



Learning Pony Rules

From the moment he is born, a foal uses his senses to learn about the world around him.

Can you fill in the missing words from these sentences?

taste smell see feel hear

The newborn foal uses his nostrils to _____ his mum.

He can ___ her too and can ___ her breathing, ___ her tongue on him and _____ her milk. He will feel safe with his mum.

The mare teaches her foal the rules for surviving in the pony world. These 'pony rules' are important for the foal to learn as they help him to become an accepted member of the herd.

Body Signs

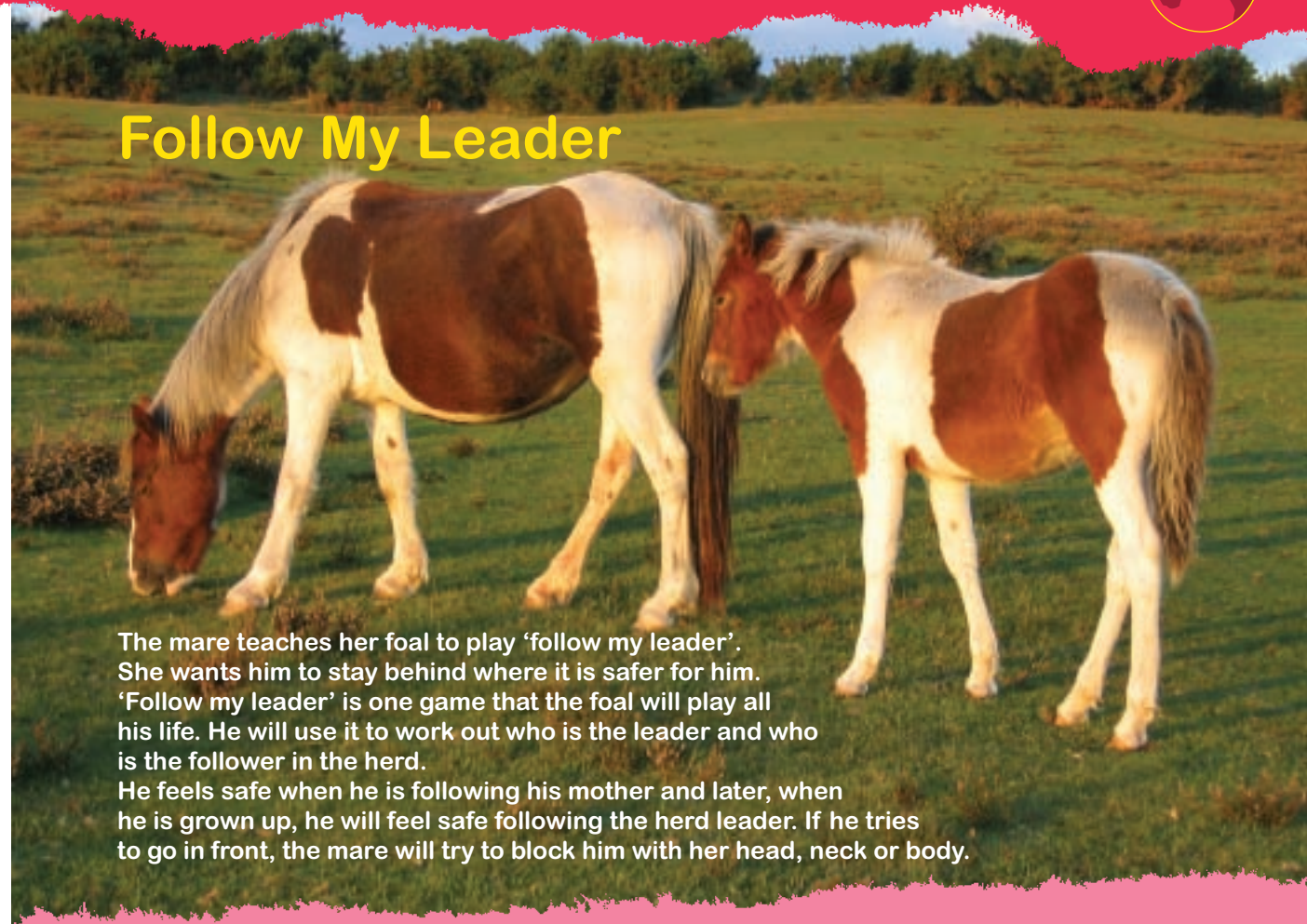


The mare helps the foal to learn these rules by making little signs with her body.

The mare will help the foal to read all sorts of really small signals that she sends out to him. She might move her ears, wrinkle and nudge him with her nose, nod her head and stretch her neck towards him, push him with her shoulder or even give him a nip!



Follow My Leader



The mare teaches her foal to play 'follow my leader'. She wants him to stay behind where it is safer for him. 'Follow my leader' is one game that the foal will play all his life. He will use it to work out who is the leader and who is the follower in the herd. He feels safe when he is following his mother and later, when he is grown up, he will feel safe following the herd leader. If he tries to go in front, the mare will try to block him with her head, neck or body.



The foal learns to take notice of these little signals. If he doesn't notice his Mum when she asks him to move away, she might push him away with her head. Another pony might not be so kind and could charge and bite.

If the foal suckles too roughly, his mum might raise a hind leg or swish her tail. If he carried on being rough, she might actually kick him.

