

Leading Livestock

Objective: Students will be able to understand the importance of holding the lead rope correctly when leading livestock. They will also learn the size difference between themselves and the animal.

Concept: A person bound to the animal that is being led can be in danger if the animal bolts to get away from the person.

Targeted Age: Elementary through high school

ACTIVITY 1

Materials: Cotton rope, approximately 20 to 30 feet in length (cotton lunge line works well)

Ask each student their approximate weight. Place one student on one end of the rope, then place enough students on the other end that they would add up to 1000 lbs. Remind the students that the average weight of a full size horse or show steer is anywhere from 1000 lbs to 1300+ lbs. Do not allow students to wrap the rope around their body or hands.

Discuss a scenario where the student is leading the animal when it decides to go back to the barn or escape. Have the large group of students begin pulling on the rope and see if the single student can keep the others from "returning to the barn."

ACTIVITY 2

Materials: One or more cattle or horse halters with cotton lead ropes attached

This activity asks the students to pretend to be animals and animal handlers. Have one student hang onto the halter and pretend to be the animal. Another student is the handler and holds onto the lead rope. Have the handler hold the rope coiled like a lyrate (see picture #1). Have the student that is holding the halter "spook" and start pulling hard. If you have enough children, you can have three or four hold onto the halter while the handler tries to hold the coiled lead rope in one hand. With the rope coiled, the lead rope will tighten around the student's hand, trapping the hand so he cannot let go and could potentially be drug by the frightened animal.

Next, have the student holding the lead rope fold it into a figure 8 shape, hanging onto the center of the remaining lead (see picture #2). Have the other students "spook" again pulling on the halter. This time, the lead rope should slide through the youth's hand and not tangle around their hand.

ACTIVITY 3

Make copies of the boy leading the team of work horses (next page). Ask students to draw a picture showing how to safely hold the reins or lead rope when leading horses.

Q: How would having the rope around your waist or other parts of your body influence the results?

A: The rope, wherever placed, will tighten when the animal bolts, knocking down, tripping or dragging the person. Any large framed animal or pet has a lower center of gravity than a two-legged person who falls down more easily. A person is no match for the large bulk and weight of an animal.

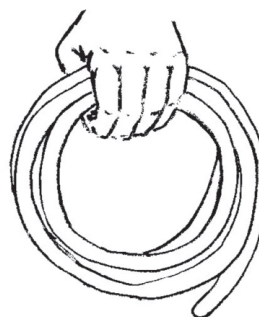


Figure 1

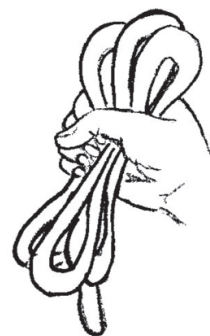


Figure 2

(resource on the next page)



Leading Livestock (resource)

