

How To Use: CAT'S SEASONS

Discussion Prompts

Here are some ideas for things to talk about while sharing the book – you could ask a few different questions each time you read it.

Although these are designed to inspire conversations between readers, you could answer them by yourself to model reading skills to young or nonverbal children. Some of the questions could also lead you to share preferences, memories and experiences, which can be a relaxing way to bond.

Cover: Can you count all of the kittens? Which one is your favourite? What would you name that kitten and why?

At the start of the story, the cats are mostly white.

Can you find a way to tell the kittens apart? (Hint: Look closely at their tails!)

One of the kittens has climbed a tree. Have you ever tried that?

The cats have turned yellow! If you could be any cat on the page, who would you be?

Can you count how many flowers, mushrooms and fish there are in the scene?

The leaves are falling – it's now autumn/fall!

You could use this spread to talk about why leaves do this every year. For a research exercise with older children, you could look into why some leaves turn yellow while others turn bright red.

Can you name all of the colours in the pile of leaves? You could also talk about words to describe fallen leaves. Example: Crunchy, flaky, rustling, crispy.

The season is changing again – do you know what will come next?

Have you played in the snow before? If so, what was the best part? If not, what are you looking forward to the most?

On the 'Winter finally gives way...' page, there's a shower of pink – can you guess what that is?

The cat family is spending time under the tree. Which character has the most flowers on their fur?

A large, dark cloud appears above them. Have you been in a storm before?

Can you see the lightning? Are you afraid of lightning and thunder or do you find it exciting? You could use this spread to gently talk about safety during thunderstorms; it's a good idea to take shelter somewhere safe and low, away from tall trees and structures.

The thunder makes a loud 'BOOM!'. What other stormy sounds can you make?
How about whooshing wind, pattering rain or cracking lightning?
The sun is peeping out from behind a cloud but it's still raining – do you know what that means?

Can you name all of the colours in the rainbow? To help them remember the order, some people use a mnemonic, like 'Richard of York Gave Battle in Vain' or they spell a name with the first letter of each colour: 'Roy G. Biv'.

If you enjoyed CAT'S SEASONS, you may also enjoy CAT'S COLOURS/CAT'S COLORS, which was Airlie's first book about Cat!

Activities

'Tis the Season

You could talk about the things that appear in each seasonal scene, then go outside and look for those elements in real life. If you're reading the book in winter, and there isn't any snow outside, you could research the factors that affect precipitation in winter and learn which conditions cause hail, sleet and snow.

Felines and Foley

'Foley' is the term used to describe sound effects added to videos after filming, such as footsteps in snow, animal calls and weather noises. You could go through the book and make a list of sound effects that you can imagine hearing in each scene, then either add your own sound effects as you read through it or film an adaptation using toys/puppets* and add the sounds in later using free video editing software on a computer or tablet. If you would like to request any materials from Child's Play (such as a silent slideshow of seasonal illustrations from the book), please contact office@childs-play.com.

Sensory Activities

Here are some ideas for CAT'S SEASONS-themed sensory activities:

- A tray could be split into sections to represent the seasons, then filled with natural props that appeared in the book such as leaves (real or paper), blossoms, insect models and cotton wool 'snow'.
 - Rainbow slime or snow slime could be made and added to a messy tray.
- You could use desiccated coconut to represent snow, then carefully dye it green and mix it together with pink petals to transform the tray into the spring scene.
 - An adult could demonstrate how glass prisms divide light into a spectrum.
This experiment could be linked to the rainbow at the end of the book.

*Our friends at Curious City designed a pack for CAT'S COLOURS/CAT'S COLORS, which contains blank clip art of the cat family, you can download and print the pack by visiting the product page on our website or by clicking [here](#).