

## National Geographic Kids Reader: Cats vs. Dogs

### Notes for teachers: using this book in the classroom

**Reading objectives:** read most words quickly and accurately, without overt sounding and blending, when they have been frequently encountered; read aloud books closely matched to their improving phonic knowledge, sounding out unfamiliar words accurately, automatically and without undue hesitation; predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far; discussing and clarifying the meanings of words, linking new meanings to known vocabulary; read accurately words of two or more syllables; retrieve and record information from non-fiction

**Spoken language objectives:** participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates; give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings

**Curriculum links:** Science: Animals, including humans; Living things and their habitats; Art and Design

**Interest words:** canine, predator, domesticated, evolve, feline, cell, hertz, instinct, carnivore, protein, pack, coyote, *Eucyon davisii*, *Felis attica*, Persian, sphynx, Maine coon, Siamese, aggressive, propeller, chemicals, behaviour, companionship

**Pronunciation guide:** Coyote (*coy-oh-tee*), *Eucyon* (*you-see-on*) *davisii* (*dav-ee-see*), *Felis* (*fee-lis*)

**Resources:** whiteboards and pens; notebooks; pencils; paper; crayons

Children who are reading at White and Lime book bands will be able to read this book in a group, pair or independently over several sessions. They will have good reading stamina and will be able to tackle more challenging vocabulary and a range of varied sentence structures. Guided group work and independent challenges can be used to develop retrieval, interpretation and meaning making, as well as children's ability to express and explain ideas and concepts.

### Language

- Most of the language in the book will be decoded by children using the full range of cues available to them and extensive word knowledge. Some discussion in guided groups and after independent reading can be used to develop children's abilities to understand and interpret more complex information. Children may need help with the following:
  - reading and understanding the abbreviation in the title: *Cats vs Dogs*.
  - decoding and understanding some of the words contained in the *Pet word boxes*: *canine, predator, domesticated, evolve, feline, cell, hertz, instinct, carnivore, protein, pack*.
  - reading and pronouncing some dog and cat names: *Coyote, Eucyon davisii, Felis attica, Persian, Sphynx, Maine Coon, Siamese*.
  - reading and understanding less familiar words with multiple syllables: *aggressive, propeller, chemicals, behaviour, companionship*.

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- Children may need help to think about what they have read and to predict the answer to the questions raised. This will help the reading and discussion that follows.
- Children may need to discuss ideas relating to ancestry, e.g. what a family tree is; what an ancestor/descendent is.
- Children may need help to record some key information as they read, using white boards/ note books for use in later discussion.
- Children may need help to use the index to retrieve information that is arranged alphabetically.

## Images

- Look at the cat and dog on the front cover and ask children to describe how they are similar and different.
- Look at the images of wild and domesticated cats and dogs in the book, and different breeds. Ask children to choose which impressive and ask them to explain their feelings.

## Activities

- Arrange a debate where children explore which pet would be the best for their school to have, and which would be the easiest to care for.
- Help children to design a poster for their local pet shop, explaining the benefits of having a dog or a cat for a pet.

## Questions

- Who has the best sense of smell: cat or dog?
- What does domesticated mean?
- What do dogs in the wild sometimes eat?
- What sounds might a threatened cat make?
- How do cats keep themselves clean and what is special about their tongues?