

Theme: Cats

Gross Motor (Indoor & Outdoor):

Cat and Mouse game (aka "chase")

Hot Kitty: Toss a stuffed kitty aka hot potato

Yarn Ball Toss: Place a masking tape line on the floor. Set a laundry basket on the floor. Let children take turns standing on the line then throwing a ball of yarn into the basket. Try different distances.

Cat Bat: Have children pretend to be cats; hang a piece of string from the ceiling, just out of the children's reach, and have the children bat at the string.

Kitten-Kitten-Cat! (aka Duck-Duck-Goose)

Kitten May I? (aka Mother May I?)

Climbing Cats: Climb on the gym equipment like a cat.

Cat Stretches: Let children slowly stretch on the floor or in the grass like a cat would do when waking from his nap.

Math Activities:

- ❑ Stamping patterns. Stamp a cat pattern across the top of the paper and let the child recreate the pattern on the bottom half of the paper.
- ❑ Picture matching: Put matching cat stickers on index cards; let children find the matching pairs.
- ❑ Cat Memory: With the matching cards used above, play a game of "concentration."
- ❑ Three Little Kittens' Mittens: Cut out 3 pair of mittens from different colored felt; let children match the pairs.
- ❑ Laminate cutouts of different size cats; let children line them up smallest to largest, lightest to darkest, etc.

Science Activities:

- Examine cat hair and/or a whisker under a microscope or magnifying glass.
- Look at pictures of cat skeletons and study cat anatomy.
- Talk about the types of food a cat needs to be healthy.

Small Motor/Manipulatives:

- ❑ Pegboards with cats on them
- ❑ Rubber stamps – cats
- ❑ Sand and water table – have children bathe plastic cats in the water table with warm soap and water.

Snacks:

Cat Face Sandwiches – let children spread peanut butter on a slice of bread, then decorate it with raisins for eyes and nose of the cat. You can use pickles for whiskers and grated carrots for fur.

Cookies shaped like cats – let children decorate

Milk – discuss why milk is good for you and which pets love milk. You could warm a little milk, give each child a small bowl of milk, and let them sprinkle cinnamon and nutmeg over the milk and lap it up like a kitten.

"Stencil" cats onto cookies, toast, etc.

Tuna fish sandwiches

Special Visual Aids/Room Set-Up/Field Trips:

Field trip ideas: Visit a pet store, a veterinarian's office, the Humane Society.

Visitors: Have a parent or grandparent come read a story about a cat, or bring in a cat or kitten for the children to pet.

Songs & Fingerplays: See cards.

Dramatic Play:

- Feather boas, stuffed cats, kitty carriers and dishes, rhinestone collars for stuffed cats, etc.
- Pretend to be a veterinarian: Provide children with stuffed cats, play stethoscopes, and bandages for the children to play with.
- Pretend to be a pet groomer: Provide children with stuffed cats, empty shampoo bottles, brushes, ribbons, collars, plastic bathtub, and towels for the children to play with.
- Pretend to be a cat: Provide children with balls of yarn, cat toys, empty boxes of cat food, and boxes for the children to crawl into.

Circle Time Activities:

Use **finger puppets** for a mini puppet show.

Flannel board stories. See: <http://www.stepbystepcc.com/animals/cats.html>

Copy cats: Let children take turns clapping a special rhythm and letting the other children try to copy it. Each child can have a turn being the “Cat”. The others are “Copy Cats”! This idea came from <http://www.stepbystepcc.com/animals/cats2.html>

Play the listening game. Each child has a turn to sit in the center of the circle and be the mommy/daddy cat. This person covers their faces and the “kittens” take turns tapping them on the shoulder and quietly running to hide, then make soft meowing sounds while the mommy/daddy search for the kittens, listening carefully for clues to their location.

Mystery Bag: Bring a gift bag that is decorated with cats to the circle each day. Inside, have a different item that would be used for or by a cat. Have the children discuss what, how or why it is used. This idea comes from <http://www.stepbystepcc.com/animals/cats3.html>

Read **The Three Little Kittens.** Cut out two matching mittens per child from different colors of paper. Mix them up and let the children find the matching pairs.

Cat Walk: Place a 1x6 board on the floor and let children take turns walking on the “fence” like a cat—backs arched, pounce, pretend they are cats playing with a ball of string, curl up like a cat in the sun... or dance down the board on tippy toes.

Cat Playground: Make an obstacle course that a cat would love to play in and let the children have fun! Tunnel, big open box, big balls, hanging ball they can bat with their hands, etc.

Books:

Kitten's First Full Moon, by Kevin Henkes

Slinky Malinki, by Lynley Dodd, Mallinson Rendel

Little Spotted Cat, by Alyssa Satin Capucilli

That's Not My Kitten: Its Ears Are Too Soft, by Fiona Watt

So, What's It Like to Be a Cat? by Karla Kuskin

Who Loves Me? by Patricia MacLachlan

April's Kittens, by Clare Turlay Newberry

Cat Next Door, by Elizabeth Koda-Callan

Feathers for Lunch, by Lois Ehlert

Have You Seen My Cat? by Eric Carle

Henry's Wild Morning, by Margaret Greaves

I Am a Little Cat, by Francois Crozat

Kitten for a Day, by Ezra Keats

Leo the Late Bloomer, by Leo Lionni

Millions of Cats, by Wanda Gag

Taking My Cat to the Vet, by Susan Kuklin

The Dog Who Had Kittens, by Polly Robertus

This and That, by Julie Sykes

The Cat and the Hat, by Dr. Seuss

Hi, Cat! by Ezra Jack Keats

Art:

Cat toy ball art – Place a sheet of paper in the bottom of a shallow baking dish. Dip a cat toy ball into tempera paint and let the children roll it around in the pan over the paper to make a cool picture.

Make cat charmies – Let children attach various items (cat or mouse shapes coated in glitter, etc.) to ribbon tied to a popsicle stick, pencil or dowel. They can dance around with their charmies when they're finished.

Yarn collage – allow children to use yarn scraps to create a collage.

Paper plate cat masks – Let children use yarn, paints, crayons and paper scraps to create their own cat mask. You may have to cut the eyes, nose and mouth for younger children.

Children can also make their own **cat costumes** by decorating paper bags. You will have to cut the openings for their heads and arms—and a slit down the front or back, if necessary.

Sponge paint over a cat stencil, or use sponges cut into cat shapes to stamp cats onto paper.

Cat necklaces – Have children cut cat shapes out of construction paper. Using a hole punch, make a hole in the top so they can thread a piece of yarn and some colored noodles to make a necklace.

Cat rubbings – Let children use crayons or chalk to rub over a cat cutout for a cat rubbing.

Yarn art – Dip a length of yarn into paint and run it across the paper; use a new piece of yarn for each color of paint.

Sock Puppet Cats – Make sock puppet cats using felt for ears and quilting or heavy thread for whiskers. Use marker pens for eyes and any other decorations.

Cat collage – Create a cat collage from magazine pictures.