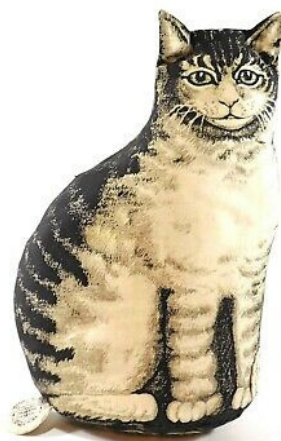

*The History Center in Tompkins County
Presents*

The Ithaca Kitty

History at Home Activity Set



The History Center in Tompkins County Presents "History at Home!"

The Ithaca Kitty

a.k.a Tabby Cat or the Arnold Tabby

Who was Caesar Grimalkin?

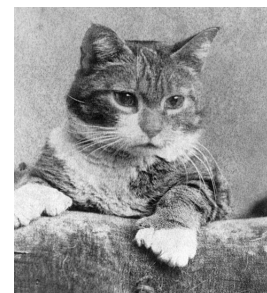
Caesar Grimalkin was a gray polydactyl cat with seven toes on each of his front paws, who lived in Ithaca New York in the late 1800's. His owner Celia Mattison Smith invented a brand new toy design made to look like him that she named the "Tabby Cat." She first designed the toy for her baby daughter Madge who was born in 1888. She enlisted the help of her sister-in-law Charity Smith, an accomplished local artist, to paint the toy to look like Caesar. Celia and Charity sent their design to the United States Patent and Trademark Office and the "Tabby Cat" was officially patented on July 5th and October 4th 1892. Arnold Print Works in Massachusetts bought the pattern and sold the Tabby Cat print to toy shops and department stores across the United States, and even in Europe and South America! The Tabby Cat was such popular toy it was displayed at the Worlds Fair in Chicago in 1893 along with four toy Tabby Kittens that Celia and Charity designed and patented in the fall of 1892.

Learn more about Caesar Grimalkin and the famous Ithaca Kitty toy at www.thehistorycenter.net/ithaca-kitty

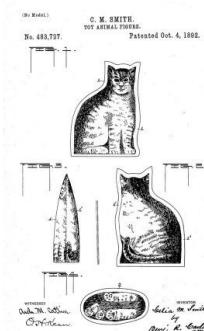
The Ithaca Kitty toy, based on the real cat Caesar Grimalkin, was originally designed with Caesar's polydactyl feet, but then Celia and Charity made a new painting that only showed 5 toes on each paw before they patented the design. In 2017, The History Center worked with a local artist to make a new version of the Ithaca Kitty toy with paws just like Caesar!



Ithaca Kitty Toy Re-design circa. 2017



The History Center in Tompkins County, Hinckley Family Collection, Portrait of Caesar Grimalkin, Howes Photography Studio Unknown, V-63-9-8.2, #23



The History Center in Tompkins County, Smith Collection, Tabby Cat Patent, October 4th 1892, V-2-3-12, #1



Tabby Cat Sew Your Own Kit, circa 1970



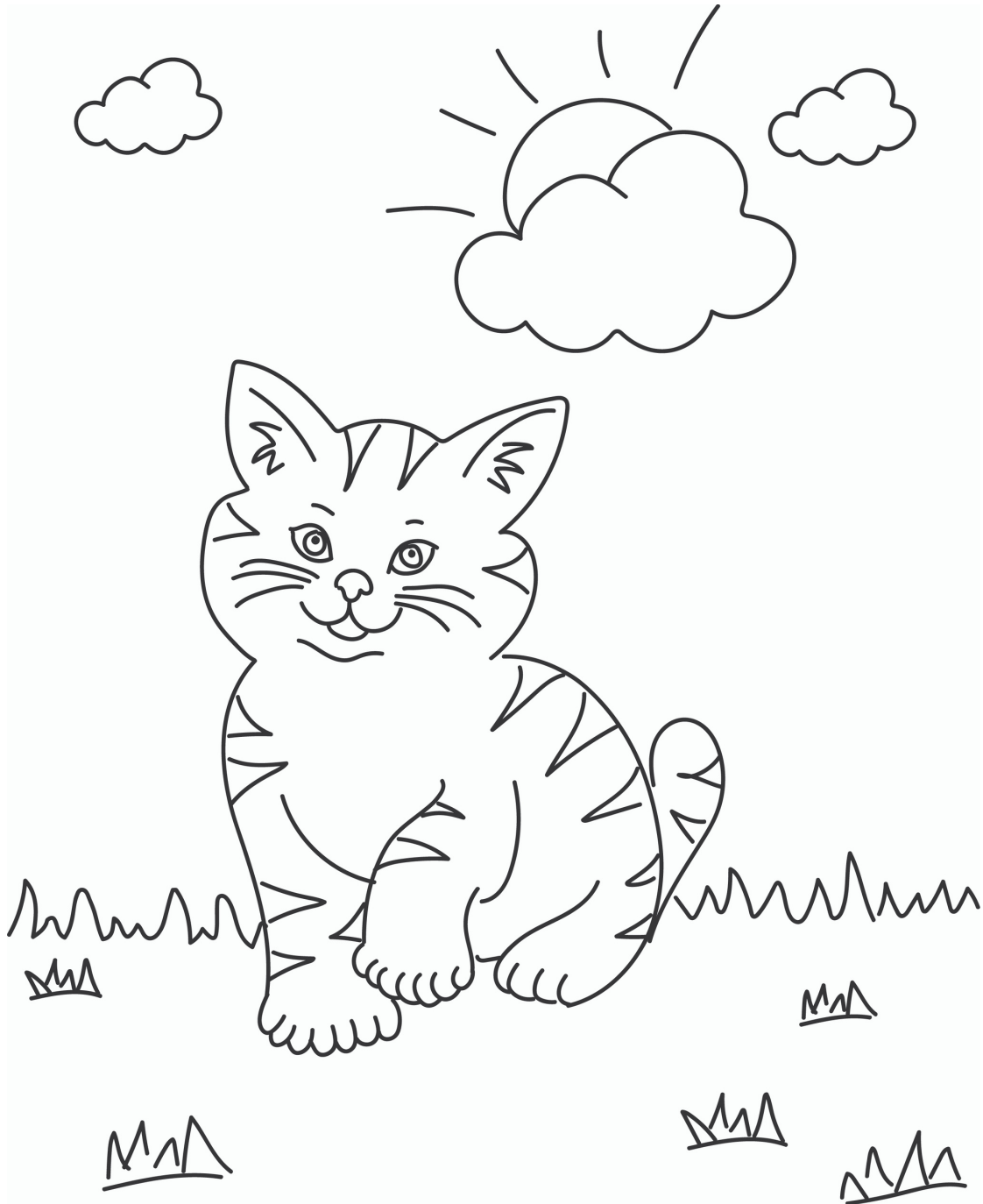
Seven Toed Polydactyl Cat Pawprint

Contact community@thehistorycenter.net with any questions. Visit www.thehistorycenter.net/learn for more History at Home activities.

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Color Your Own Ithaca Kitty!



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Original artwork by Cindy Kjellander-Cantu

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Write Your Own Ithaca Kitty Tale!

Writing Your Own Story Instructions:

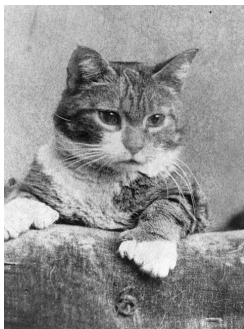
The seven toes are part of what makes Caesar special. What makes you unique and special? Brainstorm on your own or with a grown up about what makes you special.

Grades Pre-K - 2: Draw a storybook of an adventure that you and the Ithaca Kitty go on together, that shows the ways you are unique.

Grades 3 - 5: Write and illustrate a story in which you and the Ithaca Kitty go on an adventure together, that shows the ways you are unique.

Grades 6 - 8: Write a chapter of a chapter book about an adventure that you and the Ithaca Kitty go on, that shows the ways you are unique. Along the way, someone or something tries to stop you from being who you are. What happens? How do you and the Ithaca Kitty stand up for yourselves or each other?

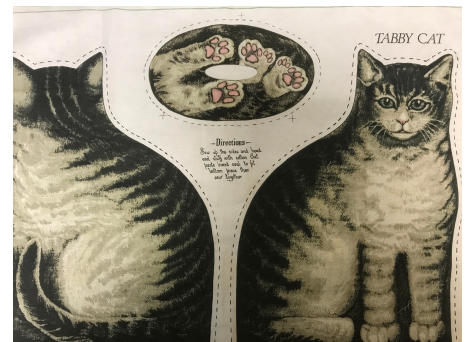
Want to share your story? Take a photo of it and send it to **community@thehistorycenter.net**. We'll share samples of the stories on our social media pages at @tompkinshistory! Follow along at **#TompkinsHistory**



The History Center in Tompkins County,
Hinckley Family Collection,
Portrait of Caesar Grimalkin, Howes Photography Studio
Unknown, V-63-9-8.2, #23



Ithaca Kitty Toy circa 2018



The History Center in Tompkins County,
Ithaca Kitty Toy Panel pre-assembly, 2019

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ELA standard 3W4 and 4W4: Create a poem, story, play, artwork, or other response to a text, author, theme, or personal experience.

Perform 'The Duel'

Inspired by the Ithaca Kitty:

The Ithaca Kitty has inspired poems, songs, books, and other art pieces for over 100 years! Can you memorize and recite this famous poem by American poet Eugene Fields below? Fields wrote this poem only a few years after the toy was first released, and said that the "calico cat" was inspired by his Ithaca Kitty toy made of calico cloth!

Circle all of the words that rhyme to help you keep track of the rhythm, and use a dictionary to look up any words you don't know.

.....

The Duel - by Eugene Field

*Published between 1892 and 1895.
This poem is in the public domain*

The gingham dog and the calico cat
Side by side on the table sat;
'Twas half-past twelve, and (what do you think!)
Nor one nor t'other had slept a wink!
 The old Dutch clock and the Chinese plate
 Appeared to know as sure as fate
There was going to be a terrible spat.
*(I wasn't there; I simply state
What was told to me by the Chinese plate!)*

The gingham dog went "Bow-wow-wow!"
And the calico cat replied "Mee-ow!"
The air was littered, an hour or so,
With bits of gingham and calico,
While the old Dutch clock in the chimney-place
Up with its hands before its face,
For it always dreaded a family row!
*(Now mind: I'm only telling you
What the old Dutch clock declares is true!)*

The Chinese plate looked very blue,
And wailed, "Oh, dear! what shall we do!"
But the gingham dog and the calico cat
Wallowed this way and tumbled that,
 Employing every tooth and claw
 In the awfullest way you ever saw—
And, oh! how the gingham and calico flew!
*(Don't fancy I exaggerate
I got my news from the Chinese plate!)*

Next morning, where the two had sat
They found no trace of dog or cat;
And some folks think unto this day
That burglars stole that pair away!
 But the truth about the cat and pup
 Is this: they ate each other up!
Now what do you really think of that!
*(The old Dutch clock it told me so,
And that is how I came to know.)*

Track the Ithaca Kitty on HistoryForge!

pg. 1

What is HistoryForge?



HistoryForge is an innovative digital history project combining maps, archival records, and census data that allows any community to explore its local history through the individuals who lived there and the buildings and neighborhoods they lived in.

You can search people and buildings from Ithaca's past at www.historyforge.net!

How can a database about people and buildings help me learn about a toy cat from the late 1800's?

Great question!

It's true that you can't find Caesar Grimalkin on HistoryForge, but you can search for his owners, and the women who invented the toy inspired by him. You can even look for the house that he lived in!

Head to the next page for some help getting started!



Contact community@thehistorycenter.net with any questions. Visit www.thehistorycenter.net/learn for more History at Home activities.



Track the Ithaca Kitty on HistoryForge!

pg. 2

Who can you find that knew Caesar?



Using the "People" search button at www.historyforge.net see what you can learn about:

- **Celia Mattison Smith** (*She invented the original 3 panel toy design! Caesar was her cat*)
 - ***Hint*** Look under Celia M Smith. ***OOPS*** Sometimes on historic documents names are misspelled or spelled in different ways. Celia's name was written incorrectly during one census as "Cecelia" can you find out which year that was?
 - Celia invented over 23 toy designs that were accepted by the US Patent Office. Is her job listed on her census sheet? What information do you think is missing from her page?
- **Charity Smith** (*She painted the original Ithaca Kitty design!*)
 - When was she born? Who did Charity live with?
- **William Hazlitt Smith** (*He was married to Celia, and was Charity's older brother. His name is on the original Ithaca Kitty patent in our archives!*)
 - ****HINT**** Sometimes only the first letter of a middle name was written down.
 - What was his job? What was his address in 1900? Is it different in 1910?

Can you find Caesar's house? How has it changed since 1892?

If you find the page with Celia or William's information you can find out which street in Ithaca they and Caesar lived on in 1900! (**Hint** their street is named after a tree!). You can also search their address under the "Places" tab.

Can you still find their house on Google Maps today?



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Sew Your Own Ithaca Kitty!

pg. 1

Sew Your Own Ithaca Kitty:

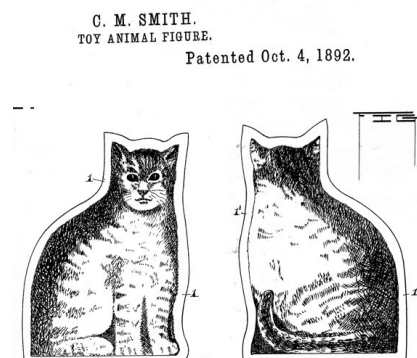
The Ithaca Kitty is quite special - it has a long history and it was one of the first toys sold in a simple sew-your-own kit! The Ithaca Kitty was a popular toy for children to make themselves. Sometimes the Kitty would be stuffed with sawdust or newspaper!

Materials

- Cloth
- Pins
- Scissors
- Stuffing material (rags, sawdust, pillow stuffing etc.)
- Needle
- Sewing machine (optional)
- Thread
- Thimble (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS pt. 1.

1. Download and print the Ithaca Kitty patent page from thehistorycenter.net/ithaca-kitty.
2. Cut out the three Ithaca Kitty patterns from the paper.
3. Trace the paper patterns onto a piece of cloth (pick any design or pattern you want!). Cut out the cloth pieces.
4. It's easiest to decorate your Ithaca Kitty before you start sewing. Draw on a kitty face, ears, paws, and tail! Does your Ithaca Kitty have seven toes like Caesar? What other ways is your kitty unique?
5. Line up the two "body" pieces of your kitty after you're finished decorating and pin them together, have your drawings face each other, since you're going to sew the pieces together before turning the pattern inside out.



Ithaca Kitty Patent Page



Cut Out Your Pattern



Pin the body pieces together.

Contact community@thehistorycenter.net with any questions. Visit www.thehistorycenter.net/learn for more History at Home activities.

Sew Your Own Ithaca Kitty!

pg. 2

INSTRUCTIONS pt 2.

6. Have an adult help you hand-sew or use a sewing machine to sew around the edge of your kitty. Be careful around the ears, they can be tricky!

7. Once the edge is done, pin the bottom piece to the body, with the paw decorations facing in. Use a machine or hand sew around 1/2 to 3/4 of the edge, but leave an opening 1-2 inches wide!

8. Turn your kitty inside out, so your decorations can be seen on the outside. Now it's time to stuff your kitty!

9. When the Ithaca Kitty was first made people used all kinds of materials to fill the toy (sawdust, clothing rags, wool, or newspaper). See what you have in your house that could be used to fill your kitty to make it stand up straight!

10. Once you've stuffed your kitty as much as you want, sew the opening at the bottom closed by hand or with a machine.

11. Now it's time to name your kitty!

You've made your very own unique Ithaca Kitty! Send us a picture of your Ithaca Kitty to community@thehistorycenter.net or share it with us on social media @tompkinshistory!



Sew around the edge of the body



Sew 3/4 of the way around the bottom pieces and then turn inside out before stuffing.



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The History Center in Tompkins County Presents "History at Home!"

Craft Your Own Ithaca Kitty!

Craft Your Own Ithaca Kitty:

The Ithaca Kitty is quite special - it has a long history and it was inspired by a cat with seven toes on each of his front paws! Now you can create your own Ithaca Kitty that shows your creativity.

- **Make a Kitty Collage** - Find magazines and newspapers around your house. Ask your grownups if you can cut them up. Cut out images, letters, words, etc that you can put together to make a kitty, using glue or tape.
- **Build Your Own 3D Kitty** - Find building materials around your home. Some ideas for materials include: Legos, Cardboard, Recycling, such as milk cartons or bottles. Can you find a solution using only 3 pieces of material like Celia Smith did when she invented the Ithaca Kitty?
- **Sew Your Own Kitty** - Draw a pattern or download the Ithaca Kitty patent to trace around, and cut your kitty out of three pieces of fabric (front, back, and bottom). Sew it together by hand or using a sewing machine.

*Want to share your kitty with others? Take a photo and post it to social media with **#historyathome** and tag **@tompkinshistory**!*

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Learn More About the Ithaca Kitty

Digital Links:

- **The History Center in Tompkins County - Ithaca Kitty**
 - thehistorycenter.net/Ithaca-Kitty
- **Ithaca Kitty - History of the Arnold Tabby (1min) - YouTube**
 - www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2jESNOXi-E
- **Discover History #02: Ithaca Kitty (28min) - YouTube**
 - www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqlyoZ9qeg0&list=PLoz4lGKRiTujUqBSrU94hOIl9ZqVHSEQT&index=19&t=5s
- **History Center Brings Back Ithaca Kitty - Ithaca Voice - November 2018**
 - ithacavoice.com/2018/11/history-center-brings-back-ithaca-kitty-an-important-piece-of-local-history/

Related Archival Collections at The History Center in Tompkins County

- **Hinckley Family Collection V-63-9-8**
- **Smith Collection V-2-3-12**

****You can look at these collections by visiting our Research Library****

Contact community@thehistorycenter.net with any questions. Visit www.thehistorycenter.net/learn for more History at Home activities.

THE HISTORY CENTER

in Tompkins County

The History Center in Tompkins County

110 North Tioga St

Ithaca NY 14850

607-273-8284

community@thehistorycenter.net

www.thehistorycenter.net

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