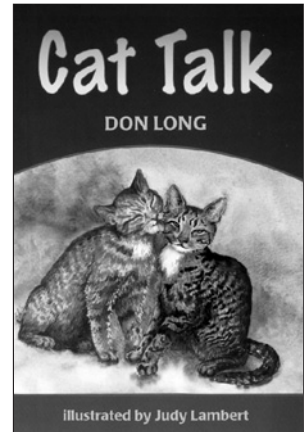


# Cat Talk

by Don Long

illustrated by Judy Lambert



## Book Summary

*Cat Talk* explains how cats communicate with one another and with people. The book describes a range of feline actions and gives the reasons behind them.

## Features of the Book

- Headings and subheadings
- The use of parentheses to give additional information
- Questions addressed to the reader
- Illustrations that enhance the meaning of the text
- Precise, descriptive language
- The personal nature of the writing
- Subtle humor
- The “cat talk” in quotation marks

## Purpose

*Cat Talk* can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** recognizing the features of nonfiction, especially the organization of material;
- S** relating what students read to their own experiences and observations;
- S** distinguishing between fact and opinion;
- S** using a text as a springboard to further research;
- S** recognizing the author’s purpose and point of view.

## The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Recognizing the features of nonfiction, especially the organization of material
- S** Relating what students read to their own experiences and observations
- S** Distinguishing between fact and opinion

## Introducing the text

Discuss the title and cover illustration.

– *Do cats really talk?*

Discuss the overall structure of the text and look at the chapter divisions. Then draw the students’ attention to pages 4, 7, 8, and 10 and talk about the use of subheadings as well as chapter headings.

– *Why is the book set out in this way?*

Read the chapter headings and subheadings.

– *What do you think you will learn about cats in this book?*

The students are likely to be enthusiastic about sharing their experiences of cats. You may need to limit this discussion!



## Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read the first chapter, which is just one page, and to think about the concept of the book being a “dictionary.”

- *What do you expect to find in each of the chapters?*

Ask the students to read chapter 2. Encourage them to take note of the headings and subheadings as they read.

- *How are the chapter headings and subheadings related?*

Check comprehension by asking what they learned about how cats use their heads and tails to “talk.” Discuss the author’s ideas about how humans should react to cats’ behavior.

Look at chapter 3, “Fighting Talk.”

- *How do the illustrations in this chapter help you understand what the author is writing about?*

The students can now read the rest of the book independently. When they have finished, share their responses.



## Revisiting the Text

The suggested activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson if appropriate or could be taken as a mini-lesson at a later time.

- S** Recognizing the features of nonfiction, especially the organization of material

With the students, build up a chart listing the features of nonfiction. This could be displayed on the classroom wall and added to as the students encounter other expository texts. Examples of such features could be:


Nonfiction books:

- often use headings and subheadings
- may have a glossary
- often have diagrams or charts
- often have photographs or detailed, accurate drawings.

- S** Using a text as a springboard to further research

The students could research facts on how other animals communicate. Make a chart together from these facts to give the students experience in presenting information in forms other than narrative. Discuss the following questions in groups.

- *How would you put these facts into report form?*
- *What headings and subheadings would you use?*
- *How would you make an interesting introduction?*

 The students could prepare an oral report for another class on what they have learned about cats. Remind the students to use headings and subheadings to help them order their information. They can use the blackline master on page 71 to help them lay out their report.

- S** Recognizing the author’s purpose and point of view

- *How does the author want you to feel about cats?*  
*How do you know?*

Ask the students to justify their views from the text and illustrations.

- *Have you read any other nonfiction books where the author talks straight to the reader?*