



Kitty Fright: Please Keep Me Inside Both Day and Night

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Grade Level: 1- 3

Time Needed: Approximately 35-40 minutes

Objective: Upon completion of the lesson, students will evaluate the health and safety risks to cats who are allowed to roam outdoors, as well as compare and contrast important care and safety items which apply to both children and cats.

Standards Addressed:

Language Arts

[NL ENG K-12.7](#) Evaluating Data

Science

[NS.K-4.6](#) Personal and Social Perspectives

Health

[NPH-H.K-4.1](#) Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

[NPH-H.K-4.3](#) Reducing Health Risks

Character Connections: Responsibility and Caring

Materials Needed:

- Pre-made roulette-style wheel divided into 14 sections. Each section will have a different scenario and consequence written on it. Ten of these scenarios will be harmful for the cat; four will be relatively safe. (If a roulette-style wheel is not possible, cards with scenarios and consequences can be used.) Possible consequences can include but are not limited to:
 - a. You lap up antifreeze (a deadly poison) and must be taken to the vet for emergency care. Go back to the beginning.
 - b. You are hit by a car. Go back five spaces.
 - c. Your paw is frozen and you have frostbite. Go back one space.
 - d. You are chased by another cat. You got scared and ran away, and now you're lost. Stay where you landed.

- e. You are trapped in a dumpster. Skip a turn waiting to get rescued.
 - f. You choke on a chicken bone. Go back to the beginning.
 - g. You are picked up by animal control officers. Luckily, you had a collar with ID tags. Lose a turn and hope that your family comes to get you.
 - h. You step on a piece of glass and cut your paw. You limp home in pain. Stay where you landed while you heal.
 - i. You have fleas and need to get a bath with special shampoo. Go back two spaces.
 - j. You caught a disease and need special treatment and expensive medicine from the vet. Go back five spaces and lose a turn while you heal.
 - k. You decide it is safer for you to stay inside and be with your family. Move ahead one space.
 - l. You are attacked by a wild animal. Go back four spaces.
 - m. You are almost hit by a car, but you made it home. Stay where you landed.
- Props representing trash, fish, and chicken bones (such as would be found in a garbage can), black cut-out to represent an oil puddle, green cut-out to represent anti-freeze, and cans with a skull and crossbones to represent poison. If possible, include large cut-outs or posters of cars, as well as stuffed animals to represent wild animals in your area who might pose a risk to domestic animals.
 - One six-sided die.
 - Stuffed toy cats (one for each team).
 - Breakaway collars with numbered ID tags (one for each team).
 - A large and cheerful “HOME” sign.
 - Note cards with photos and words showing the needs of animals and/or children. There should be enough for each student. Items can include but are not limited to: clean water, healthy food, a home, sleep or a bed, protection from storms, protection from cold weather, clothes, love, affection, playtime, forgiveness, kindness, checkups at the doctor, school.
 - Dry-erase board, chalk-board, or flip charts.
 - *Who Let the Cats Out* worksheet (one copy for each student); see page 4.
 - Crayons or colored pencils.
 - Optional: Cat headbands for each student. (These can be made by following the directions provided at <http://familycrafts.about.com/cs/catcrafts/a/blcathb.htm>.)

Helpful Background Information:

<http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/pets>

Teacher Preparation:

1. Arrange student desks in rows.
2. Use the props representing dangers to animals and place them around the classroom. Place some of them in places that students will have to go around them.
3. Decorate the teacher's desk or another large fixture at the front of the class (in front of the last row of desks), with bright colors and a sign that says "HOME" in big cheerful letters.
4. If using the optional cat headbands, create one for each student.

Lesson Procedure:

Opening Activity:

Meet students outside the classroom door, pass out cat headbands (optional), and greet them with, "Hello, cats! As you enter the room, please watch out for dangers. When the door opens you may encounter obstacles such as trash, puddles of oil, and cars. Each of you should do your best to get as close to your seat as possible without moving anything with your hands or walking over it. Some of you may find you cannot get to your seat. If this happens, please go to the front of the room and sit in a circle. Any questions?" Allow two to three minutes for this activity.

Lesson Body:

1. Invite all students who could get to their seats to the circle at the front of the room. Review with the students that they are looking at the many dangers that a cat might face when allowed outdoors. Explain that just like children, lots of bad things can happen to domestic animals like cats when they are allowed outdoors by themselves.
2. Ask the students to name some dangers to cats who are not watched. They may wish to look around the room and see if they can get some ideas. Write down the list at the front of the room.
3. Tell students that they are going to play a game where they get to see what may happen to a cat who is allowed to go outside or who snuck out when no one was paying attention to an open window or door. Introduce the students to the large roulette-type wheel divided into 14 section (or cards).
4. Tell students that the classroom is now one giant board game, and each seat is a "space" on the board. Their mission will be to get their cat to "Home" safely. Teams will start at the seat designated as the first space (to be decided by the instructor), roll the die, move the number of seats (spaces) indicated on the die, and then spin the wheel (or pick a card). Depending on where the wheel lands, they will either go back to the beginning, go back a specified number of spaces, or stay where they are

but skip a turn on the next go-around. The team who reaches the end (“Home”) first will be the winner.

5. Divide students into at least six teams (the number of teams and number of students per team will vary depending on class size). Explain that each student on the team will take turns spinning the wheel, rolling the die, or moving the team playing piece the correct number of spaces.

6. Give each team one stuffed cat and explain that the cat will act as a playing piece. Ask each team to name their cat. Also give each team a breakaway collar, taking a moment to explain why breakaway collars help all cats stay safe. (Show how they break open if the cat gets stuck on something.) Ask the team to place the collar on their cat.

7. Ask students to pay attention to the dangers their team cat encounters throughout the game.

8. Play the game until one team reaches Home.

Closure:

1. After one team has reached Home and is declared the winner, ask students to bring all of the cats Home where they can be safe.
2. Ask the team to pick up one note card from the Home desk and then return to the circle on the floor in the front of the room.
3. When all the students have returned to the circle, ask: “If a cat (or any pet) roams outside on his or her own, what may be a danger to their safety and health?” Write the class’s answers on the board or flip chart under the heading “Dangers.”
4. On the board or flip chart, make a three section chart with “YOU” on the left side, “YOUR CAT” on the right, and “BOTH” in the middle.

YOU	BOTH	YOUR CAT

Ask students to one-by-one show their cards and tape them in the correct column, depending on whether the need is for themselves, their cat, or both. This will help make the connection that a cat (or any domestic animal) has many of the same needs as we do.

5. Ask the students to share any other needs they feel are shared by humans and other animals; add those to the chart.

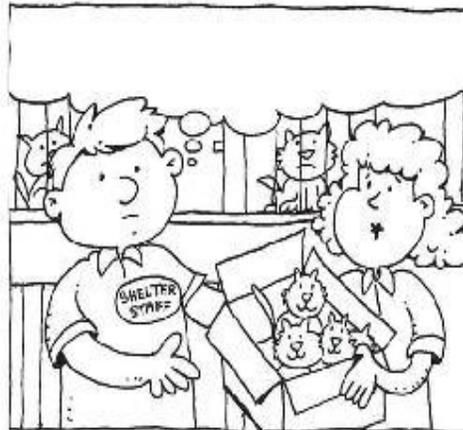
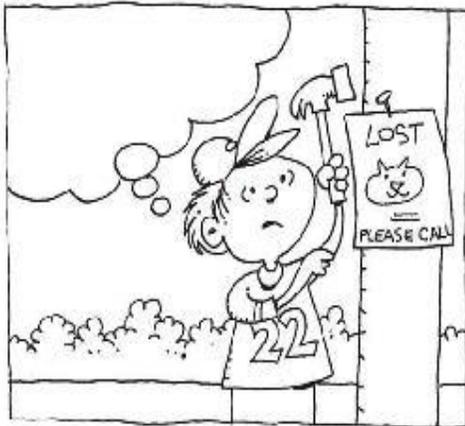
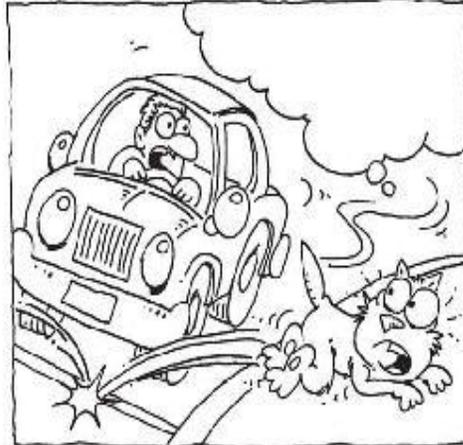
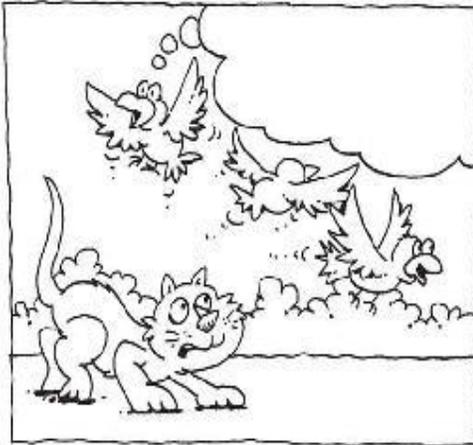
6. Refer to the chart and review with the students that, just like us, cats have many needs, and that those who live inside with their families live healthier, safer, and longer lives.

7. Provide students with a copy of the worksheet *Who Let the Cats Out*. Ask them to complete the worksheet.

Who Let the Cats Out?

Animal shelters and most veterinarians recommend keeping cats indoors. Wildlife and environmental experts

agree! Let's see why. In each bubble, write what the person or animal in that scene is thinking.



Look at the last scene on this page. Pet overpopulation—unwanted cats and dogs—is one of the sad results of roaming pets. To prevent this problem, don't let your pets roam. Also have them spayed or neutered. Design a bumper sticker asking people to spay and neuter their cats and dogs.

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