

# Millions of Cats

by Wanda Ga'g

Newberry Honor Book, 1929. A literary classic comprised of simple, but detailed, illustrations and an endearing story about a loving husband and his quest to find the perfect cat for his wife.



## Read

### Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *What would you do with a million cats?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder where that man found all of those cats? Are they all his?

### During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Ask the children to try and remember as you read which animal crawled in the mitten first, second, and so on. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

### Rare Words in *Millions of Cats*:

- sighed: to breathe long and loud
- trudged: to walk a path or distance with slow, heavy steps
- hundreds: the third digit to the left of the decimal, written with a 1 followed by 2 zeros
- thousands: the fourth digit to the left of the decimal, written with a 1 followed by 3 zeros
- millions: the seventh digit to the left of the decimal, written with a 1 followed by 6 zeros
- billions: one thousand million, written with a 1 followed by 9 zeros
- trillions: an exceptionally large but unspecified number, written with a 1 followed by 12 zeros
- fuzzy: covered with short fine hairs or fibers
- quarrel: to engage in an angry dispute
- scraggly: messy and uneven in appearance and shape

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## After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- What did the old man and old woman's house look like?
- Why were the old man and old woman sad?
- What did the old man decide he would do to make his wife happy?
- Where did the old man find the cats? How many cats were there?
- Which cats did the old man choose to take home?
- What happened to the pond? The grass?
- How did the old man and old woman decide which would be the best way to pick their favorite cat?
- What happened to the cats?
- Which cat was left after the others disappeared? Did the old man and old woman like the kitten?



Do

## Show Me.....a Trillion!

**You will need:** construction paper, counting bears/blocks/chips or any other counting manipulative

**Before:** either display a printed number line or write the numbers 0-10 on a whiteboard or pieces of regular paper.

This activity can be done at tables, but is best done on the floor in a circle. As a group, practice counting to 10 while pointing to each number. Talk about each number and what makes it unique, for example, 1 is straight and tall, 0 looks like a circle, 3 has two humps, 4 has no curves, 10 is made up of a 1 and a 0, etc. Next, hand out construction paper (counting mats) and enough counting manipulatives so each child has 10.

Start by having the counting mats clear, with no manipulatives. Point to one of the numbers, say it aloud and instruct the students to put the correct amount of manipulatives on their mats. When they are finished they are to put their hands in the air (to symbolize that they are done). Once they are finished, display the correct amount of manipulatives and have each child count his/her objects. For example, "show me 4 blocks." The children will then place 4 blocks on their mats and raise their hands. "Good, now that you are all done, let's count together." "1-2-3-4" (while showing your 4 blocks on your mat). Repeat the activity until all numbers have been represented.

If desired, allow the children enough time to play and build with their manipulatives.