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CHAPTER 1: The Cat

1. Why is the cat valued as a domestic animal?

2. What is the Latin word from which the name "cat" derives?

3. Why does it seem likely that the cat would have been first domesticated in Egypt?

4. How is the domestic cat chiefly different from the wild cat?

5. What is the normal life-span of a domestic cat?

6. How many kittens might the owner of a mated pair of cats expect to have every year?

7. Why is knowing the history of the domestic cat and its various breeds not “scientific knowledge” in the most strict sense?

8. Why is it important to recall that we naturally learn by making distinctions?

9. What does it mean to say that an organism is a “complex whole in which all the parts are reciprocally ends and means”?

10. Which four chemical elements are the principal ones into which living things can be dissolved after death?

11. What does it mean to say that an organism is “made up” of these elements?

12. Should an organism be understood to be a collection or mixture of these elements?

13. How do living things differ from non-living things?

14. What are the most basic activities shared by all animals—those activities, that is, because of which it is said to live and be an animal?

15. How can we negatively characterize the difference between all animals and plants?

16. How are the higher animals, such as the cat, further differentiated from plants?

17. What, then, is an animal?
