkeys, are grazers and prey animals. As such their “fight or flight” reaction is prominent, and their senses are developed to rapidly detect changes in their environment. They have a strong herd instinct which makes them feel safe and less vulnerable. Horses continuously display behaviours related to their fight or flight instinct and their other responses to conflict.

Like many animals, horses communicate much more through postures, gestures and expressions than they do with their vocal cords. The ability to read and respond to this horse body language is imperative to in being able to handle and care for horses safely.

### Equine behaviour



FergusTheHorse.com

#### Task 1

Use the following resources to answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpD46p9ktQM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gseaM5RPmrY>

<http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Emergency-Response/Just-in-Time/08-Animal-Behavior-Restraint-Equine-HANDOUT.pdf>

*Question 1:*

How do horses establish order within their herds? Explain what types behaviour and associated body language might be exhibited to accomplish this?

*Question 2:*

When observing equine behaviour, what parts of the horse's body do they use to communicate with each other?

*Question 3:*

Imagine you are at the Werribee horse yards, and there are 4 horses in separate yards. What body language signs might alert you that our (normally friendly) horses are frightened and may be aggressive?

## Task 2

Use the following resources to answer the questions below:

Understanding Equine behaviour through their anatomy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGK2kfirmbo&t=15s>

Horses have widely spaced eyes, and as a result have a large field of peripheral vision; however, “blind spots” do exist and are important characteristics to keep in mind when approaching and moving equine.

*Question 4:*

Describe the characteristics of equine vision and where the horse’s blind spots are located?

*Question 5:*

List 3 things a human handler can do to safely approach a horse?