



“Cats’ Rule!”

Cat Bill 2011



Legislative Assembly

Exercise LAPS

(First & Second Reading)

**Adapted by the Parliamentary Education Office from the
original text of the Western Australian Parliamentary
Debates, 2011.**

“Cats Rule!” **TEACHER’S NOTES**

Introduction

The purpose of this Bill is to introduce measures to ultimately reduce the large number of stray cats being euthanised each year and to encourage responsible cat ownership. The Bill also provides measures for better management of the unwanted impacts of cats on the community and environment.

Currently, the legislative control of domestic cats is facilitated through the adoption of local laws by local governments. However, only a small minority (13% of all local governments) have introduced cat control local laws, which leads to regulatory inconsistency across the State.

The key features of the Cat Bill are:

- a) Providing for all cats that have reached 6 months of age to be microchipped, sterilised and registered with the local government where they are usually kept;
- b) Providing for all cats to also be microchipped and sterilised prior to transfer;
- c) Providing for local governments to administer and enforce the provisions of the Bill;
- d) Providing for local governments to be able to seize cats; and
- e) Providing for local governments to create local laws for the control of cats within their district.

To allow local governments and members of the public time to prepare for its introduction, there will be a phased introduction with a long lead time. Phase 1 of the legislation will take effect from 1 November 2012, with the provisions requiring microchipping, sterilisation and registration to come into effect a year later on 1 November 2013.

The text of this role-play has been adapted from the Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) record of the first and second readings in the Legislative Assembly (the Lower House). It is designed for use during the class visit to Parliament and aids in explaining the key workings of the Parliament. However, the script and glossary can also be used by the class teacher as a springboard or adjunct to programs aimed at achieving outcomes set out in the Society & Environment Learning Area of the Curriculum Framework.

Preparation for Role Play

It is important that the background information contained in the Introduction and the listed glossary terms be discussed with the students. Roles can be allocated and rehearsed prior to the visit to Parliament so that the students can read their part with confidence and understanding. This not only avoids potential embarrassment on the part of the reader, but also enables those students who do not have reading roles to better understand and follow the debate.

Glossary

(Concepts and vocabulary within the context of this exercise)

Vocabulary	Meaning	Usage
Bill (n)	a proposed or draft law.	<i>The bill was debated yesterday.</i>
Commend (v)	to give approval and support - (base word in <i>recommend</i>).	<i>I commend this film to you all. It's a fantastic thriller.</i>
Motion (n) (<i>not used in this role play</i>)	a formal proposal – an application for a ruling.	<i>The motion is, we all wear uniform to the parade.</i>
adjourn (v) <i>a-jern</i>	to close a session of discussion.	<i>We will adjourn the meeting.</i>
[to] table (v) <i>(Not used in this role play)</i>	in Parliament it means to officially present something in the House by placing it on the central 'table of the House'. Usually a report but sometimes an object.	<i>"I hope the Minister will table the report before continuing."</i>
aye <i>(eye)</i>	the old-fashioned word used for voting "Yes" in Parliament.	<i>All those in favour say "Aye".</i>
Act	Is a bill which has passed, been assented to and has become law.	
feral	Animals that were tamed but are now wild	
overkill	To overstate, exaggerate a situation	<i>"Suspending Harry from school for picking his nose is a bit of overkill, don't you think?"</i>
Electorate <i>(elect-ter-it)</i>	A Member's office in the area they are representing	
Moggie <i>(mog-ee)</i>	Not a pedigree cat; a mix of breeds	<i>Cynthia paid \$1000 for her Persian Cat. My cousin gave me a Moggie for free.</i>
<i>Hansard</i>	the official written record of the debate speeches from Parliament and so named after the first British family who printed the transcript of the House of Commons.	
Introduction and first reading	the House formally grants permission to a Member to introduce a bill and the Clerk then reads the long title.	
Second reading speech	a second reading of the bill at which time the principle or purpose of the Bill is summarised and explained by the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary introducing it.	
Second reading debate	the debate of a bill by members of the House where they express their views and may hint at changes or amendments they would like to make.	
Consideration in Detail <i>[not used in this role play]</i>	a committee stage (and not technically a debate) where the Bill is considered clause by clause and changes can be suggested through motion and then voted on.	
Third reading <i>[not used in this role play]</i>	the formal final reading of the Bill's long title by the Clerk in readiness for it to be delivered to the other House of Parliament, with a message seeking agreement and acceptance of the Bill.	

CAST DATA SHEET

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES EXERCISE

“Cats Rule!”

(18 reading roles)

Hon. Grant WOODHAMS SPEAKER Member for Moore Party affiliation: National Party	Mr Mark MCGOWAN Member for Rockingham Party Affiliation: Labor	Mr Chris TALLENTIRE Member for Gosnells Party Affiliation: Labor
Mr John CASTRILLI Minister for Local Government Member for Bunbury Party affiliation: Liberal	Mr Paul PAPALIA Member for Warnbro Party Affiliation: Labor	Ms Rita SAFFIOTI Member for West Swan Party Affiliation: Labor
Mr Roger COOK Member for Kwinana Party Affiliation: Labor	Mr Andrew WADDELL Member for Forrestfield Party Affiliation: Labor	Ms Margaret QUIRK Member for Girrawheen Party Affiliation: Labor
Ms Martin WHITELY Member for Bassendean Party affiliation: Labor	Mr Joe FRANCIS Member for Jandakot Party Affiliation: Liberal	Mr Peter MCHUGH Clerk of Legislative Assembly
Mr Fran LOGAN Member for Cockburn Party affiliation: Labor	Mr Albert JACOB Member for Ocean Reef Party Affiliation: Liberal	
Mr David TEMPLEMAN Member for Mandurah Party Affiliation: Labor	Mr Bill JOHNSTON Member for Cannington Party Affiliation: Labor	
Mr Frank ALBAN Member for Swan Hills Party Affiliation: Liberal	Ms Lisa BAKER Member for Maylands Party Affiliation: Labor	

Additional roles allocated on the day:

2 Hansard Reporters

1 Sgt-at-Arms

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Cat Bill 2011**“Cats’ Rule!”**

The following role-playing exercise is based on the original text from the Parliamentary Debates of the 38th Parliament of Western Australia, Legislative Assembly 2011. It has been adapted by the Parliamentary Education Office to suit the needs of students.

Best results occur when the reading roles are allocated and rehearsed beforehand.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY –First Reading of the Cat Bill 2011

CLERK: (Mr Peter McHugh) *(stands up and reads the title then sits down)*

Cat Bill 2011 a Bill for an Act to provide for the control and management of cats; and promote and encourage the responsible ownership of cats.

SPEAKER:(Hon. Grant Woodhams) *(remains seated)*

The Minister for Local Government

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: (Hon. John Castrilli) *(stands up)*

Mr Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a Second Time.

The Minister commences the Second Reading speech.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: *(remains standing and reads speech)*

This legislation has been developed to reduce the number of cats roaming our streets and also reduce the number being put down each year. Stray cats are causing a range of problems in our community, including the killing of wildlife. This bill will encourage responsible cat ownership in order to protect our environment.

Currently, only 13 per cent of local governments have introduced cat control laws and this has led to confusion across the state.

Mr Speaker, I commend this Bill to the House. *(Minister then sits down)*

MEMBER FOR KWINANA: *(Mr Roger Cook) (stands up)*

Mr Speaker, I move that this debate be adjourned. *(Member for Kwinana sits down)*

SPEAKER: *(remains seated)*

Members, the question is that this debate be adjourned.

All those in favour say "Aye" *(All say Aye)*

Those against say "No" *(No one says no)*

I believe the Ayes have it.

The Ayes have it

SECOND READING DEBATE RESUMES 3 WEEKS LATER

SPEAKER

The Member for Warnbro.

MEMBER FOR WARNBRO - (Mr Paul Papalia)

Mr Speaker, I wish to speak briefly about the Cat Bill. People in my electorate are worried about what extra costs will be added to owning a cat on top of the increases in house and living expenses. Minister, how are we supposed to afford these extra costs, especially those on low incomes?

MEMBER FOR COCKBURN - (Mr Fran Logan)

Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:

The Member for Cockburn.

MEMBER FOR COCKBURN:

Mr Speaker, I am worried that this legislation will allow local governments to do pretty much whatever they want. It will take control away from the state government. They will make this a law to suit themselves.

MEMBER FOR JANDAKOT - (Mr Joe Francis)

Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:

The Member for Jandakot.

MEMBER FOR JANDAKOT:

Mr Speaker, I know that this Bill will not please everyone but the main issue for me is animal welfare. Owning a pet is a massive commitment and this Bill calls for all cats to be sterilised, micro-chipped and registered by 6 months of age. If a person cannot look after their pet, then they shouldn't own that animal in the first place....

MEMBER FOR COCKBURN:

What about those people who look after their pets but cannot afford your registration fees?

MEMBER FOR JANDAKOT:

Oh, come on! A small cost to register cats is like me registering my dog!

MEMBER FOR MAYLANDS - (Ms Lisa Baker)

Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:

The Member for Maylands

MEMBER FOR MAYLANDS:

I rise to speak to the Cat Bill. I agree that feral cats are a huge problem with some people owning ten or more cats per household. This isn't fair to the cats or the neighbours. There is a need to sterilise and microchip cats to control numbers. My own cats would like to be listening to this debate today! They're probably watching this on the internet at home, knowing them.

MEMBER FOR FORRESTFIELD - (Mr Andrew Waddell)

Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:

The Member for Forrestfield

MEMBER FOR FORRESTFIELD:

Mr Speaker, we need to ask ourselves: what is this bill really about?

How many cats are we talking about here, does anybody even know?

People say that there are about 650,000 stray and feral cats roaming around.

Let's face it; if that's true, we will never wipe out the whole stray cat population.

MEMBER FOR CANNINGTON – (Mr Bill Johnston)

Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:

The Member for Cannington.

MEMBER FOR CANNINGTON:

Mr Speaker, I agree it's easy enough to sterilise and microchip cats with owners who live in our cities and towns. But feral cats in the middle of nowhere do not have an owner. How are we going to microchip and sterilise them and who is going to pay for that? The Minister needs to look into this before I support this Bill.

MEMBER FOR OCEAN REEF – (Mr Albert Jacob)

Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:

The Member for Ocean Reef.

MEMBER FOR OCEAN REEF:

I think this is a fantastic Bill and my cat would hiss at the arguments from the Opposition. We should also introduce a tagging system so that local governments can list all registered cats on a database. They will then be able to tell if a missing cat is owned by somebody or if it's a stray.

MEMBER FOR ROCKINGHAM: (Mr Mark McGowan) Interjects (stays seated)

OK Member for Ocean Reef, if micro-chipping is in place, why do we need to tag cats as well? It's a bit of overkill don't you think? Even three blind mice can see that!

MEMBER FOR KWINANA: Interjects (stays seated)

Hey! Leave the mice out of it! I owned pet mice when I was a kid. At least they don't become strays and eat birds.

MEMBER FOR GOSNELLS: (Mr Chris Tallentire)

Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:

The Member for Gosnells.

MEMBER FOR GOSNELLS:

Mr Speaker, people in the community either love cats or dislike them. This law may give anti-cat people power to cause trouble and do horrible things to these beautiful animals. Complaints made to Councils about cats could lead to owners being treated unfairly. If we do not look closely at the legislation, decent people will be hurt.

MEMBER FOR WEST SWAN: *(Ms Rita Saffioti)*

Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:

The Member for West Swan.

MEMBER FOR WEST SWAN:

Mr Speaker, a resident in my electorate came and spoke to me about cats. She was worried about cats being put down a little too quickly after they were found on the streets. She thought the local council didn't try hard enough to find the owner. I feel that this legislation may be going slightly overboard with its extreme penalties.

MEMBER FOR GIRRAWHEEN: *(Ms Margaret Quirk)*

Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:

The Member for Girrawheen.

MEMBER FOR GIRRAWHEEN:

Mr Speaker, one person wrote to me about their 90 year old mother whose back yard had been taken over by stray cats. Her small dog is often frightened to go outside because the she-cats attack the dog if he gets too close to the kittens. Minister, the issue of stray cats needs urgent action and Local Councils have to make an effort to stop this problem.

MEMBER FOR SWAN HILLS: *(Mr Frank Alban)*
Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:
The Member for Swan Hills.

MEMBER FOR SWAN HILLS:
Mr Speaker I just want to speak briefly about this fantastic Bill....

MEMBER FOR WARNBRO: *(interjects remains seated)*
Fantastic?! Try telling that to cat owners who do the right thing!

MEMBER FOR GOSNELLS: *(interjects remains seated)*
Why is the Government targeting cats? Why not dogs too?

MEMBER FOR ROCKINGHAM: *(interjects remains seated)*
Ha! The Government act like the cat that's got the cream!

MEMBER FOR SWAN HILLS:
Wow members of the opposition, you're like a cat on a hot tin roof today!

SPEAKER *(**Speaker Stands Up)*- *All Members remain silent)*

Take a seat Member for Swan Hills!

I have given the call to the Member for Swan Hills and I would like it if Members opposite can keep quiet. Member for Swan Hills, please stand up and carry on with your speech. *(**Speaker sits down)*

MEMBER FOR SWAN HILLS:
I would love to continue my speech if the member for Warnbro would quit grinning at me like a Cheshire Cat!

SPEAKER: *(warning the Member for Swan Hills)*
Member.....!

MEMBER FOR SWAN HILLS:

My apologies Mr Speaker. As I was saying, I do support this Bill; my rural electorate of Swan Hills is a perfect breeding ground for stray cats due to lots of food and shelter. Pet owners need to become more responsible and not dump their cats.

MEMBER FOR MANDURAH: *(Mr David Templeman)*

Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:

The Member for Mandurah

MEMBER FOR MANDURAH:

Mr Speaker, I noticed the section *Transfer Ownership of a Cat* in this Bill. To me, trading in cats is harder than selling a car. The person who sells a cat has to fill in a form and send it to their Local Government. The person who buys the cat has to fill in another form, send it back and then a bill is sent to them to register it.

Why involve local government in our lives to control cat numbers? Surely there must be an easier way.

MEMBER FOR WARNBRO: *(interjects remains seated)*

Hear! Hear!

MEMBER FOR BASSENDEAN: *(Mr Martin Whitely)*

Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER:

The Member for Bassendean.

MEMBER FOR BASSENDEAN:

Mr Speaker, I'm more of a dog person myself.

MEMBER FOR JANDAKOT:

I thought you were pretty catty actually!

MEMBER FOR BASSENDEAN:

Mr Speaker, I worry that people who can't afford the new fee proposed in this Bill will dump their cats in the bush. Unless the Government is prepared to help a low-income earner with the costs toward sterilising their cat then the chance to reduce the breeding of cats will be lost.

SPEAKER:

The Minister for Local Government.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

I would like to thank the members for their comments. We have heard some interesting views from both cat lovers and those who prefer the dog faction, or as I like to call it; "Moggie versus Doggie".

Mr Speaker, I must say the introduction of this legislation has been well supported and will work in controlling the cat population. I move that this Bill be now read a Second Time.

SPEAKER:

Members, the question is that the bill be read a Second Time.

Those in favour say "Aye" (*most members say "Aye"*).

Those against, "No" (*nobody says "No"*)

I believe the "Ayes" have it.

The "Ayes" have it.

CLERK:

Cat Bill 2011 a Bill for an Act to provide for the control and management of cats; and promote and encourage the responsible ownership of cats.

This bill went on to receive its third and final reading in the Legislative Assembly.

On motion by the Minister for Local Government, it was then transmitted to the Legislative Council for their consideration.

In the Legislative Council, after debate, it was passed with amendments. A Message was sent to the Legislative Assembly with amendments for concurrence on 01 November 2011. The Legislative Assembly agreed to all amendments put from the Legislative Council 02 November 2011.

The bill was given Royal Assent by the Governor, His Excellency
Mr Malcolm McCusker on 9 November, 2011.

This law will take effect from November 2013 in Western Australia.