

## Grade 5 – Ancient Egypt Reading Comprehension

- 1- Read the text *Cats in Ancient Egypt* on page 2. Answer the comprehension questions on page 3.
- 2- On page 4 is another text on cats. After reading the text, answer some multiple choice questions. For the second part, write complete sentences to express your opinion about the different pets listed on the left, using the right form of the verb to be and the adjectives listed on the right.
- 3- On page 6 are two short texts about the discovery of King Tut's tomb. Answer the comprehension questions.
- 4- You can send me pictures of your work at:  
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## *Cats in Ancient Egypt*

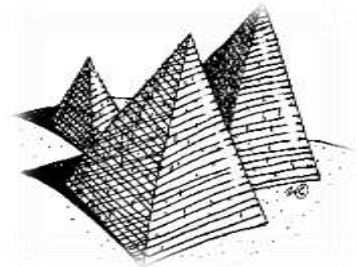
Cats played an important role in Ancient Egypt. From protectors of their grain, to pets, cats' influence on Egyptian life was **unmistakable**. The popularity of Egyptian cats is reflected in the many Ancient Egyptian paintings and carved stone statues in which they appear.

Cats and Egypt share a long and interesting history. Many cat experts believe that Ancient Egyptians were the first to domesticate cats. At first, it was a practical matter as cats were brought in to protect **granaries** and homes from pests like rats and cockroaches. Eventually though, Ancient Egyptians - especially the wealthy - started to adopt cats as pets.

Paintings on tombs and other buildings show spotted, slender cats, which are believed to be the first domestic cats. It is believed that these early Egyptian cats were the ancestors of the Egyptian Mau. This **breed** is not as well known as other cat breeds

Whoever killed a cat in Ancient Egypt was put to death. Amazingly there were also laws banning the exportation of cats.

Ancient Egyptians loved cats and went into mourning whenever any of the family cats died. Cats were even mummified after death. Cat cemeteries have been discovered along the River Nile and cat mummies can be found in the tombs of many Egyptians.



1. This text could possibly be found in a \_\_\_\_\_ book.
  - a. history
  - b. biology
  - c. mathematics
  - d. physics
  
2. Cats were important \_\_\_\_\_ in Ancient Egypt.
  - a. as mummies
  - b. as a source of food
  - c. as ancestors
  - d. as protectors and pets
  
3. The prefix **un** in the word "*unmistakable*" in paragraph 1 means \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. not
  - b. against
  - c. many
  - d. for
  
4. *Granaries* in paragraph 2 are places where one keeps \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. grapes
  - b. grain
  - c. clothes
  - d. treasure
  
5. Cats were kept as pets, in particular by the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. soldiers
  - b. sick
  - c. rich
  - d. slaves
  
6. The word *breed* in paragraph 3 is a / an \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. verb
  - b. noun
  - c. adjective
  - d. adverb
  
7. "*However, the Egyptian Mau is now becoming more popular.*" This sentence fits best into \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. paragraph 1
  - b. paragraph 2
  - c. paragraph 3
  - d. paragraph 4
  
8. Where, according to the passage, have cat cemeteries been discovered?
  - a. next to pyramids
  - b. close to wells
  - c. along the River Nile
  - d. close to statues
  
9. When a family cat died in Ancient Egypt, the family felt \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. responsible
  - b. sad
  - c. excited
  - d. embarrassed
  
10. In Ancient Egypt it was not allowed to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. breed cats
  - b. keep cats as pets
  - c. kill or export cats
  - d. carve statues of cats



The house cat has lived with people for at least 3.500 years. The ancient Egyptians used cats to keep mice and rats away from grain and other food. It is possible that humans kept them as pets even before that, because the 8000-year-old bones of people and cats were found together in a grave in Northern Cyprus.

House cats have many interesting qualities. For example, they sleep longer than most animals. The typical cat sleeps for about 14 hours a day, and some sleep even 20 hours. As well, when cats jump or fall, around in the air so that their feet point towards the ground. That is probably one reason why people say that cats have “nine lives”. House cats also point their ears in different directions. If a cat is walking one way, it can point its ears backwards to a noise coming from behind.

The senses of a house cat are much superior to those of humans. Their ability to see at night is much better than ours, and during the day their field of vision is 20 % wider. As for hearing, house cats can pick up sounds that are higher than we can perceive, even higher than dogs can hear. A domestic cat’s sense of smell is about 14 times stronger than a human’s. In addition, the house cat can feel things with its whiskers. When a cat is moving at night, its whiskers stick straight out from its nose and help the cat avoid bumping into objects. No doubt all these super senses make the house cat such an excellent hunter of small animals like mice.

Nowadays, however, people don’t usually keep house cats for their hunting ability. Although cats are generally loners, they can be quite affectionate when they choose. Many cat owners love to sit with their cat and quietly stroke its fur while it makes soft purring sounds. In fact, some programs in hospitals and prisons bring in cats regularly to help calm the nerves of patients and convicts. It is said that “a dog is man’s best friend”, but people with cats are sure to disagree.

#### Questions

1. The best title for the reading text is
  - A) “The many kinds of house cats”
  - B) “House cats make good pets”
  - C) “Surprising facts about the house cat”
  - D) “The past and present lives of house cats”
2. Scientists are sure that house cats have been pets
  - A) for less than 3.500 years
  - B) for 3.500 years
  - C) for more than 3.500 years
  - D) for 8,000 years
3. People say cats have nine lives because
  - A) they can point their ears in different directions
  - B) they sleep for a long time
  - C) they can hear noises from behind them
  - D) they can usually land on their feet

4. How are a house cat's senses better than a dog's?  
 A) it can see better  
 B) it can hear higher sounds  
 C) it has a stronger sense of smell  
 D) its whiskers can feel objects in the dark



5. Generally speaking, house cats are  
 A) solitary animals  
 B) not good hunters any more  
 C) unfriendly  
 D) noisy when people stroke their fur

6. Some programs use cats to help people. Which people do cats NOT help in these programs?  
 A) violent people  
 B) calm people  
 C) sick people  
 D) nervous people

## II. Vocabulary

Below is a list of pets. Match the adjectives on the right with the pets to express your opinion.

Pets	Verb (to be)	Adjectives
Dogs Cats A parrot A snake Tropical fish Rabbits White mice A frog Turtles	Is/ isn't  Are/ aren't	Interesting Loud/ noisy Expensive Dangerous Cute/ beautiful/ lovely Solitary Dirty/ messy/ disgusting Friendly/ affectionate Difficult to take care of

**Name:**

**Date:**

The rumor of an ancient curse didn't stop the archaeologist Howard Carter from opening the tomb.

The King was only nineteen when he died, perhaps by his enemies. His name was Tutankhamen: King Tut. The ancient Egyptians revered their Pharaohs as Gods. Upon their deaths their bodies were carefully preserved. The mummified bodies were then placed in elaborate tombs (like the Great Pyramid) and surrounded by all the riches the royals would need in the next life. The tombs were carefully sealed. Egypt's best architects designed the structures to resist thieves.

### **The Search for the Missing King**

In 1891 a young Englishman, Howard Carter arrived in Egypt. Over the years he became convinced that there was at least one undiscovered tomb, that of the almost unknown king Tutankhamen. Carter found a sponsor for his tomb search in the wealthy Lord Carnarvon. For five years Carter dug looking for the Pharaoh and found nothing.

(adapted from <http://www.unmuseum.org/mummy.htm>)

#### **A. For questions 1-5, choose the best answer.**

1. Which is the most suitable title for the first text?
  - a. King Tutankhamen's life
  - b. The Great Pyramid
  - c. Howard Carter and the Curse of Tut's mummy
  
2. Tutankhamen
  - a. was a king for many years
  - b. died at the age of 90
  - c. was probably killed
  
3. The ancient Egyptians
  - a. worshipped and admired their kings
  - b. didn't believe in God
  - c. believed in the twelve Gods
  
4. After their deaths, the Kings' bodies
  - a. were all buried together in the Great Pyramid
  - b. were wrapped
  - c. were buried with their wives

5. Tombs in ancient Egypt were
  - a. carefully protected against thieves
  - b. decorated by architects
  - c. built by experienced builders

**B. Decide whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE according to the texts.**

1. Carter went to Egypt to discover a tomb. **TRUE/ FALSE**
2. Tutankhamen was well known in the nineteenth century. **TRUE/ FALSE**
3. Lord Carnarvon was a rich man. **TRUE/ FALSE**
4. Lord Carnarvon would cover the cost of Carter's excavation. **TRUE/ FALSE**
5. As soon as Carter arrived in Egypt, he discovered Tutankhamen's tomb. **TRUE/ FALSE**