Reading!

LO: To use inference skills to answer questions about the text



Recap: What story were we reading?

Brief outline of the text:

You know when your cat stares off into space? Or glares at a wall? Or jumps at something that isn't there? This book is all about the creature that makes the cats scared. It is a fiction book, written by James Patterson. We are going to read the 'prologue'.



Discussion questions:

Scaredy Cat says that life was as it should be on Strawberry Lane, 'until Poop and Pasha arrived on my cul-de-sac.' What does this tell you about the story? What do you think is going to happen?

Glossary:

- 'Dear hearts' – This is what Scaredy Cat is calling the reader. It is a nickname for us.
- cul-De-Sac – A road of houses that has a dead end.
- domain – Territory or area that is owned by someone.
- bowles – The organ in your body that stores waste before you go to the toilet.
- Vladimir Putin – Russian Prime Minister
- superior – Better than/the best
- finicky/skittish – Jumpy or scared



Pay close attention.

Closer.

Even closer.

Oh, that's so much better. Except for your breath. Reminds me of a dog I met once.

Now listen to me. L—I—S—T—E—N. Oh, yes. I'm used to being listened to. I demand it. I insist on it. I will be listened to!!!

You've heard of Scaredy Cats, correct? Nod your head if you're listening. Now nod your head if I'm right. Aha, you *have* heard of Scaredy Cats.

Well, I'm a real Scaredy Cat, but, as you will see, I'm not the one who is afraid. Oh, no. That should be you. Mee-OWWWWW!

There are others like me. Not nearly as talented, or fierce, or clever. But there are Scaredy Cats in your small town, your big city, your neighborhood, maybe even your backyard. We Scaredy Cats are everywhere. It's just that human beings can't see us. Only cats can see a Scaredy Cat.

Are you with me so far, dear hearts?

I am the Scaredy Cat on Strawberry Lane—a cul-de-sac (look it up) in the western suburbs of Fairview. The homes here are very lovely. Practically mansions. Why, there's even a gorgeous green golf course. Strawberry Lane runs right alongside the back nine. That's what golfers call the final holes on an eighteen-hole course. (You can look that up, too!)

Everything was going as it should. Fine and dandy, the cat's meow. But then a certain family moved to Strawberry Lane. That would be the Wilde family.

But why should I care about these Wildes?

I don't.

In fact, I couldn't care less about all human beans. They mean nothing to a Scaredy Cat as magnificent as I.

My complete focus was on the Wildes' two cats, whom they brought with them to my domain!

Poop, two and a half, a gray British shorthair. And yes, the vet gave her that name in honor of her nervous bowel syndrome. The name stuck. So did poop to the sides of her litter box. She's better now. But, well, let's just say I aim to make her bowels nervous again.

The other Wilde cat? Pasha, almost four, born in St. Petersburg. No, not St. Petersburg, Florida. St. Petersburg, *Russia*. Pasha is a white long-haired Persian cat. Speaks six languages. Once met Vladimir Putin, or so he claims. Repeatedly.

Now, this is important for our story. You must have noticed that cats are, shall we say, a teensy-weensy bit totally crazy, spooked-out, cat-eyed paranoid!

Always looking over their shoulders. Skittish. Often staring down long hallways at nothing. Frequently gazing out windows at…nothing. Jumping off couches and benches, and tables, and mantelpieces when they hear the slightest *poof* of a noise.

Well, Scaredy Cats are why they do that.

I am why they do that.

To be as clear as I can, I am a shadowy presence that only cats can see. I'm not exactly a ghost, but that's a good way to think about me—especially if you don't think very well.

I'm scarier than any human ghost, though, because, as I'm sure you know, cats are far superior to humans in every way.

My job, my duty—nay, my calling—is to make sure that the cats in my realm act more cattish than any other cats on this planet or any other. My mission, should I choose to accept it, and I have, is to maintain the proper cat order, the catus quo, to resist any and all change to our cattiness or cattitude.

Cats are proud, cats are stubborn, cats are finicky, and I plan to keep it that way, especially in *my* domain!

And that is precisely the way life was on Strawberry Lane until Poop and Pasha arrived on my cul-de-sac. (Haven't you looked it up yet? I told you to look it up paragraphs ago!)

Here's what happened. And I should warn you—this is not a happy story. This, dear hearts, is a ghost story.

Discussion questions:

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