Fabulous Felines

**Lesson 3: Grades K-3**

**Keeping cats safe: Pet Hazards**

**Curriculum Connections, Standards addressed:**

**Academic Goals:** 1.5, 1.6, 1.10, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.3, 3.6, 3.7, 4.6, 4.7

**Knowledge Goals:**  Communication Arts: 1, 4; Science: 3; Health/Physical Education: 5

**Objective:** To help children identify pet hazards and help them learn how to keep cats safe.

**Common Core-Aligned Activities:**

**3-LS4-4—Make a claim about the merit of a solution to a problem caused when the environment changes and the types of plants and animals that live there may change. Cause and effect relationships are routinely identified and used to explain change. (3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3)**

Cats are curious! Our homes are a myriad of action opportunities for our feline friends. Discuss some of these situations with your students. What safety issue does a burning candle hold for cats? A hot stove top? A dangling electrical cord? Potted plants - are they poisonous to cats? How about chemicals in cleansers and personal care products? The list goes on and on. How does the concept of cause and effect in our home environments affect the animals that share our home? Make a list of the dangers. Make a second list of the changes that can be made to make our homes safe for our feline companions.

**Character Concepts:** Responsibility

Being the guardian of another creature is very important. You hold their welfare in your hands. The natural curiosity of cats can place them in danger. It is vital you protect them within your home and their environment. This may mean making adaptions to your own environment that will eliminate dangerous scenarios for our pets.

**STEM initiatives: Thinking critically in the connections to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math**

**2-LS2-1—**Events have causes that generate observable patterns.

Cause and Effect are powerful observation tools that can predict patterns. How can cause and effect predict the dangers to our pet cats that may be found in our homes? How can we structure our environment to eliminate these dangerous scenarios for our pets?

**Materials Needed:**

* Hole punch
* String or yarn
* Colored paper
* Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Safety Officer” badges
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Pet Hazards” cards
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Pet Hazards at Home”
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Happy Holidays”
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “The Great Indoors”

**Method:** Cats face many hazards inside and outside the home. A hazard is something that can be dangerous, in this case, for your cat. And because we care about cats, we’re going to learn how to keep them safe. Cats depend on us to watch over them and protect them from anything that could be harmful.

Today you are all going to be made official “safety officers.” You are going to be in charge of keeping cats and all pets safe from harm. Let’s make badges to wear.

Distribute a copy of the badge to each student. Ask students to decorate them with markers, colored pencils, and crayons. Use a hole punch and string so the children can wear them.

Cut apart the “Pet Hazards” cards provided. Put all hazard cards into a box or hat. Have each student choose a hazard card. Each student will be responsible for learning about the hazard they chose. In small groups, students should address:

1. Why each hazard is dangerous for cats and other pets.
2. In what area of the house the hazard would be found.
3. How to prevent this hazard for pets. Keep in mind that pet-proofing a home is very similar to child-proofing a home.

Are these dangers present in your classroom? If you had a classroom pet, how could you make the room safer? What other dangers can students think of that weren’t listed? Are there special times of year that create more hazards? When are those times?

Help students review this lesson with the “Pet Hazards at Home” handout. See the “Happy Holidays” handout and “The Great Indoors” handout to find out more about pet hazards. This is important safety information for all pet parents!

**Call to Action:** Create a “Cat Safety Quilt.” Using pieces of colored paper, ask each student to draw a picture, make a collage, or write something to teach other students about his or her assigned pet hazard. When all of the “quilt squares” are complete, hang them together to form a “quilt” in a large visible area so that other students can learn from it.

Even if you’re not wearing your badge, you should always be a “safety officer” for all animals! You can help animals by making the world a safer place for them. Get your family involved by looking for hazards inside and outside your own home. Take appropriate measures to make your home safe for pets and other animals.

Reading: Visit our section entitled *Recommended Children’s Literature* for a comprehensive listing of animal-related books.

Web sites: Visit our section entitled *Recommended Web Links* for animal-related web sites.