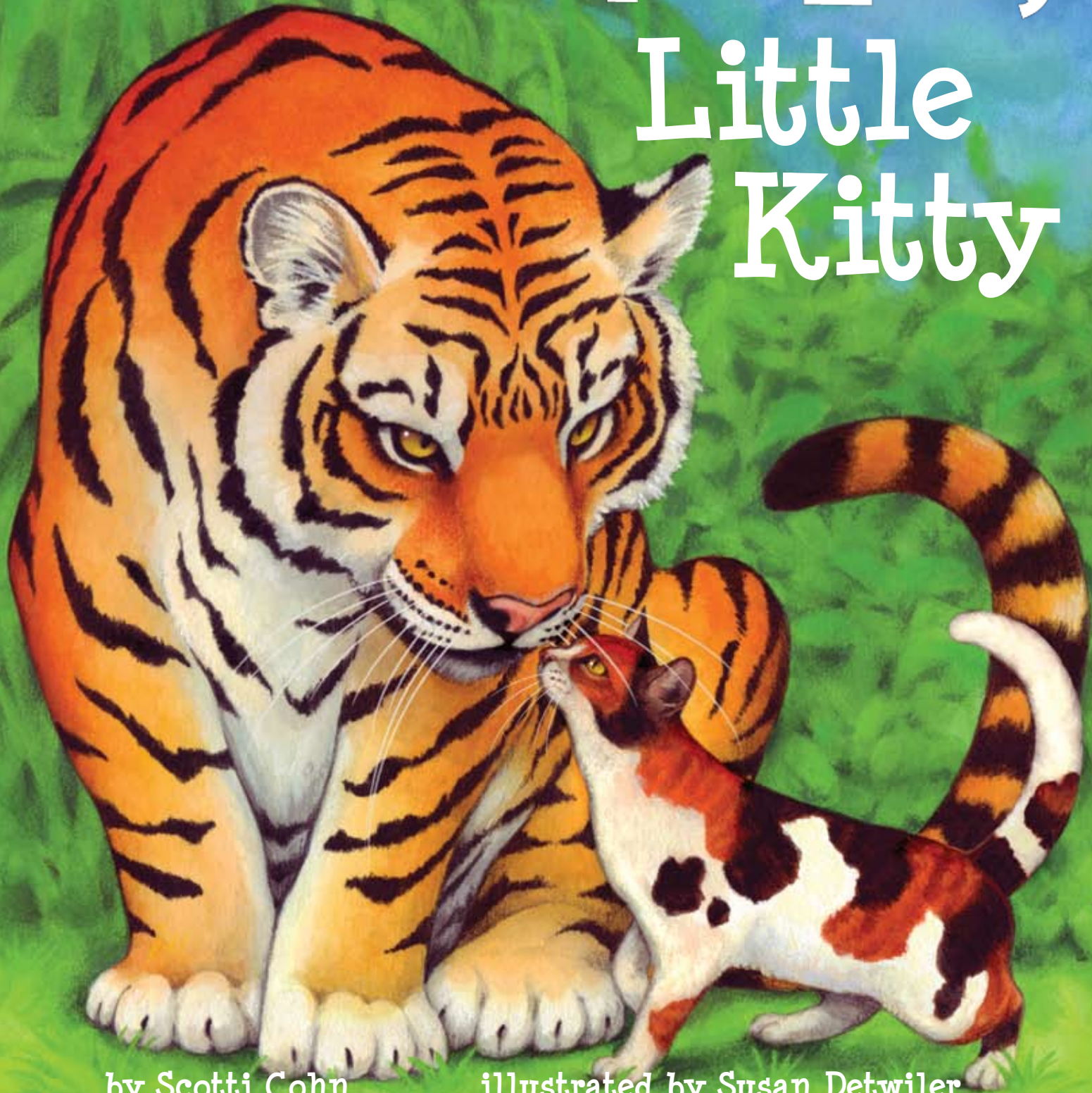


# BIG CAT, Little Kitty



by Scotti Cohn

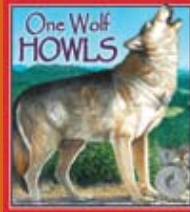
illustrated by Susan Detwiler

front flap

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# BIG CAT, Little Kitty

Big cats are fierce predators that roam the world from the mountains to the deserts. How are these big, wild cats that hunt for their food the same as pet cats that might chase a mouse or ball of yarn? How are they different? The award-winning prequel to this book, *One Wolf Howls*, introduces children to counting and the months of the year as they watch the seasons changing. This sequel introduces children to the days of the week as they travel to seven different world habitats to meet the big cats, and then back home to compare and contrast the domestic cat's behavior to that of its relative.



Big cats in the book include tiger, cheetah, lion, snow leopard, cougar, jaguar, and bobcat.

It's so much more than a picture book . . . this book is specifically designed to be both a fun-to-read story and a launch pad for discussions and learning. Whether read at home or in a classroom, we encourage adults to do the activities with the young children in their lives.

Free online resources and support for the book at [www.SylvanDellPublishing.com](http://www.SylvanDellPublishing.com) include:

- For Creative Minds as seen in the book (in English & Spanish):
  - What Are Cats and How Are They Related?
  - Cats of the World: A Map and Matching Activity
  - Cat Senses and Adaptations
  - Cat True or False Questions
- Teaching Activities:
 

◦ Reading Questions	◦ Math
◦ Language Arts	◦ Geography
◦ Science	◦ Coloring Pages
- Interactive Quizzes: Reading Comprehension, For Creative Minds, and Math Word Problems
- English and Spanish Audiobooks
- Related Websites
- Aligned to State Standards (searchable database)
- Accelerated Reader and Reading Counts! Quizzes
- Lexile and Fountas & Pinnell Reading Levels

eBooks with Auto-Flip, Auto-Read, and selectable English and Spanish text and audio available for purchase online.

Thanks to Craig Saffoe, Biologist and Curator (interim) Great Cats and Bears Exhibits at the Smithsonian National Zoological Park, for reviewing this book for accuracy.



**Scotti Cohn** is the award-winning author of *One Wolf Howls*, the prequel to *Big Cat, Little Kitty*, and is currently working on a third book in the series, *On the Move*, about seasonal migrating animals. She is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, and the author of eight nonfiction books as well as short stories and poems that have appeared in magazines for young people. Scotti has two grown children. She and her husband, Ray, share their home with five little kitties.

**Susan Detwiler** is the illustrator of several books for children including *Big Cat, Little Kitty*, award-winning *Pandas' Earthquake Escape*, and award-winning *One Wolf Howls* for Sylvan Dell, *The First Teddy Bear*, and *The Wonderful Bicycle Parade*. She is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators and her illustrations have appeared in the children's magazines, *Highlights For Children* and *Ladybug*. Susan's artwork has also been used for puzzles, games, and greeting cards. Books have always been a source of joy in her life, and as a child she particularly loved books with beautiful illustrations. Susan was educated at the Maryland Institute College of Art and lives with her artist husband in Baltimore.



Scotti Cohn



Susan Detwiler



by Scotti Cohn  
illustrated by Susan Detwiler

One fine Monday night, a big cat paces among the vines and trees. Her ears twitch and turn. She listens to every chirp, hoot, and screech.

“Who are you?” asks a gibbon. “And whose jungle is this?”

The big cat growls, “I am Tiger, and this is MY jungle.”

She chases Gibbon up a tree.



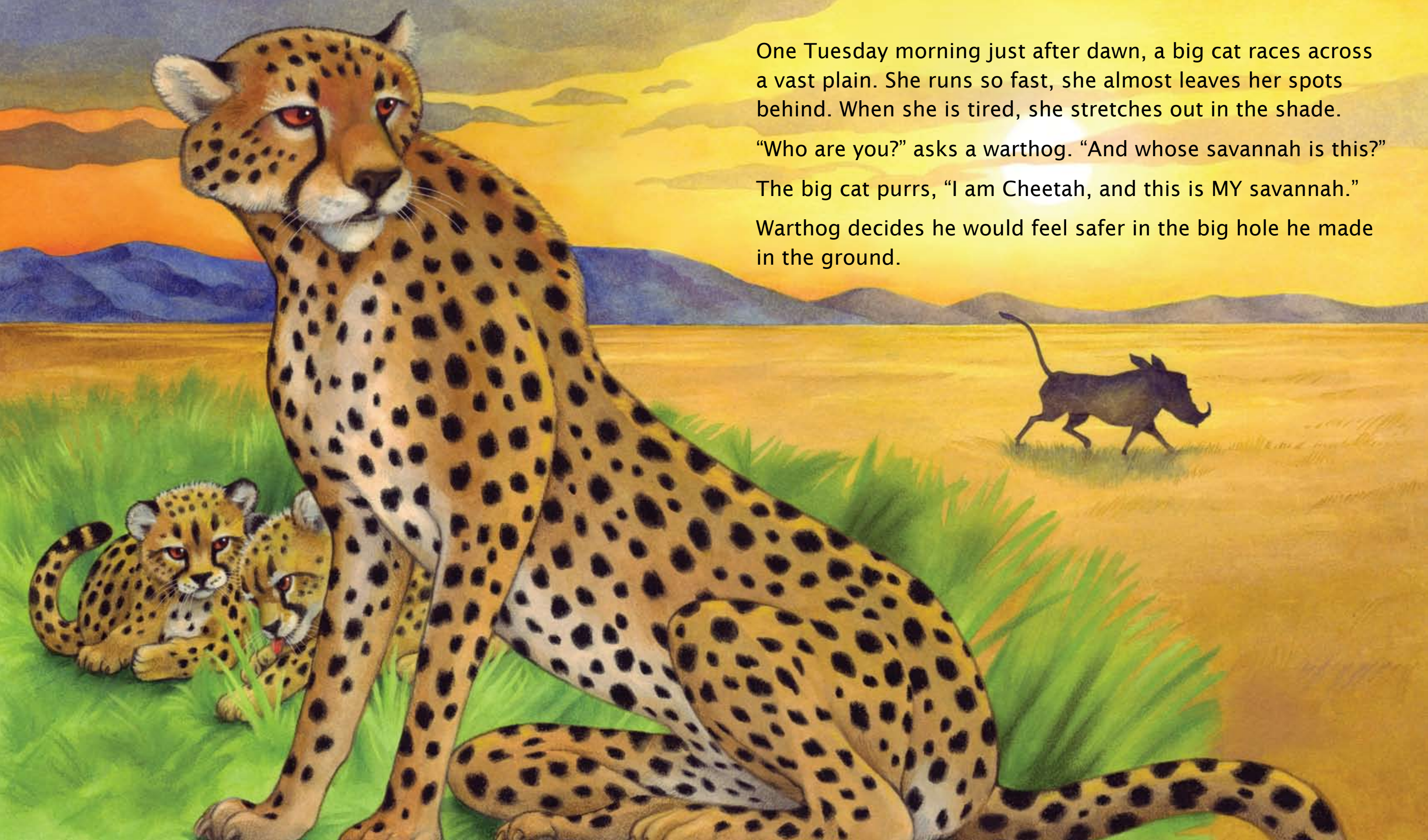
That same night, a little kitty paces among the potted plants. Her ears twitch and turn. She listens to every chirp, buzz, and hum.

“Who are you?” asks a spider. “And whose porch is this?”

The little kitty growls, “I am Tiggy, and this is MY porch.”

She chases Spider under a plant stand.



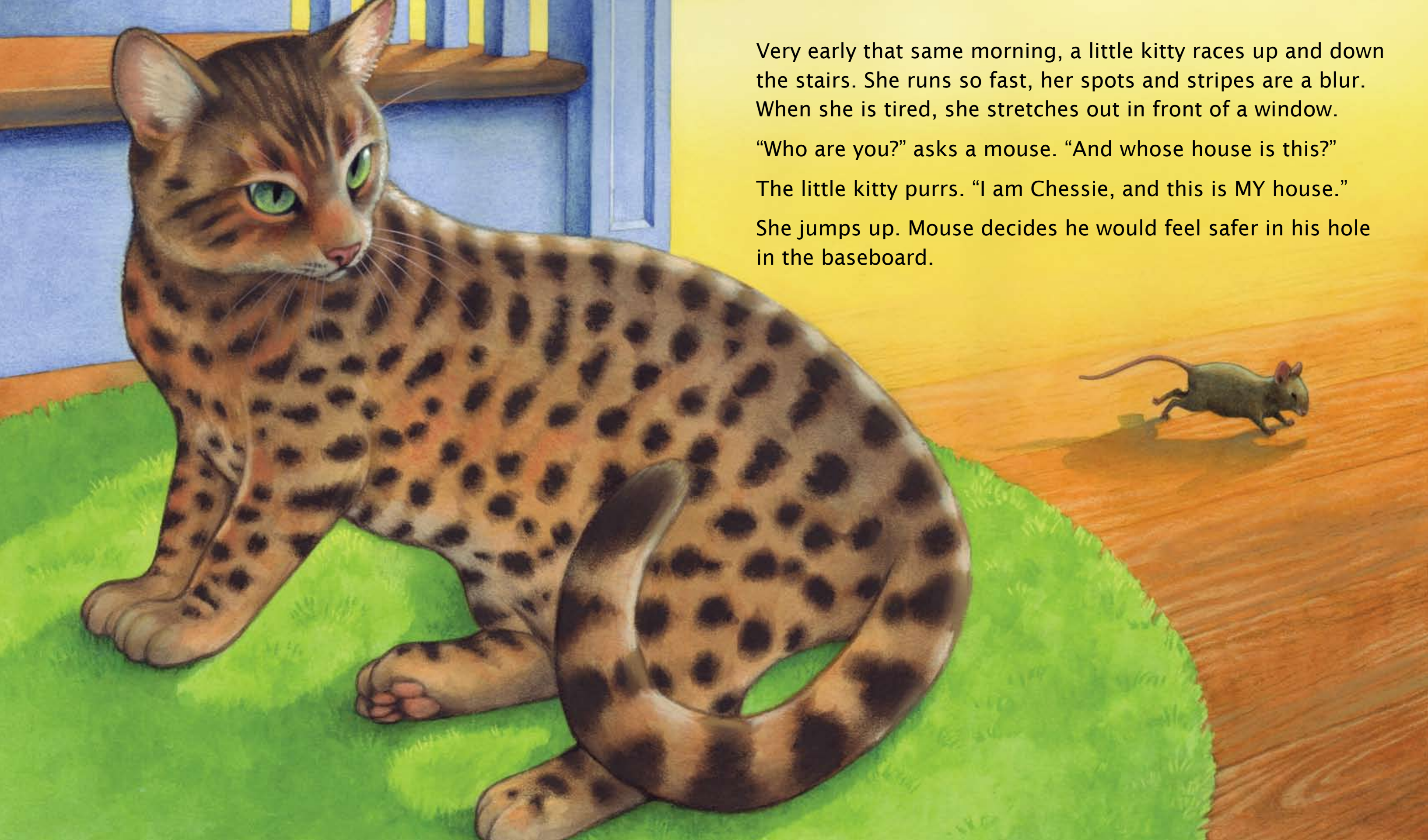


One Tuesday morning just after dawn, a big cat races across a vast plain. She runs so fast, she almost leaves her spots behind. When she is tired, she stretches out in the shade.

“Who are you?” asks a warthog. “And whose savannah is this?”

The big cat purrs, “I am Cheetah, and this is MY savannah.”

Warthog decides he would feel safer in the big hole he made in the ground.



Very early that same morning, a little kitty races up and down the stairs. She runs so fast, her spots and stripes are a blur. When she is tired, she stretches out in front of a window.

“Who are you?” asks a mouse. “And whose house is this?”

The little kitty purrs. “I am Chessie, and this is MY house.”

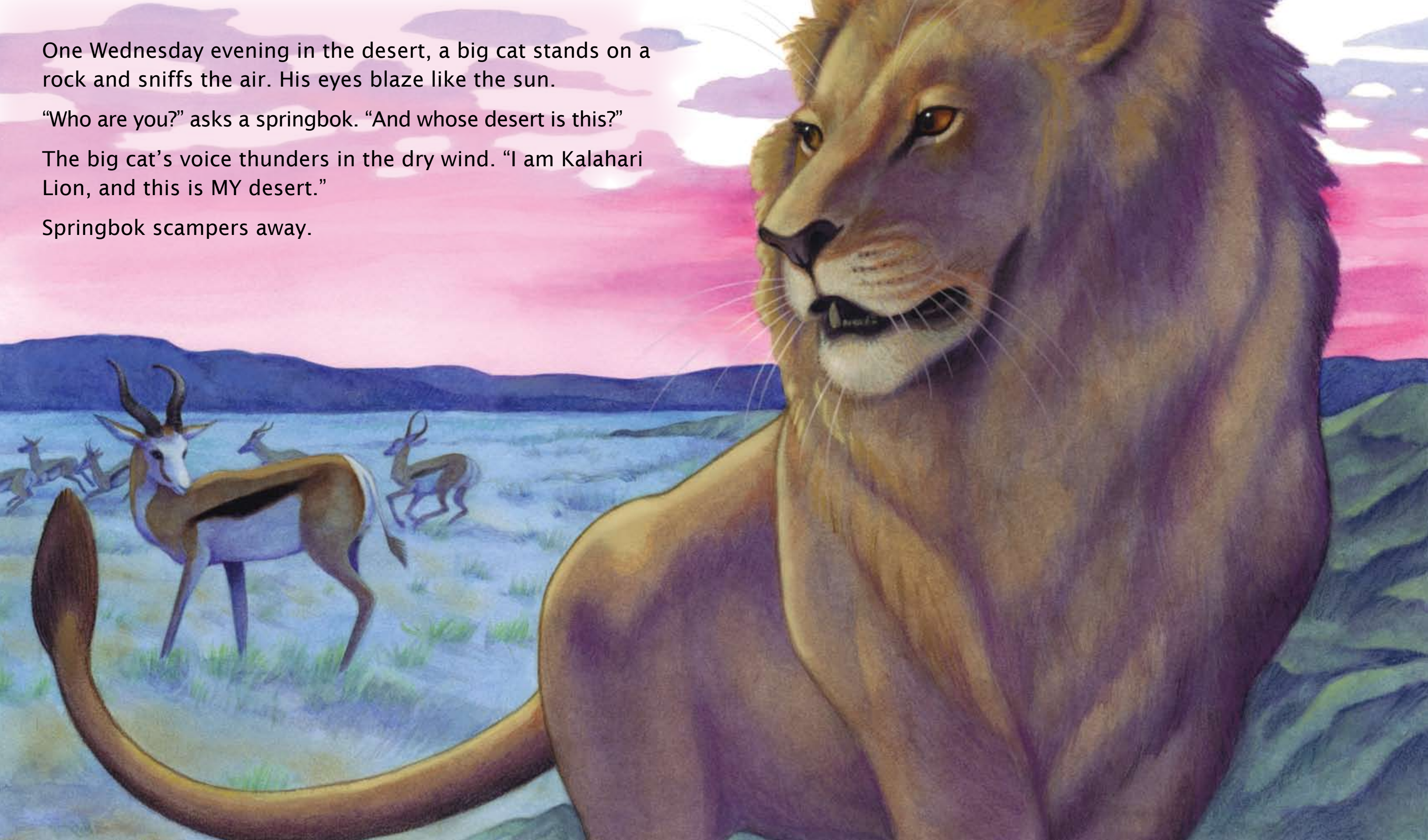
She jumps up. Mouse decides he would feel safer in his hole in the baseboard.

One Wednesday evening in the desert, a big cat stands on a rock and sniffs the air. His eyes blaze like the sun.

“Who are you?” asks a springbok. “And whose desert is this?”

The big cat’s voice thunders in the dry wind. “I am Kalahari Lion, and this is MY desert.”

Springbok scampers away.



## For Creative Minds

The For Creative Minds educational section may be photocopied or printed from our website by the owner of this book for educational, non-commercial uses. Cross-curricular teaching activities, interactive quizzes, and more are available online. Go to [www.SylvanDellPublishing.com](http://www.SylvanDellPublishing.com) and click on the book's cover to explore all the links.

### What Are Cats and How Are They Related?

Some people group all cats that roar and live in the wild (lions, tigers, jaguars, and leopards) as "big cats." Other people use the size and weight of the wild cats to group them, including the roaring cats, cougars, snow leopards, and cheetahs in the "big cat" group. Some people include bobcats, clouded leopards, lynx, and ocelots in the big cat group but other people put these cats in a "medium cat" group. Other people think of "big cats" as any wild cat, regardless of size. What do YOU think makes a cat a big cat?

Scientists all over the world use a scientific name for all living things. No matter where the scientists live or what language they speak, they all understand the scientific names. It also avoids confusion over phrases like "big cat." They sort or classify living things into groups, starting with very general sorts that get more and more specific: The two smallest (genus and species) groups become the scientific name.

Cats are mammals (like us) in the Carnivora family—or meat-eating mammals. There are two major sub-families:

#### Cats that roar (Pantherinae)



lion:  
*Panthera leo*



tiger:  
*Panthera tigris*



jaguar:  
*Panthera onca*

#### Cats that don't roar (Felinae)



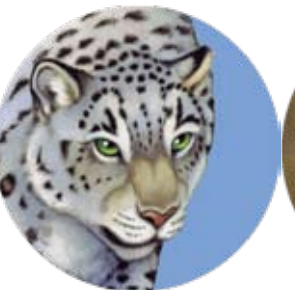
bobcat:  
*Lynx rufus*



cheetah:  
*Acinonyx jubatus*



domestic (pet) cat:  
*Felis catus*



snow leopard:  
*Uncia uncia*



cougar:  
*Puma concolor*

## Cats of the World: A Map and Matching Activity



Match the cat to its description. Answers are upside down, below. Can you find where the cats live on the map?



1

These endangered striped cats once roamed the jungles all across Asia but are now only found in isolated pockets.



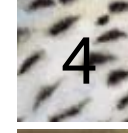
2

The world's fastest cats are found on Africa savannahs (grasslands) and a small section of Iran (in Asia). Their spots help them hide in the tall grass.



3

Adult males are easily recognized by their manes. These great cats live in social groups called prides. They can be found in deserts, savannahs, and forests in parts of Africa and a small section of India.



4

Living high in the snowy mountains of Central Asia, these endangered spotted cats are rarely seen by humans.



5

This cat is known by many names including the one used in the book: mountain lion, panther, and puma. Solid in color, these cats can be found in many habitats in North, Central, and South America.



6

All cats will swim if they have to but this particular type of cat likes swimming! Some are spotted and some are black but they all live in the Central and South American rainforests.



7

Twice as big as an average domestic cat, these wild cats live in a wide range of habitats from southern Canada down to northern Mexico.

Answers: 1. Tigers; 2. Cheetahs; 3. Lions; 4. Snow Leopards; 5. Cougars (Mountain Lions, Pumas, or Panthers); 6. Jaguars; 7. Bobcats

## Cat Senses and Adaptations



Cats have very large eyes for their body size to help them see in the dark. Like humans, the pupils open and close to let in more or less light as needed. Most non-roaring (small) cat pupils look more like tiny slits (to let only a little light in) when it is bright and big and round at night to let in lots of light.

Their eyes also act like mirrors at night to gather as much light as possible. That's why cat eyes glow or look red if caught in bright lights at night.

Like most predators, the eyes are on the front of the head (like our eyes) to judge distances. Cats can see more things in their "side" vision (peripheral) than we can.



Cats move each ear in different directions to track the sounds which helps them track their prey.



Unlike humans, cats can't taste much difference in foods.

Cat tongues are rough, like sandpaper, to help them drink water, to clean themselves, and to pull feathers, meat, and skin off the animals they eat.



Cats have a good sense of smell. Like many animals, cats "mark" their territory with smells. This tells other animals "stay out" or "this is mine." When a domestic cat rubs up against you, it is "marking you" to let other cats know that you belong to it. Cats and other animals also claw trees or go to the bathroom to mark territory.



Cats use their sense of touch as well as their eyes to help them move around in the dark. Their whiskers (vibrissae) sense changes in air currents to tell them where things are. When walking or pouncing on prey, cats' whiskers point forward to help them "see" in the dark. Blind pet cats can even walk around just using their whiskers to see! When sleeping or at rest, cats' whiskers are even with their heads.

Cats use their sharp claws to grab prey, fight, and climb trees. Most cats (except for cheetahs, fishing cats, and flat-headed cats) can pull (retract) their claws all the way inside their feet to help keep the claws nice and sharp. They sharpen claws on trees (or furniture).



The soft pads on the bottom of cats' feet act like cushions. Some scientists think that cats sense vibrations through their pads, helping them to know when something moves.



All cats have long, sharp, knife-like teeth (canines) to stab and kill their prey. Other teeth are used to hold onto their prey and to tear the meat off the bones.

## Cat True False Questions

Can you tell which statements are true and which are false? Answers are upside down, below.

- 1 Many wild cats are threatened or endangered because of loss of habitat or over hunting.
- 2 All wild cats live by themselves (solitary). Mother cats will send their kittens off to find their own territory as soon as they are grown.
- 3 Kittens have baby teeth that are replaced by adult teeth, just like us.
- 4 All cats are meat eaters. Wild cats must hunt for their food. Pet cats have instincts to hunt prey and will often kill birds or mice—even if they aren't hungry.
- 5 All cats grab prey with their paws.
- 6 All cats can eat while lying down.
- 7 Cheetahs prefer to chase their prey. Most other cats prefer to keep low to the ground to stalk their prey and will usually pounce quickly, but will chase prey if they have to.
- 8 Cats wag their tails only when happy.
- 9 All cats purr when happy.
- 10 Wild kittens will push their feet up and down (like kneading bread) on their mother while drinking milk. Pet cats will sometimes do this to the people in their lives.
- 11 Wild cats live on every continent except Australia and Antarctica.
- 12 Pet cats have some of the same behaviors as their wild cousins.
- 13 Cats have different colors of fur and patterns.
- 14 Cats can talk to each other and to other animals like they do in the story.
- 15 Some scientists think pet cats descended from wild cats in Africa.

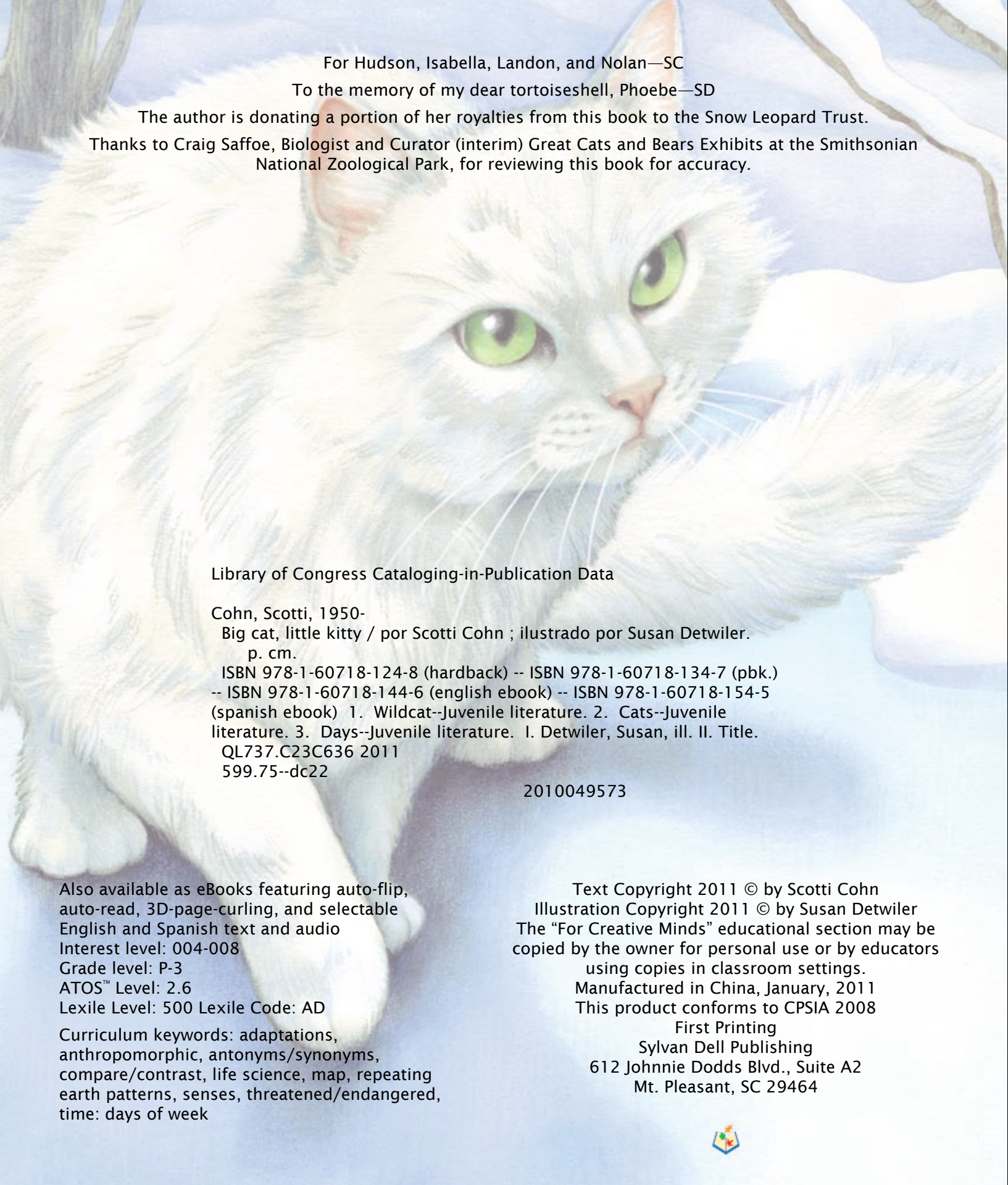
Answers: 1. True—some cats have been hunted and killed just because people are afraid of them and other cats (tigers, snow leopards) have been killed for their fur or other body parts; 2. False—lions live in social groups (prides); 3. True; 4. True; 5. True; 6. True; 7. True; 8. False—a cat swishing its tail could mean that it is upset; 9. False—some cats roar, but cannot purr, and others can purr, but cannot roar; 10. True—maybe as a way of saying "you are mine"; 11. True; 12. True; 13. True; 14. False—many animals can communicate with each other but not by talking like we do; 15. True.

For Hudson, Isabella, Landon, and Nolan—SC

To the memory of my dear tortoiseshell, Phoebe—SD

The author is donating a portion of her royalties from this book to the Snow Leopard Trust.

Thanks to Craig Saffoe, Biologist and Curator (interim) Great Cats and Bears Exhibits at the Smithsonian National Zoological Park, for reviewing this book for accuracy.



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