

# Horse Evaluation CDE Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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**SAMPLE**

## Questions

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- 1. What term describes the genetic makeup of an individual horse?**
  - A. Phenotype**
  - B. Genotype**
  - C. Trait**
  - D. Characteristic**
  
- 2. Which type of pasture is considered the best all-around for horses?**
  - A. Timothy grass**
  - B. Kentucky bluegrass**
  - C. Orchard grass**
  - D. Bermudagrass**
  
- 3. What term describes a condition of only having one gene variant for a trait?**
  - A. Heterozygous**
  - B. Homozygous**
  - C. Phenotypic**
  - D. Genotypic**
  
- 4. What factors most commonly determine the speed of a horse?**
  - A. Age, weight, diet**
  - B. Stride length, stride frequency**
  - C. Height, muscle strength**
  - D. Foot size, breed**
  
- 5. What color is associated with the Palomino horse?**
  - A. Black with white mane**
  - B. Chestnut with black mane**
  - C. Gold with white mane and tail**
  - D. Bay with white markings**

- 6. What term is used to describe a horse with too much slope to the pastern?**
- A. Camped out**
  - B. Coon-footed**
  - C. Straight legged**
  - D. Over at the knee**
- 7. What are the five basic colors of horses?**
- A. White, gray, black, brown, chestnut**
  - B. Bay, black, brown, chestnut, white**
  - C. Palomino, paint, bay, white, gray**
  - D. Black, palomino, gray, dun, chestnut**
- 8. By the age of which number are most horses considered to be mature?**
- A. Three**
  - B. Four**
  - C. Five**
  - D. Six**
- 9. Which grain is associated with the risk of containing the fungus ergot?**
- A. Wheat**
  - B. Barley**
  - C. Rye**
  - D. Oats**
- 10. What is the term for a bay or brown horse with a lighter colored muzzle?**
- A. Mealy mouth**
  - B. Blaze**
  - C. Snip**
  - D. Star**

## **Answers**

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1. B
2. B
3. A
4. B
5. C
6. B
7. B
8. B
9. C
10. A

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What term describes the genetic makeup of an individual horse?**

**A. Phenotype**

**B. Genotype**

**C. Trait**

**D. Characteristic**

The genetic makeup of an individual horse is referred to as its genotype. This term encompasses the specific set of genes and alleles that an individual inherits from its parents, which ultimately influences its inherited traits. Genotype is a crucial concept in genetics, as it helps determine various characteristics such as coat color, conformation, and even behavioral tendencies. In contrast, phenotype refers to the observable traits or characteristics of an individual, which can be influenced by both genetic and environmental factors. Traits are specific qualities or features of an organism, such as height or color, while characteristics can refer to broader attributes, encompassing a range of traits an animal may display. Therefore, genotype is the precise term used to indicate the underlying genetic composition of the horse, distinguishing it from the more observable attributes referred to by the other terms.

**2. Which type of pasture is considered the best all-around for horses?**

**A. Timothy grass**

**B. Kentucky bluegrass**

**C. Orchard grass**

**D. Bermudagrass**

Kentucky bluegrass is considered one of the best all-around pastures for horses due to its palatability, nutritional value, and adaptability to various soil types and climates. It is a cool-season grass that thrives in a range of environments and is particularly valued for its dense growth habit, which provides excellent ground cover. This grass not only offers a suitable forage source throughout the growing season but also has good drought tolerance once established. Horses generally prefer the taste of Kentucky bluegrass, leading to better feed intake and overall nutrition. Furthermore, this grass has a good balance of carbohydrates, protein, and fiber, which is crucial for maintaining a horse's health and performance. The ability of Kentucky bluegrass to withstand grazing stress and recover quickly after being eaten also makes it a sustainable choice for pasture management.

**3. What term describes a condition of only having one gene variant for a trait?**

- A. Heterozygous**
- B. Homozygous**
- C. Phenotypic**
- D. Genotypic**

The condition of having only one gene variant for a trait is accurately described by the term "homozygous." When an organism is homozygous for a particular trait, it has two identical alleles for that trait, whether they are dominant or recessive. This means that, for that specific gene, both parents contributed the same variant. In contrast, the term "heterozygous" refers to an organism that has two different alleles for a specific gene, which does not fit the description provided in the question. The terms "phenotypic" and "genotypic" describe different concepts; phenotypic refers to the observable traits of an organism, while genotypic refers to the genetic makeup itself, but does not specify the number of gene variants. Hence, the most accurate term for having one gene variant is "homozygous."

**4. What factors most commonly determine the speed of a horse?**

- A. Age, weight, diet**
- B. Stride length, stride frequency**
- C. Height, muscle strength**
- D. Foot size, breed**

The speed of a horse is primarily determined by stride length and stride frequency. Stride length refers to how far a horse travels with each step, while stride frequency refers to how many steps the horse takes in a given period of time. For maximum speed, a horse needs to achieve an optimum balance between these two factors; a longer stride can cover more ground per step, while a higher frequency allows for quicker progress overall. These two elements are critical in performance contexts such as racing or any speed-related discipline, where acceleration and sustained speed are indicators of success. A horse that can effectively maximize its stride length and maintain a high frequency can outrun others regardless of physical attributes like age or weight. In contrast, while age, weight, height, and breed can influence a horse's overall athletic performance and health, they do not directly dictate speed in the same clear and measurable way that stride mechanics do. Understanding the emphasis on stride mechanics allows for better training and performance optimization for equestrians and trainers alike.

**5. What color is associated with the Palomino horse?**

- A. Black with white mane
- B. Chestnut with black mane
- C. Gold with white mane and tail**
- D. Bay with white markings

The color associated with the Palomino horse is gold with a white mane and tail. This breed is characterized by its striking golden coat, which is reminiscent of the color of a gold coin, along with its light-colored mane and tail that typically appear white or very light cream. The combination of these features gives the Palomino a distinctive and visually appealing appearance that is easily recognizable. The other options describe horses with different colorations that do not match the specific traits of a Palomino. For instance, a black horse with a white mane, a chestnut horse with a black mane, and a bay horse with white markings each represent other equine colors or breeds, but they do not correspond to the specific characteristics of a Palomino, which is primarily defined by its golden coat and light mane and tail.

**6. What term is used to describe a horse with too much slope to the pastern?**

- A. Camped out
- B. Coon-footed**
- C. Straight legged
- D. Over at the knee

The term that describes a horse with too much slope to the pastern is "coon-footed." This term refers to a condition in which the pastern is excessively sloped, leading to an abnormal conformation that can affect the horse's movement and overall performance. Horses that are coon-footed may have a lower angle at the pastern, which can lead to issues with stride, balance, and can increase the risk of injury over time. Understanding this condition is important for evaluating horse conformation, as proper pastern angle is crucial for the horse's soundness. A horse with a well-aligned pastern will generally have better shock absorption and leg function. Recognizing the specific terminology related to leg and hoof structure is essential for those involved in horse evaluation, breeding, or training.

**7. What are the five basic colors of horses?**

- A. White, gray, black, brown, chestnut
- B. Bay, black, brown, chestnut, white**
- C. Palomino, paint, bay, white, gray
- D. Black, palomino, gray, dun, chestnut

The five basic colors of horses encompass a range of common equine colorations that serve as foundational categories in horse evaluation. The correct answer includes bay, black, brown, chestnut, and white, which are well-established basic colors in horse color classification. Bay is characterized by a reddish-brown coat with black points (mane, tail, and lower legs). Black horses have a solid black coat without any brown or lighter patches. Brown horses can vary significantly in shade but generally have a dark coat with lighter areas around the muzzle or flanks. Chestnut refers to a reddish-brown color without any black points, often seen in various shades from light to dark. Finally, white horses are completely white, often stemming from different genetic factors that allow for this coloration. This classification is fundamental in equine identification and evaluation, as these colors form a basis for understanding horse appearance in different breeds and types. Other colors like palomino and paint, while beautiful and prevalent within certain breeds, do not fall under the category of basic colors in the same way.

**8. By the age of which number are most horses considered to be mature?**

- A. Three
- B. Four**
- C. Five
- D. Six

Most horses are considered to be mature by the age of four. At this age, a horse has typically reached its physical growth and development milestones, making it capable of handling more intense training and performance activities. Horses undergo significant changes during their early years, and by four years old, their musculoskeletal systems are generally strong enough to sustain the demands placed on them during riding, pulling, or competitive events. In horse evaluation, maturity is an essential factor as it often correlates with a horse's ability to focus, learn, and perform tasks effectively. This age also aligns with the time many horses may begin their formal training and entry into competition. Thus, recognizing four as the age of maturity is crucial for assessing a horse's potential and suitability for various roles, such as performance or breeding.

**9. Which grain is associated with the risk of containing the fungus ergot?**

- A. Wheat**
- B. Barley**
- C. Rye**
- D. Oats**

Rye is the grain most closely associated with the risk of containing the fungus ergot. Ergot is a fungus that primarily affects cereal grains, particularly rye, and can produce toxic alkaloids harmful to both animals and humans if ingested. The conditions that favor the growth of ergot, such as humid, cool weather, often coincide with rye cultivation. This is significant because ergotism, the condition resulting from the consumption of ergot-infected grain, can lead to severe health issues, including convulsions and even gangrene in extreme cases. While other grains like wheat, barley, and oats can suffer from various fungal infections, they are not typically associated with ergot. Wheat and barley can be affected by different types of molds, and oats are less susceptible to fungal infestations in general compared to rye. Understanding the specific risks associated with each type of grain is crucial for animal health and safety in agricultural practices.

**10. What is the term for a bay or brown horse with a lighter colored muzzle?**

- A. Mealy mouth**
- B. Blaze**
- C. Snip**
- D. Star**

The term that describes a bay or brown horse with a lighter colored muzzle is known as "mealy mouth." This term refers specifically to the paler coloration found on the muzzle, and it is often associated with certain coat colors, such as bay or brown. The mealy coloration is a result of the horse's genetics and is characteristic of certain breeds or individual horses. Other terms mentioned in the choices refer to different markings or features. For instance, "blaze" refers to a wide white stripe down the front of a horse's face, "snip" describes a small white marking on the muzzle that is not as extensive as a blaze, and "star" refers to a small white mark on the forehead. These terms do not apply to the specific characteristic of having a lighter colored muzzle on a bay or brown horse, which is why mealy mouth is the correct answer.