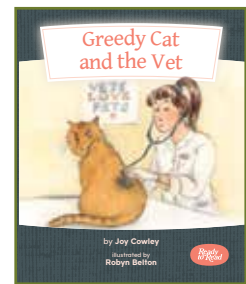


Greedy Cat and the Vet

by Joy Cowley
illustrated by Robyn Belton

This text is levelled at Green 2.



Overview

It's time for Greedy Cat to go to the vet for his check-up and flu injection, but he's not happy about it and he makes his feelings known.

This story supports the development of a self-extending reading process. It requires students to "use a range of sources of information in the text, along with prior knowledge, to make sense of the texts they read", to monitor their reading, and to "use strategies such as asking questions and making inferences to help them think more deeply about the ideas in the text" (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 12).

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at www.readytoread.tki.org.nz

Related texts

Previous stories about Greedy Cat: *Greedy Cat* (shared); *The New Cat* (Magenta); *Greedy Cat Is Hungry* (Red 2); *Lunch for Greedy Cat* (Yellow 3); *Greedy Cat's Door* (Blue 3)

Poems about Cats: "Bedtime Cat" (poem card); "Catsways" (in the shared book *Splish Splash!*)

Other stories about pets: *Me and My Dog* (shared); *Nibbles* (Blue 1); *Watching the Game* (Blue 2); *Skipper's Happy Tail* (Blue 1), *No, Skipper!* (Blue 3); *Where's Nibbles?* (Green 2); *A Place to Sleep* (Green 3)

Cross-curriculum links

English (level 1): Selects and reads texts for enjoyment and personal fulfilment.

Text characteristics

Greedy Cat and the Vet has the following text characteristics that help develop the reading behaviours expected of students reading at Green.

Familiar characters and settings

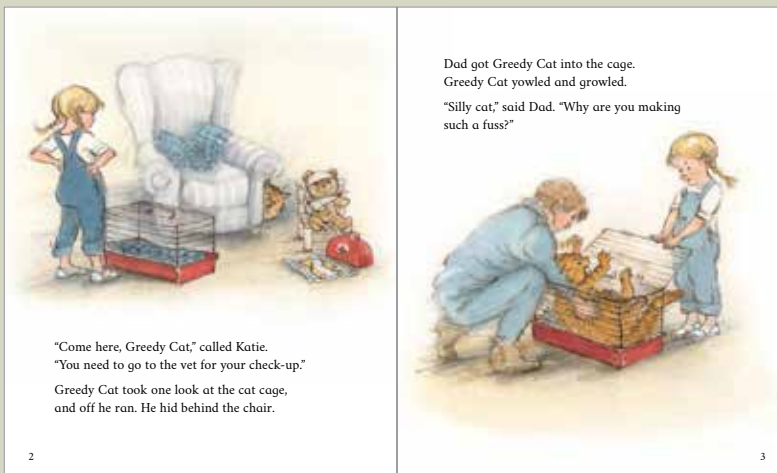
Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences

Illustrations that support and extend the meaning but may not exactly match the words

Dialogue between easily identified speakers

Sentences that run over more than one line and several lines of text on every page

A range of punctuation to support phrasing and meaning



Vocabulary features that provide opportunities for students to build and apply their knowledge of letters, sounds, and words, for example:

- the digraph "ch" in "chair", "check-up", "lunch", "much", "such"
- the initial consonant blends in "claws", "close", "cried", "floor", "flu"; "Greedy", "growled"; "please"; and the silent "w" in "wriggled"
- the irregular verb forms – "came", "felt", "hid", "ran", "took"

Mostly familiar vocabulary, including many high-frequency words, but also some less familiar words and phrases (for example, "cat cage", "chair", "check-up", "claws", "Dear", "ears", "floor", "flu injection", "growled", "Hold him tight", "mouth", "paw", "perfect", "Silly", "such a fuss", "teeth", "tummy", "vet", "waiting room", "whispered", "wriggled", "yowled") that are likely to be in a reader's oral vocabulary and are strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations

Reading standard: After one year at school

The Literacy Learning Progressions

Suggested reading purpose

(What can the students expect to find out or think about as a result of reading this text?)

To find out what happens when Greedy Cat goes to see the vet

Possible learning goals

(What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?)

The behaviours listed below link to *The Literacy Learning Progressions*. **Select from and adapt** them to set your specific learning goal. Be guided by your students’ particular needs and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*Reading and Writing Standards for Years 1–8*, Knowledge of the learner, page 6).

This text provides opportunities for students, over several readings, to:

- **make connections** between their prior knowledge and information in the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- identify the main events in the story (**summarise**)
- **make meaning** by searching for and using multiple sources of information rather than one source
- **monitor** their reading and self-correct where necessary, for example, by rerunning text or checking further sources of information.

Introducing the story

- Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that the introduction to the text activates their prior knowledge and supports them for a successful first reading. A short video on the importance of introducing the text is available at: <https://vimeo.com/142446572>

For English language learners, you could talk through the illustrations on the cover, title page, and first few pages before the whole-group session, to build confidence with vocabulary and to provide support with text features that may be unfamiliar. You can find further information about features of texts that may need support at [ELLP](#).

- A few days before introducing this story, add copies of familiar Greedy Cat books to the students’ browsing box for them to reread and enjoy.
- Tell the students you have another Greedy Cat story for them to read. Have them briefly recall Greedy Cat’s past antics.

- Use the title and the cover illustration to discuss what a vet is and what she is doing with Greedy Cat. Introduce the idea of pets needing regular check-ups and injections (including flu injections) to keep them healthy. Encourage the students to share any experiences they have of taking pets to the vet. *Does your pet look as grumpy about it as Greedy Cat does here?*
- Enjoy the students’ discovery of the sign on the wall. *Do you think this vet loves this grumpy cat?*
- Use the illustration on the title page to confirm the idea that Greedy Cat is not happy to be going to see the vet (and to introduce the term “cat cage”).
- Discuss what is happening in the illustrations on pages 2 and 3 (who, what, where, why). To provide support for “yowled” and “growled”, prompt the students to recall what Greedy Cat does when he’s angry or upset. Also slip the idea of “making a fuss” into the discussion.
- Share the purpose for reading and have the students think, pair, and share their predictions about what might happen. The students could begin reading the story for themselves at this point. If you think they need more support, you could discuss the illustrations on pages 4 and 5 to introduce the idea of a waiting room.

Monitoring the reading

- Observe closely as the students read the story quietly to themselves. Note their confidence and perseverance, their attempts to solve unknown words, and any instances of self-monitoring, cross-checking, and self-correction. Provide support to individual students as necessary. There will be opportunities to provide further support with word solving and comprehension on subsequent readings.
- If a student makes an error without noticing, wait until the end of the sentence or page before intervening, unless they stop reading. Waiting gives the student an opportunity to notice the error and fix it for themselves. Use appropriate prompts to draw their attention to the error.
- Remember to base your prompts on what you know about the student’s prior knowledge. For example, asking an English language learner if a word or sentence sounds right may not be useful if they are not familiar enough with English syntax and vocabulary to know the answer. In this case, an explanation and further examples would be more effective, or simply tell them the word.

- These are examples of possible student errors and teacher responses:

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
He hid behind the chair .	He hid behind the couch .	<i>Is that a couch in the picture? Check the beginning of the word. Try that again.</i>
“Silly cat,” said Dad.	“S – ” (student stops)	<i>I can see speech marks. What is Dad saying to Greedy Cat? If more help is needed, say: What can you see in that word (“Silly”) that will help you?</i>
He needs a check-up and a flu injection.	He needs a check-up and a f – (student stops reading)	Remind the students of the introductory discussion. <i>What does Greedy Cat need? Look at the beginning of the word. If necessary, articulate the initial blend “fl”.</i>
She felt around his tummy.	She feeled around his tummy.	<i>You said ... Could we say it that way? Read it again so that it sounds right. (For an English language learner, this may sound right, so you could say: In English, we say “She felt around his tummy.”)</i>

- Other prompts that you could use include: *Were you right?; You said ... can you find your mistake and fix it?; What else could you check?; Say the first part, then the next part; Think about what would make sense; Does that look right and sound right?; Read the sentence again.*
- Reinforce the students’ attempts to problem-solve, whether they are successful or not.
- For further suggestions about ways to support students to self-monitor (to cross-check, confirm, and self-correct), see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1–4*, page 130.

Discussing and rereading the story

You can reread this story several times, focusing on different aspects and providing opportunities for students to build vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency.

Select from and adapt the suggestions below. Some of the discussion points overlap, and several can be explored further as after-reading activities.

- Enjoy the students’ responses to the ending. Encourage them to infer what happened to the vet between the end of page 7 and the beginning of page 8 and to speculate about what the characters (including the vet) are thinking in the page 8 illustration. Draw out the idea that reading is often more fun when writers and illustrators leave things for readers to imagine.
- Encourage the students to think critically.
 - *What will Katie tell Mum about the visit to the vet? Will Dad tell the same story?*
 - *What will the vet tell her family when she goes home?*
 - *What will happen when it’s time for Greedy Cat’s next check-up?*
- Have the students reread the story, stopping to discuss points of interest. You could explore such aspects as:
 - the ways Greedy Cat misbehaved and the words used to describe his misbehaviour (for example, “yowled”, “growled”, “his claws came out”)
 - what they have found out about what vets do. You could create a “vet” word web, using ideas in the story as well as drawing on the students’ own experiences. You could also explain that “vet” is short for “veterinarian”.
 - the humorous details in the illustration, such as the teddy bear that Katy is playing “vets” with on page 2, the “VETS LOVE PETS” sign on the cover and on page 8, and Greedy Cat’s facial expressions
 - the use of speech marks to indicate dialogue, the attributions to indicate who the speaker is, and the alternatives to “said” (“called”, “cried”, “asked”, “whispered”) to show how the character is talking. Encourage the students to read the dialogue in a way that reflects the unfolding storyline.
 - the clues in the text (including the dialogue) and the illustrations that show the characters’ feelings, in particular, how they feel about Greedy Cat. You could:
 - record the students’ ideas about how the characters are feeling (for example, happy, angry, sad, excited, surprised, worried, embarrassed) and why they think so. (See also After reading.)
 - have the students choose one of the characters (Katie, Dad, the people in the waiting room, or the vet) and think, pair, and share their ideas about what that character thinks of Greedy Cat. Ask the students to explain what helped their thinking.

- how the students worked out new words (or tried to) for example, by checking initial letters or letter blends, looking for the biggest known part of the word, thinking about what makes sense, noticing inflected endings, reading on to the next word, or rereading. Use the opportunity to draw attention to specific aspects of words such as:
 - initial consonant blends
 - words with “ch” digraphs
 - the silent “w” in “wiggled”
 - the irregular past-tense forms of some verbs. Reread the sentences where the verbs occur and support the students in identifying the relevant present-tense forms. Explain that there are some verbs that can’t have “ed” added (for example, “came” not “comed”, “felt” not “feeled”, “hid” not “hided”).
- Provide many opportunities for students to reread this story and other related texts. You could also read picture books about vet visits or naughty pets to the whole class.
- To support summarising, the students could draw and write about four things (in sequence) that Greedy Cat did in the story. Alternatively, they could draw and write about something Greedy Cat did at home, in the waiting room, and in the vet’s room (three things in total).
- The students could draw their favourite part of the story (including, if they wish, what happened in the vet’s room between the end of page 7 and the beginning of page 8) and add captions and descriptive labels.
- Have the students choose one or two words about the feelings of the characters (generated when discussing the story) and draw and write about when a character was feeling that way in the story. Alternatively, they could draw and write about a time when they have felt that way.

After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should arise from your monitoring of the students’ needs during the lesson and provide purposeful practice and reinforcement. Where possible, make links to other texts, including texts generated from language experience and shared writing, and to the wider literacy programme (oral language, writing, handwriting, alphabet and word games and activities) and other curriculum areas.

For English language learners, **SELLIPS** also has ideas for purposeful and relevant tasks.

Select from and adapt these suggestions, according to the needs of your students.

- Ask the students to reread the story with a partner. Listen in, noting their ability to self-monitor and use punctuation to support phrasing and expression. You could also use this time to do a quick Running Record with a student to provide more information on an aspect you have noticed.
- The students can build their comprehension and fluency by rereading the story while listening to the audio version. Audio versions are particularly supportive for English language learners because, as well as clarifying pronunciation, they provide good models of the prosodic features of English, such as intonation and phrasing.
- They could choose three illustrations and create thought bubbles for the characters.
- The students could draw and write about their own experiences of taking a pet to the vet.
- Support the students in finding out more about the work that vets do.
- Build the students’ knowledge of irregular past-tense verb forms. Give the students cards with the present-tense and past-tense forms for them to match up. (You could include some regular verb forms as well.) Provide further support, particularly for English language learners, by together making up oral sentences that include the irregular verbs.