

Cats

Literacy for Anywhere - Level 4



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Cats

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Leveled Readers for the Developing World and Beyond!

How to Use Literacy for Anywhere

This is a *Literacy for Anywhere* level 4 book. This text is designed for students in year one or grade one in school. Ideally, first grade students will be reading level one texts independently by the end of the year, second grade students will be reading level two texts, and so on. Of course, we realize that every student, classroom, and school is different, so the book level may not always correspond to the class or grade level.

If your school or library uses another system for leveling books, you can use the chart below to add *Literacy for Anywhere* books into the collection.

Levels are based on the following study: *Supplemental Information for Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy: New Research on Text Complexity*.

Literacy for Anywhere	U.S. Common Core Band	The Lexile Framework®	Flesch-Kincaid
Starter	Very basic books for those just starting!		
1	<2nd	<420	<1.98
2	2nd - 3rd	420 - 620	1.98 - 3.5
3	2nd - 3rd	620 - 820	3 - 5.3
4	4th - 5th	740 - 880	4.5 - 6.1
5	4th - 5th	850 - 1010	5.5 - 7.7

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Cats

Level 4



Cats are meat-eating mammals that can be found all over the world. All the cats in the world are part of a family called Felidae. This family has small cats that live with humans but also giant cats that can hunt us.



Cats are good hunters. They move quietly and stay hidden while they follow something that might be good to eat. Cats love to eat rodents and other small animals. Even kittens love chasing pieces of string or grass that look like tails. Cats are born to hunt.

Scientists put cats into the same family because they have common traits and ancestors. Cats can be found in nature on every continent except for Antarctica and Australia. Australians sometimes have cats as pets, so there's almost nowhere you can't find them. In English, cat and feline can be used the same way. All cats are felines and all felines are cats.

Felidae includes cats that aren't kept by people and even cats that can be dangerous to people. Just like domesticated cats, wild cats and big cats are excellent hunters and climbers and have sharp claws and teeth.



Cats need to have great senses to be such good hunters. Cats have excellent hearing and very special eyes. At night it may look like a cat's eyes glow. They actually have special reflectors in their eyes that catch light. This makes their eyes light up and helps them see very well in the dark.



Cats also have whiskers that help them sense things they can't see. Because cats love to sneak around, they need a way to tell if it's safe to go into a certain hiding spot or hole and to feel small things around them they might not have time to look at. Whiskers can even feel tiny changes in the air that can help cats climb and balance.



Domestic cats are famous for taking a lot of naps. They're also famous for purring. If you pet a cat in a way that it likes, it will make a special sound. Some people think it sounds like a tiny motorcycle inside the cat's body. All cats big and small, wild and domestic, purr. Have you ever made a cat so happy that it purred?

A cat that lives with people or is raised by people is called a domestic cat. There are two large groups of domestic cats, short-haired and long-haired. Most of the domestic cats in this book are short-haired. Here is a long-haired cat for you to compare.



Cats have lived with people for a long time. It's likely that people first started to live with cats because they ate mice. Mice were a problem because they liked to eat people's food. People that lived with cats learned that cats would kill the mice and help save their food.



A young cat is called a kitten. Like most mammals, cats give live birth. They don't lay eggs like chickens. Cats can have many kittens at one time. They feed them with milk from the mother's body like other mammals.

Always be careful with new cats. Not all cats love to be petted and even some cats that live with people are very scared of strangers. If you pet a cat it can purr but it can also scratch! If a cat scratches you be sure to wash it right away. You can catch diseases from a cat scratch or bite.



There are many types of cats. The Birman is a domestic longhaired cat from Burma. Cats are often considered special or magical and this cat is sometimes called the “Sacred Cat of Burma.” It always has blue eyes.



This is an American Shorthair cat. Many Americans keep cats like this as pets. The ancestors of these cats were likely brought over by Europeans to eat mice and rats.

Cats were very special in ancient Egypt. Many people there used to treat cats like gods. In modern Egypt there are still cats like the Egyptian Mau. Even though it looks different from the Birman, both are domestic cats and are related to lions and tigers.



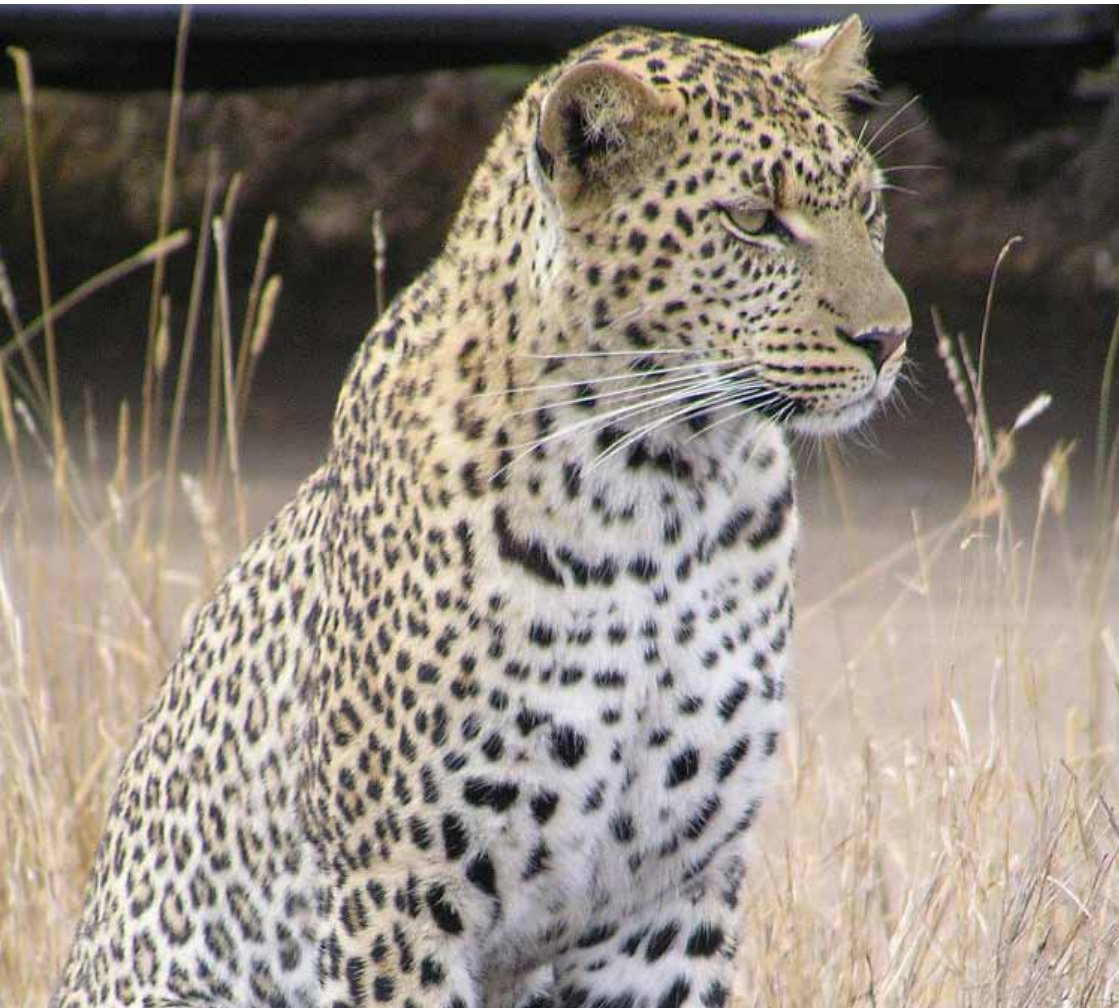


Lions are part of a group of cats called big cats. Big cats are wild and don't usually live in houses or as pets. They can be very big and dangerous and have sharp teeth and claws like domestic cats but much bigger. This lion lives in Africa.

Tigers are another type of big cat that can get very big. Tigers can grow to be 3.38 meters long and weigh over 380 kilograms. They are the biggest members of the entire cat family. Some tigers can eat up to 23 kilograms of food per day. There are six types of tigers alive today; this is a Bengal tiger from India.

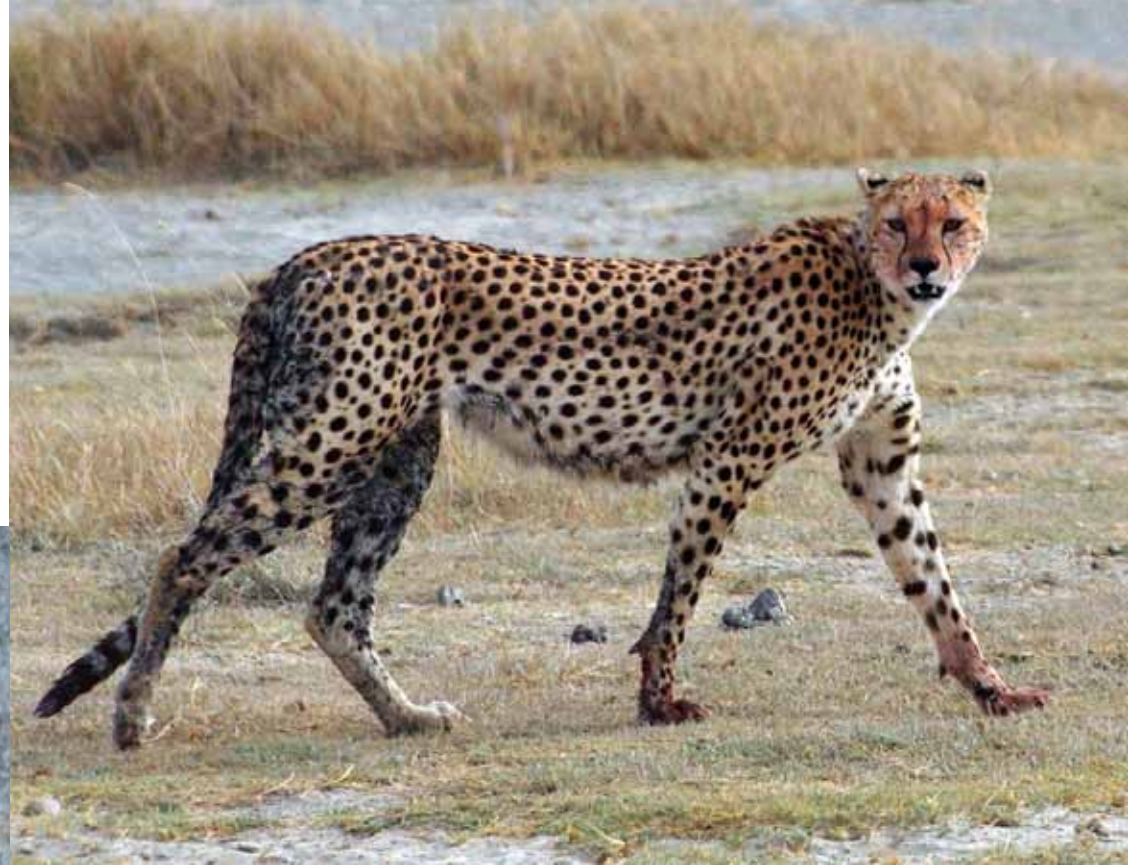


A leopard is another big cat that lives in Asia and Africa. It is famous for the spots it has all over its coat. Some leopards are completely black. These are sometimes called black panthers. The leopards' habitat covers the largest area of all the big cats. Because of this, there are many different kinds of leopards.



The jaguar is another big cat with spots, but it lives in Central and South America. Even though jaguars look like leopards, they are bigger and more aggressive, like tigers. Jaguars have very strong jaws that let them eat animals such as turtles and crocodiles. Jaguars use their powerful jaws even when eating softer animals, using their bite to crush the skulls of their prey.

Smaller than the jaguar, pumas are also found in North and South America and go by many names such as cougar or mountain lion. Pumas mostly eat other large animals. Humans kill them because they sometimes eat pets or farm animals. Many of them are in danger of going extinct.



Cheetahs live in Africa and are famous for being very fast. The cheetah is the fastest land animal and it can run up to 110 kilometers per hour. Running like a cheetah is like driving on a highway. Their bodies are long and sleek to help them run and they swing their tails to keep balance while they race through African savannas catching prey.



There are other wild cats that are too small to be called “big cats.” They don’t live with people but they aren’t giant hunters like lions and tigers. They can sometimes look like domestic cats but are very dangerous. This is a small wild cat from Europe.

The ocelot is another little wild cat that lives in North and South America with jaguars and pumas. It spends most of its life in trees. Even the biggest ocelots are only 1.5 meters long including their tails.



The black footed cat, also called the small spotted cat, is one of the smallest cat species and is found in southern Africa. The biggest adults only grow to be 2.45 kilograms. Because they are nocturnal (they only come out at night) they are rarely seen by people.



Cats can be big or small, dangerous or friendly, and beautiful or scary. Some people love cats and call themselves “cat people.” Are you a cat person?

Cats

Review Questions!



1. Lions, tigers, house cats, and ocelots are all part of what family?
2. Why do cats have whiskers?
3. Why did humans probably start living with cats at first?
4. What is the smallest wild cat?

Cats

Write!



Your friend really loves cats. She loves them so much she wants to get a lion as a pet and keep it in her room. You know that's dangerous but she thinks it will be fine.

Write her a letter trying to convince her not to get a lion as a pet.

Attributions

Contributing Authors, Organizations, and Photographers

Words & Layout

Author: Michael A. Jones

Editing and Layout: Michael A. Jones

Co-editors: Hannah Bradley and Chelsea E. Hall

Photography

Cover: Didier (Flickr | BY-SA), 1. Sasha Fujin (Flickr | BY), 2. Jennifer Bernard (Wikimedia | BY), 3. Fabian Köster (Wikimedia | BY-SA), 4. Roger H. Goun (Flickr | BY), 5. Public Domain, 6. mongider (Flickr | SA), 7. dingopup (Flickr | BY-SA), 8. Astrostudy (Wikimedia | BY-SA), 9. Public Domain, 10. Craig Pemberton (Wikipedia | BY-SA), 11. Kristen Kokkersvold (Wikipedia | Open to Use), 12. Liz West (Wikimedia | BY), 13. Ocdp (Wikimedia | BY-SA), 14. Kevin Pluck (Wikimedia | BY), 15. Sumeet Moghe (Wikimedia | BY-SA), 16. Jen Erkamp (Wikipedia | BY-SA), 17. Bjørn Christian Tørrissen (Wikipedia | BY-SA), 18. cm0rris0n (Wikimedia | BY-SA), 19. Rob Qld (Flickr | BY), 20. Viator Luc (Wikimedia | BY-SA), 21. Spencer Wright (Flickr | BY), 22. Pierre de Charbonnes pour photozoo.org (Wikimedia | BY-SA), 23. Marie-Lan Nguyen (Wikimeia | BY)

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