

Weekly English Practice



30th October 2014

English Coaching Projects

weeklyenglishpractice.wordpress.com

"Those who play with cats must expect to be scratched." Miguel de Cervantes

Do cats grieve*?

How do these four-legged felines respond to the loss of a member of the household?

* **grieve:** to feel emotional pain caused by loss, to cry after someone dies

realize: to be aware, to recognize

ease: to make less intense

surviving: still alive, living

figure out: learn through calculation

risk: to take action involving danger

turf: (colloquial): territory

distraught: very sad, upset

owners: the people who have the cat

pick up on: to notice, to sense

handle: to manage, to tolerate

newcomer: one who has arrived recently

pass away: to die

petting: touching a pet affectionately

grooming: brushing an animal's hair

at all: any quantity, even just a little

Many people don't **realise** animals grieve the loss of companions and family members. There are also many pet parents who recognise their cats are grieving but then make the mistake of rushing out to find another companion cat to **ease** the emotional pain.



Even if two companion cats had a hostile relationship, the **surviving** cat may still grieve the loss. There's confusion about where the other cat has gone. The two cats, whether they were close or not, had negotiated territories within the household and now the surviving kitty has to **figure out** whether to **risk** crossing onto the other cat's **turf**.

To add to the initial grief of the surviving cat, there's the fact that human family members are acting **distraught**. Cats are creatures of habit and they depend on their **owners** to behave the same way each day. As the owner grieves the loss of a pet, the grieving cat **picks up on** the elevated stress level.

In an effort to prevent the cat from being lonely, the owner may bring home another cat. This is a recipe for disaster. The grieving cat is not emotionally ready to **handle** the intrusion of an unfamiliar animal in his home, and could become aggressive. If the resident cat is in the middle of grieving for a lost companion, it puts the **newcomer** in a no-win situation.

Don't rush to fill an empty space left by the cat who recently **passed away**. The surviving cat needs his normal routine. He needs to be with you in the form of playtime, interaction with family members, **petting** and **grooming** as usual. Make sure the environment provides stimulation and activity for the cat to keep his mind focused on positive activities.

It's not unusual for a grieving cat to stop eating or to experience a change in litter box habits. If you notice either of these, contact your veterinarian. Watch that your cat doesn't fall into a depression. Stay in contact with your veterinarian if



you're **at all** in doubt about how your cat is handling the loss of his companion.

This story was adapted from:

<http://www.catbehaviorassociates.com/do-cats-grieve/>

“Something to chat about”

- What advice is given in the article about...
 - getting a replacement cat?
 - spending time together?
 - observing habits?
- How can you tell if a cat is grieving?
- What things do you think a cat misses when it loses a companion?
- Why do people often bury dead pets?
- Do you think animals experience grief in the same way as humans?
- What about dogs, horses, fish and other animals?



“iLook, iThink, iSpeak” Express yourself better!

- Come to the ECP Halloween Party to have a great Friday night out!
- And you can practice your English too if you want ;-)
- Free drinks (including craft beer), pintxos and music.
- The best costumes will win prizes.
- Bring your family and friends!

THIS FRIDAY AT 20:00 at
[San Ignacio de Loyola 15](#)
See you there!



ARE YOU AFRAID OF SPEAKING ENGLISH?



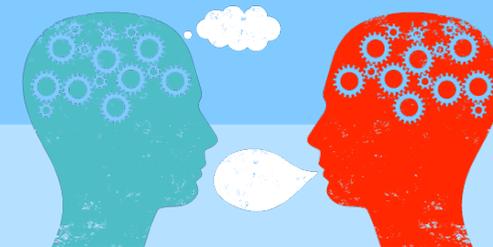
Photo © Alison Keable

Point to these cat features in the picture!

whiskers
 paw tail
 ears fur
 claw

What other animals have distinguishing characteristics?
 Look at the words on the right and say which animals have them

- TRUNK
- ANTENNAE
- WINGS
- TUSKS
- ANTLERS
- BEAK
- FEATHERS
- FANGS
- POUCH



Let's debate!

Answer these questions:

What animals to people usually keep as a pet?

Do you have any pets?

Choose a statement from the ones below.

List some reasons for the statement.

List some reasons against the statement.

Discuss the subject, using your lists to help you.

Decide if you agree with the statement or not.

Write it all in an email to your ECP coach (and record your voice!).

It is cruel to keep a pet

We should not interact with animals

Fishing and hunting should be banned

Dogs are better than cats

We should not eat meat