

词汇: *sound* 声音

We've all heard cats **meow** and **hiss**, but why do they **purr**? There are a number of theories out there - from the commonly held belief that they are simply happy, to British comedian Eddie Izzard's light-hearted suggestion that they are impersonating a drill.

While they do purr when tickled or caressed to show their appreciation for attention, cats also make the noise when not in our company. The purring noise is a consistent **pulsing** sound that occurs while they both **inhale** and **exhale** breath. The word 'purr' is a great example of **onomatopoeia** and refers to the constant noise which ranges in **frequency** between 25 and 150 **hertz**.

For a long time, scientists debated how cats purred. Most people believe that the cat's brain signals the **laryngeal** muscles to **vibrate** and function like a valve, opening and closing the space between the **vocal cords**. What triggers this reaction is debated. Some argue that the cat intends to purr, while others say it may be due to **endorphins** released by the brain as a reaction to pleasure, or pain.

According to Leslie A. Lyons, an assistant professor at the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of California, cats often purr while stressed, such as when they head to the vets or are recovering from an injury. So what are the potential benefits of this 'drilling' sound? Some scientists believe the **vibrations** that **ripple** through the cats' bodies may actually promote muscle development, heal bones and injuries, ease breathing and lessen pain. It could even help to soothe discomfort in a similar way to a child sucking their thumb.

So, the purring of a cat may have more uses than just telling you they're enjoying attention. It's also important to remember that not all cats can purr. Some bigger felines, like lions, can't, and only **roar**. So, the next time you hear a roar, it probably isn't your pussy cat, and you might need to run.

词汇表

meow	猫叫声，喵喵叫
hiss	嘶嘶声
purr	（猫发出的）咕噜声
pulsing	脉冲的
inhale	吸气
exhale	呼气，吐出气
onomatopoeia	象声词，拟声词
frequency	（声波的）频率
hertz	赫兹
laryngeal	喉部的
vibrate	震动，颤抖
vocal cords	声带
endorphin	内啡肽，安多芬
vibration	持续震动
ripple	（声音）传播起伏
roar	吼叫

测验与练习

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. True or false: *cats purr when they breathe in and out.*
2. Why does Eddie Izzard compare purring to drilling?
3. What is the word 'buzz' an example of?
4. Why might the brain release endorphins?
5. Do all cats purr?

2. 选择意思恰当的单词或词组来完成下列句子。

1. If one _____ too deeply, they may cough.

exhale	exhalation	exhales	exhaling
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2. Listen to that tiger _____. It's terrifying.

roared	roars	roaring	was roaring
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3. The seat _____ to massage your back.

vibrating	vibrate	vibration	vibrates
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4. Be careful when _____ – try not to breathe too deeply.

inhaling	inhales	inhale	inhalation
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5. The sounds _____ through the air.

ripples	rippling	rips	rippled
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答案

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. True or false: *cats purr when they breathe in and out.*

True. Cats purr when they inhale and exhale.

2. Why does Eddie Izzard compare purring to drilling?

It was a joke. Drilling is a similar sound – they both pulse.

3. What is the word ‘buzz’ an example of?

‘Buzz’ is an example of onomatopoeia – a word pronounced like it sounds.

4. Why might the brain release endorphins?

As a reaction to pleasure or pain.

5. Do all cats purr?

No. Big cats like lions don’t usually purr.

2. 选择意思恰当的单词或词组来完成下列句子。

1. If one **exhales** too deeply, they may cough.

2. Listen to that tiger **roaring**. It’s terrifying.

3. The seat **vibrates** to massage your back.

4. Be careful when **inhaling** – try not to breathe too deeply.

5. The sounds **rippled** through the air.