Fabulous Felines

**Lesson 5: Grades K-3**

**Good or Bad? Proper Treatment of Cats**

**Curriculum Connections, Standards addressed:**

**Academic Goals:** 1.5, 1.10, 2.3, 3.1, 3.6, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6

**Knowledge Goals:** Communication Arts: 1, 6; Mathematics: 1; Science: 3; Health/Physical Education: 3, 4, 5

**Objective:** To review how to treat cats properly.

**Common Core-Aligned Activities:**

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

**SL.K-2.1-- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions.**

We can all agree, cats are curious! They are also fun, loving, affectionate and full of personality. Our responsibility to our feline friends is to appreciate them and also to watch out for their welfare. We’ve learned a lot of ways to do this so now it’s time to review. Encourage students to actively participate by holding up their Happy Face/Sad Face sheets as you pose the review statements below. Use the statement as a springboard of discussion as your students elaborate on what they have learned about our ancient friends, the cats (as early as 3500 B.C., Egyptians started domesticating wild cats from Africa to be their pets and 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. Discuss how making adaptions to your own environment can help eliminate dangerous scenarios for our pets and give them quality of life.

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

**2-LS4-1—Make observations (firsthand or from media) to collect data which can be used to make comparisons.**

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

Cause and Effect are powerful observation tools that can predict patterns and affect how we can alter our behavior to achieve a particular outcome. How can cause and effect predict the dangers to our pet cats that may be found in our homes? What have you learned regarding the nature of cats and how we can best structure our environment or change our behavior to eliminate dangerous scenarios for our pets?

**Materials Needed:**

* Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Happy Face/Sad Face”
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Happy in the House”
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “Animal Pals”

**Method:** This is our last lesson about our fabulous feline friends! We are going to review how to treat cats properly.

Copy a “Happy Face/Sad Face” sheet for each student. Cut all sheets apart to give you multiple sets of happy faces/sad faces. Distribute a set to each student. Read each sentence aloud. After each sentence, ask students to hold up the happy face for good treatment of cats or the sad face for bad treatment of cats. Discuss the correct information with them that is provided below.

1. My cat stays indoors all day. ☺
2. I know that getting shots hurts, so I don’t let them give any to my cat. ☹
3. I’m going to surprise my cousin for his birthday. I’ll give him a kitten. ☹
4. My cat scratches on the couch to sharpen her claws. ☹
5. My cat likes to chew on our houseplants. She loves the way they taste. ☹
6. I never brush my cat because she doesn’t like it. ☹
7. I give my cat water to drink every day. ☺
8. I gave my cat a large paper bag to play with. ☺
9. My cat has a safety collar and I.D. tag with my name, address, and telephone number. ☺
10. I pet my cat every day. ☺
11. I am going to have my cat spayed or neutered to prevent unwanted litters. ☺
12. I scoop my cat’s litter box once a week to keep it clean. ☹
13. My cat rides in his pet taxi when we’re in the car. ☺

Correct information for each statement:

1. Keeping cats indoors protects them from diseases such as rabies, being hit by a car or injured in other ways, and prevents unwanted litters.
2. Vaccinating pets is an important part of their care and should be given each year.
3. Getting a pet should be carefully planned. Pets require a lot of care and having them is a big responsibility.
4. Cats naturally scratch to remove old nail sheaths, to stretch, and to mark their scent. They should be trained gently to use a scratching post or box instead of the family couch.
5. Certain houseplants are poisonous to cats. Keep those that are out of reach.
6. Cats should be gently brushed regularly as part of their grooming routine.
7. Cats should drink fresh water, never milk, daily.
8. Cats and kittens love to play and should have plenty of safe toys, such as paper bags. Never give them plastic bags!
9. Cats should have a special safety collar designed to break away if they become stuck. Cats should always wear an I.D. tag even if they live inside.
10. Pets need daily attention and love just like we do.
11. Spaying and neutering cats and dogs is important to prevent unwanted litters and certain diseases.
12. Cats should have their litterbox scooped daily, not weekly. If the litterbox isn’t clean and fresh each day, kitty may find someplace else to go!
13. Riding in a pet taxi while in the car keeps cats and people safe. It prevents cats from becoming lost or hurt and drivers from having accidents.

To supplement this lesson, distribute the “Happy in the House” and “Animal Pals” handouts.

**Call to Action:** Play a game of “Simon Says” using cat behaviors. Have children stretch like a cat, meow, pounce, purr, bat at a toy, swish their tails, hiss, arch their backs, sleep, etc. May the best cat win!

Collect pet items for your local animal shelter or rescue group. Ask the children to decorate several boxes for the collection. Organizations usually have a wish list of items they need. You may also choose to collect pennies. Get the whole school involved. Give your project a catchy name like “Coins for Kitties.” Take a field trip to tour the shelter and deliver the items. Meet the animals, the recipients of your gifts! Children are sure to feel they’ve made a difference in the lives of homeless and abandoned 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.