



EM36



10-15 minutes

A VISIT FROM CAT



To develop contrasts in the performance of expressive movement (hard/soft, gentle/fierce)
 To practise contrasts in vocal performance (hard/soft, loud/quiet, gentle/fierce)
 To develop the use of formal gestures, accompanied by the correct words, for interaction – use them to interact expressively with a puppet



❖ Cat puppet from EM17 – provided here too for those who didn't do Caterpillars



❖ 'A White Cat' (fragment) by P. Tchaikovsky, or the Cat Theme from 'Peter and the Wolf' by S. Prokofiev – available on YouTube – to accompany cat movements in the last activity



You could also show your child the 'cats' dancing in Act III of the 'Sleeping Beauty' ballet to the above music – search for 'Tchaikovsky Sleeping Beauty 18 Act III Puss in Boots and the White Cat' on YouTube



Play 'Guess the Guest':

Tell your child that they are going to have a guest. Say that you will give them a 'gesture riddle' to work out who it might be: walk around the room pretending to be a cat. Walk on 'soft paws' (on tiptoe) moving your hands gently in front of your chest to imitate the way a cat moves its front paws, pretend to wash your whiskers and face, stretch and so on.

Ask your child if they can guess who the visitor might be. If they do not recognise who you are pretending to be from your expressive movements, ask them to try to guess from the sound of your guest's voice; say 'Meow!' very softly and melodiously.

Play 'A Visit from Cat':

Go through the routine for persuading a shy guest to approach – ask your child what they have to do and say. Ask them to invite the cat to approach by stretching out a hand gently, palm upwards, and beckon the cat puppet with their index finger, saying, 'Come here please, Cat, come here', gently and expressively.

Ask your child for their ideas about how to make Cat feel happy and welcome (feed the cat, stroke her, give her some milk and give her toys to play with). If necessary, help them by asking questions, for example: *How should we stroke the cat so that she loves it? How can we give her something to drink?*

Demonstrate the required movements, showing your child how to perform them gently and expressively – for example, pretend to hold a cat and show them a gentle stroking movement; pretend to pour a saucer of milk, put it down and say 'Here little cat, here's your drink' in a sing song voice.

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Your child can pretend to be a cat, attempting to copy and perform the movements expressively.
 Your child can use some ideas of their own for 'moving like cats'.
 Your child can use familiar formal gestures and the correct words for interacting with the cat puppet.



KEY TO LEARNING
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A VISIT FROM CAT – continued



Play 'Soft Paws, Sharp Claws':

Perform the actions as you say the words. Ask your child to join in by both repeating the words and doing the actions:

What's your name, little cat?

Meow, meow

Do you like milk, little cat?

Meow, meow

Shall I give you a mouse, little cat?

Meow, meow

Shall I let a dog into the house, little cat?

Grr...grr...grr

Gently stroke an imaginary cat, speak softly

Gently stroke an imaginary cat, meow softly

Gently stroke an imaginary cat, speak softly

Gently stroke an imaginary cat, meow softly

Gently stroke an imaginary cat, speak softly

Gently stroke an imaginary cat, meow softly

Gently stroke an imaginary cat, let your voice get a bit louder

Hold up your hands, making your fingers into fierce 'claws'; make loud growling sounds

Play 'Wash, Walk and Scratch':

Tell your child that they are going to pretend to be a cat. First they need to practise some cat movements by themselves.

Next show them some expressive cat movements to try: Cat scratching her ear, Cat walking around the room taking very light soft steps, Cat stretching lazily and Cat washing her face. Ask your child to join in and copy you; they should try to move very expressively, using the whole body.

Then ask your child to think of some more 'cat movements' of their own (e.g. imitating an angry cat – Cat lets out her 'claws' and 'bristles', arching her back).

Play the music to accompany the cat movements and 'move like cats' together. Praise your child for particularly expressive movements, specifying exactly what they are doing well.

At the end of the game, follow the routine for saying goodbye to a visitor – Cat bows (nods her head), and your child bows, waves and says goodbye.

Cut out the cat to use as a puppet - only needed if you don't already have it from EM17.

