

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR, DR. SEUSS



Learn more about Dr. Seuss, the infamous author and illustrator behind the book *The Cat in the Hat* and so many others.

## THE CAT IN THE HAT

*The Cat in the Hat* was Seuss's 13th children's book. Seuss wrote it because he was worried that children were not learning to read.

Dr. Seuss wrote and illustrated 44 children's books during his lifetime.

Treating children with respect was key to Seuss's philosophy of writing for them. As he said, "I don't write for children. I write for people."

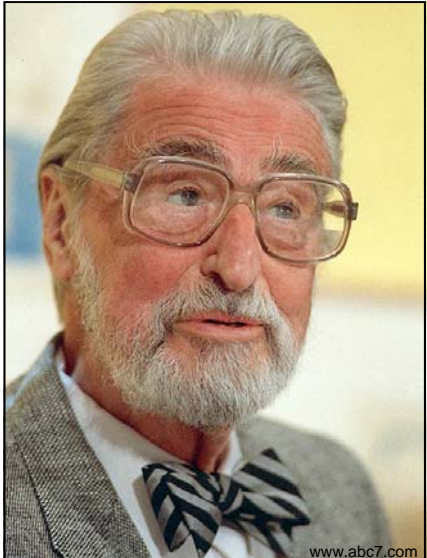
## WHO IS DR. SEUSS?

Theodor Seuss Geisel was born in 1904 and was known as "Ted" to family and friends. If you want to pronounce the name the way his family did, say "Zoice," not "Soose." Seuss is a Bavarian name, and was his mother's maiden name. Seuss was actually his middle name.

Published in 1957, *The Cat in the Hat* sold nearly a million copies by the end of 1960. The book's runaway success inspired Seuss, his wife Helen, and Phyllis Cerf to found Beginner Books, a division of Random House that would publish books designed to help children learn to read.

A few weeks before his death in 1991, he told an interviewer "Whenever things go a bit sour in the job I'm doing, I always tell myself 'You can do better than this.' The best slogan I can think of to leave with the kids of the U.S.A. would be 'We can...and we've got to...do better than this.'"

Dr. Seuss was not a doctor. He briefly studied English literature at Oxford after graduating from Dartmouth, but instead became a cartoonist. In 1955, Dartmouth awarded him an honorary doctorate.



Theodor Seuss Geisel, or "Dr. Seuss".



Above: Dr. Seuss' star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
*The Cat in the Hat* contains 236 words!

# VOCABULARY



Tim Trumble Photo, Childsplay (Tempe, AZ)

## ART & THEATER TERMS

**puppetry:** an art form in which objects, often with human or animal characteristics, are brought to life by puppeteers.



Tim Trumble Photo

Puppeteer Ricky Araiza manipulates the fish puppet in the Childsplay production of *The Cat in the Hat*

**rhyme:** one of two or more words or phrases that end in the same sounds.

## SHOW TERMS

**fan:** a flat device held in your hand and waved back and forth in front of your face often to stay cool.



www.etsy.com



allexpress.com

**gown:** a long dress that a woman wears especially during a special event.

**handshake:** the act of grasping someone's right hand with your right hand and moving it up and down, often as a greeting.



as-found.net



brookite.com

**kite:** a toy made of a light frame covered with cloth, paper, or plastic and flown in the air at the end of a long string.

**mat:** a small piece of material used to cover the floor or ground.



Amazon.com



Skippiomy.com

**net:** a device used for catching or holding things, made of pieces of string or rope and woven together with spaces in between.

**pot:** a container used for making and serving tea and that has a spout and handle.



englishtealeaves.com



Lowes.com

**rake:** a tool with many metal, wooden, or plastic pieces at the end of a long handle, often used to gather leaves or break apart soil.

**tame:** trained to obey people; not wild.



www.quora.com

These two tigers have been tamed.



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The Cat in the Hat does lots of tricks.

**trick:** something done to surprise or confuse someone and to make people laugh.



## PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION, pg. 2



### 2) ACT IT OUT!

**Goal:** Students will visualize text as directors and explore how performers must block a scene and then act it out.

**Explanation:** In this activity, students will outline, block and act out a scene of their choice from the book *The Cat in the Hat*.

**When:** Before the performance

**Activity:**

1. Divide the students into groups and have each group choose a scene (or page) from Dr. Seuss' book *The Cat in the Hat*.
2. Ask the students to imagine and brainstorm how they would bring the page to life on stage. They may need to write down some of the lines.
3. Ask each group of students to block their scene (blocking means to design or plan the movements of actors on a stage or movie set ) and spend some time rehearsing their scene with actions and expression.
4. Groups can then perform for their classmates.

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. What key lines in the scene affected your staging choices?
2. Did you learn anything valuable about your classmates?
3. Did you learn anything valuable about yourself?
4. What was most challenging for you about this activity? What was easiest for you?

**Follow-up Question After the Performance:**

1. How did the staging of your scene compare to what the performers did on stage?

### 3) RETELL THE STORY WITH PUPPETS

**Goal:** To demonstrate reading comprehension through puppetry and performance.

**Explanation:** In this activity, students will re-tell parts of the story of *The Cat in the Hat* using simple puppets.

**Preparation:** Before you begin this activity, prepare simple finger puppets to represent each character in *The Cat in the Hat* using reproducible page 15.

**Activity:**

1. Read excerpts from *The Cat in the Hat* as a class.
2. Discuss the sequence of events. What happened first? What happened next? How did the characters respond? What problems did they encounter?
3. Show students the puppets you have prepared.
4. As a class or in small groups, allow students to perform the excerpt of their choice from *The Cat in the Hat* with the character puppets. Students may use the finger puppets to narrate the story in their own words.

**Follow-Up Questions:**

1. Why did you choose that particular excerpt? What challenges did you face when you were acting it out with the puppets?
2. How did the problems resolve in the story? How did you solve the problems you encountered?
3. What did you like about using puppets?
4. What was most challenging for you about this activity? What was the easiest for you?

## POST-SHOW DISCUSSION AND ASSESSMENT, pg. 2



Tim Trumble Photo, Childsplay (Tempe, AZ)

### 2) SCAT LIKE THE CAT

**Goal:** To explore words that rhyme

**Explanation:** In this activity, students will explore words that rhyme by creating a visual and playing a rhyming game.

**Activity:**

1. Have students think about words that rhyme with “cat”.
2. Using the hat reproducible found on page 16, have students use the stripes in the Cat’s hat to write down words that rhyme with cat.
3. Allow students time to color their hats (red and white—or any colors they want!)
4. Alternatively, you can create a “class” hat as a large group, rather than having students work individually.
5. To go a bit deeper, play a rhyming game by getting in a circle. Working clockwise, have one person say a word and then each person following come up with a word that rhymes. If they cannot think of a word they are “out” and the last one standing is the rhyming champion!

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. What was challenging about this activity?
2. Why do you think the Cat in the Hat speaks using rhyming words?

### 3) SLOW MOTION SCENE

**Goal:** To create a slow motion scene, such as in *The Cat in the Hat*.

**Explanation:** When the cat is balancing the objects and starts to fall in the performance, the action goes into slow motion. Students will create their own slow motion scene in groups.

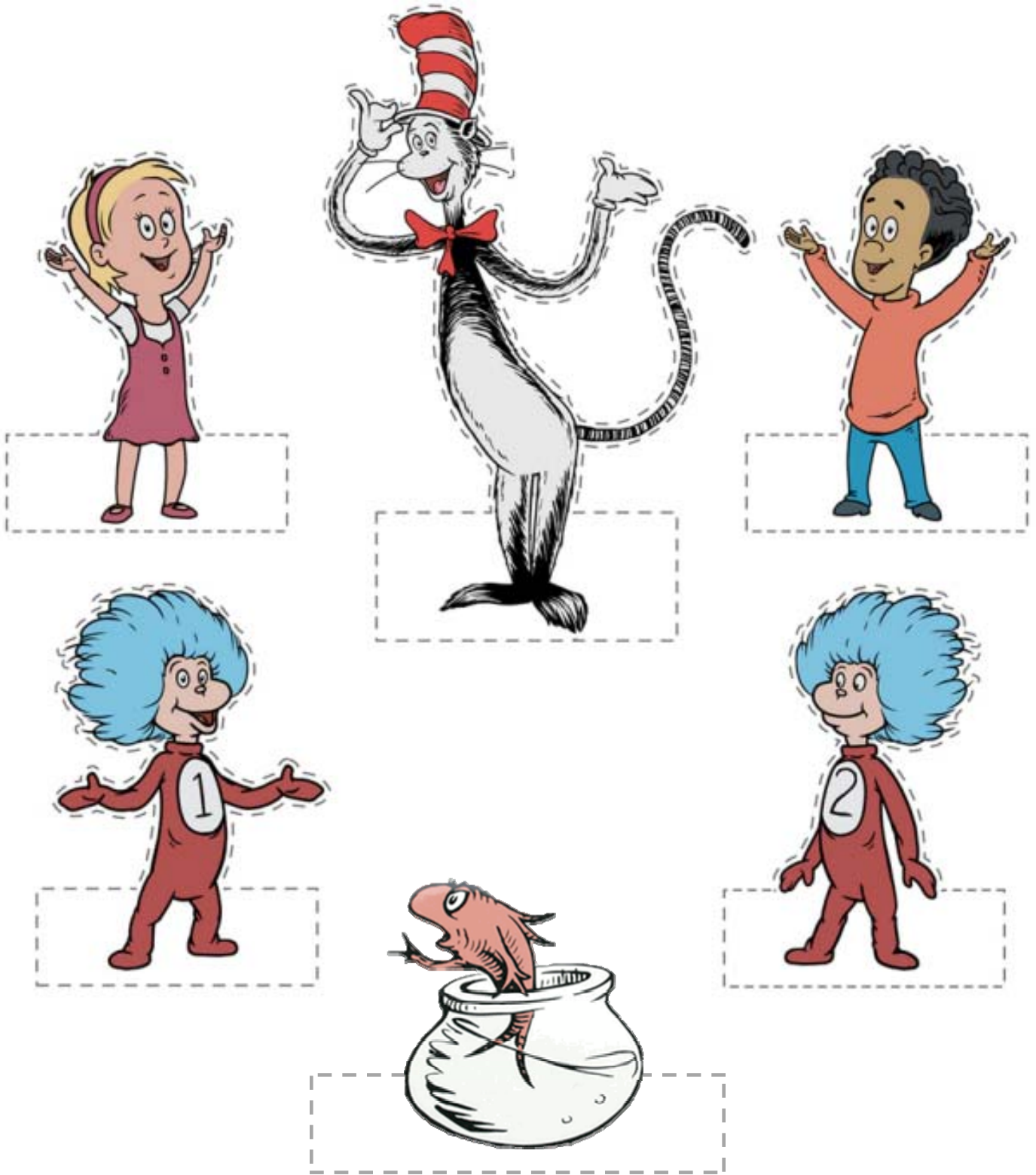
**Activity:**

1. Invite students to think about the scene in the performance when the cat is balancing objects and then falls in slow motion.
2. Divide students into groups of 4 or 5 and have them discuss actions or things that could happen that might be interesting in slow motion.
3. Have them work together in groups to create their own slow motion scene. Make sure scenes have a beginning, middle and end and tells a story though movement.
4. Have each group share their scene with the class.

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. How is your scene similar to the one in *The Cat in the Hat*? How is it different?
2. What was challenging about this activity? What challenges do you think the creative team had when they created the slow motion scene in *The Cat in the Hat*? What would you do different next time?

# REPRODUCIBLES (use with pre-show exploration activity #2, page 12)

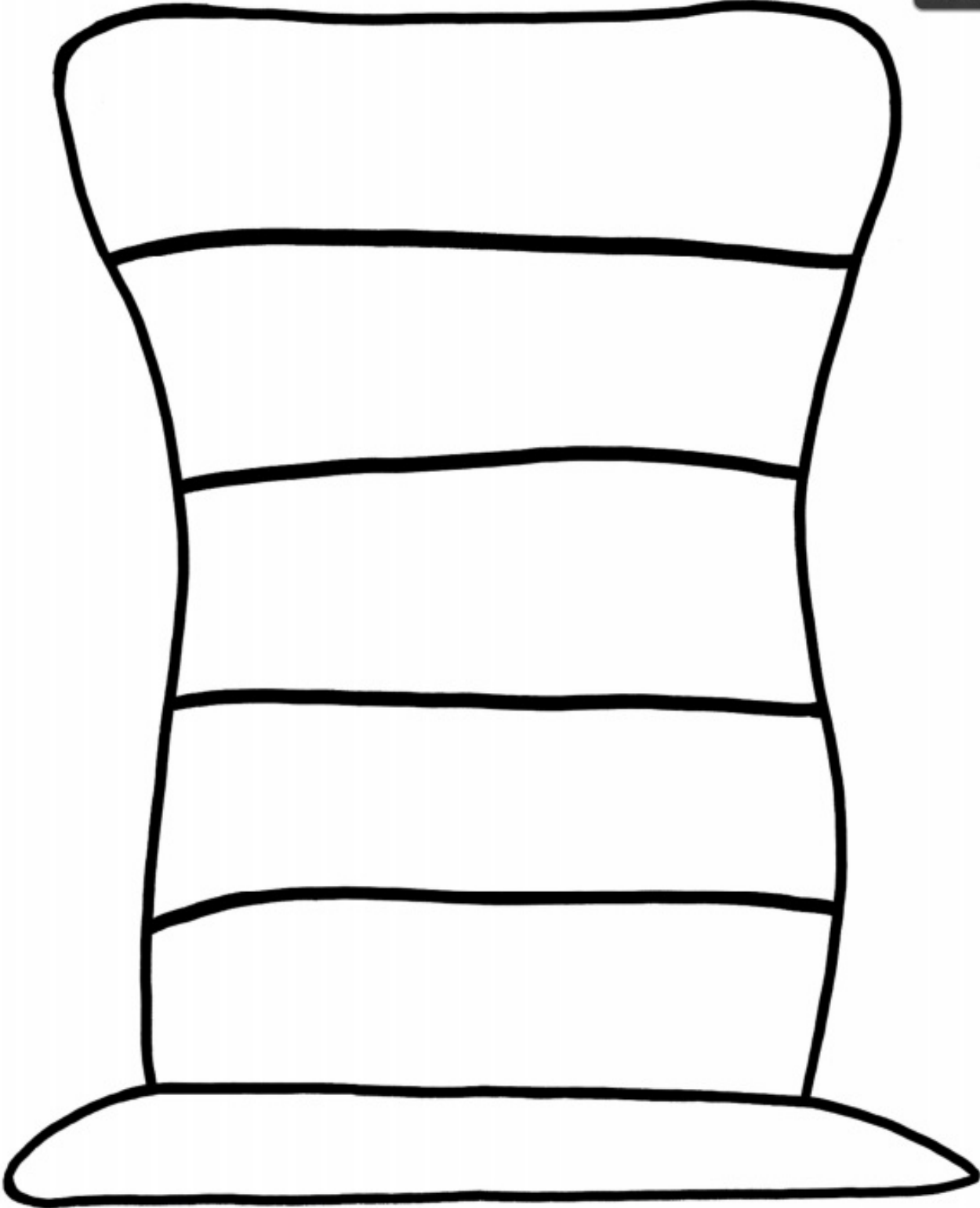


[pbskids.org/catinthehat](http://pbskids.org/catinthehat)



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**REPRODUCIBLES, pg. 2** (use with post-show assessment activity #2 on page 14)





# RESOURCES AND SOURCES



## MORE BEGINNER BOOKS:

The Big Honey Hunt  
By Stan & Jan Berenstain

The Cat in the Hat  
Comes Back  
By Dr. Seuss

One Fish, Two Fish,  
Red Fish, Blue Fish  
By Dr. Seuss

Green Eggs and Ham  
By Dr. Seuss

Are You My Mother?  
By P.D. Eastman

Go, Dog. Go!  
By P.D. Eastman

A Fish Out of Water  
By Helen Palmer

## ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM RESOURCES

### ***“Biography of Dr. Seuss”***

<http://www.biography.com/people/dr-seuss-9479638>

*Learn more about the life of Dr. Seuss.*

### ***“Cat in the Hat Read Aloud”***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDQuAD2aNHk>

*Listen and watch the Obama family read the book aloud to children in South Africa.*

### ***“Dr. Seuss Characters”***

[www.seussville.com/#/characters](http://www.seussville.com/#/characters)

*Learn more about any Dr. Seuss character.*

### ***“Interactive Games”***

<http://pbskids.org/catinthehat/>

*Online games and activities connected to The Cat in the Hat.*

### ***“Interview with Audrey Geisel”***

<http://www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/seuss>

*Learn more about the fascinating life of Dr. Seuss.*

## STUDY GUIDE SOURCES

Childsplay. “2014-15 National Tour: The Cat in the Hat.”

<http://www.childsplayaz.org/national-tour>

Dr. Seuss. <http://www.seussville.com>