

## Heather on Horseback <sup>1</sup>

This is a story about a young girl riding her horse and the mishap that changed her life.

### Instructions

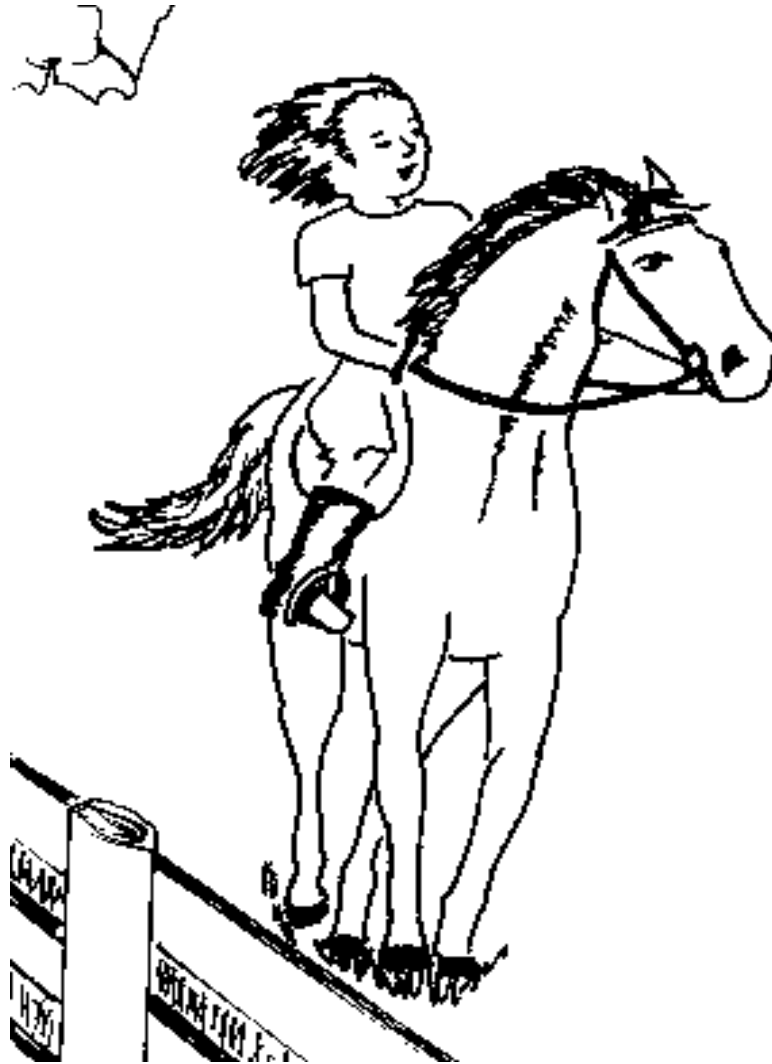
Get together with two or three of your friends. Then read the story and answer the questions that appear in the story.

Mark your answers on the answer sheet. Please don't write in the problem booklet. After you have selected your answers to a question, discuss your choices with your friends, but please don't change your answers or mark more answers. Continue reading the story while answering and discussing the questions.

When you finish the story, ask the instructor for a copy of the answer key. Compare your answers to those in the key, but don't change your answers. Discuss the story and answers with your friends and the instructor. When you finish, complete the questionnaire attached to this booklet. Give the booklet and the completed questionnaire to the instructor. Your answers will be used to improve the exercise. Thanks!

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<sup>1</sup> Developed by Carter Waterkeyn, Marcos Montes De Oca, and Roland Panganiban at a workshop on August 3-5, 1998, Gainesville, Florida, sponsored by the University of Florida, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering and the University of Kentucky, Southeast Center for Agricultural Health and Injury Prevention. Technical advice and revisions by workshop leaders Carol Lehtola and Henry Cole. Drawings by Rita Wilkie and Roland Panganiban. The work was supported by CDC/NIOSH Cooperative Agreements U07/CCU408035-06-1 and U06/CCU412900-02. The views expressed in this document are those of the authors and not necessarily those of CDC/NIOSH or the US Government.



### Heather and Her Family

Heather is a 13-year-old. She lives with her father, Dan. Her mother died in a car accident when she was seven. Dan is in sales and marketing, and is seldom home. He is always busy with his work and doesn't spend much time with Heather, but would do anything for her.

### Another Weekend Trip

On one of Dan's many business trips, Heather stays home with her live-in nanny, Elizabeth. Heather is looking forward to her weekly riding lesson at home. Dawn is Heather's first horse. Her father bought the mare for Heather four weeks ago. Heather's riding instructor, Rick, is on his way to give the riding lesson. While waiting for Rick, Heather decides to ride. Her father stops by the fence to say good-bye before he leaves for his trip.

Turn the page and begin.

Work a page at a time.

Don't jump ahead, but you can look back anytime.

As he leaves on his trip, Heather's father stops by the fence to say good-bye, but Heather is already galloping Dawn around the pasture and pretends she doesn't see her dad. Look at Figure 1 on the next page.

Question A

What do you think is going on here? (For each item, circle T or F on the answer sheet.)

- T   F   1. Heather doesn't think she needs to wear her helmet.
- T   F   2. Dan thinks Heather is safe and not likely to be injured.
- T   F   3. Heather is excited about her lesson.
- T   F   4. Dan likes Heather to be happy and to enjoy herself.
- T   F   5. This is probably not the first time Heather has ridden without her helmet.
- T   F   6. Heather doesn't think she needs supervision as she gallops her horse.

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[After you have marked your answers, please continue with the story.]

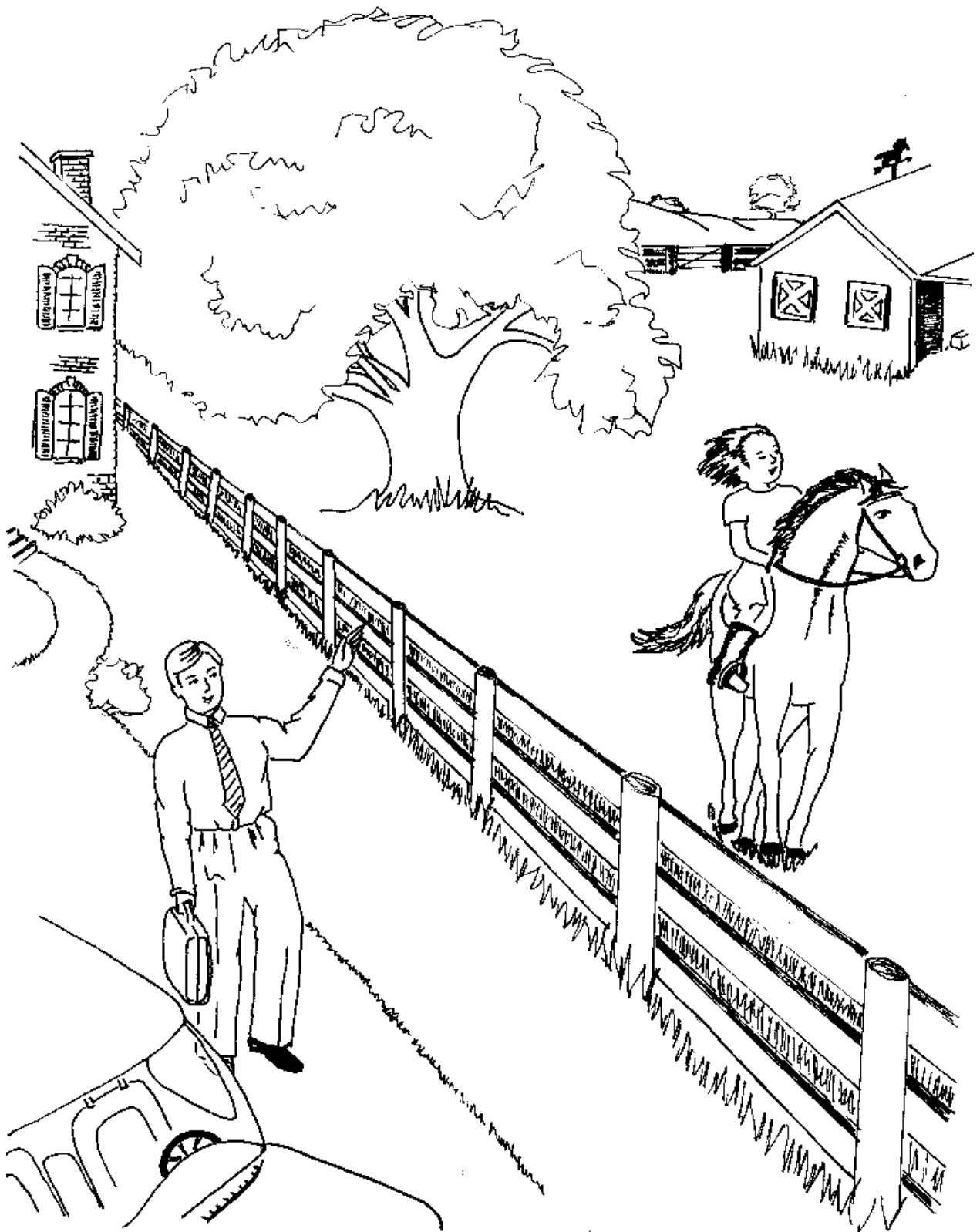


Figure 1: Heather gallops her horse as her dad leaves for a business trip.

Dan notices that Heather isn't wearing her helmet, but decides to let it go because he's running late. He also thinks Heather will be OK because she is a smart girl and is usually careful. Then he leaves without saying good-bye to his daughter.

Question B

What are some things that could happen to Heather as she rides? (For each item, circle T or F on the answer sheet.)

- T   F   7. Heather's horse could be spooked and throw her.
- T   F   8. Heather's horse could step in a hole and throw her.
- T   F   9. A loud noise from an airplane, motorcycle, truck or other source could spook the horse causing it to rear.
- T   F   10. Heather's horse could buck her off.
- T   F   11. Heather could get pinned to the fence.
- T   F   12. Heather might have a nice ride with no problems.

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[After you have marked your answers, please continue with the story.]

A small plane flying overhead drops down low to the ground. Its noise and sudden motion spook the horse. When the horse balks and rears Heather is thrown off. Look at Figure 2 on the next page.

Question C

What can Heather do to keep from getting hurt? (For each item, circle T or F on the answer sheet.)

- T   F   13.   Jump off the horse and land safely on her feet.
- T   F   14.   Wrap the reins around her hands to keep from hitting the ground.
- T   F   15.   Grab the horse's tail to keep from falling.
- T   F   16.   Wrap her arms around the horse's neck.
- T   F   17.   Put her hands and arms out to break her fall and to protect her head.

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[After you have marked your answers, please continue with the story.]

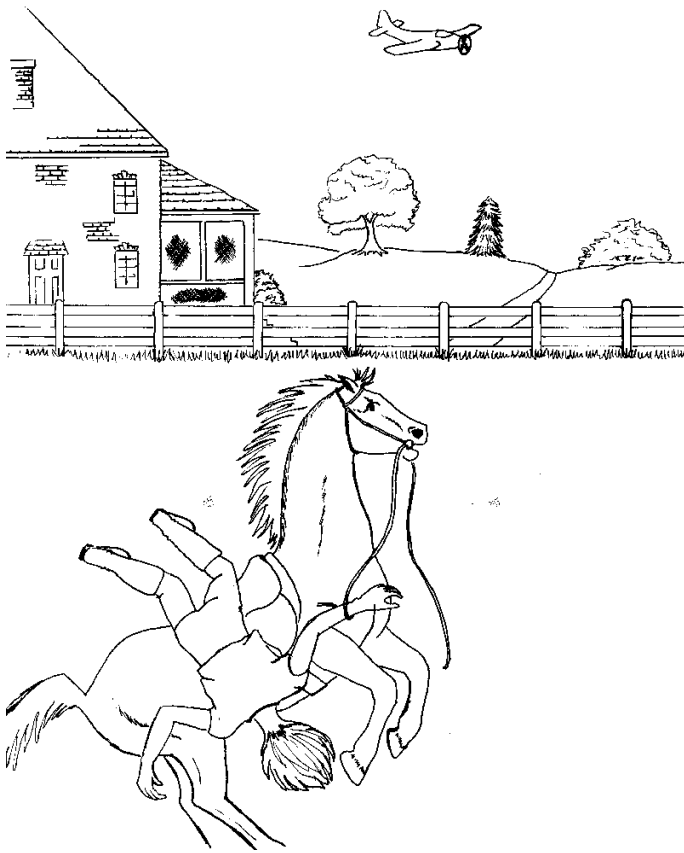
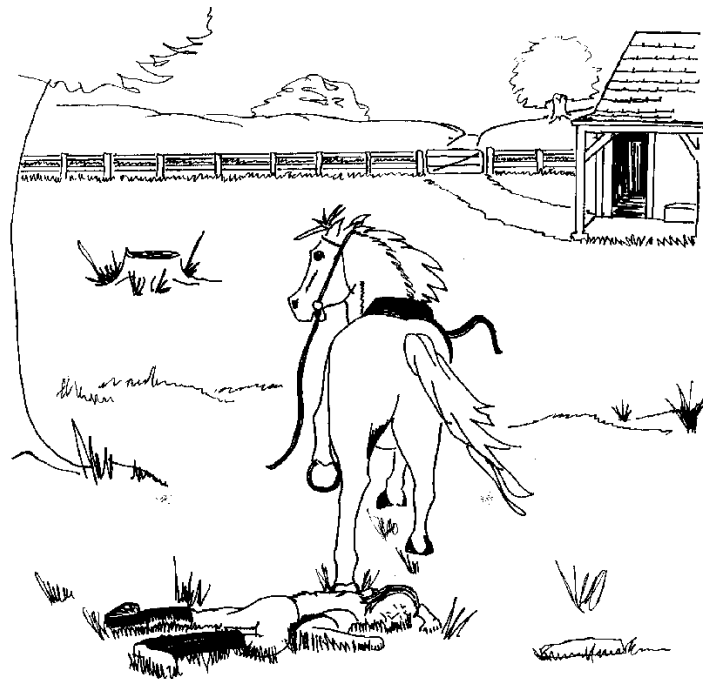


Figure 2. Heather's horse is spooked, bucks, and she is thrown





Heather's riding instructor found her lying unconscious on the ground. The local EMS rushed her to the hospital. She had no skull fractures but the concussion resulted in a severe brain injury. The cuts on her face were superficial. See Figure 3 on the next page.

#### Question D

Think about this story. What are some things Heather, Dan, Elizabeth, and Rick could have done to keep Heather from being injured? (For each item, circle T or F on the answer sheet.)

- T   F   18. Heather should have worn her helmet.
- T   F   19. Dan could have told Heather to get off the horse, go put her helmet on, and wait until Rick arrived.
- T   F   20. Rick could have stressed that Heather was not to ride unsupervised and without a helmet.
- T   F   21. Elizabeth, her live-in nanny, should have been watching out for Heather.

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[After you have marked your answers, please continue with the story.]

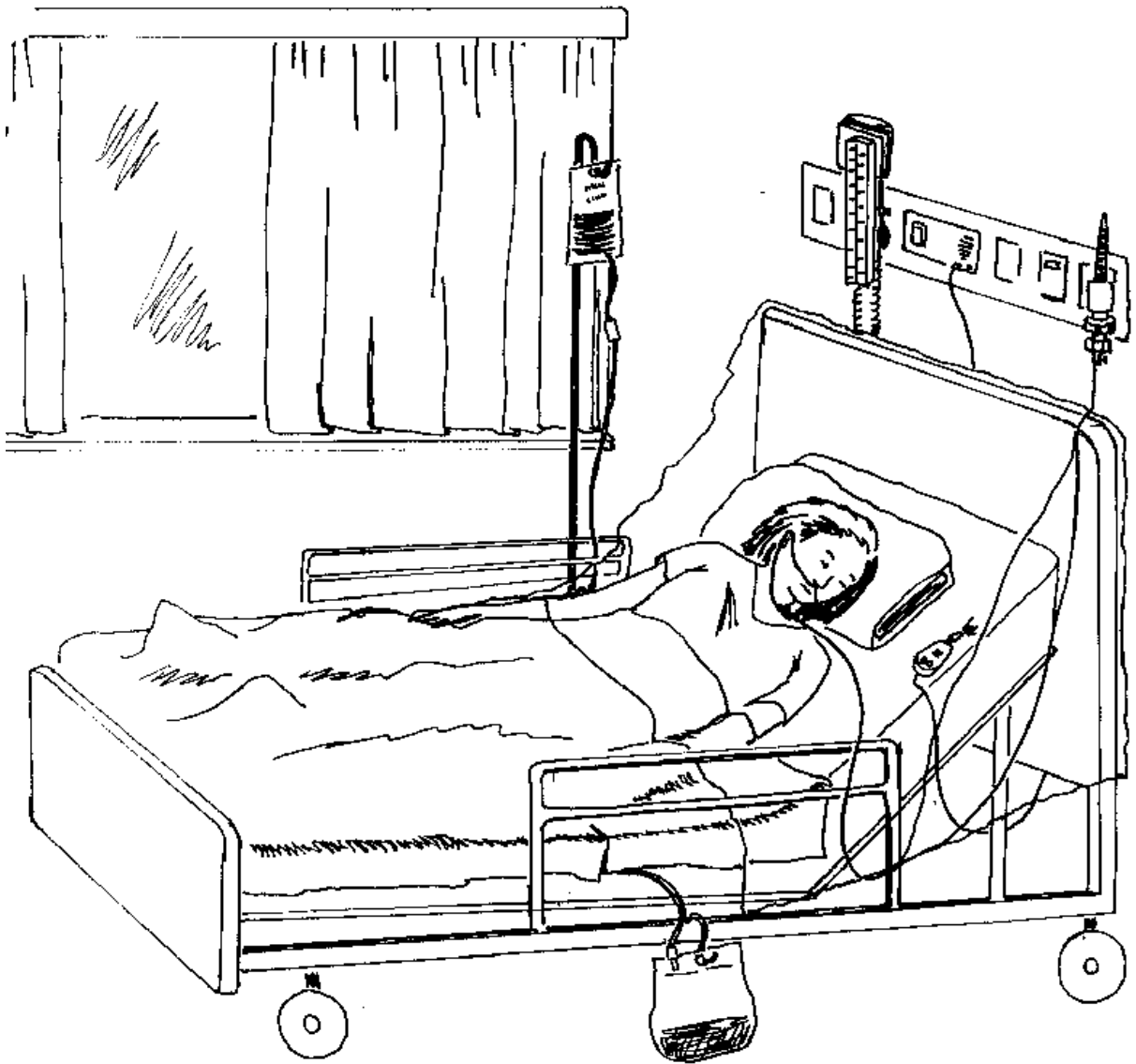


Figure 3. Heather in the hospital after her head injury.

Heather was in a coma for five weeks. Her brain damage was severe. A year later her doctors think she has healed about as much as can be expected. She has no control of her legs and cannot walk. She has great difficulty speaking and cannot write. While she can still read a little, she usually can't understand and remember what she has read. She lost much of her memory including her personal and family history. She no longer remembers her mother. Look at Figure 4 on the next page.

### Question E

What things can Heather do after her injury? (For each item, circle T or F on the answer sheet.)

- T   F   22. Ice-skate.
- T   F   23. Be a cheerleader at her high school.
- T   F   24. Play normally with her former friends.
- T   F   25. Ride her horse again by herself without assistance.
- T   F   26. Watch television.
- T   F   27. Try on clothes.
- T   F   28. Go to the mall with her father.
- T   F   29. Go to school.
- T   F   30. Get a date.

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After you have marked your answer sheet, ask the instructor for a copy of the answer key. Check the answers and discuss any differences of opinions with your friends.

After you have marked your answers, please continue with this activity by reading and discussing the newspaper clippings on the following pages.

When you have finished your discussion, please complete the questionnaire attached to your answer sheet. Give your completed answer sheet and questionnaire to the person who is conducting the class session or meeting.

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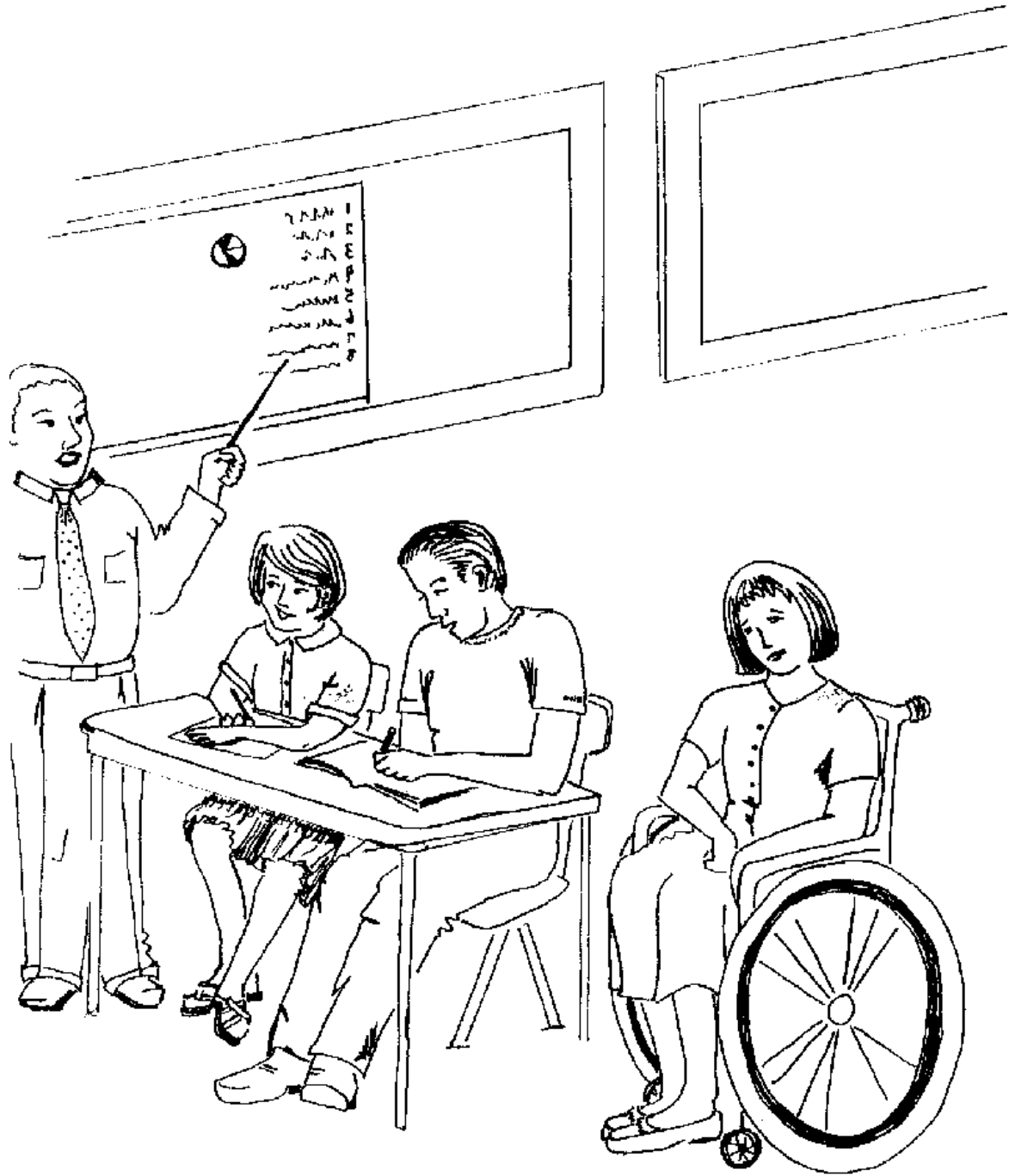


Figure 4. Heather’s doctors think she has healed as much as can be expected

### **Injuries to People On or Around Horses**

The following newspaper articles about injuries to people who fell from horses are taken from the American Association of Horse Safety (AAHS)

web page. The main concern of AAHS is the prevention of injuries to people on or around horses. According to the AAHS, the majority of injuries from horses occur when people are riding. For more information and articles regarding injuries contact:

[http://www.law.utexas.edu/dawson/theme/injur\\_97.htm](http://www.law.utexas.edu/dawson/theme/injur_97.htm)

## Florida

### Fund-Raiser for Injured Boy

*Florida Today* carried a story by Cheryl Bartoszek on April 25, 1997 about James Salmon, an eleven year old boy who was recovering from severe head injuries sustained April 6 while riding a horse in Gainesville. He was taken to a nearby hospital after being thrown into a tree. A neurosurgeon removed a blood clot from his swollen brain. He was comatose at the time.

Coma patients are rated on a 3 to 15 scale.\* Initially rated a 5, James is now a 10, and in a depressed mental state. Unable to speak, James sits in a chair and makes faces at therapists. He sleeps a lot, yet continues to improve. James is off the ventilator and has been moved from the pediatric intensive care unit to a pediatric ward. Within the next few weeks, he will leave the hospital for a rehabilitation facility closer to home. Several months of intensive rehabilitation will include relearning how to speak, eat and perform simple tasks.

James' father was with him at the time of the accident. James received permission to ride around a pasture one last time.

The fund-raiser will be held at the Cocoa Beach Country Club pavilion on May 17. Persons wishing to assist with donations of cash or labor may call (407) 784-3998 days or (407) 783-4818 evenings.

### Six-Year-Old Girl Killed in Horse Accident

Florida—The *St. Petersburg Times* carried a story on June 6, 1997 about Olivia Barber, a 6-year-old girl who bled to death from a ruptured spleen that she suffered in a riding accident. She was pinned between a horse and a stable wall while riding into a stall.

\* The Glasgow Coma Scale ranges from a low of 3 to a high of 15. To learn about the scale and how it is used, see the following web site: <http://www.ahs.uwaterloo.ca/~cahr/headfall.html>. This will take you to an article entitled "The Anatomy of a Head Injury," by Dr. Eric A. Roy, which explains the damage caused by head injuries. It also describes how emergency medicine professionals use the scale to assess the severity of the injury.

## Nebraska

### 13-Year-Old Girl Killed in Fall from Horse

Nebraska—The *Omaha World-Herald* carried a story on October 16, 1997. As she crossed a highway and a ditch, the girl lost hold of the reins, and the horse threw her to the ground. She was taken to the Bridgeport Hospital by the Broadwater rescue unit, where she died of head and internal injuries. "If there ever was a perfect child, Ashley fit the bill," the girl's teacher Marilyn Glause said. Classes were held Wednesday in the two-room school in Broadwater that Ashley attended as a seventh-grader. A school nurse and a counselor from the Leyton School District were helping students and faculty in the grieving process.

## Ohio

### Eleven-Year-Old Girl Critically Injured in Horse Accident

Ohio—*Dayton Daily News* carried a story on October 26, 1997 about an 11-year-old girl who was critically injured about 4 p.m. Saturday in Bethel Township, Miami County. The horse threw the girl and kicked her in the head in a field near 6345 S. Ohio 202, a county dispatcher said. The child was taken to Children's Medical Center.

## United Kingdom

### Death of 14-Year-Old Boy on Horseback

England—The July 11, 1996 issue of the *Daily Mail* reports on the death of a 14-year-old boy in a horse accident. The boy and a girl age nine were leading a horse through the woods near its stable when they decided to ride it. They had no saddle or helmets. The horse spooked and threw both to the ground, killing the boy and injuring the girl.

## Colorado

### Judge Injured while Riding Horse

Colorado—The *Denver Post* reported in its March 23, 1997 edition that US Bankruptcy Judge Stewart Rose was hospitalized with head injuries he suffered when the horse he was riding collided with a parked truck. Rose was out riding when his horse bolted and struck the parked vehicle. Rose

was wearing a helmet. His head struck the top of the truck's hood, which broke the helmet loose. He then hit his head on the side of the bumper.