

# The Lazy Editor

## Why We Love This Stupid Cat

Pointless cat videos are the most popular videos online. But . . . why? *Scope* investigates.

BY JENNIFER DIGNAN AND ADEE BRAUN

**DIRECTIONS:** Read this article, which contains awful mistakes. Then follow the prompts in the box on p. 21.

**1** You're staring at your phone, watching a clip of a fluffy white kitten attack a ball of yarn. You should be working on your history paper, but—oh! A compilation video of cats sleeping in boxes. Their so cute! One more video can't hurt, right? You click. *Awwwwwww*. This Vine of a cat playing the piano is *so sweet* . . .

**2** Suddenly you realize an hour has passed and you've done nothing but watch 17 pointless cat videos. (OK, fine: 18 videos.) And you don't even have a cat. In fact, you don't even *like* cats. Is they're something wrong with you?

**3** No. There is nothing wrong with you at all. Most of us have probably spent more time scrolling through silly cat videos than we'd like to admit. After all, cat videos are the most-watched type of video on



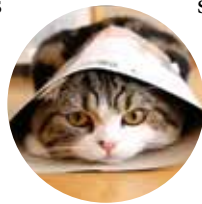
the Internet. More than 4 million are posted on YouTube and Vine every year. On YouTube, cat videos get 25 *billion* views a year. As anyone who has ever seen online sensation Maru walk around with a bag stuck on his head will tell you, there is something about a cat video that we just can't resist. But . . . why?

## WE LOVE THIS STORY. TOO BAD WE COULDN'T BE BOTHERED TO EDIT IT! WILL YOU FIX IT FOR US?



**4** It might seem like the answer is simple: Cats are cute. And it's true—cats *are* cute, with their big eyes, little noses, and soft, cuddly bodies. The reason cats are cute is that our brains associate them with babies, did you catch that, to our brains, “cute” equals “baby.” As a result, the same instinct that draws us to babies also draws us to cats.

**5** That partly explains why a three-and-a-half-minute video of kittens doing nothing but meowing has been viewed 10 million times. Cats are far from the only cute creatures on YouTube, though, so there must be other reasons why they rule the Interwebs. One of these is, no doubt, the deep connection that we share with them. According to the Humane Society of the United States, cats are among the most popular pets in the world; Americans alone own some 95 million of them and our relationship with cats dates back to ancient times, when people kept them around to kill mice and other critters that plagued crops and homes, but cats were seen as more than just pest-control workers. In some societies, they were worshipped as divine creatures. In ancient Egypt, the cat-headed goddess Bastet was one of the most beloved deities, and the



Maru, an 8-year-old cat who lives in Japan, has 11,000 Instagram followers.

punishment for killing a cat was often death. (You have to wonder what Bastet would think of our giggling over a cat pawing at a roll of toilet paper.)

**6** Another reason for the popularity of cat videos may be that cats are kind of elusive. Dogs, by comparison, we see all the time—walking down the street, playing in parks. Many cats, however, live indoors and are rarely seen by anyone but his owners. Sure, some cats go outside, but they tend to keep its distance. Even our own cats are unlikely to entertain us on demand; cats are known, after all, for his independence. So we turn to the Internet, where we can watch them do cute, funny stuff whenever we want.

**7** Certain videos may also give a sense of satisfaction to those who feel snubbed. *Ignore me when I call you? Walk away when I want to pet you? Well, ha! You just fell into a fish tank!* Chances are, though, that most of us would be happy to cuddle the cats we see online, to hold them on our laps and pet her as we stare at our phones . . . watching more cat videos. ●

### FIND IT/FIX IT

**DIRECTIONS:** Can you find and fix all the errors in the article? Write the answers on your own paper.

**Paragraphs 1, 2 & 3:** Their? There? They're? Our writers were confused. Fix three mistakes.

**Paragraphs 4 & 5:** Two sentences here are waaaaay too long. Please correct them.

**Paragraphs 6 & 7:** A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun. A singular pronoun (he, she, him, her) is used for a singular noun (Bob, Sarah, Fluffy). A plural pronoun (their, them) is used for a plural noun (students). Kindly fix the four mistakes.

FOR MORE PRACTICE,  
GO TO SCOPE ONLINE.

GET  
MORE  
ONLINE!