

The Stolen Kitten

Kyria Abrahams



I found the kitten sitting on my front porch in the toy bin. He was black and white and crying like a human baby. Where did he come from? I noticed he had no collar. Who would be so irresponsible?

I went inside and opened a can of tuna fish. After I placed the tuna in the doorway, the kitten hungrily lapped it up and then walked right inside the house.

“Hey, kitten! I didn’t say you could come in!” I yelled.

The kitten seemed unconcerned with this information. He plopped down onto a bunch of pillows on the couch and began to groom his paws.

My older brother Michael walked into the room, saw the kitten, and started laughing. “What the heck? You brought home a cat?” he asked.

“I didn’t exactly bring him home,” I explained. “He just kinda walked in through the front door and made himself at home.”

“Aw, Mom is gonna be so angry!” Michael said. “You’d better call her.”

“Okay,” I said. “I promise I’ll call right now.”

At that moment, I had every intention of doing the right thing and calling my mother. What happened next was slightly different, though.

I picked up the kitten and put him into a box. I gave him a blanket and a toy. And then I brought him to my bedroom and shut the door.

Our family never owned pets, but I had always wanted one. I knew a little bit about taking care of them. I knew he wasn’t a newborn kitten because he was big and fluffy, and his eyes were open. Newborn kittens are not supposed to be separated from their moms. When a human finds them, they have to be extra careful.

I knew he was going to need a litter box. Of course, since I don’t own a cat, I didn’t have one. So I took a cardboard box and ripped up an old newspaper into shreds. I learned this trick from an Internet video.

Immediately, the kitten jumped into the box to do his business. I knew this meant he was already litter box trained.

I really should call my mom about this, I thought, as the kitten meowed and jumped up onto my lap. Well, he sure did seem to like me! Maybe I didn’t have to give him back after all!

If someone can’t take care of their kitten, they deserve to lose him! I thought.

The kitten kept meowing quite a lot. It wouldn’t stop. And then, it started trying to bite my hand.

“Hey kitten! I’m not food!” I said.

“Meow!” yelled the kitten, trying again to bite my finger.

I knew I had to go to the store and get some cat food. I opened my piggy bank to see what was inside.

Five dollars and 98 cents. Well, that would certainly be enough to buy a can of cat food.

“You stay put, kitten!” I told him. “I’m going to get you food!”

I bet his last owners never gave him food. They probably didn’t love him at all!

I made sure he had plenty of water and shut the bedroom door. I put on my coat and grabbed my keys. I headed out to Whiskers Organic Pet Supply up the street from my house in Astoria, Queens.

On my way out the door, I spotted a sign on the telephone pole:

LOST KITTEN

Black and White, very friendly. If you find him, please call us. We are worried sick.

“Hmm,” I thought. “Well, if you were so worried about your kitten, maybe you should have taken better care of him!”

I laughed to myself and headed into the pet store. *People are so irresponsible! It’s a good thing I found that kitten and took him in. Now, I’m buying him food! Thank goodness he found me!*

When I walked into the pet store, I could barely get through the door. The place was packed! A group of kids were hanging up flyers about this same cat.

In the back of the store, I saw a little boy in a wheelchair. He was about five years old,

and he was crying.

“I can’t believe I lost my kitten!” he said to his parents. “I couldn’t get to the open door in time!”

I looked at the flyers on the wall. It was definitely the cat I had back at home, sitting in my bedroom, behind a closed door.

Then the truth of the situation hit me: I had stolen a little boy’s cat!

In my mind, I had made up a whole story about the people who lost the kitten, and how they deserved to lose him. Now I realized there was a lot I didn’t understand. I tried to justify why I should keep the kitten by convincing myself the owners deserved to lose him. Now I saw that it was all a big mistake.

I approached the little boy in the wheelchair. He blew his nose and looked up at me.

“I have your kitten,” I told him. “I’m sorry. I just found him and fed him. He’s at my house.”

The little boy began to cry with laughter. He stretched his arms out and gave me a great big hug. “Thank you so much! I was just about to put a new flea collar on him when he ran out the door. I couldn’t chase him! Because of my... you know... my legs.”

“I’ll be right back,” I told him. I ran home to get the kitten and reunite owner and pet.

A situation isn’t always as simple as it seems on the outside. I thought for sure the kitten’s owners deserved to lose him, but I didn’t have all the information. In the end, I was the one who didn’t deserve to keep the kitten.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What does the narrator find on her front porch?

- A a dog
- B a kitten
- C a can of tuna
- D a lost boy

2. How do the narrator's feelings about the kitten's owner change in the story?

- A At first she thinks the owner is irresponsible, but then she realizes she is wrong.
- B At first she thinks the owner is responsible, but then she realizes she is wrong.
- C At first she thinks the owner misses his or her kitten, but then she realizes she is wrong.
- D Her feelings do not change. She thinks the owner is irresponsible throughout the story.

3. The narrator assumes that the kitten's owner did not take care of the kitten. What evidence from the story best supports this conclusion?

- A "Well, he sure did seem to like me! Maybe I didn't have to give him back after all!"
- B "*It's a good thing I found that kitten and took him in. Now, I'm buying him food!*"
- C "I laughed to myself and headed into the pet store. *People are so irresponsible!*"
- D "I bet his last owners never gave him food. They probably didn't love him at all!"

4. Why does the narrator convince herself that the kitten's owner was irresponsible?

- A because she thinks the kitten looks skinny
- B because she is worried about the kitten
- C because she wants to keep the kitten
- D because her mom won't let her keep the kitten

5. What is this story mostly about?

- A The narrator makes an assumption, then realizes that she was wrong.
- B The narrator finds a lost kitten that was neglected by its previous owner.
- C The narrator finds a lost kitten and learns how to care for it.
- D The narrator finds a lost kitten, hides it from her mother, and gets in trouble.

6. Read the following sentences: "In my mind, I had made up a whole story about the people who lost the kitten, and how they deserved to lose him. Now I realized there was a lot I didn't understand. I tried to **justify** why I should keep the kitten by convincing myself the owners deserved to lose him."

As used in this sentence, what does the word "**justify**" most nearly mean?

- A tell the truth about a situation before a judge
- B realize that you have been wrong about something
- C pretend that a situation does not exist
- D come up with a good reason for something

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

The narrator tells herself that the kitten's owner must not have loved him; _____, she later learns that her assumption was wrong.

- A meanwhile
- B however
- C for instance
- D therefore

8. What does the narrator see at the pet store?

9. At first, the narrator thinks that the kitten’s previous owner was irresponsible, but then she realizes that she was wrong. What causes her to change her opinion?

10. What is the main theme or message of the story, and why? Support your answer using information from the story.

Teacher Guide & Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 530

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8. What does the narrator see at the pet store?

Suggested answer: Student answers may vary, depending on the level of detail they provide.

For example: The narrator sees a flyer for a lost cat, a group of kids putting up more flyers, and the owner of the cat she found.

9. At first, the narrator thinks that the kitten's previous owner was irresponsible, but then she realizes that she was wrong. What causes her to change her opinion?

Suggested answer: The narrator changes her opinion about the owner when she meets him at the pet store. He explains that the kitten ran away and that he wasn't able to chase it because he is in a wheelchair.

10. What is the main theme or message of the story, and why? Support your answer using information from the story.

Suggested answer: Answers may vary and should be supported by the passage.

Example: The main theme of the passage is, "A situation isn't always as simple as it seems on the outside." At the beginning of the story, the narrator makes a false assumption without having all of the facts—she assumes that the kitten's previous owner did not take care of him, just because the kitten is lost. When she meets the owner at the pet store, she realizes that she was mistaken about the situation. Her new perspective also allows her to see how her own actions were not as admirable as she had thought. The message is that people should think carefully and try to get all the information about a situation before making decisions or judgments.