



Meet Gus and Flora, Two Cats Who Help Kids Learn to Read and Build Their Confidence

Meet five-year-old Gus (Altai Augustyn of Currahee) and four-year-old Flora (Elbrus Camomile of Currahee), both Siberians, who spend many hours volunteering at their local library with handler Gwyneth Hayes. Their work helps kids build confidence and increase their literacy skills by encouraging them to read.

For the past four years Gus has been using his feline charm and patience to help kids develop their reading skills. Flora recently became a certified therapy cat and has joined Gus on library visits over the past year. Through a program called Tales to T.A.I.L.S (Therapy Animals Increase Literacy Skills), Gus and Flora encourage kids to read, engage, and connect with them as they listen attentively. In turn, their presence increases the comfort and confidence in children as they read aloud.

“Therapy work for Gus is a win-win,” said Gwyneth. “Seeing a child grasp literacy and gain confidence in both their reading and social skills because of working with Gus is a huge accomplishment and very rewarding.”

“Flora enjoys going to the library and making the kids laugh. She likes getting belly rubs from the children and snuggles up into the lap of a young reader and falls asleep. The kids love it and feel very at ease when they are reading to her.”