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Having a horse has taught me responsibility in many different ways. A healthy horse requires lots of attention in many different areas. You have to dedicate yourself to your animal if you want him to perform for you and to be good. All these things have made me more responsible and taught me important lessons about growing up.

A normal daily working horse would need more care than a horse that isn't ridden very often. A working horse would need the right amount of food and would also need fresh clean water all day. If a horse was being kept inside they would need proper bedding such as straw or sawdust. A horse that is kept outside would need safe and strong fencing and a shelter to keep safe if anything should happen.

Grooming is a very important step of taking care of your horse. When you are grooming a horse you would need to start with the curry comb, the hard brush, and soft brush. After you curry you would need moisturizer and shosheen. These sprays would help there coat. After you curry and brush you need to clean there hooves. Cleaning the horses hooves is limiting the chance of the horse to get any infections in the hoof such as laminitis or founder. You would need to clean the hooves with a hoof pick and bleach. The hoof pick gets all the dirt and pebbles or rocks out of the hoof. Then you would spray the hoof to disinfect anything that might be in the hoof. Then after you brush and clean the hooves you now would need to brush the mane and tale out. For this step you need a good mane and tale brush and the conditioner. You need to brush the mane and tale out then condition and again brush it out. After you get all -

the knots out you should braid the tale and sometimes the mane to keep them nice.

Once every one or two months horses need to be vaccinated to prevent diseases and different sicknesses. When you deworm a horse you are preventing the horse from worms and other wormlike diseases, such as pinworm. Pinworm causes an itching sensation causing the horse to rub its tale on fences, stall walls, posts. Etc. and if the horse rubs on anything else it could be reinfected or another horse could be infected.

When you are using equipment you would want to handle it with care even if it isn't yours. When you use the equipment you would need to oil it for shows and dust it off. For a bridle if it was leather you would also need to oil it and keep it shining. With the bit you would usually take a wet damp cloth and wipe the bit down until there are no spots left on it. After you clean the saddle and bridle you are now ready to show your horse.

In order for your horse to perform well for you, you would need to correctly condition and train your horse. A horse is kind of like an athlete they need lots of training and exercise to get better at what they are working on. Good exercise will help your horse in building muscle and how long your horse can be worked. A younger horse would need to start slowly and every time you work your horse gradually increase your time limit. If you pull a horse out of the pasture and it has not been ridden in a while and you expect the horse to do great you might overheat your horse and may cause muscle or joint soreness. The best conditioning to do with your horse is called legging up which means to walk and trot your horse for hours. This type of conditioning will help your horse in muscular, bone, ligaments, and tendon areas. After walking and trotting your

horse for hours you can try different training techniques to strengthen your horse.

In this essay I have said what a horse has taught me in life and what responsibilities I have learned from just joining 4-H. it has also taught me how wonderful taking care of a horse can be and how life changing it can be.