

THE JAPANESE BOBTAIL



Read the text and choose the word that best fits the gap.

Cats have been (0)_____ of the lives of human beings for thousands of years. One interesting breed which fascinates scientists is the Japanese Bobtail - a domestic cat with an unusual "bobbed" tail more (1)_____ resembling the tail of a rabbit than that of other cats. The breed has been known in Japan for centuries, and it features (2)_____ in folklore. In many traditions, cats are frequently (3)_____ of fear and mistrust but in Japanese stories the Bobtail tends to be (4)_____ as a force for (5)_____. The image of a Bobtail seated with one paw raised is considered a lucky charm.

But how did the Bobtail (6)_____ its short tail? One legend tells of a sleeping cat whose long tail (7)_____ fire. In a panic, it tore through the town, spreading flames everywhere. As a result, the then emperor declared that all cats should have their tails cut short as a (8)_____ measure. Science, however, has a less "romantic" explanation based on genetics.

