

For today's poem, I thought I would give you a poem by the poet T.S. ELIOT (the 'T.S.' stands for 'Thomas Stearns'), as I gave you a clip this week of Alec Guinness reading some poems by TS Eliot. TS Eliot was born in America, but like the film director STANLEY KUBRICK, he settled in England and made his home there and became an 'honorary Englishman'. A lot of Eliot's poems are quite long and hard to understand - they are more like music than poetry in the way they affect you (and his most famous poems are called 'FOUR QUARTETS', like four string quartets). But this is a nice, short-ish poem, on 'The Naming of Cats' from a funny collection of poems that TS Eliot published under the name OLD POSSUM'S BOOK OF PRACTICAL CATS. These poems were turned into a musical by Andrew Lloyd-



Webber, including a very famous song called 'Memory':  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gd\\_oHoPzYc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gd_oHoPzYc)

And the musical was turned into one of the worst films ever made, which you must never, ever watch. Anyway, back to the poem, which goes like this:

### THE NAMING OF CATS

The Naming of Cats is a difficult matter,  
It isn't just one of your holiday games;  
You may think at first I'm as mad as a hatter  
When I tell you, a cat must have THREE DIFFERENT NAMES.  
First of all, there's the name that the family use daily,  
Such as Peter, Augustus, Alonzo or James,  
Such as Victor or Jonathan, George or Bill Bailey -  
All of them sensible everyday names.  
There are fancier names if you think they sound sweeter,  
Some for the gentlemen, some for the dames;  
Such as Plato, Admetus, Electra, Demeter -  
But all of them sensible everyday names.  
But I tell you, a cat needs a name that's particular,  
A name that's peculiar, and more dignified,  
Else how can he keep up his tail perpendicular,  
Or spread out his whiskers, or cherish his pride?  
Of names of this kind, I can give you a quorum,  
Such as Munkustrap, Quaxo, or Coricopat,  
Such as Bombalurina, or else Jellylorum -  
Names that never belong to more than one cat.  
But above and beyond there's still one name left over.  
And that is the name that you never will guess;  
The name that no human research can discover -  
But THE CAT HIMSELF KNOWS, and will never confess.  
When you notice a cat in profound meditation,  
The reason, I tell you, is always the same:  
His mind is engaged in a rapt contemplation  
Of the thought, of the thought, of the thought of his name:  
His ineffable effable  
Effanineffable  
Deep and inscrutable singular Name.