



Scores of Donkeys!

Can you tell how healthy they are?

STUDENT INTRODUCTION

- ▶ In this activity you will assess the health of some of the Donkey Sanctuary's animals.
- ▶ You will also look at the donkeys' diets.
- ▶ Use the information provided to answer the questions and complete the tasks.

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At the Isle of Wight Donkey Sanctuary you will find many happy, healthy donkeys who are a perfect weight and in great condition.

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Sadly though, some of the animals at the Sanctuary have been rescued and need special attention from the keepers to get them back to peak health and fitness. Also, some donkeys may be quite old, ill or recovering from illnesses which means they, too, need special care.

In order to do this, the keepers need to monitor the donkeys' health and food intake very carefully.

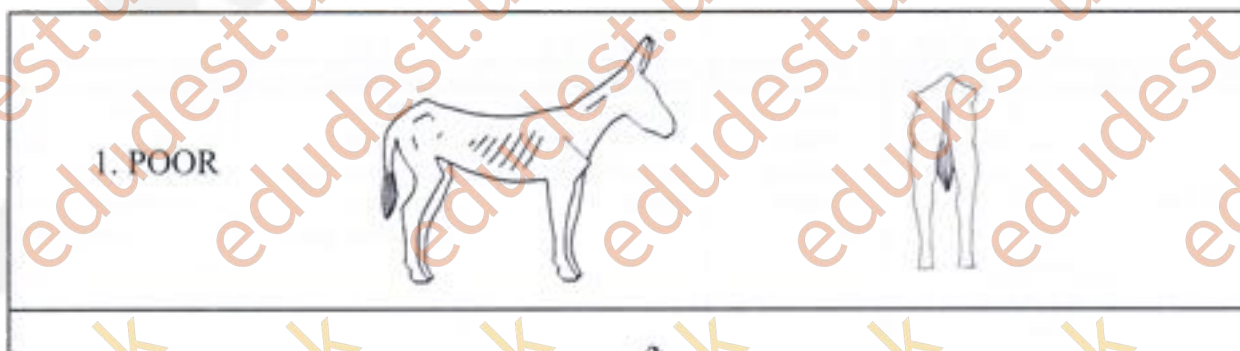
On the next two pages you will find the health scoring charts like those used by the keepers to assess each animal's condition.



Look at the charts and read the information thoroughly.

Then choose 5 of your favourite donkeys and assess their fitness. Try to choose some donkeys that are fatter or thinner than the others so that you get to practise scoring them properly!

DONKEY BODY CONDITION SCORE CHART



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Condition Score	Neck & Shoulders	Withers	Ribs & Belly	Back & Loins	Hind Quarters
1 - POOR	Neck thin. Neck meets shoulder abruptly, shoulder bones jagged.	Spine near withers prominent.	Ribs can be seen from a distance. Belly tucked up.	Backbone easily seen (prominent).	Hip bones visible. Little muscle cover. May be a cavity under tail.
2 - Moderate	Some muscle development overlying bones. Slight step where neck meets shoulders .	Some cover over dorsal withers .	Ribs not visible.	Poor muscle development either side of spine.	Poor muscle cover on hind quarters . Hip bones may be slightly visible.
3 - IDEAL	Good muscle development and light cover of muscle/fat. Neck flows smoothly into shoulder .	Withers flow smoothly into back.	Ribs just covered by light fat/muscle. Belly firm with good muscle tone and flattish outline.	Muscle development either side of spine is good.	Good muscle cover in hind quarters . Hip bones rounded in appearance.
4 - Fat	Thick neck , hard crest over withers . Broad withers . Overdeveloped loins . Slight crease along back . Rounded hind quarters . Evenly covered hind quarters .				
5 - OBESE	Thick neck , crest bulging with fat and may fall to one side. Shoulders rounded and bulging.		deposits covering ribs . Swinging belly.	Broad back , deep crease along spine and bulging fat either side.	Fat may overhang tail head. Fat uneven and bulging.

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POINTS OF A DONKEY



OK - YOUR TURN!

Choose your five favourite donkeys and use the information on the previous pages to condition score them!

- » Remember - score each aspect from 1 - 5 where 1 is Poor and 5 is Obese.
- » Then decide on an overall score for each animal and write a brief explanation as to why you chose this score.

Donkey Name	Neck & Shoulders	Withers	Ribs & Belly	Back & Loins	Hind Quarters	OVERALL SCORE

Explanation:

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Explanation:

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Explanation:

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Explanation:

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Explanation:

Why not check your scores with other members of your group that chose the same donkeys?

If there is a keeper available, you could ask them to check your scores too! Remember that they may be busy dealing with the animals, and that is more important.

TASK TWO - DIET

It is important that the keepers know how much food each animal gets.

Apart from the grass they eat in the fields, can you find out what else the donkeys are given to eat?

Answer the following questions. Use the information boards or find a friendly keeper who has some spare time to help!

Q1. What else are the donkeys given to eat? Make a list...

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Q3. How will the amount and type of foods given affect the donkey's overall health? Explain.

Q4. The diagram opposite shows a horse's lower front teeth at about 6 months of age before they are all fully developed.

Can you explain why these teeth show that horses (and donkeys) are herbivores?

