

## If You Give a Cat a Cupcake Classroom Activities

#### **GETTING SIDETRACKED**

What starts with a cupcake ends up being so much more as Cat gets sidetracked looking for seashells at the beach, working out at the gym, and riding the merry-go-round. Play a simple game of telephone with your students to introduce

them to the basic structural idea behind *If You Give a Cat a Cupcake*. The telephone game demonstrates how something may begin as one thing and end up as something entirely

different. And often the thing you end up with is much more fun than what you began with!

#### THE ART OF THE CUPCAKE

Celebrate *If You Give a Cat a Cupcake* with a cupcake party! Bake cupcakes for your students, but leave the treats undecorated. Then set up a station in your classroom with frosting, sprinkles, and candies and invite each student to decorate his or her own cupcake. Alternatively, give each student a piece of card stock with an outline of a cupcake on it. Then have students decorate their cupcakes with markers, crayons, glitter, confetti, and other art materials. After students cut out their personalized creations, decorate a wall in your classroom with these delectable works of art.

#### **WORKING OUT**

Cat may enjoy eating cupcakes, but he stays healthy by working out on the treadmill, lifting weights, taking karate, and rowing. Plan a day of physical fitness for your students to remind them of the importance of taking care of their bodies. Go for a walk or a jog as a class, have students complete an obstacle course, or have them play a sport, like Frisbee or kickball. Consider inviting a qualified parent volunteer to visit your class to teach aerobics, karate, tai chi, yoga, or pilates.

#### **CAUSE AND EFFECT**

What if Cat were to ask for something other than sprinkles to go with his cupcake? If that one event were to change, would the story take an entirely different course? Explore the cause-andeffect process with your students by trying out an alternative version of Cat's story. Have your students sit in a circle while you sit in the middle holding a ball. After you say the opening words "If you give a cat a cupcake, he'll ask for," pass the ball to a student and have him or her fill in the next part of the story. Perhaps Cat will ask for a fork to eat his cupcake with or a bib to tie around his neck. After the student makes a suggestion, have him or her pass the ball back to you. Continue the story with the new idea. So if Cat asks for a fork, you say, "When you give him the fork, he might" and then you pass the ball to another student who provides the next part of the story. Keep passing the ball (and the ideas!) back and forth and see how silly and



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#### **ALLITERATION ITERATIONS**

Introduce your students to the concept of alliteration by challenging them to think of other items beginning with the letter C that they could give Cat. Instead of a cupcake, how about a cantaloupe? Or a camera? Or a car? Extend this game to the other If You Give . . . Books<sup>TM</sup> by asking your students to name things beginning with the letter M that they could give Moose and things beginning with the letter P that they could give Pig.

#### **DOWN FOR THE COUNT**

While at the beach, Cat collects seashells in his pail. Fill a pail or other container with shells, counting the number that you put in. Have students estimate the total number of seashells in the container. encouraging them to use an estimation anchor in coming up with their answers. Give a prize to the student whose estimate is closest to the actual count.

#### IS THE PRICE RIGHT?

Here is another estimation activity; with this one, you can also teach your students about money and the pricing of various consumer products. Bring in pictures or actual samples of the following

items from the story: a cupcake, a jar of sprinkles, a bathing suit, a pail, a gym membership, a ticket for the merry-go-round, a ticket to the science museum, and a pair of shoes. Show students one item at a time and have them guess how much each item costs. See whose guess is closest to the actual retail price. After going through the items. have students add up all the true costs to see how much Cat's adventures would cost in your town or city.

#### MUSEUM SCAVENGER HUNT

Cat visits the dinosaurs and the Hall of Apes when he goes to the science museum. Organize an informational scavenger hunt for your students to complete during a field trip to a local museum. Go to the museum in advance of the scheduled trip and create a series of questions for your students to answer based on the various exhibits and displays. If the museum includes a dinosaur exhibit or a Hall of Apes, be sure to include them in your scavenger hunt.

#### **OUT OF SEQUENCE**

Once your students are familiar with If You Give a Cat a Cupcake, reinforce reading comprehension and the importance of chronology with this activity. Print the text from each page of the book on a separate sheet of paper, shuffle the papers. and then randomly pass out the sheets to your students. Challenge your students to put the story back into its correct sequence by lining up in order, starting with the child who has "If you give a cat a cupcake" and ending with the child who has "he'll

want a cupcake to go with them." Alternatively, have pairs of students complete this same exercise by giving each partnership an envelope filled with mixed-up slips of paper. Text from different pages of the book should be printed on each slip.

### If You Give . . . Books<sup>TM</sup> Classroom Activities

#### **SWEET TREATS**

The If You Give . . . Books<sup>TM</sup> feature lots of mouthwatering sweet treats, including cat cupcakes, moose muffins, mouse cookies, and pig pancakes. Look up a recipe for a delicious snack on www.mousecookiebooks.com or in *Mouse Cookies & More: A Treasury*. Bring in a copy of the recipe, along with all the necessary ingredients and baking tools. In your school's cafeteria or kitchen, teach your students how to follow a recipe as you all make cupcakes, muffins, cookies, or pancakes together. Bon appétit!

#### **HEALTHY CHOICES**

Cupcakes, muffins, cookies, and pancakes are all fine in moderation, but remind your students that being healthy means making healthy choices. Plan a nutrition lesson for your class, teaching dietary guidelines and the importance of eating foods from all the food groups. Challenge your students to come up with a list of healthy snacks as well as a list of dishes that incorporate all the food groups.

#### **FAVORITE SURVEY**

After reading at least five of the If You Give . . . Books<sup>TM</sup> with your students, use the books to explore the concepts of surveys, data, and graphs. Poll each of your students to find out which of the If You Give . . . Books<sup>TM</sup> is his or her favorite. Compile the data and share it with your students in a table format. As a class, convert the data first into a bar graph and then into a pie chart, labeling both graphs appropriately.

#### **ANIMAL FRIENDS AT SCHOOL**

A group of lovable animal friends, including Cat, Moose, Mouse, and Pig, populates these books. In honor of *If You Take a Mouse to School*, have your students bring their own special stuffed animals to school for a day. In preparation for the big day, reread *If You Take a Mouse to School* and have students create invitations to bring home to their animal friends. On the day itself, read several favorite If You Give . . . Books<sup>TM</sup> with your students and their animals and also arrange to do several of the other activities outlined here in this classroom guide.

#### **GIVE-A-BOOK BOOK DRIVE**

Instead of giving a cupcake, a party, a pancake, a muffin, or a cookie, why not give books? Have your class sponsor a schoolwide book drive. While you set up donation bins and arrange for a local organization to accept the donated books, your students can create fliers and posters to publicize the event. Get the book drive highlighted in your school newspaper and set a goal of having one new or gently used book donated for every student in the school. After the book drive is over, make plans for delivering the books to the organization.

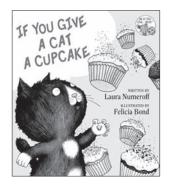
# CALLING ALL KID DECORATORS!

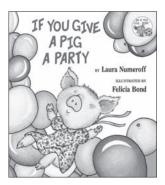
You could win a trip to a Cake Decorating Camp for Kids at the worldrenowned Wilton School of Cake Decorating!

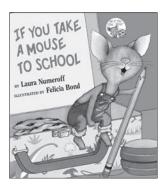
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Recipe Contest, sponsored by HarperCollins
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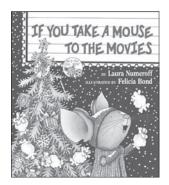
visit www.mousecookiebooks.com.

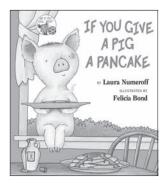
## Share all the If You Give . . . Books™ with your students!

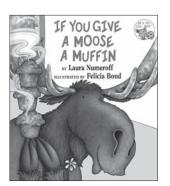


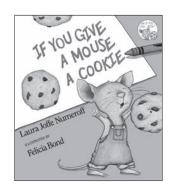


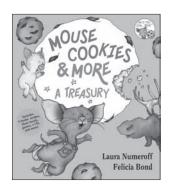


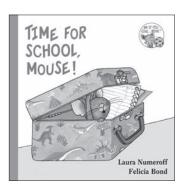


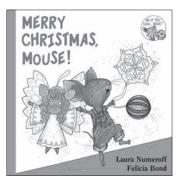


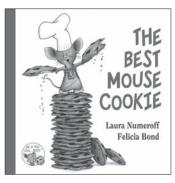


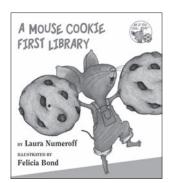












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