

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Extraordinary Cat:

A Chinese Tale

by Pleasant De Spain

Once there was a Chinese mandarin who had a cat that he treasured above all other animals. He loved the cat so much and thought that it was so extraordinary that he named it Sky.

One day soon after, an advisor to the court spoke to the mandarin and explained, "There is something much more powerful than the sky, and that is the cloud. The cloud can darken and even hide the sky from view."

"Quite right," agreed the mandarin. "From this day forth my beautiful cat shall be called Cloud."

Two weeks later the mandarin's wife said, "Dear husband, I don't think that Cloud is a proper name for your cat. There is something stronger than the cloud, and that is the wind that blows the cloud about."

"Indeed! From now on my superior cat will be called Wind. Here Wind! Here Wind! Nice little Wind."

During the next month the mandarin's brother came for a visit and agreed that the cat was the most extraordinary animal he had ever seen. "But," he said, "Wind is not a suitable name for this superb creature. The wind is servant to that which it cannot penetrate. . . such as a wall. The wall is stronger than the wind."

"I hadn't thought of that," replied the mandarin, "and you are to be congratulated, brother, for being so observant. From now on, my dearest cat, the most wonderful cat on earth, will be called Wall."

The very next day the royal gardener heard the mandarin call his cat, "Wall," and said, "But sire, you are forgetting that a mouse is able to chew a hole in a wall. The mouse is the strongest."

"How clever of you," said the mandarin. "From this day forth my lovely cat will be called Mouse. Come here Mouse!"

But just then the mandarin's son skipped into the garden to play, and when he heard his father call the cat "Mouse," he started to laugh and laugh!

"What causes you to laugh, my son?" asked the mandarin.

"Father" replied the boy, "everyone knows that there is something stronger than the mouse and that's the cat who catches him!"

The mandarin smiled and then began to laugh with his son. "Of course! How foolish I've been. From now on my extraordinary animal will be called by the name it most deserves, and that is Cat!"

1. The author writes that the mandarin "had a cat that he treasured above all animals." What does the word *treasured* mean in this sentence?

- A. carried around
- B. put up for sale
- C. thought highly of
- D. played a lot with

2. Which of these shows that the mandarin thinks that his cat is extraordinary?

- A. The mandarin makes the cat an advisor.
 - B. The mandarin thinks of the cat like a son.
 - C. The mandarin gives the cat special names.
 - D. The mandarin builds the cat its own garden.
-

3. The advisor to the court thinks that the cat's name should be changed to something more

- A. gentle
 - B. powerful
 - C. beautiful
 - D. playful
-

4. Who tells the mandarin he could change the cat's name to "Mouse"?

- A. the son
 - B. the brother
 - C. the gardener
 - D. the wife
-

5. Another good title for this passage could be

- A. The Wise Ruler
 - B. So Many Cats at the Court
 - C. The Wind and the Clouds
 - D. The Cat with Many Names
-

6.

Use the dictionary entry below to answer this question.

<p>watch (wɒtʃ) <i>v.</i> 1. to observe, regard, look at, pay attention to. <i>v.</i> 2. look after, care for, protect, supervise. <i>n.</i> 3. clock, timepiece, pocket watch, wristwatch. <i>n.</i> 4. sentry, security guard, lookout, caretaker.</p>

Which meaning of *watch* is used in the sentence below?

Anita looked at the watch she wore on a chain around her neck.

- A. meaning 1
- B. meaning 2
- C. meaning 3
- D. meaning 4

Answer Key

1. C) thought highly of
2. C) The mandarin gives the cat special names.
3. B) powerful
4. C) the gardener
5. D) The Cat with Many Names
6. C) meaning 3