

Play is the most powerful way young children learn.

Every time you play, sing or read with children they are learning about language.

By sharing this book and play experiences with children they will have the opportunity to:

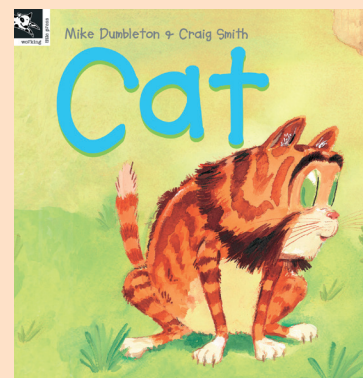
- Retell stories and create their own stories.
- Discover similarities and differences in their world.
- Explore their world through creative and imaginative play.

We hope these activities will provide you with a starting point for fun and purposeful play with children.

Engaging With Language and Literacy



- Talk about the cover of the book. Do any of the children have a cat or do they know anybody who has a cat? Do they look like this cat? What sound does the cat make?
- Discuss the illustrations inside the front cover. You could ask:
 - Can you see the cat?
 - What do you think the boy is going to do?
- Encourage the children to join in with the story and praise their attempts. Do any of the children notice the rhyme in the story? Explore words that rhyme with cat.
- This is a great story for encouraging children to make predictions. Stop reading at appropriate points in the story and let the children have a guess at what they think might happen next.
- Encourage the children to retell some of the Cat's adventures. Write down their ideas and let them illustrate them. This would make a great wall story for the children to share.
- Talk about what adventures Cat or anyone of the other characters might have tomorrow. Make your own book about the character they choose. Write or type the children's stories, let them illustrate their ideas and make your own books.



Cat

by Mike Dumbleton and Craig Smith

Cat is the inaugural manuscript developed through Picture Book to Performance, an exciting and unique literacy initiative for children aged between one and four years by Windmill Performing Arts and The Little Big Book Club.

Read Cat and play his games online at www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au

Experience the theatrical production by Windmill Performing Arts. For details visit www.windmill.org.au

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Exploring Our World



Children learn about their world through talking and listening.

- Make a cat collage with the children. Let the children cut cat pictures out of old magazines and greeting cards. You could also ask parents for any unwanted photos of cats and add the children's illustrations to the collage.

When the collage is complete have the children compare the cats. Talk about their colours, sizes, type of fur and what the cat is doing in the picture.

- Explore the illustrations in the book. Ask the children what things are the same and what things are different about the house in the story and their own homes. Have the children draw a picture of their house and describe it to you. Display their pictures and their ideas about their homes.
- Set up a Cat Writing Bag. Let the children take turns at taking it home. In the bag include a toy cat, a diary, coloured pencils and instructions for the parents to write a short story about what an adventure Cat had at their house. The children can illustrate their story at home and share it with the other children the next day.
- Read non-fiction books about wild cats with the children. When you have finished reading record any facts the children can remember.

Have the children illustrate their fact and make your own non-fiction book about cats.

Enjoying Music and Movement



- Sing some favourite nursery rhymes or songs with the children that can be adapted to include a cat, e.g. Round and round the garden, Went the little cat. One step, two step, Tickle you just like that!

- Learn the nursery rhyme Hey Diddle Diddle

Ask the children to draw a picture to illustrate this nonsense rhyme. Display their illustrations with the words to the rhyme. Read the rhyme together during group times.

- Read the nursery rhyme 'The Three Little Kittens' with the children. Draw three or four pairs of mittens and decorate each pair with a different pattern. Cut out the mittens and let the children match the pairs.

Being Creative Through Play



- Provide pictures of cats or toy figurines of cats at the drawing table to encourage observational drawings of cats.
- When the children are familiar with this activity you could introduce a different pet for the children to work with.
- Make orange play dough with the children so they can make models of Cat.
- Encourage the children to paint pictures of their pets. You may want to ask parents to send in photos of their pets to help the children with their painting. If the children don't own a pet they can paint an animal that they would like to have as a pet.

Enjoying Dramatic Play



Play is most valuable to the child when it is led by the child.

Vet Clinic

- Set up a Vet clinic with the children.
- Invite a veterinarian, someone who works at an animal shelter or a pet shop owner to come and talk to the children about how to look after pets.
- Your clinic will need toy animals, a white coat for the vet and a doctor's kit.
What ideas do the children have?
- You can encourage the children to use literacy in their play by providing a telephone, appointment book and pens for the receptionist.
- Children will enjoy 'reading' x-rays and information books about pets. Don't forget magazines for the waiting room!

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Notes List any other books, rhymes or activities the children have enjoyed.

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Role Play



- Let the children pretend to be cats. Read the story and encourage the children to role-play the cat. Look carefully at the illustrations with the children. Discuss how Cat might be feeling on different pages. Let the children pretend to be a scared cat, a happy cat etc...
- Give the children toy animals to play with outside. Initially support the children to role-play the story with the animals but as they become more familiar with the activity allow their imaginations to take over.
- Add a toy animal to the home corner. Discuss with the children how they can look after their new 'pet'. Ask the children what they will need in the home corner to help care for the pet?

Other Books to Try

The Owl and the Pussycat by Edward Lear and Jan Brett (there are a number of versions of this book by different illustrators)

The Cat in the Hat by Dr Seuss

Slinky Malinki by Lynley Dodd (Slinky Malinki features in a number of books including Hairy Maclary)

Rhymes and Songs

Hey Diddle Diddle

Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle
The cow jumped over the moon,
The little dog laughed to see such sport,
And the dish ran away with the spoon

Pussy Cat Pussy Cat

Pussy cat, pussy cat, where have you been?
I've been to London to visit the Queen.
Pussy cat, pussy cat, what did you there?
I frightened a little mouse under her chair.