

**American Morgan Horse Association, Inc.**

# **Youth of the Year Contest Guidelines and Study Aid**



Youth Programs  
American Morgan Horse Association, Inc.  
4066 Shelburne Rd, Suite 5, Shelburne, VT 05482  
(802) 985-4944 • Fax: (802) 985-8897  
E-mail: [info@morganhorse.com](mailto:info@morganhorse.com) • [www.morganhorse.com](http://www.morganhorse.com)

Congratulations on deciding to participate in a Youth of the Year contest. The American Morgan Horse Association is very excited for you!

Youth of the Year contests are challenging, fun, exciting and a little bit nerve-wracking, but mostly they are a wonderful opportunity to share your love and knowledge of our wonderful Morgan horse.

Everyone wins at a Youth of the Year contest. If you have taken the time to prepare and take part you will be rewarded with knowledge, new friends and experiences that will help you to succeed in all parts of life. The oral presentation will help you to develop, or improve, your research, brainstorming, writing, and public speaking skills. The horse judging phase will help with deductive reasoning, analytical, and decision making skills. The written exam will encourage you to learn more about all aspects of horsemanship; safety, rules, nutrition, veterinary care, and more. The horsemanship pattern will give you the opportunity to practice your riding skills.

The AMHA Youth Department has prepared some guidelines to help you do your best at the upcoming contest, use these to study and test your knowledge as you prepare. I wish you the best of luck and hope that you enjoy the contest as much as we enjoy having you take part. If you have any questions regarding the contest, contact your local coordinator. I am also available to help you in any way possible. Please call during office hours, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday.

Good luck and have fun!



Katie Hodges  
Youth Programs Coordinator  
American Morgan Horse Association  
802/985-4944 ext 401  
Katie@morganhorse.com



The American Morgan Horse Association Youth of the Year Contest is a four part competition designed to show off your skills in various equine-related areas. Each phase is equally weighted and worth 250 points. Some local and regional contests may not offer all four phases of the program due to time constraints; however, in the senior division they must offer at least three of the phases.

## Phase 1 – Horse Judging

The horse judging phase will evaluate your ability to assess Morgan horses based upon their conformation and performance. To prepare for this phase you should study two resources: *The Morgan Horse Judging Standards* and the *USEF Rule Book*. The first is available at no charge from AMHA or it can be downloaded at [www.morganhorse.com](http://www.morganhorse.com), it describes the ideal type and conformation of the Morgan horse and the standards for each division. The second is available from USEF and can also be downloaded from their website at [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org). USEF is the national governing body for equestrian sport and they maintain the rules of competition that are followed at recognized Morgan shows.

Another handy resource is the video tape version of *The Morgan Horse Judging Standards*. This video is available from AMHA and illustrates each division with live action clips.

The horse judging phase should include at least three to four classes of live Morgans. These may include in-hand and performance classes. Usually you will be judging four horses at a time and, depending on the contest, you may have to give oral reasons for your placings. If you are asked to give oral reasons you should take good notes and be able to explain and defend why you placed the class the way you did. Check with your contest coordinator to see if you will be asked to do this. AMHA has developed a Morgan Youth Judging Guide, this will help you to learn more about contests, judging and giving oral reasons. Your local 4-H or FFA offices are also a great resource for horse judging materials.

How about some practice? Judge the photos of the Morgan stallions and mares shown on the following page and try delivering a set of reasons based on your placing. Have a parent or friend judge you using the cart below. For more practice cut out your own photos!

Reasons Score Chart	Possible Points	Your Points
<b>Organization.</b> Reasons should be well organized and systematic including a comparison of horses in three pairs; the top pair, the middle pair and the bottom pair. Reasons should not consist of a simple description of each animal. The focus should be on why one animal in a pair was placed over the other animal in that pair.	20	
<b>Relevancy.</b> Reasons should reflect the actual differences in the horse pairs and should consist primarily of those points of comparison that were significant in the placing of the pair.	20	
<b>Accuracy.</b> Truth is the primary consideration in scoring reasons. Redundancy in terminology describing similar points of discussion between separate pairs of horses should be avoided.	20	
<b>Terminology.</b> Emphasis should be placed on use of terms commonly used to discuss horses. Emphasis should be placed on comparative rather than descriptive terminology.	20	
<b>Presentation.</b> Oral reasons should be presented in a poised, confident, convincing manner, but they should never convey arrogance. Loud, boisterous, arrogant delivery is not desirable and should be penalized. Likewise, shy, timid, unconvincing presentations should not receive the highest scores. Reasons should be presented in a relaxed, conversational manner. The presentation should not contain lengthy pauses and must be delivered within 2 minutes. Reasons should be grammatically correct with proper pronunciation and enunciation of words and syllables.	20	

## Stallions



1



2



3



4

## Mares



1



2



3



4

## Phase 2 – Written Exam

The written exam checks your knowledge of the following areas: nutrition; genetics, color and breeding; bones, physiology and endocrinology; anatomy and teeth; Morgan history and registry rules; conformation, gaits unsoundness and way of going; horse evolution and breeds; showing and show procedures; diseases; parasites; horse psychology; tack and equipment.

Don't panic! You don't have to know everything there is to know about these twelve subject areas. You'll want to begin to build a good working knowledge though. Start with the basics; learn the basic body parts of the horse and of tack, know the basic coat colors, the famous Morgan horses of history (Justin Morgan, Sherman, Bulrush, Rienzi and Ethan Allen to name a few), etc. You'll probably be surprised at how much you already know just from being around horses. Do you know where the hock is? Where would you find a horn on a saddle? What is a female horse called? I bet you know all of those answers and more!

You may find the exam hard at first, but don't give up! Answer as many questions as you can but don't get frustrated if you can't answer them all or run out of time. The exam will be long, senior divisions exams will be 250 questions, and there will usually be a time limit of one hour. Junior and Walk/Trot divisions will usually have fewer questions. You are not expected to finish all of the questions, especially when you are just getting started. You are just expected to do the best that you can, and to learn from the experience.

Don't concentrate too long on any one question, if you can't think of the answer move on, you may even find something later in the test that will help you remember the answer to that question you got stuck on. Most tests will have a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blanks, true/false, and matching questions, as well as pictures that you will be asked to label or identify. Find the area of the test that you are most comfortable with and start there, you don't have to start with number one! After the test, take a few minutes to think about some of the questions that really stumped you, jot them down and the next time you study you can look up those questions and figure out the answers.

All of the questions on your test should be taken from the AMHA reference list:

1. THE COMPLETE MORGAN HORSE by Jeanne Mellin
2. THE MORGAN HORSE JUDGING STANDARDS MANUAL
3. THE AMHA REGISTRATION RULES BOOKLET
4. The AMHAY Horsemastership Program
5. The USEF Rule Book
6. THE HORSE by J.W. Evans, Anthony Borton, Harold Hintz, and L. Dale Van Vleck
7. THE ILLUSTRATED VETERINARY ENCYCLOPEDIA FOR HORSEMEN by Equine Research, Editor Don M. Wagoner
8. The Morgan Horse Magazine (A current year subscription is strongly encouraged, but 5-6 articles to be determined will be photo-copied and mailed to the qualifying participants along with the speech topic.)
9. The AMHA Website

How about some practice? Can you answer any of the questions below? After you have tried to answer all the questions go back and find the answers from the references listed above, this is the best way to learn!

1. The height of the horse is measured in hands. A hand is equal to \_\_\_\_\_ inches.

2. The mother of a horse: \_\_\_\_\_
3. An untrained or inexperienced horse: \_\_\_\_\_
4. A male horse that has been castrated and cannot breed: \_\_\_\_\_
5. A singing master and schoolteacher in Vermont: \_\_\_\_\_
6. The form sent to AMHA when a horse is sold is called a: \_\_\_\_\_
7. A name that is registered with the AMHA and can be used in front of the horse's name:  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Name people refer to a "jaquima" noseband as: \_\_\_\_\_
9. An injury or imperfection that does not interfere with the serviceability of the horse is a  
\_\_\_\_\_.
10. Foaled in 1833, this horse was noted for his beauty and speed at the trot. He was the most popular horse of his time and sired over 1,200 foals. His name was:  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. This famous Morgan was named, "Champion of the World" in 1867 when he beat the reigning champion trotter, Dexter, in front of 40,000 people. His name was  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. Mating of animals more closely related than the average of the population from which they came is \_\_\_\_\_
13. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a horse with a mixture of white hairs throughout its coat.
14. The first milk produced by the mare. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Test used to diagnose Equine Infectious Anemia. \_\_\_\_\_
16. A speedy, but collected, gallop is called a \_\_\_\_\_
17. A series of right & left circles in a riding pattern: \_\_\_\_\_.
18. \_\_\_\_\_ published the first volume of the Morgan Horse Register.
19. Morgans range from \_\_\_\_\_ hands, with some individuals over or under.
20. In Classic Pleasure, the length of the toe must not exceed \_\_\_\_\_.
21. The number of handlers allowed in an in hand class is \_\_\_\_\_.
22. The test required before any foal may be registered is \_\_\_\_\_.
23. A horse's complete name, including letters, punctuation, and blanks, shall not exceed \_\_\_\_\_ characters.
24. The word that describes the ideal or standard of perfection for the breed:  
\_\_\_\_\_
25. The horny growth behind the fetlock is called the: \_\_\_\_\_.
26. The tool used to restrain a horse by applying pressure to this lip is called a \_\_\_\_\_.

27. A horse that is caught in his stall between his withers and the stall wall is said to be \_\_\_\_\_.
28. A horse with good conformation should have withers the same height as the \_\_\_\_\_.
29. Name the English bridle with two bits: \_\_\_\_\_
30. How wide must a curb chain be to be legal: \_\_\_\_\_
31. This is used in many species to provide a rough guide of the nutritional adequacy of a diet and the level of food intake of an animal. \_\_\_\_\_
32. This nutrient is a carrier of substances that nourish, taking nutrients to the cells, and also transports wastes from the cells to the organs of excretion. \_\_\_\_\_
33. This nutrient is the oils and related compounds in the grain and roughage and naturally make up about 2—4% of the ration. \_\_\_\_\_
34. This nutrient is described as the building blocks of tissue and are composed of units called amino acids. \_\_\_\_\_
35. Which determines the sex of a foal, sire or dam? \_\_\_\_\_
36. Number of chromosome pairs in the horse \_\_\_\_\_
37. A horse with a mixture of white and dark hairs of any color is known as:  
\_\_\_\_\_
38. What is another name for the knee bones? \_\_\_\_\_
39. Number of pairs of ribs in the average horse \_\_\_\_\_
40. Two bones that compose the gaskin \_\_\_\_\_
41. Founded in 1909, the Morgan Horse Club (as it was then called) was formed to support the Morgan breed. It evolved with the breed, and in 1971 underwent reorganization and was renamed: \_\_\_\_\_
42. This Morgan was ridden by Confederate General Stonewall Jackson in his Civil War campaigns. \_\_\_\_\_
43. This Morgan was the mount of General Joshua Chamberlain when he won the fight of Little Round Top during the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863. \_\_\_\_\_
44. The percentage of today's Saddlebreds carry Morgan blood \_\_\_\_\_
45. Year of the first annual Grand National Morgan Horse Show was held in Detroit, Michigan.  
\_\_\_\_\_
46. This is a common unsoundness resulting from wear, injury or abuse. On each side of the heel extending above the hoof are elastic cartilages just under the skin that serve as part of the shock-absorbing mechanism. They are commonly termed lateral cartilages. When they ossify (turn to bone) they are called this: \_\_\_\_\_

47. Not very common but are serious unsoundnesses. These bony deposits usually appear just above the coronary band (hoof head) on a hind foot, although front feet also may be affected. The long and short pastern bones may fuse together, causing severe pain and lameness. \_\_\_\_\_
48. This is an inflammation of navicular bone and bursa. The condition causes lingering lameness and should be diagnosed and treated by a veterinarian. \_\_\_\_\_
49. During the Miocene epoch, what 2 sets of bones fused to enable the horse to run faster?  
\_\_\_\_\_
50. Name the evolutionary stage of the horse that produced the first one-toed horse.  
\_\_\_\_\_
51. The very first horses evolved on the North American continent over \_\_\_\_\_ million years ago.
52. Another name for Eohippus \_\_\_\_\_
53. True or False-in carriage driving a driver must carry a whip in hand \_\_\_\_\_
54. When driving two unmatched horses as a team, which side is the smaller horse placed \_\_\_\_\_
55. Marker at which a dressage horse and rider enter the ring \_\_\_\_\_
56. Name the jump which first has a wall and then a pond with water. \_\_\_\_\_
57. On which side of the neck should the bight of the reins be placed for saddle seat equitation?  
\_\_\_\_\_
58. Another name for lockjaw, characterized by muscle rigidity \_\_\_\_\_
59. Disease caused by Streptococcus equi infection \_\_\_\_\_
60. Test used to diagnose EIA \_\_\_\_\_
61. Name for inflammation of the bone \_\_\_\_\_
62. The most common and most destructive of all internal parasites in the equine \_\_\_\_\_
63. These parasites are common in young horses and are usually not found in horses more than five years old. Immunity normally develops following exposure to these large roundworms during adolescence. \_\_\_\_\_
64. Larvae of all three types enter the mouth and embed themselves in the mucous lining of the gums. After about a month, they migrate to the stomach and become attached, leaving the stomach lining inflamed and ulcerated. After 8 to 10 months of development, the larvae pass out in the manure. Once outside, it hatches into an adult fly, and the cycle begins again.  
\_\_\_\_\_
65. What are the two principle methods of self-protection

66. utilized by horses? \_\_\_\_\_
67. What is the primary consideration of any horse facility? \_\_\_\_\_
68. What are the four natural aids? \_\_\_\_\_
69. Name for a bit with a very shallow port \_\_\_\_\_
70. This martingale does not affect the head position of a horse. \_\_\_\_\_
71. Who introduced the ladies' sidesaddle into the horse world? \_\_\_\_\_
72. Part of harness to which the overcheck is attached. \_\_\_\_\_
73. Type of kimberwicke bit with slots for rein placement. \_\_\_\_\_
74. This is the proper name for the lash on a whip. \_\_\_\_\_
75. True or False: Only informal attire is allowed in Classic seat equitation classes.  
\_\_\_\_\_
76. True or False: Whips are prohibited in the AMHA Dressage seat medal class.  
\_\_\_\_\_
77. Horses should have annual immunizations for: \_\_\_\_\_  
a. Ringworm    b. Tetanus    c. EIA    d. Colic
78. When a horse lays his ears flat back against his neck, he is: \_\_\_\_\_  
a. Lazy    b. Sleepy    c. Angry    d. Interested in something behind him
79. Morgans may be shown with boots in this class: \_\_\_\_\_  
a. Hunter over Fences    b. Parade    c. Stock Horse    d. English Pleasure
80. Which of the following are examples of grain: \_\_\_\_\_  
a. Corn & Timothy    b. Corn & Oats    c. Oats & Timothy    d. Alfalfa & Timothy
81. Which of the following are examples of natural aids: \_\_\_\_\_  
a. Seat & Crop    b. Spurs & Crop    c. Seat & Legs    d. Spurs & Legs
82. Which is a mild bit that acts on the horse's bars and lips? A direct pull on the reins exerts direct pull on the horse's mouth. \_\_\_\_\_  
a. Western curb    b. Hackamore    c. English Curb    d. Snaffle
83. A horse that has gone off his feed is restless, and kicks his belly probably has: \_\_\_\_\_  
a. Thrush    b. Colic    c. Strangles    d. Navicular
84. Most Morgan classes call for Morgans to be judged \_\_\_\_\_  
a. 50% Type, 50% Conformation    b. 60% Performance, 40% Type  
c. 40% Performance, 60% Type    d. 30% Type, 70% Conformation
85. General Sheridan's famous horse was: \_\_\_\_\_  
a. Comanche    b. Copper Bottom    c. Rienzi    d. Black Hawk
86. The running martingale is attached from the girth to the: \_\_\_\_\_  
a. Noseband    b. Reins    c. Billets    d. Throatlatch

## Phase 3 – Horsemanship Pattern

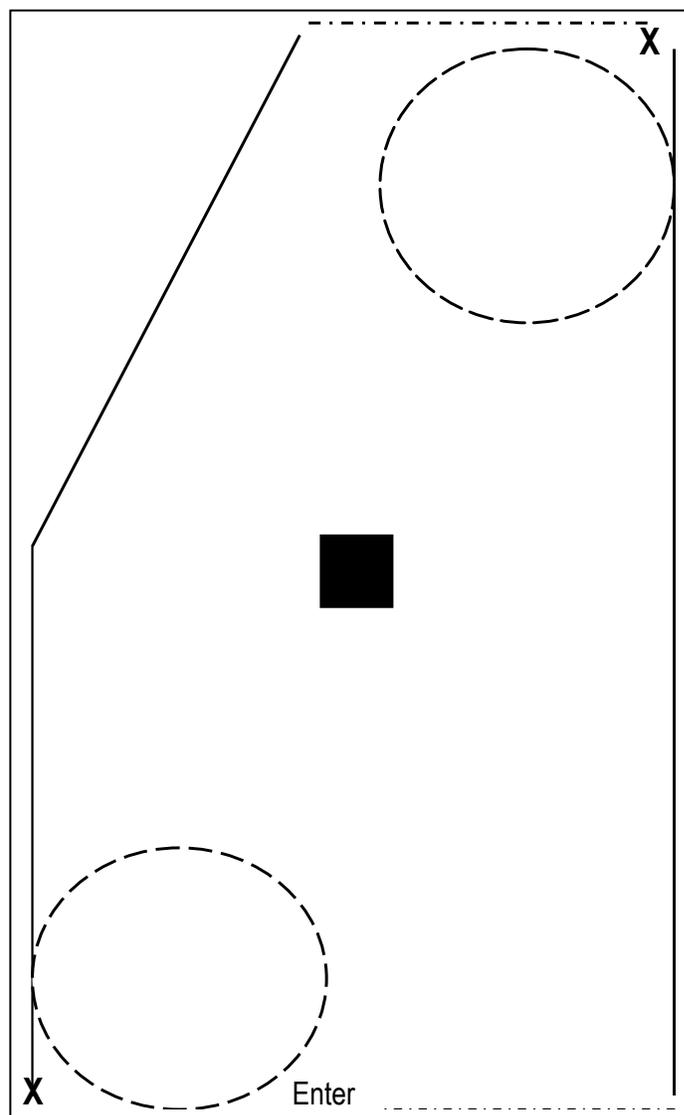
The horsemanship phase of the Youth of the Year contest evaluates your riding or driving ability. It is important to realize that this is a horsemanship pattern, not an equitation pattern. Your contest organizer should provide you with the pattern beforehand so that you can practice, the pattern will be executed from memory.

Score sheets will vary depending on the pattern but, in scoring this phase the judge will evaluate:

- Obedience of horse and correctness in the execution of the pattern
- Transitions and smoothness of overall performance
- Position of the handler, overall appearance and use of aids
- Showmanship and poise
- Grooming and presentation of horse and handler

How about some practice? Can you ride the pattern below? Have your riding instructor score you using the score chart.

1. Enter arena and acknowledge judge.
2. Turn right and proceed down the rail at a jog or trot on the correct diagonal.
3. At the end of the straightaway, halt.
4. In the curve, demonstrate a circle to the left at a lope or canter.
5. At close of circle, transition to a walk and continue to a point half way across the end of the arena. Stop briefly.
6. Pivot left and extend the jog or trot on the incorrect diagonal to the mid-point of the opposite straightaway.
7. At the mid-point, return to the jog or change to the correct diagonal and continue to the end of the straightaway.
8. Halt in the curve and turn 180 degrees in either direction.
9. In the curve, demonstrate a circle to the right at a lope or canter.
10. At the close of the circle, halt. Turn toward center ring and walk to judge.
11. Wait to be dismissed by the judge. Acknowledge judge and depart from arena.



<b>Pattern Score Chart</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Your Score</b>	<b>Scorer's Notes</b>
Execution of pattern	175 pts		
Rider's position, correctness and effectiveness of aids	25 pts		
Showmanship, poise, and overall performance	25 pts		
Grooming of horse and rider	25 pts		
<b>Total Score</b>	250 pts		

## Phase 4 – Oral Presentation

The oral presentation, or speech, will be on a topic determined by the contest organizer. There is a five minute time limit for this phase. Five minutes may sound like a lot now, but once you start talking you may find it difficult to limit yourself to this time frame.

The best advice is to be prepared! This is accomplished by starting work on your speech as soon as possible and by practicing it over and over again. If your topic is one that will require research or interviewing other people, make sure to plan ahead, it may be difficult to find the resources you need or to schedule time with those you would like to speak to.

Visual aids can add a polished look to a presentation and may help to put you at ease. If you decide to use visual aids make sure that they are appropriate to the topic, neatly prepared, and that you have all of the materials you need. Don't wait until you are in the speech room and the judges are ready to hear your presentation to ask for an easel and an overhead projector! Good, stiff poster board or foam board, in appropriate colors, make a good background for a picture collage, but make sure the pictures are well attached!

In scoring this part of the contest, judges will consider:

- General appearance, voice, poise, posture and manner of speech
- Presentation of subject, including organization of material, proper grammar and vocabulary
- Subject matter, including background information, originality and constructive thoughts
- Interview and question responses

Also, be sure to make three extra copies of your speech, you should give these to the judges before you begin. Don't forget to include a bibliography; list any books, magazine articles, websites or other resources you used, and list anyone that you may have interviewed as a part of your research.

How about some practice? Could you give a 5 minute speech on the provided topics? Have a parent or friend score your performance using the score sheet on the following page.

- Choose any Morgan stallion, past or present, and any Morgan mare, past or present-explain why you would choose to breed them and what you'd expect to produce.
- Why is the Morgan horse suitable for the discipline in which you compete?
- Morgans: Making a difference.
- The magic of Morgans.

- Morgans-the versatile breed.
- My Morgan, my friend.
- What my Morgan means to me.
- Why I would like to judge the Grand National.
- Why Morgans are the best breed.
- Following in their hoof prints . . . Stallions and their get.
- Versatility. What it means to the Morgan breed.
- The AMHA has put you in charge of promoting the Morgan horse to the public, locally, nationally and internationally. What methods would you use to entice new spectators and participants to the breed, and generally make the Morgan breed more visible to the horse world and/or in the sports arena?

I. General Appearance (50 points) Comments:

Voice  
Poise  
Posture  
Manner of Speech

Points \_\_\_\_\_

II. Presentation of Subject (75 points) Comments:

Organization of Material  
Proper Grammar  
Vocabulary

Points \_\_\_\_\_

III. Subject Matter (100 points) Comments:

Background Information  
Originality of Ideas  
Constructive Thoughts

Points \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score:

## “In a nutshell”

In a nutshell, Youth of the Year contests are both challenging and enjoyable; they are both hard-work and fun. Try not to put too much pressure on yourself when you are getting started with this program, or too much emphasis on the outcome. The goal is for you to learn more about the Morgan horse and to become a better horseperson. Awards and accolades are just the icing on the cake.

At the end of the contest your coordinator will have an awards ceremony of some sort. The exams will have been corrected, the scores tallied and the prizes laid out. Regardless of your final score, you have achieved something you should be very proud of: You took a chance, you participated, and you did your best. Congratulations!

## Please Don't Forget!

When it's all said and done hopefully you can look back on the experience and smile. Before you rush off to your next activity, or even before you begin studying for the next contest, please don't forget something very important. Take minute to say thank you to all of the volunteers who helped put this Youth of the Year Contest together. A phone call, personal note, or letter to the editor of your club newsletter will go along way in making someone's day and letting them know that their time and talents were appreciated. It is not easy to put one of these contests together, they take a lot of time and resources, and a lot of volunteers.

Your "Thank You" check list:

- Contest Coordinator(s)
- Show Management
- Awards Sponsor
- Speech Judges
- Pattern Judge
- Horse Judging Official
- Horse Owners (who loaned horses for judging contest)
- Parents
- Coach/Instructor/Trainer/Youth Leader
- Other \_\_\_\_\_