

Cat Secrets

AUTHOR: Jef Czekaj

ILLUSTRATOR: Jef Czekaj

PUBLISHER: Ballzer + Bray : Harper Collins

COPYRIGHT DATE: 2011

ART MEDIUM: digital media

GENRE: fantasy

LIFE SKILLS: curiosity, sense of humor, truthfulness, friendship

SYNOPSIS: Three cats are ready to read the book of cat secrets, but they are afraid other kinds of animals might try and read it also. They don't want to share their feline secrets!! To weed out non-cat readers they require the reader to go through a series of "cat tests" – meowing, purring, stretching and taking a cat nap! Although the reader seems to pass the tests, in the end, the cats fall fast asleep and an inquisitive mouse begins reading all about the cat secrets.

BOOKTALK: Cat secrets are for CATS. If you are not a cat, you should NOT read this book. Are you a cat? No? Then STOP READING THIS BOOK!

AUTHOR:

Author's Name Jef Czekaj

- He is a cartoonist
- Has been a children's book author and illustrator for several years
- Is a DJ and musician
- His comic, *Grampa & Julie: Shark Hunters*, was part of the Nickelodeon magazine for ten years
- Lives in Somerville, Massachusetts
- <http://www.czekaj.com/>

Other books written by the author:

- *Call for a New Alphabet, A*
- *Grampa and Julie: Shark Hunters*
- *Hip and Hop, Don't Stop!*
- *Oink a Doodle Moo*
- *Yes, Yes Yaul!*

ILLUSTRATOR: Jef Czekaj (see above)

CHALLENGING WORDS

Especially
Whisper
Gasp
Convinced
Revealing
absolutely

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: (Please include 4-6 questions)

- 1 What secrets do you think cats might have?
- 2 How would you keep other animals from reading the book of cat secrets?
- 3 Which character(s) do you like most in the book – the cats or the mouse? Why?
- 4 What secrets would you find in a book called Human Secrets?
- 5 The cats in this book talk to the reader. They ask questions. They ask the readers to do things, and they act like they are getting answers. What do you think of that? Do you talk to your cat? Do you wait for them to respond?
- 6 What do you think the mouse in the story will do with the cat secrets he learns?

ACTIVITIES with CORE STANDARDS:

Language Arts: Kindergarten Core Standard #2: Find the title and author of a text. Use pictures and text to draw conclusions and answer who, what and where questions.

- Put the book on the Dukane digital presenter and project the cover on the screen.
- Ask a student to come up and point to the title and then have another student locate the author's name on the cover.
- Discuss the picture on the cover and what "shhh!" might mean in the story.
- Take a picture walk through the book and discuss what might happen in the story.
- Read the book aloud and discuss speech bubble technique.
- Discuss onomatopoeia and the words in the book that are onomatopoeias. List on board.
- Ask the students who, what and where questions following the reading to check comprehension.

Language Arts:

Retell this story with the characters being another animal – a dog, a horse, a snake, whatever animal you choose. What do these animals say and ask?

1.RL.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

1.RL.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lessons.

1.RL.3 Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

Science:

Kindergarten Core Standard #5: Examine and classify living and nonliving organisms in order to compare and contrast their characteristics. Observe plants and animals and describe their similarities and differences.

- Show class photos of living and nonliving things. Ask them to sort them into living and nonliving baskets.
- Discuss characteristics of the items/photos in each basket.
- Focus on animals. What characteristics do animals have?
- Read the book aloud. After reading it, name anything that is living or nonliving in the story.
- The book and cats are the main living/nonliving items in the story. Do a Venn diagram together comparing the characteristics of a book and cat. Analyze to see if there are any common characteristics.

RELATED INTERNET SITES:

www.czekaj.com

Cartooning <http://www.activitytv.com/cartooning-for-kids>

Teaching books.net: <http://www.teachingbooks.net/tb.cgi?aid=3869>