



Activity Ideas

Stuart J. Murphy
MathStart®

Same Old Horse

Pattern Recognition

Level 1 Ages 6+

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Making predictions based on the observation of patterns is an important part of logical thinking.

Poor Hankie the horse is allergic to hay! Every 20 minutes he sneezes. But that's only the beginning of his boring predictability, of which pasture-mates Jazz and Majesty waste no time making fun. "Just watch," says Jazz to Majesty. "Hankie will come out of the barn at exactly ten o'clock." They know that Hankie's owner Susan takes him out about an hour after she arrives at the barn, and she had arrived at nine o'clock. They also know which week Hankie will wear a blue saddle pad, and when he likes to roll in the grass and take a long cool drink. Hankie's buddy Spark Plug assures him that predictability isn't always such a bad thing. Still, Hankie may have a surprise in store for everyone... Illustrated by Steve Björkman.

- Read the story together with your class and point out how Majesty and Jazz make predictions about what Hankie will do next. Ask the children to predict what Hankie will do before you read on and find out. Ask each child to give a reason for his or her prediction
- Change the patterns in the charts that appear in the book. For example, change the chart on page 11 that shows when Hankie's owner Susan arrives at the barn, and when she takes Hankie outside to read:

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Susan arrived	9:00 AM	9:15 AM	9:30 AM	9:00 AM	9:15 AM	9:30 AM
Hankie Outside	9:30 AM	9:45 AM	10:00 AM	9:30 AM	9:45 AM	?

Have the child examine each new chart and predict what Hankie will do based on the new data, explaining why.

- For three or four days, have each child keep a chart of certain activities he or she does every day. For example:

Activity	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs
Time I got up				
What I had for breakfast				
Color of my shirt				
Time I got home from school				

Ask the children if they can see patterns in each other's charts. Are they predictable, like Hankie?