



# FAMILY OPERA INITIATIVE

## CAT: the opera-musical

Composed by  
KITTY BRAZELTON  
Written by  
GEORGE PLIMPTON  
Directed by  
GRETHE BARRETT HOLBY

Music Direction by DAVID WOLFSON  
Costumes by CAMILLE ASSAF  
Sets by RAY WETMORE

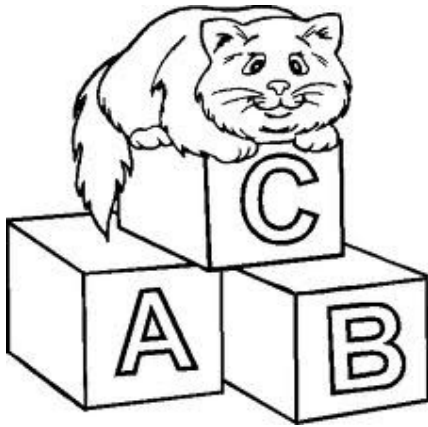
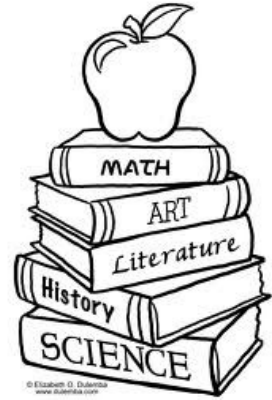


**Educational Supplement 3-6th  
2010**

# Summary

Cat comes to Veterinarian Dr. McGee to brag about being the one animal with only three letters in her name. The Vet's assistants are impressed but quickly change their tune when the Vet tells her that she in fact isn't the only animal with 3 letters in her name. Cat is disappointed and falls into despair.

The Vet sends her to the library to discover the letters C-A-T are important in the formation of many words and she returns with confidence and a long list of new vocabulary words to enthusiastically share with the others..



## Opera Terms

This show is an OPERA- MUSICAL. That means that the characters are going to sing the dialogue (**Libretto**) instead of speak it. This piece also contains many musical styles from today as well as older forms of classical music.

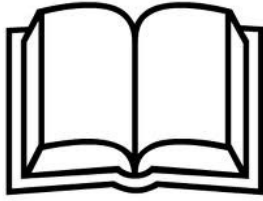
### VOICE TYPES-

- Different people sing at different **pitches**.
- Some people sing very high. They are called **Sopranos**. They are usually women.
- Women who sing lower than **Soprano** are called **Mezzo** or **Mezzo Soprano**.
- Men who have high pitched voices are called **Tenors**. The tenors of many operas will sing the romantic lead
- Men who sing low are called **Basses**. These men usually play characters that are the bad guy or the comedic part.

### VOLUME-

- You can also sing different volumes. If you sing **forte** it means you sing or play very loudly. You may also see, fff = **fortissimo**, which means *very* loud.
- If you sing or play **piano** it means you are singing or playing softly. You can play the piano at *piano* volume! Or go further and play at ppp = **pianissimo** which means extra soft
- These musical terms are in **Italian**.
- Music is read from a book called a score. Inside the score it will tell you who is singing and how they are singing. It also tells the conductor what the instruments are playing and how the **dynamics** of the piece should be played.





**In preparation for attending**  
CAT: the opera musical

**Noisemakers**

In the middle of the show there will be a big storm. The audience will supply the noisemakers to create the thunder and wind of this terrible weather. Here are a few suggestions on how to create your noisemaker.

**Materials Needed:**

- Small Soda or Water Bottle
- Rice, Beans, Dried Corn, Beads, Charms, Glitter, Sequins, Other Small Items
- Small Kitchen Funnel
- Craft Glue

**Instructions:**

Start out by cleaning the bottle well and removing the label. Make sure the bottle is totally dry before you start this project. Place the end of the funnel into the bottle and start filling it! Start out with about a cup of rice. You can add more or less if you like.

Then, start adding any small items you would like to 'search' for in the bottle. It can be beads, charms, small toys, etc. You can also add some sparkle to your bottle by adding glitter or sequins.

Once you have everything you want in your bottle, spread some glue around the threads on the neck and replace the cap tightly. This will prevent the cap from falling off or being removed.

**Materials Needed:**

- Paper Plate
- Crayons, Paint, Markers
- Dried Beans
- Strips of Tissue Paper (You can also use crepe paper or fabric)
- Craft Glue
- Scissors
- Stapler



**Instructions:**

Start out by decorating the paper plate. (To make a larger noisemaker decorate 2 plates and seal them together.

Cut thin strips of tissue paper, crepe paper, or fabric and glue one end on the inside edge of the paper plate. Glue several strips on until you have half of the paper plate covered. Let the glue dry completely.

Next, you will fold the paper plate in half, decorated side out. Place a handful of beans inside the folded paper plate and then staple the sides together in several spots so they are sealed tightly.



**Sponsors:**

This commission was made possible with generous donations by **Jane A. Gross & The Jaffe Family Foundation**. Development of CAT has been made possible with generous support from the Elisabeth C. Dudley & Sarah W. Plimpton, The AKC Fund, Pam and Bill Michaelcheck, and the Atlantic Center for the Arts. Performances were supported by Michelle & Star Childs, and the Norfolk Children's Foundation.

**After attending**  
CAT: the opera musical



**Discussion Questions**

- 1) Who are the main characters in the story?
- 2) Do you think this story is non-fiction or fiction?
- 3) What is the big problem (conflict) in the story?
- 4) What would you have suggested to Cat if you were the Vet, Dr. McGee?
- 5) What kinds of things was Cat upset about? Why was she upset?
- 6) Do you think the Assistants are friends with Cat? Why do they make fun of her later in the story? Have you ever felt left out of the group?
- 7) Have you ever felt disappointed? Give me an example. How did you handle your disappointment?

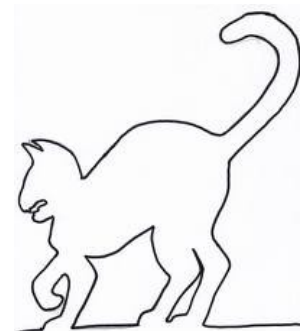
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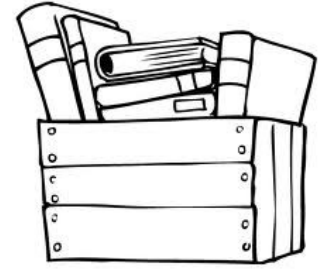
**Spelling Games**

**PLACE HOLDER**

Cat was very excited about finding so many words that contain C-A-T within them. Go through the list of words from the Opera-Musical below and find the definition for each. Then write a sentence using the word.



# Math Adventure



1) A big storm in the Atlantic Ocean has a wind speed of 64 mph. At 4:00a.m. the wind increases 15mph. At 6:00a.m. the wind speed increases 23 miles an hour. How many miles an hour is the storm moving at 6:01a.m?

2) The town of Gogetter is having a rough summer. They have had a big rain every night for a week. If it rained 2 hours on Monday, 1 hour and 45 minutes on Tuesday, 25 minutes on Wednesday and 1 hour and 30 minutes on Thursday, how much time has it rained this week?

3) Hurricane Fred is producing 3 inches of rain a minute. If the dam is 17 inches high, how long does it need to rain for the dam to overflow? If we add 7 inches of sandbags to the top of the dam how long will it need to rain for it to overflow?

4) Hurricanes are named in alphabetical order. How many storms have been labeled hurricanes if the current hurricane is Hurricane Nancy?

5) Hurricane Sam moves 214 miles to the east, backtracks 106 miles to the west and then returns 87 miles to the east before being downgraded into a tropical storm. What is the distance east that was covered by Hurricane Sam?

[NM-PROB.PK-12.1.2 NM-NUM.PK-5.2.3]



## ACTIVITIES-

A few ideas for Educators for use with the story.

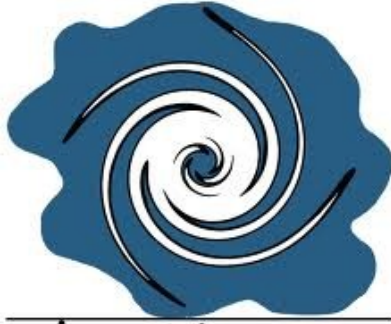
Theatre- Have the students work in groups to create a story about another animal who has a problem. What suggestions does Dr. McGee have for their problem?

Research a few of the animals mentioned by cat in the play. (Dog, Pig, Hippopotamus, Rat, Flying Fox, Chimpanzee.) How are they different? How are they alike? How do these animals interact with other living creatures in their environment?

Play a spelling (Scrabble or Boggle) game using as many animal spelling words (old or new) as you can. Write the words you spell on a sheet.

Link in lessons about Animal Life Cycles, Invertebrates vs. Vertebrates, Camouflage, Environments and the Food Chain.

Discuss the Severe Weather; Snow Storms, Hurricanes, Tornadoes. Compare and Contrast severe weather formations using a Venn Diagram.



# Hurricane

[NS.5-8.1.4,6]

In the opera, Dr. McGee and his staff are very concerned about Cat during the hurricane.

## What is a hurricane?

A hurricane is a name given to a tropical cyclone.

hurricane

- In order to be a hurricane, the wind speeds must reach at least 74 mph. They create lots of rain, which can cause flooding.
- Hurricanes only form over warm seas, normally in the tropics. Rain, high winds, hail, and tornadoes are found in the clouds around the hurricane. The center (eye) of the storm is almost always clear of this activity.
- These storms are also called hurricanes in the eastern Pacific, but named "typhoons" in the West Pacific and Asia.
- "Hurricane" is from the New World Spanish *huracán*.
- In Mayan language "*Huraken*" is the God of Storms or bad weather.

1) What are hurricanes called in Asia?

- A- typhoons
- B- tornado
- C- blizzard

3) What type of weather is not usually associated with hurricanes?

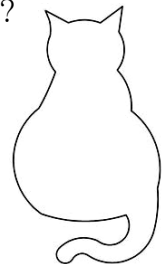
- A- wind
- B- snow
- C- rain

2) In which part of the hurricane would you be safe from wind and hail?

- A- the tail of the hurricane
- B- the eye of the hurricane
- C- the front of the hurricane

4) Which of the following wind speeds would not signify a hurricane?

- A- 120 mph
- B- 85 mph
- C- 65 mph



Several National Education Standards are covered just by attending a production at with Ardea Arts, Family Opera Initiative including:

NA-T.5-8.7 Analyzing, evaluating and constructing means from theatre.

NA-T.5-8.8 Understanding context by analyzing the role of theatre in the community and other cultures.

NA-T.5-8.6 Comparing and incorporating art forms by analyzing methods of presentation and audience response.

Students will also be:

- exposed to proper audience behavior,
- respond to and evaluate dramatic activities,
- identify the use of music, creative movement and visual components in play;
- and observe the performance of artists and identify theatrical vocations.