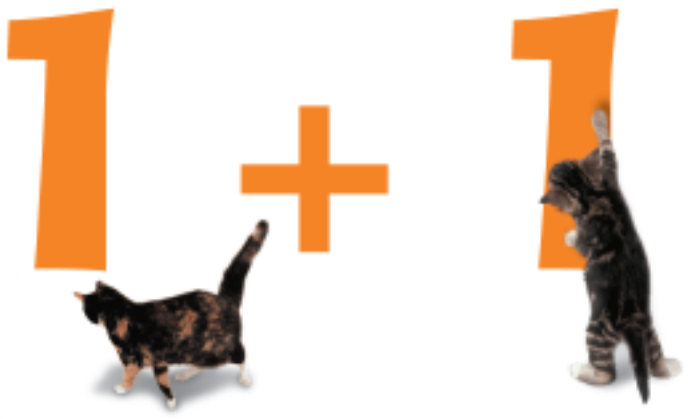


I don't know how to add - but I sure can multiply!



Every year the SPCA gets thousands of cats and kittens dropped off at our shelters.

Why? People haven't spayed or neutered their cats.

It doesn't take long for the numbers to add up. **You do the math...** see how many kittens can be born in just two years from Belle, an unspayed female cat.

1. Belle has two litters of kittens each year. Each litter has six kittens. How many kittens does she have in one year?

$2 \times 6 =$



2. In two years how many kittens does Belle have?

$2 \times$ $=$

5. In total how many cats can be born from one unspayed female cat in just two years?

$+$ $=$

3. Half of Belle's kittens are female. How many females has she had in 2 years?

$\div 2 =$

4. Belle's female cats haven't been spayed either. They have as many kittens in a year as Belle. All together how many kittens do they have in one year?

\times $=$

** The answer does not include the fact that Belle's female kittens of the first litter can have kittens in the first year, and in the second year. This would make the number of kittens add up even more quickly. For a real math challenge, factor this in and try to figure out how many kittens there would be. **WE THINK IT IS ALMOST 500 CATS!***





= 6



FACT or FICTION?



It is expensive to have my pet spayed or neutered.

Fiction: The cost may seem like a lot, but it is a one-time cost. Over the long-term the benefits of your pet not getting certain types of cancers, having calmer behaviour and not adding to the pet overpopulation problem, far outweigh the initial cost.

Male cats don't need to be neutered because they don't have the kittens.

Fiction: Male cats can be an even bigger part of the pet overpopulation problem. They can be responsible for hundreds of kittens being born each year because they can mate with several female cats each year.

It will hurt my pet.

Fiction: The surgery is done after pets are given a drug to make them sleep (anesthetic). They don't feel the surgery at all and recover quickly.

A kitten can have kittens.

Fact: Yes, a kitten can have her first litter of kittens as early as 5 months old. It is important to get your kitten spayed when she is 5 or 6 months old.



Spring is when cats mate - so book a date before it's too late!

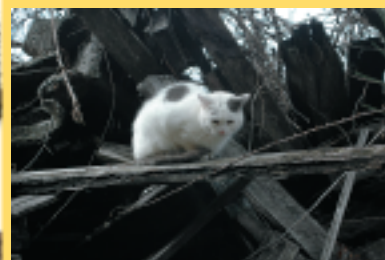


WOW, 168!* That's a lot of kittens. If this cycle were to continue, in seven years Belle could be responsible for 420,000 cats!



And two years later . . .

Because there are too many cats being born, shelters end up full of adult cats waiting for homes.



Some cats end up stray, foraging for food.



Kittens CAN have kittens!

Did your family or friends adopt a kitten last summer? If the kitten has not been spayed or neutered yet, now is the time to get it done! By six months of age cats can reproduce. Many people wait too long to get the surgery done, thinking their cat is still just a kitten. But, before they know it, they have an unwanted litter of kittens on their hands.



OMK! "Oh my... kittens" activity

What if your cat had an accidental litter of six kittens? How easy would it be to find them homes?

Below are a few of the many hurdles that make it hard to find homes for cats. Solve the math problems below. Using the neighbourhood of 50 possible homes, put an **X** on the homes that can't adopt to find out how many potential homes are left.

- Many people (34%) already have cats and can't adopt your kittens. Calculate 34% of 50 homes. **Cross off those homes.**
- Twenty homes are rented by families. But 95% of landlords won't allow pets. Work out 95% of 20.
- Four per cent of people have severe allergies to pets – particularly cats! Figure out 4% of 50 homes.
- Of the 50 homes, one in 10 families just doesn't like cats and would never adopt.
- Eight per cent of the 50 homes have dogs who don't get along with cats at all!

How many homes are left for you to adopt your kittens? Yikes, not enough! To sum up, having more cats than homes equals pet overpopulation.

Answers: a: 17, b: 19, c: 2, d: 5, e: 4.

