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Newsletter 2015

# Horse'n Around

BY DAWN FORD

## Human Interaction ... at the core of early literacy training

**According to literacy expert Linda Phillips reading is the perfect way to help babies explore their senses and experience the human interaction they crave from the moment of birth.**

"That human interaction is important and should be nurtured through talking with children, holding them to develop their sense of trust, singing to delight and soothe them, and reading to them to develop their oral vocabulary," says Linda Phillips, an education professor and director of the U of A's Canadian Centre for Research on Literacy.

Yet reading alone is not enough. Draw children's attention to the parts of a book and point out the title, the au-



thor and illustrator. Talk about the pictures and encourage children to tell you what they see. It's not the book you choose for your children but rather how you engage them in the reading that matters most. Most of what children read in school is controlled by someone else, often leading to a lack of interest



in the material.

Adults can never be sure of what will catch the interests of a child so be guided by the child's interests. Rich reading opportunities can be found in multiple

types of print not just children's literature and they include comic books, magazines, newspapers, the Internet, and more.

Pictures in books can be the centre of discussion of 'what's that? That's a duck,' where the caregiver both asks and answers the questions while pointing and engaging the preschooler with their voices.

It's how you use the books you have, how you use them to engage children in the language, develop their vocabulary, their sense of story as well as their memories. And, start reading to them as babies and engaging them in what you read. Engagement is the key. Read to your baby every day. ■

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Arabian Horse  
Reading Literacy Project

# Growing a reader ...

Reading is a learned skill. We are born listening and learning, but because our sight is one of the last sense to develop, we need to learn to read. As a parent, the responsibility is up to you to help support reading and the development of reading skills in your children. It requires attention, practice and the right environment to foster the kind of growth and development of your children when it comes to reading.

In the first three years of your child's life there is massive brain development occurring. A brain grows up to 64% beyond its initial size in the first 90 days (according to a recent study of the Journal of the American Medical Association of Neurology). Activities, attachment, stimulation and rich experiences all contribute to the growth and development of the new neuro-pathways developing in the brain. These pathways need to be connected to form the new circuits which control functions like hearing and vision.

Preparing your child to read begins with YOU, the parents and other influential adults in your child's life. Through activities such as talking, singing, writing and play, early literacy development begins. As parents, you must learn many of the fun and easy ways to nurture your child's pre-reading skill. One of the easiest ways to help your child along is to let them see you read. You are a major role model. Say nursery rhymes, filled with rich language and rhythm. Play music and sing together. Children love to hear the sound of your voice. Talk about your day and what you are doing. Visit the library and attend free storytime sessions.



## Box Stalls

HOW TO PLAY: The four box stalls below are filled with all kinds of things you might find in and around a horse barn. Although each of the items appears more than once, only three of them can be found in all four stalls. Can you figure out which they are and circle them? ■



ANSWER: HOOF PICK, PAIL AND HELMET.

Make reading a pleasurable and relaxing time for you and your family. Don't force your child to read. Reading is a skill every child develops. Your child may not be ready. Work to inspire your child with imaginative and unstructured play. Play is how children learn.

Have books, puzzles, paper, crayons and toys around the house. Look for books and stories with bright colours, simple words, repetition and colorful pictures and illustrations. No pressure, but ... it is up to you! Plant the seed and encourage your child's interest and love in books and reading. Take the time in your day, everyday, to sing, play, read, write and talk with your child. That way, your child can grow to be a reader for life.

**Excerpts from an article in the Sherwood Park News by Michele Feser, Assistant Manager for the Strathcona County Library's Youth Services at [mfeser@sclibrary.ab.ca](mailto:mfeser@sclibrary.ab.ca) ■**



A NEW  
PROGRAM ...

# Family Reading Therapy

Designed to bring families together and support each other in working with challenged reader(s) ... children or adults. This program is a series of four separate sessions, reading to the horses and participating in various activities. The participants can be 1 child and 1 adult or 2 adults (parents or guardians) and as many children as are within the family (maximum of 4 "kids"). Ideal for the challenged reader, autistic child or child with learning disabilities. Contact Gary Millar for more information 780 499 9219 or email at [gary.millar@arabianhorsereading.com](mailto:gary.millar@arabianhorsereading.com)



## Little Storm

*The Arabian Horse Reading Literacy and Imagination Project is committed to helping children enhance their literary skills!*

*We have published our own Grade 2 level reader where a young boy deals with his Mom and Dad's divorce by spending time at Mr. Martin's farm. His life changes forever when he makes friends with a horse named Misty.*

Download your epub copy today at <http://www.arabianhorsereading.com/books.html>. ■



## Pony Adventure Summer Camps

***If you have a child that loves horses, or a love for animals I'm sure they would love to attend this Christian program camp.***

The kids will work with the miniature horses learning to lead, brush, some pony agility and possibly some tricks. They will have an opportunity to ride on the second day.

2-day camps - 10am to 3pm

Suitable for 'kids' Grade 1 - 6.

Cost is \$175 plus GST per child.

At Millar Venture Arabian Farm, the following camp dates are available:

- Monday, July 13 and Tuesday, July 14, 2015
- Wednesday, July 15 and Thursday, July 16, 2015
- Monday, July 20 and Tuesday, July 21, 2015
- Wednesday, July 22 and Thursday, July 23, 2015



For more information and to register, please call Gary Millar at (780) 499-9219. ■

To find the solution of these puzzles or to check out more exciting games and activities, check out the Arabian Horse Reading Project website at [www.arabianhorsereading.com](http://www.arabianhorsereading.com) ■

## Trifon Note Cards

***Enjoy sending handwritten messages to your friends and family on these high quality, black and white, hand drawn note cards. They come in packages of 10, complete with envelopes.***

Some school classrooms are selling these as a way of paying for their experience with the horses. I sample is posted within the website at <http://www.arabianhorsereading.com/teachers.html>

For more information in getting involved with this Note Cards Fundraiser, contact Gary Millar (780) 499-9219 or [gary.millar@arabianhorsereading.com](mailto:gary.millar@arabianhorsereading.com)

Watch for Limited Edition Art Prints of this same amazing black and white pencil drawing. ■



## Useful Links

**ARABIAN HORSE ANGEL WINGS PROJECT** To provide a safe & comfortable special place for 'kids' and their families to visit and



experience extraordinary, quality of life moments with live horses and animals in conjunction with their medical treatment, while facing chronic and life threatening issues.

[www.arabianhorsereading.com](http://www.arabianhorsereading.com) ■





# Read to Trifon, the Arabian stallion

[arabianhorsereading.com](http://arabianhorsereading.com)

Photo by Robin Szala



**DISCOVER ARABIAN HORSES.COM** It is a private initiative to provide high impact and effective "outreach", attracting new people to become involved in the Arabian horse community, to take riding lessons and join clubs.  
[www.discoverarabianhorses.com](http://www.discoverarabianhorses.com) ■



**ARABIAN HORSE ASSOCIATION (AHA)** provides an association of like-minded Arabian horse enthusiasts and a focal point for your favorite recreational or competitive activities. AHA is the official breed association and registry in the USA with more than 40,000 members who own Arabian, Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian horses. [www.arabianhorses.org](http://www.arabianhorses.org) ■

# 15 Most Random and Amazing Facts about Horses

*Horses have been called the noblest of creatures, and it's easy to see why. Depending on which scientific accounts you believe, they've been man's original best friend since anywhere from 4000 to 2000 B.C. They've taken us wherever we've asked them to including the fields of battle.*

Yet here we are in the 21st Century, and there are still plenty about these noble creatures you still don't know. Want proof? Here is our list. Which is your favorite?

- 1** Horses have the largest eyes of any land mammal.
- 2** Horses can run within hours after birth.
- 3** At one time people thought horses were colorblind. They're not, though they are better at seeing yellows and greens than purples and violets.
- 4** A horse's teeth take up a larger amount of space in their head than their brain.

**5** Horse hooves are made from the same protein that comprises human hair and fingernails.

**6** Horses can sleep both lying down and standing up.

**7** Because horse's eyes are on the side of their head they are capable of seeing nearly 360 degrees at one time.

**8** The fastest recorded sprinting speed of a horse was 88 kph (55 mph). Most gallop at around 44 kph or 27 mph.

**9** Horses use their ears, eyes and nostrils to express their mood. They also communicate their feelings through facial expressions.

**10** Horses will not lie down simultaneously because at least one will act as a look-out to alert its companions of potential dangers.

**11** Vocalizations are highly important to horses. Examples: Whinnying and neighing sounds are elicited when horses meet or leave each other. Stallions (adult male horses) perform loud roars as mating calls, and all horses will use snorts to alert others of potential danger.

**12** An adult horse's brain weights 22 oz, about half that of a human.

**13** Guess what, horses can not vomit.

# Party

**Arabian Horse Reading Literacy Birthday Parties**

Come enjoy your birthday party with your four-legged friends.

Treat your guests to a party that is unique.

For more information contact Gary Millar at [gary.millar@arabianhorsereading.com](mailto:gary.millar@arabianhorsereading.com) or (780) 499-9219

**14** A horse can see better at night than a human. However, it takes a horse's eyes longer to adjust from light to dark and from dark to light than a human's eye.

**15** Most of the time, wherever a horse's ear is pointing is where the horse is looking with the eye on the same side. If the ears are pointing in different directions, the horse is looking at two different things at the same time. ■

## For further information

The Arabian Horse Reading Literacy Project is an innovative, experiential learning program—Equine Assisted Learning. This program is committed to motivating children to want to read, enhancing their literacy skills and developing their confidence in reading.

It is an amazing adventure for the children to enjoy the opportunity to read to the horses and experience the exhilaration and joy of spending time with these amazing non-judgmental teachers. *"It is important to teach children to read, but we haven't achieved anything if children know how to read ... but don't!"*

**To register for a session or for more information about "The Kids are Reading to the Horses"**

Gary Millar  
[gary.millar@arabianhorsereading.com](mailto:gary.millar@arabianhorsereading.com)  
 (780) 499-9219

[www.arabianhorsereading.com](http://www.arabianhorsereading.com)

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### WHO'S READING TO THE HORSES?

- pre-school 'kids'
- pre-school 'kids' - en français
- Grade 1 and 2 'kids'
- Grade 4 'kids'
- junior high 'kids'
- family therapy sessions for challenged reader(s)
- boys and girls clubs, i.e. cubs, beavers, brownies
- birthday party groups