

Evolution of Popular Breeds



ARABIAN
HORSE ASSOCIATION

6030 Greenwood Plaza Blvd
Suite 100
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

youth@arabianhorses.org
www.arabianhorses.org

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Discover
Leg Up
Arabian Horse Association

Lesson Plan

1. Arabian Horses – Ancient History

- A. Arabian horses evolved in the desert over thousands of years. They were bred by the Bedouins, a nomadic people who treasured their horses. They selected breeding stock carefully to be sound, agile, and loyal. These traits served the horses well in the harsh desert conditions and during frequent wars.
- B. Arabian warriors used their horses as mounts during invasions into Europe. These wars were fought because Muslims, followers of the Prophet Mohammed, believed in spreading their religion. They used the Arabian horse to travel and fight as far west as Spain and as far east as China!



2. Expansion Into Europe

- A. Before Arabian horses were introduced into European breeding programs, European horses were typically very large, heavily-built horses. This had been important because those horses had to carry not only men, but also the heavy suits of armor and large weapons commonly used.



Darley Arabian

- B. Why did this change? With the invention and spread of firearms, heavy armor and swords were less effective and so were used less. Thus, it was not as important to ride horses capable of carrying heavy equipment.
- C. Qualities like speed and agility became more important, and the Arabian horse had them! Arabian horses were sought to improve the bloodlines which then dominated Europe. The addition of Arabian blood added quickness and sureness of foot.
- D. Three Arabian stallions were imported to Europe from the Middle East between 1683-1730. These stallions were the Darley Arabian, the Byerly Turk, and the Goldolphin Arabian. These stallions gave rise to the majority of all modern Thoroughbred bloodlines.



Byerly Turk

3. Arabian Genetics

- A. Arabian genetics are said to be fixed, or proponent, meaning Arabians are more likely than other breeds to pass their traits onto offspring.
- B. The use of pure Arabian blood to strengthen other bloodlines has occurred so often throughout history that nearly every modern recreational or “light” breed has been improved, at some point, by being crossed with the Arabian horse.
- C. The Thoroughbred is perhaps the best example of the use and spread of Arabian bloodlines. Nearly every Thoroughbred traces its male lines to one of the three foundation Arabian stallions: Darley Arabian, Byerly Turk, and the Goldolphin Arabian. The Thoroughbred itself has also influenced dozens of other breeds, including stock horses and warmbloods, thus spreading Arabian influence even further.

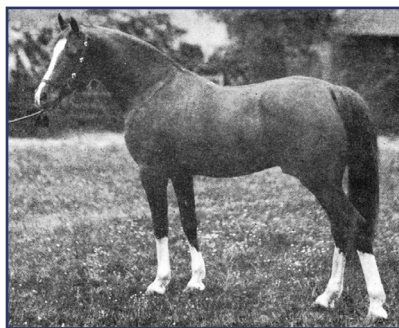
4. Noble Arabian Horse Breeding Programs

- A. Nobility and the upper class of many countries prized Arabian horses. By making Arabian horses their horse of choice, some of these influential people gave rise to breeding programs which are today renowned worldwide.
- B. Solomon, King of Israel, ruled during the 9th century. He was reputed to have built 40,000 stalls for his Arabian horses!
- C. The Turkish ruler Mohamed Ali the Great (from the early 1800s) loved the Arabian horse, and he used his power and wealth to collect the best Arabian horses in the Middle East. He even negotiated peace treaties with Arabia based upon payment in Arabian horses! His collection eventually grew to 1,100 horses. This herd was further developed by Mohamed’s son, and over time, the herd has maintained and broadened its influence throughout Egypt and Europe.



Goldolphin





English Crabbet Arabian Stud

- D. The English Crabbet Arabian Stud was founded by Wilfred and Lady Anne Blunt of England. Their passion for Arabian horses led them to travel extensively into the desert. The Blunts actively bred Arabian horses from 1878 through 1906. They chose their own horses during frequent trips into the desert and their program provided foundation horses for countries such as Russia, Poland, Australia, North and South America, and Egypt.
- E. Arabian horses were bred by Russian Tsars and noblemen in the 17th century. In the late 1800s more organized breeding programs were established, one of those started by Count Orlov. He developed the Orlov Trotter. Another Russian nobleman, Count Stroganov, traveled to the Middle East to obtain animals for his breeding program. He also admired the Crabbet Arabian Stud and purchased animals from their studbooks.

5. Influence on Modern European Breeds

- A. The Arabian horse greatly influenced the development of more than 30 modern European breeds. Arabian horse characteristics which have been passed to other breeds might include:
 - i. A finely made head with large, expressive, widely-spaced eyes, small ears, a delicate and tapering muzzle, a bulging forehead (known as the jibah), and a dished face.
 - ii. A long elegant neck, arched (known as the mitbah), tying high to the chest and withers.
 - iii. A flat topline from withers to loin to hip.
 - iv. A high-set tail which is also carried high when in motion.
- B. Look carefully at the following breeds in photos or on the AHA Evolution of Breeds poster. What are some Arabian characteristics you can identify in the following breeds?

Welsh Mountain Pony—Wales, 1st century A.D.

Thoroughbred—England, Early 1700s

Hackney—England, 1760

Trakehner—Russia, Early 1800s

Lipizzan—Slovenia, Early 1800s

Percheron—France, Late 1700s



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This, Bonheur's best-known painting, shows the horse market held in Paris on the tree-lined Boulevard de l'Hôpital, near the asylum of Salpêtrière, which is visible in the left background. For a year and a half Bonheur sketched there twice a week, dressing as a man to discourage attention. Bonheur was well established as an animal painter when the painting debuted at the Paris Salon of 1853, where it received wide praise. In arriving at the final scheme, the artist drew inspiration from George Stubbs, Théodore Géricault, Eugène Delacroix, and ancient Greek sculpture: she referred to The Horse Fair as her own "Parthenon frieze."

Gift of Cornelius Vanderbilt, 1887
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

6. Influence on Modern American Breeds

- A. Arabian horses also helped shape breeds popular in America today, either directly through the addition of purebred Arabian horses in strategic breeding programs, or indirectly through the use of other breeds already profoundly influenced by Arabian horse bloodlines (such as the Thoroughbred).

American Quarter Horse—Virginia, 1700s

Morgan—Vermont, 1789

American Saddlebred—U.S. Early 1800s

Standardbred—U.S., 1849

Tennessee Walking Horse—Tennessee, 1886

Appaloosa—Idaho, 1938

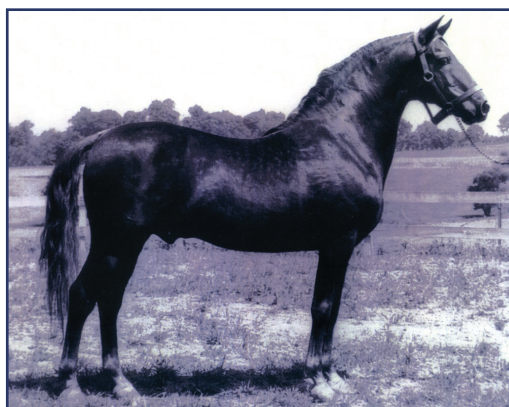
Pony of the Americas—Iowa, 1954

Paint Horse—U.S., 1960s

National Show Horse—U.S., 1981



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Morgan Horse

Warrior Horses

Before the advent of modern weaponry such as firearms, European horses had to be large and heavily built. They had to possess enough strength to easily carry a man plus his heavy weaponry and armor. A suit of armor and sword alone could weigh 100 pounds—and that's not including tack, other weapons, shields, and the rider!

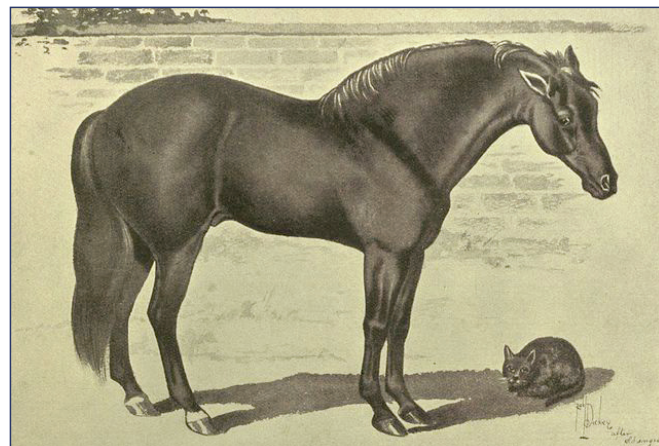
The Arabian horse was the war vehicle of choice in many places around the world. Can you think of any qualities the Arabian horse has in common with today's war vehicles?



The Arabian Horse in England

The Goldolphin Arabian lived from about 1724 to 1754. He is considered one of the three foundation sires for the Thoroughbred. The stallion was foaled in Yemen and given as a gift to King Louis XV, the king of France. Eventually he was purchased by the English Earl of Goldolphin, and was known from then on as Goldolphin Arabian. His closest companion was a cat named Grimalkin, who is in several of Goldolphin Arabian's portraits. The stallion and the cat had a long friendship and soon after the horse died, Grimalkin also died, reportedly of grief. **Byerly Turk** was one of the three Thoroughbred foundation stallions. He originally belonged to a Turkish officer. When the Turkish officer was captured in 1688, the stallion was claimed by Captain Robert Byerly of England. The horse served as a wartime mount for Captain Byerly before becoming a stud in England in 1689. His descendants were famous for their superior form and speed, two hallmarks of the Thoroughbred.

The Crabbet Arabian Stud was founded by Wilfrid and Lady Anne Blunt. Lady Anne was granddaughter of the English poet Lord Byron, who also admired horses and had an appreciation for the cultures of the Mid-East.



Goldolphin Arabian and his cat, Grimalkin



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Lord Byron included horses in a number of his poems, including this one, which underscores the horse's wartime role.

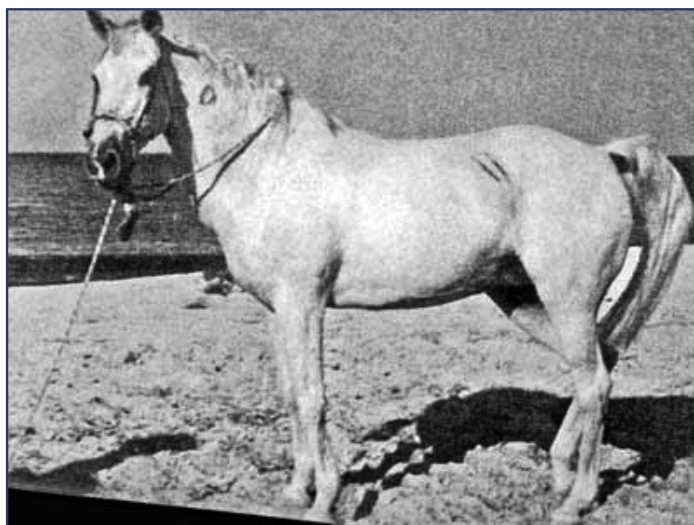
*And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war.
- Lord Byron*

The Arabian Horse is the Stuff of Legends

Tales of the beautiful Arabian horse can be found throughout written and oral history, especially in the Middle East. Often these stories describe the mythic origins of Arabian breed characteristics. Enjoy this traditional Arabian horse legend!

Legend of the Al Khamsa Mares

Long ago, a tribe of Bedouins came to the end of a long and tiring journey through the desert. Their proud Arabian mares were parched and exhausted. Knowing this, the warriors decided to drink in the nearby watering hole, but then each master called to his horses. Five extraordinary mares ignored their thirst and chose instead to return to their masters' sides. From that day forward, those five mares were honored as the most loyal of all. The Al Khamsa, or "five", mares became the most revered mare of the Bedouin and were each given a name to represent her own bloodline.



Al Khamsa Mare



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Unscramble the tiles below to reveal a message

R E

S A

T I C

P O T

N G

E N E

P R E

B I A

E N T

A R A



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ARBIANA SORSEH HEVA PEESD NAD LYTIIGA

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1

Unscramble each of the clue words above, then copy the letters in the numbered boxes below with the same number.

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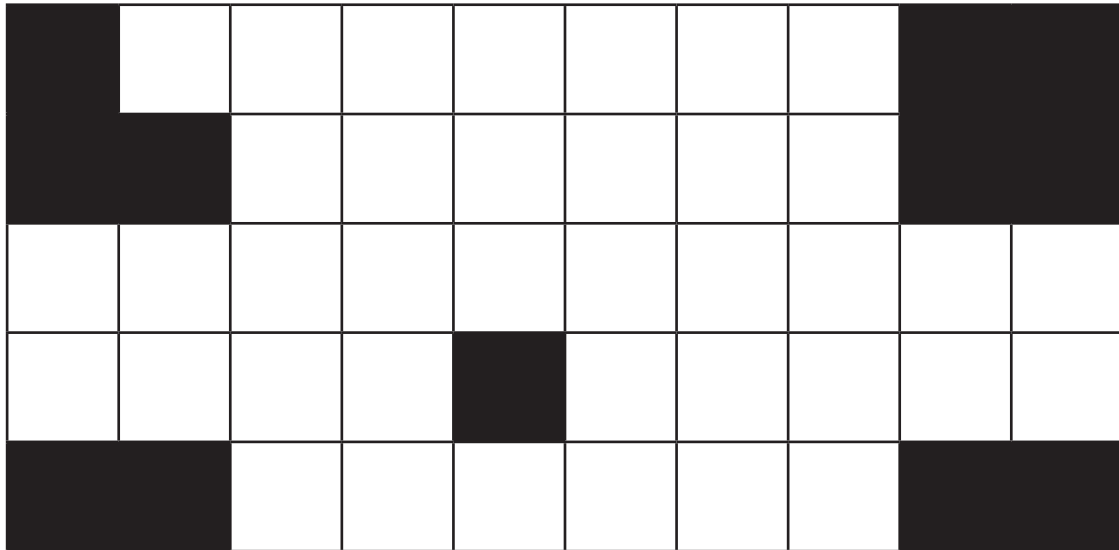
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12 3 13 14 7 15



Unscramble the letters below and place in the boxes to reveal a message



S A S A N
 F L R E D C
 O B R E E I S
 M N R T U I E G H D
 I A H O B L N S E T



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R E	S A	T I C	P O T
N G	E N E	P R E	B I A
	E N T	A R A	

A R A	B I A	N G	E N E	T I C
S A	R E	P R E	P O T	E N T



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ARBIANA SORSEH HEVA PEESD NAD LYTIIGA

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1

Unscramble each of the clue words above, then copy the letters in the numbered boxes below with the same number.

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12 3 13 14 7 15



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		B	R	E	E	D	S				

S A S A N
 F L R E D C
 O B R E E I S
 M N R T U I E G H D
 I A H O B L N S E T



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