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# Early Springtime Pussy Willow Circle

— Compiled and composed by Laurie Clark; additions by Clair Orphanides

Hey diddle, diddle, the cat and the fiddle  
The cow jumped over the moon.  
The little dog laughed to see such sport  
And the dish ran away with the spoon.

Then the cat ran away too  
And could not be found.  
To search for a mouse  
She made not a sound.

Pussy cat, pussy cat, where have you been?  
I've been to London to visit the queen.  
Pussy cat, pussy cat, what did you there?  
I frightened a little mouse under her chair.

*Alternately clap hands together, then lap.  
Shape moon with left hand up; right hand jumps over it.  
Alternately clap hands, then lap as above.  
Pointer and thumb of left hand make a circle,  
pointer on right hand "runs away" behind back.*

*Speak in a whisper.*

*Palms up, facing forward, moving in rhythm to the words.  
Gesture "crown" on head for queen.  
Palms up and moving in rhythm as above.  
Pointer and middle finger on right hand go under the  
"bridge" that thumb and pointer on left hand form.*

Then the pussy cat went home to her kittens.  
They were sad because they had lost their mittens.  
They looked everywhere for their mittens,  
Those sad little kittens.  
They followed the pussy cat.  
They went this way and that, this way and that.

*Sad face and gesture.*

*Crawling*

Once three little kittens they lost their mittens,  
And they began to cry,  
“Oh, mother dear, see here, see here,  
Our mittens we have lost.”  
“What? Lost your mittens? You naughty kittens.  
Then you shall have no pie.”  
Meow, meow, meow, meow.

*Sung while sitting still to traditional melody. All three verses of the traditional rhyme can be sung, or skip from the first to the final verse to get to the rat.*

The three little kittens they found their mittens  
And they began to cry.  
“Oh, mother dear, see here, see here,  
Our mittens we have found.”  
“What! Found your mittens, you darling kittens.  
Then you shall have some pie.”  
Meow, meow, meow, meow.

The three little mittens put on their mittens  
And soon ate up the pie;  
“Oh, mother dear, we greatly fear  
Our mittens we have soiled.”  
“What! Soiled your mittens? You naughty kittens!  
Then they began to sigh.  
Meow, meow, meow, meow.

The three little kittens they washed their mittens  
And hung them out to dry;  
“Oh, mother dear, look here, look here,  
Our mittens we have washed.”  
“What! Washed your mittens? You darling kittens,  
But I smell a rat close by.”  
Meow, meow, meow meow.

*Alternate first line if skipping from first to final verse could be: “The three little kittens found and washed their mittens. . .” continue with song.*

The rat was very close by.  
The mother cat and her kittens  
Used their noses to smell  
They looked all around the house.  
They knew the hiding places quite well.

*Point to nose  
Sniff in random directions; gesture sniffing one another.*

*Game from an unknown source, done sitting in a circle with children’s legs stretched out in front, feet pointing toward the center of the circle:*

The kittens and their mother came in the front door  
They thought they heard a sound.  
They looked all around the first floor.  
They looked under the table.  
They climbed the stairs and looked in the bedrooms.  
They looked under the beds in the bedroom.  
They heard a scratching sound.  
They ran up to the attic

*Separate feet to go in the door  
Fingers “crawl” up legs to knees  
Fingers go under knees  
Fingers crawl up to shoulders  
Fingers go behind neck  
Make scratching sound with fingernails  
Fingers crawl to top of head*

They looked under the old quilt.  
The rat jumped out and ran down the stairs  
Out under the crack of the front door.  
The cat and her kittens followed  
But they could not fit through the crack.  
They closed their eyes and went to sleep.  
Meow, meow, meow

One of the kittens went outside to play.  
Robin Redbreast sure had a lot to say.

Little Robin Redbreast sat upon a tree.  
Up went pussy cat, down went he.

Up went pussy cat, away robin ran  
Saying, "Catch me, pussy cat, catch me if you can.

Little Robin Redbreast sat upon a spade.  
Pussycat looked after him and then he was afraid.

Little Robin chirped and sang and what did pussy say?  
Pussycat said, "Meow, meow, meow," and robin ran away.

There is another pussy in the winter meadow.  
In her brown coat she begins to stir.  
Come out, dear little pussy  
And show us your silver fur.

*Verse from Spring book (Wynstones series):*

I know a little pussy  
Her coat is silver gray.  
She lives down in the meadow  
Not very far away.  
She'll always be a pussy,  
She'll never be a cat  
For she's a pussy willow.  
Now what do you think of that?  
Meow, meow, meow, meow  
Meow, meow, meow—SCAT!

Also in the meadow  
Where there is snow still on the ground  
The grasshopper family  
Is looking for spring to be found.  
They follow each other so merrily,  
And they start their song with a one [clap on thighs]  
two [clap hands]  
three [snap]!

*Fingers hide under hair  
Right hand goes quickly from head down  
body to opening between feet*

*Both hands go quickly from head down body to feet.*

*Right pointer (RP) and tall finger (TF) on top of left shoulder.  
RP and TF climb up right arm to shoulder, eyes follow.*

*RP and TF climb down left shoulder to hand, eyes follow.  
Clasp hands together in front when saying "catch" each time.*

*RP and TF on top of left shoulder  
LP and TF climb up right hand to shoulder, eyes follow.*

*Grasp thumbs together, fingers move  
up and down flying like wings.*

*Begin in crouching position and slowly rise up until standing,  
then go down on "meows," hitting floor on "scat."*

*First line begins on one note; every line thereafter is  
sung on the next note of a rising scale. The traditional  
tune begins on middle C and rises diatonically.  
This can be adjusted to a pentatonic scale.*

*First meow is on top note, then each 'meow'  
sung on next descending note.*

Grasshoppers three a fiddle-ing went

D D D D E F#D D D

Hey, Ho, never be still

G F# E A A A

They paid no money toward their rent

A D D D E F# G A

But all day long with elbows bent

A B B A A G# G# A

They fiddled a tune

A D D D D

Called rillabee rillabee

E F#F#F# F#G A

Fiddled a tune called rillabee rill.

D D D D E F# D D D

“What’s this?” said the grasshopper mother

As she spied something on the ground

“The pussy willows have left us a gift—

A little soft and silver bed

On which to rest our weary head.”

*Can be sung either sitting with fiddling gesture or standing and walking around the circle while fiddling.*

*All lie down.*

**Laurie Clark** *has been a Waldorf kindergarten teacher for over 30 years and currently works at the Denver Waldorf School.*

**Clair Orphanides** *is a member of the early childhood faculty at the Brooklyn Waldorf School.*



*Detail of Fanciful Flight by Betty Jones*