

Guided Fantasy: Magically Transform Children into Cats

Children deserve depth and creativity in the curriculum.

Kindergarten children love to watch and interact with kittens and cats.

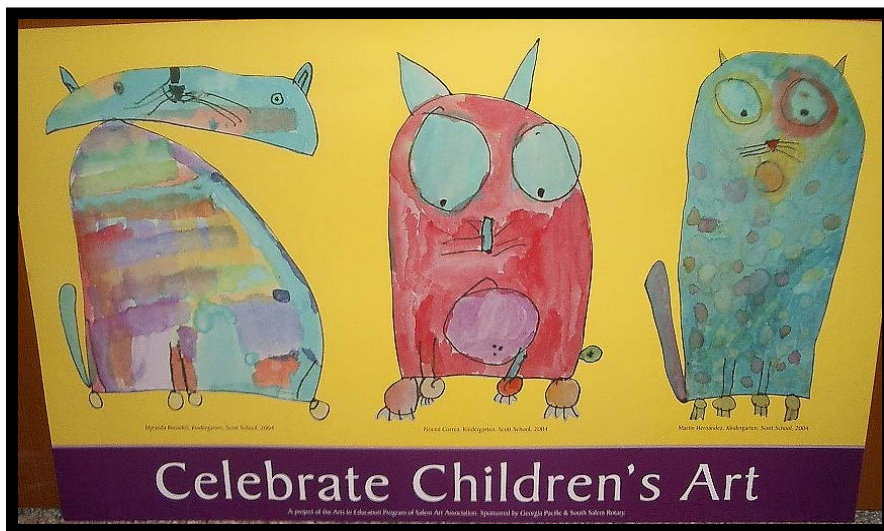
You can transform them into cats with a little encouragement. "I'm going to magically turn you all into cats." Pat their shoulders and put on light music as you **guide the children through a cat or kitty's activities**, stretching their bodies, lapping up milk, cleaning their paws, rolling around, curling up like a ball. Sing or talk the fantasy through - while your children meow, patter or prance around the room. You may want to use the Baby Kitty Fantasy from *Music is Magic for Your Child and You!* to get you started.

Provide guided art lessons in how to draw cats.

This delightful community art poster features kindergarten art from Jennifer Foster's classroom. Notice how uniquely different each cat is.

Learn About cats by observation, drama, drawing, and literature.

The study of cats can involve the whole class or a small group of cat lovers who want to become the class "experts on cats." Begin by exploring what children already know about cats and what they wonder about cats. Record children's responses on a KWL chart. Then immerse them in fiction, nonfiction, poetry, art, music and drama. Observe cats. Move like a cat. Use clay, drawings and paintings to visually express "catness." Learn the ASL sign for cat and fingerspell c-a-t. Explore literature and illustrations of cats.



Fast-writes for fluency with intrinsically motivating words

"Cat" is one of our foundation words: it has personal meaning and allows us to reinforce the directionality for "c" and "a" and the downward and across motion for "t." We want these movements to be automatic.

We can build fluency by asking children to do fast-writes with real words. "Write 'cat' as accurately and quickly as you can and then draw your cat." Expect all children to be able to write "cat" with efficient, automatic handwriting and to draw their own individual interpretation of a cat.