

## **Sayings About Horses (Part 1)**

**(Story words: language, young, energy)**

Today, people travel by plane, car, train, bus, metro, and bike. But before these were the ways of getting around, people depended on horses. For thousands of years, people have ridden horses and used them in their work. Thus, our language has many sayings that involve horses because so many people lived with horses and knew their quirks and ways.

Think about the following case. You are on a long hot ride trying to get somewhere far from home. You pass a stream, and you know that this is the last stream you will pass. You have many hot miles of trail left to travel. You dismount and walk over to the stream and get a big drink of water and fill up your canteen for later. Your horse, however, looks at the stream with no interest and does not drink. The saying, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink," is something people say to mean

people will not always listen to wise counsel, no matter how much you insist.

You can tell how old a horse is by looking into his mouth and counting his teeth. An old horse has less life and work left in him than a young horse and thus has less value.

“Do not look a gift horse in the mouth” is a saying that expresses that it is rude to inspect a gift to see how much value it has. If you give someone a gift, and he asks whether the item was on sale or discounted, you could laugh and tell him to “stop looking a gift horse in the mouth.”

Most times horses graze on grass or are fed other grains, but sometimes they are given oats. Oats are known as a “hot” feed because they give horses a lot of energy that may make them wild or willful. We say that someone is “feeling his oats” if he is being self-important and bossing others around. Perhaps something good or stimulating has happened to this person. For the moment, it has made him overconfident and smug.