Fabulous Felines

**Lesson 1: Grades K-3**

**What Do Cats Need?**

**Curriculum Connections, Standards addressed:**

**Academic Goals:** 1.6, 1.10, 2.5, 3.1, 3.6, 3.7, 4.6, 4.7.

**Knowledge Goals:** Communication Arts: 6; Science: 3; Health-Physical Education: 5

**Objective:** To teach children about cats’ basic needs and to help them understand that pets and people’s needs are very similar.

**Common Core-Aligned Activities:**

**SL.3-4.1—Engage effectively in collaborative discussions building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.**

**SL.3-4.1c—Pose and respond to specific questions and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to remarks of others.**

Ask students to discuss how cats--as living, breathing, feeling creatures---have needs. If some of these needs are not met (i.e., food and water), cats can become very sick and even die. What are the needs of cats? How are they similar to our needs? Discuss.

Have a spelling bee with a difference. Make a list of **all** the needs our feline friends have and share the list ahead of time with students. On the day of the spelling bee, divide students into teams to determine who can remember—and spell—each need of our fabulous felines!

**Character Concepts:** Responsibility

Being the guardian of another creature is very important. You hold their welfare in your hands. It is vital you do what you are supposed to do, providing humane and compassionate care to your feline friend.

**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 needs of cats?

**Materials Needed:**

* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Pets Need Match-Up”
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “See if You Can Give a Reason Why…”
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “If I Had a Cat…”
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Microchip”

**Method:** Children and pets both need to be taken care of; they can’t take care of themselves. Children need their mom and dad or another adult who loves them to care for them. Pets also need a family who loves them to care for them. The needs of pets are very similar to our needs. What kinds of things do we need in order to be healthy and happy? We need food, water, shelter, exercise, love, and medical care. Pets must have all of these things, too.

Print out the 3 pages of the “Pets Need Match-Up” hand-out. Cut along the dotted lines on the first 2 pages of the hand-out. Tell the class, “I’ll show you a picture of something we need, then you’ll find the word that matches the picture. As we match the picture needs with the words, let’s talk about why each one is so important.” Match all the cards until each has a mate.

What would happen if each of these needs weren’t met?

Now we’re going to sing a song to help remind us to care for our pets each day. Let’s sing the Love Your Pets Song (sung to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.)

*Love, love, love your pets,*

*Love them every day.*

*Give them food*

*And water, too,*

*Then let them*

*Run and play.*

To reinforce these concepts, distribute the “See if You Can Give a Reason Why…” handout and the “If I Had a Cat…” handout to each student.

**Call to Action:** Give children the opportunity to practice meeting pet’s needs. Designate half the class as pretend pet owners and the other half as pretend pets. Have the owners do pretend activities such as feeding, walking, petting, and playing with their “pets.” Then let the children reverse roles.

Don’t forget to give your cat a collar and microchip! What could happen if your cat escaped outside and didn’t have I.D.? Distribute the “Microchip” handout.

**Reading:**

*Patch the Kitten*, Jenny Dale, 2000 Aladdin Books

Louise falls in love with a tiny kitten left on the doorstep of her parents animal rescue center. Once Patch is nursed to health she is put up for adoption, but Louise wants to keep her! Discusses important issues regarding animal adoption. Ages 4-8

*A Home for Nathan*, Claudia M. Roll, 1999 The William Snyder Foundation for Animals

The true story of a cat who is dropped off at an animal shelter, cared for by a shelter, and then adopted into a loving home. Children learn about the important role that animal shelters play in our society, and why owning a pet is a commitment that lasts a lifetime.

Ages 4-8.

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

**HEY TEACHERS! If your students want more fun, here is an additional hand-out to download:**

 “Be Prepared”