

# Pigs

By: Hannah Lancaster



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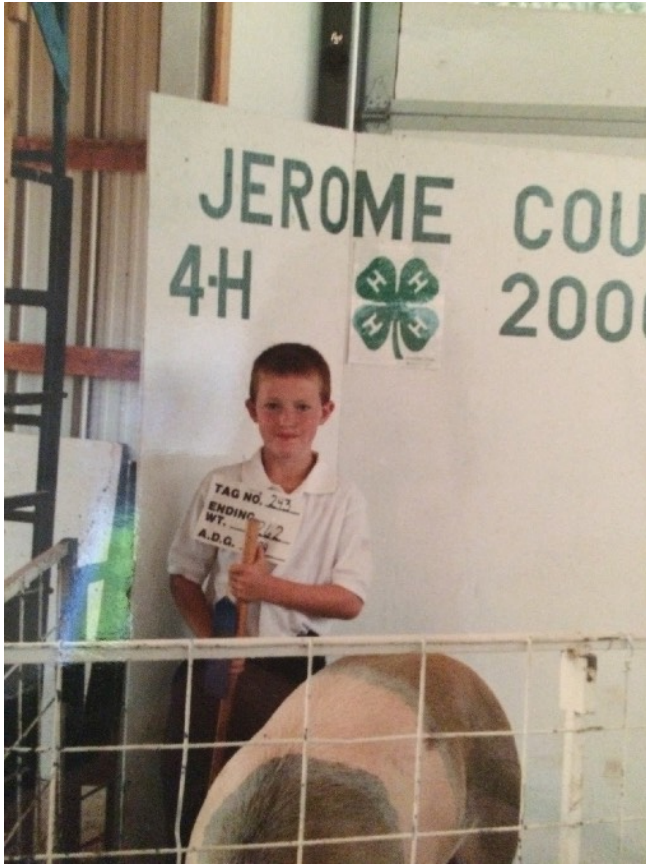
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# My Story- Life on the Farm

My name is Hannah Lancaster and I am going to tell you everything I know about pigs. Well, maybe not everything, but my favorite things! I grew up on a hog farm in southern Idaho. My mom, dad, brother, and I spent countless hours working, feeding, and loving our pigs. You could maybe even call us experts by now.



Award given to Hannah Lancaster for being the Top Swine Showman at the Jerome County Fair in 2007



My brother, Jordan Lancaster, in the 2000 Jerome County Fair

Every summer, my brother Jordan, and I would compete in our counties **4-H** competition. We would raise and feed them until they were ready for the show. Our pigs always looked good.

# Pigs! What are they?

So now that you know I've been around pigs my whole life, I'm going to tell you what I think everyone should know about pigs. There are a few different names for pigs: hogs, **swine**, bacon... wait, maybe I shouldn't have put that last one in there. Oops! A male hog is called a **boar**, while a female is called a **sow**.





Pigs bathing in the sun

Pigs are raised all over the world! They provide many valuable resources for humans including **lard**, leather, medicines, and of course, food.



# Babies!

My favorite part! When a sow has babies, she gives birth to a **litter** of young called **piglets**. A sow can give birth to anywhere from 7-12 babies twice a year. When they are born, piglets weight about 2.5 pounds, until they are full grown and can reach up to 500-700 pounds, some even bigger!



The author holding a new baby pig

# Breeds

There are around 130 breeds of pigs in the world. The 3 most popular in the United States are Durocs, Hampshires, and Yorkshires.

Selected breeds of pigs					
	name	use	distribution	characteristics	comments
	Berkshire	meat	U.K., Japan, Australia, N.Z., South America	medium-sized; black with white feet, face, and tail tip	raised for pork and bacon in different areas
	Duroc, or Duroc-Jersey	lard	North and South America	medium length; light gold-red to dark red	1/2 Jersey Red, 1/2 Duroc
	Hampshire	meat	U.S. breed	medium weight, long body; black and white forelegs and shoulders	active, alert, good grazer
	Landrace	meat	north and central Europe and U.S.	medium-sized; white, often with small black spots	several breeds; raised for bacon
	Spotted	meat	developed U.S.	black and white spotted (ideally 50/50)	sometimes called Spots
	Yorkshire (in England, Large White)	meat	worldwide distribution	white, sometimes with dark areas	a bacon breed; sows are prolific



# What do Pigs Eat?

Pigs are **omnivores** like humans. We eat both plants and animals. They have horrible eyesight, but their **snout** makes up for it. Pigs use their noses to find food around them or in the ground.





Domestic pig eating grain on the farm

**Domesticated** pigs and wild pigs have different diets. The wild pigs eat leaves, roots, fruit, and other small animals while the domesticated pigs eat mostly corn or grain based dinners.

# Pigs Aren't Just Cute, They're Smart Too

Pigs sometimes get a bad reputation for being stupid and dirty, but that could not be further from the truth. Many people think they are dirty because of all the mud, but the mud is really helping them stay cool because they have very few sweat glands. The mud cools their body down.

Pigs are also one of the smartest animals on the planet! I bet you wouldn't guess that pigs are the smartest domesticated animal, but they are, even ahead of dogs. Now go tell your friends everything you've learned about pigs!



# Questions

- 1) Where is the main distribution of the Duroc breed?
- 2) The pig is the smartest \_\_\_\_\_ animal in the world.
- 3) Compare the pig to your own favorite animal, what are some similarities and differences they share?

# Glossary

**Boar**- male pig

**Domesticated** - species of vertebrates that has been **domesticated** by humans so as to live and breed in a tame condition and depend on humankind for survival

**Lard**- fat from the abdomen of a pig that is often used in cooking

**Omnivore**- animal that eats both plants and animals

**Piglet**- baby pig

**Snout**- part of the pig containing the nose and jaw muscle

**Sow**- female pig

**Swine**- another name for pig or hog

**Wean**- when a young child or baby animal gets accustomed to food rather than their mother's milk

**4-H**- helps young people become productive citizens by instructing them in useful skills (as in agriculture, animal husbandry, and carpentry)



# Works Referenced

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# Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.2

Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.4

Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 5 topic or subject area*

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.10

By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

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