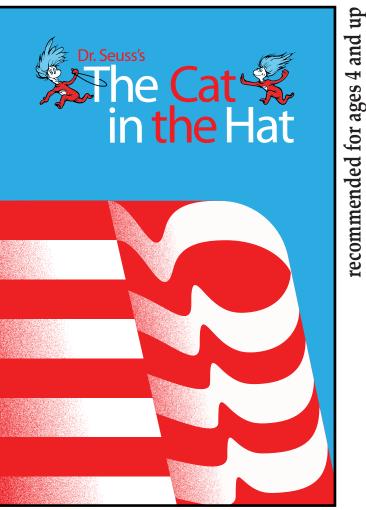
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April 19 - May 26, 2018 by Dr. Seuss directed by Jeff Mills

Dr. Seuss's The Cat in the Hat *is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.MTIShows.com* 

teacher guide prepared by Grace Melon, Francesca Pedersen, Jake Pinckes, and Jay Williams

Box Office & Group Sales: (312) 922-1999

at **DePaul's Merle Reskin Theatre** 60 E. Balbo Drive, Chicago (*please note: not a mailing address*)

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Teacher Guides are developed by The Theatre School at DePaul University.

Complimentary guides are distributed to teachers, and are available online for all ticket purchasers. They are intended as a tool to facilitate learning, discussion, and an enhanced theatre experience for our audience.

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> Please Note: Some links may have changed since this guide was published.

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#### **Chicago Playworks Program Goals:**

• To provide a live theatre experience for students, teachers, administrators and families in the Chicago metropolitan area.

• To provide theatre of the highest quality that is interactive, entertaining and relevant; theatre that reflects the life experiences of students who live in an urban, multi-racial and multi-cultural city.

• To serve principals, teachers and students in their pursuit of Illinois learning standards.

• To integrate performances and teacher guide information/activities into the classroom curriculum.

- To offer our performances within a workable, convenient time frame.
- To contact principals and teachers with valuable and solid information that will help them to make choices that fit their students' needs.

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# Welcome to Chicago Playworks!

Welcome, Students and Teachers! Thanks for seeing our play! But wait, there's still laughs to be had, even after today! Right here in this packet, we hope you have fun, completing each activity, one by one.

There's a lot to learn from *The Cat in the Hat,* and now's your chance to do just that. Imagination is key in the world of Dr. Seuss, and if you open your mind, the world's what you choose. Take a seat and read through the following pages. Inside you will find info and games suited for all ages.

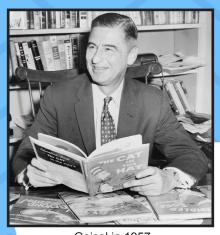
We hope that you laugh. We hope that you learn. We hope that to the theatre, you'll want to return. So take a seat, grab a pen, and prepare to dig in!

There's more to discuss outside of our door. You are about to embark through Seuss' most famous lore.

Sincerely,

Grace Melon, BFA3/Theatre Arts Francesca Pedersen, BFA3/Theatre Arts Jake Pinckes, BFA3/Theatre Arts Jay Williams, BFA3/Theatre Arts

# Who was Dr. Seuss?



A person's a person, no matter how small. Children want the same things we want. To laugh, to be challenged, to be entertained and delighted.

~Theodor Seuss Geisel (a.k.a. Dr. Seuss)

Brilliant, playful, and always respectful of children, Dr. Seuss charmed his way into the consciousness of four generations of youngsters and parents. In the process, he helped millions of children learn to read.

Geisel in 1957 www.loc.gov

Dr. Seuss was born Theodor Geisel in Springfield, Massachusetts, on March 2, 1904. Geisel published his first children's book, *And to Think I Saw it on Mulberry Street*, in 1937, after 27 publishers rejected it. In 1954, Pulitzer Prize-winning author John Hersey challenged Geisel to write a story "first graders wouldn't be able to put down," and asked that it be limited to 225 distinct words from a standard first grader's vocabulary list. Geisel nearly succeeded, using 236 unique words in the story, though the endeavor took him nine months largely due to the word restriction.

In 1957, Random House published *The Cat in the Hat*, a book that continues to charm children more than 50 years later. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1984, two Academy Awards, two Emmy Awards, a Grammy Award, and three Caldecott Honors, Geisel wrote and illustrated 44 books. Theodor Geisel died on September 24, 1991. Dr. Seuss lives on, inspiring generations of children of all ages to explore the joys of reading. Dr. Seuss's most famous books are *How the Grinch Stole Christmas, Green Eggs & Ham, The Lorax, Horton Hears a Who, The Cat in the Hat*, and so many more!

#### Dr. Seuss's Awards

- Pulitzer Prize for Lifetime of Contribution to Children's Literature (1984)
- Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature, Design for Death (1947)
- Academy Award for Best Animated Short Film, Gerald McBoing-Boing (1951)
- Emmy Award for Best Children's Special, Halloween Is Grinch Night (1977)
- Emmy Award for Best Children's Special, The Grinch Grinches The Cat in the Hat (1982)
- Grammy Award for Best Recording for Children, How the Grinch Stole Christmas! (1966)

# What About the Book?

*The Cat in the Hat* is one of the world's best selling children's books. When it was released in 1957, *The Cat in the Hat* became an instant hit and made Dr. Seuss a world-renowned children's book author. It also led to the creation of Beginner Books, a publishing house that produced books similar to *The Cat in the Hat* to help children learn how to read.



Geisel with a copy of his book, April 25, 1957. (Photo by Gene Lester/Getty Images)

Reflecting on the book's success, Dr. Seuss said in 1983: *It is the book I'm proudest of because it had something to do with the death of the Dick and Jane primers.* Dick and Jane primers, written by William S. Gray and Zerna Sharp, were a popular series of books to teach young kids to read

He also admitted that same year that he wrote the story with a political message in mind: *The Cat in the Hat is a revolt against authority, but it's enhanced by the fact that the Cat cleans up everything at the end.*  Geisel's original story was supposed to be about a king and queen cat, but "queen" wasn't on the list of acceptable words. Geisel looked through the list of words again and spotted "hat", which obviously rhymed with "cat", so he decided to make a story out of that instead.

> CAT HAT SAT MAT

# Write a Poem

THE IT A MERSING

The sun did not shine, It was too wet to play, So we sat in the house, All that cold wet day.

-Narrator

Now it's your turn to rhyme like the Cat in the Hat!

What would you do at the end of the play? What would you tell your mother that happened all day? Step into the shoes of one of the kids and tell your mom what you did.

Compose a poem telling your parent or caregiver how you spent your time. Write five lines and soon you will find, you'll be writing like Dr. Seuss in no time.

#### **For Teachers**

We recommend printing out the next page for each student. Ask each of them to write a five-line poem that answers how they would describe their day to a parent, using the rhyming prompt as a starter. Then ask each student to give the poem a creative title.

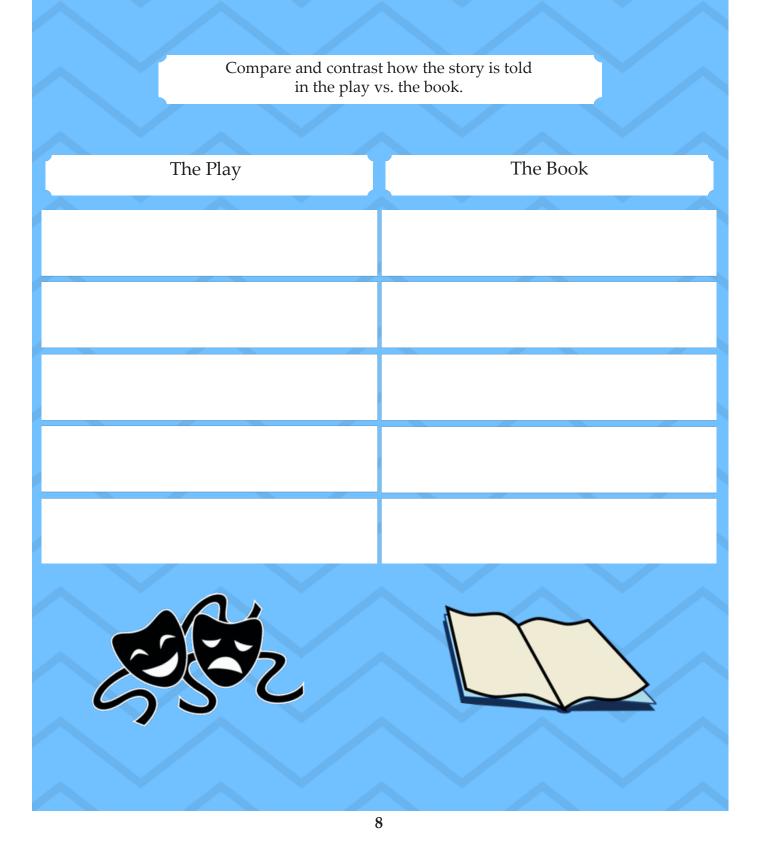
The purpose of this activity is to reengage the class with the world of *The Cat in the Hat* after the play. By picking up right where the play left off, in the play's language, the students are ready to dig into conversation about the play and take part in the activities to follow. And then after dinner... Just before bed... We told her what happened... And here is what we said...

## A POEM BY:

**Common Core Standards**: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS - *The Cat in the Hat* by Dr. Seuss is a great introduction to poetry, specifically rhyme. The prose throughout the book provides ample opportunity for understanding and appreciating the poetry form.

CCR.R.4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone. CCR.R.5 Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole. CCR.R.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

## *The Cat in the Hat*: the Play vs. the Book



If the class has not read *The Cat in the Hat,* we recommend reading it now, either as a class or individually.

#### **For Teachers**

This can be part of the in-class discussion. The purpose of this exercise is to discuss how the same story can be told through different forms of media, a book vs. a play in this instance.

Possible points of discussion:

- Which version was more engaging?
- Was anything lost between reading the book and seeing the play? Was anything gained between reading the book and seeing the play? Which version do you think told the story more effectively?
- Did the different versions have different stories? What were some resonances from the book? From the play?

These are just possible talking points. We recommend printing off copies of the previous page, and distributing them to your class. Some really interesting and effective conversations may arise from having the students lead the conversation with their answers. *Why do you sit there like that?* ~The Cat

## Time to get on your feet!

#### Tableau Exercise

In this activity, the students will be split up into groups and asked to create a tableau of what they think is a key moment from the play. The goal is for each group to create a still image that tells a story without any speech or movement.

#### **For Teachers**

*The Cat in the Hat* is a very active play. Much of the story is told with the actors' bodies. The movement of the play is made up of many different pictures that the actors shape. The goal is to explore what types of stories we can tell when we take away spoken word and use only movement. How do we take a written story and physicalize it?

#### **For Teachers**

You can either assign groups or let the students pick their own groups. We recommend groups of 3 or 4 students. You can either assign each group a tableau or let them choose their own. Letting them pick their own allows for the possibility of multiple tableaus of the same moment, which can lead to a conversation about how and why we interpret the same moment differently.

#### **Possible Tableaus include:**

- The Cat entering the house
- The Cat and The Fish balancing on the ball
- The characters cleaning up the house
- Thing 1 and Thing 2 being released

#### **Common Core Standards**:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS -students will learn fundamental ideas of collaboration and self expression. CCR.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

SOCIAL STUDIES - educates students on the right and wrong in different scenarios. If students are able to differentiate between good and bad, their understanding on social studies themes will be enhanced. SS.IS.4.K-2 Evaluate a source by distinguishing between fact and opinion.

HEALTH/WELLNESS - provides opportunity for understanding of cleanliness and proper responsibility in *The Cat in the Hat* story. This understanding is crucial in developmental traits for students. 1B.1a Identify one's likes and dislikes, needs and wants, strengths and challenges. 1B.1b Identify family, peer, school, and notes.

What would YOU do if your mother asked you. ~Boy

## Raise Your Hand If...

For this activity, ask the students to sit in a circle. Ask a series of questions to the students. After every question, any student who relates to or feels that the question applies to them should raise their hand. After a moment, ask the

next question. The questions should start out simple and get more complex. While questions may be rooted in the text of the play, this activity is more about the students connecting to each other using the play's themes, rather than learning about the play itself.

IMPORTANT: Every student has the right to PASS on any question they do not feel comfortable answering.

#### For Teachers

The goal of this activity is for the students to connect to both the script and each other by relating their personal experiences with moments from the play. By taking themes present in the play, students raise their awareness of their commonalities and differences, and it discourages students from making assumptions about each other.

#### Notes on Activity

- This activity can be adapted into a number of forms. The students can sit and raise hands, stand in a circle and walk towards the center, etc.
- Everyone should be quiet and listen to each other.
- After each question, the students should take a moment and acknowledge who has answered to each question.
- It is important to frame the questions as, "To the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand if..." This lets the students feel more comfortable and more free to answer how they want.

#### Sample Questions:

(You can ask these questions, add to these questions or create your own list of questions, whatever suits the needs of your particular class.)

To the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand if:

- You live with one or both of your parents.
- You have a sibling/siblings.
- You live with only one parent/guardian.
- You ever come home to an empty house.
- You have ever had to take care of a sibling.
- You have ever felt lonely.
- You have ever had an imaginary friend.
- You have ever gotten in trouble for doing something that wasn't your fault.
- You have ever gotten away with something bad that you actually did.
- You have ever made up a story.
- You have ever told a lie.
- You ever daydream.

After this exercise, it is important to have a debriefing discussion. This can be done in one large group, multiple smaller groups or pairs (depending on the class size). This discussion is a time to talk about things such as:

- How your students are feeling now.
- What reactions and responses were the students most aware of.
- Questions that no one responded to (if any).
- What students learned about themselves and what students learned about their classmates.

#### Common Core Standards:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS - provides personalization to a global theme. Students will be able to connect their personal lives with the book. CCR.R.9 Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches that author takes

SOCIAL STUDIES - allows students to further connect Dr. Seuss' philosophies to the student's personal ideas. The connection will then enlighten the student on decision making and understanding. SS.IS.2.K-2 Explore facts from various sources that can be used to answer the developed questions.

HEALTH/WELLNESS - allows students to prioritize themes from other Dr. Seuss books that will further their educational enhancement from the lesson. 1B.1a Identify one's likes and dislikes, needs and wants, strengths and challenges.



# Time to Create! Make Your Own Play!

In this activity, students will divide into groups again, and pick another Dr. Seuss story. They will take this story and adapt it into a short play (less than 5 minutes).

#### Possible choices include:

- Green Eggs and Ham
- Oh, the Places You'll Go
- The Lorax
- Horton Hears a Who!
- How the Grinch Stole Christmas
- Yertle the Turtle
- The Sneetches



#### **For Teachers**

*The Cat in the Hat* was not written for the stage like most plays. The Cat, The Fish, the kids, and Thing 1 and Thing 2 started life as illustrations and written words in a book. Years later it was adapted into the play you watched. By having the students create small adaptations, they will learn how to analyze a story, pick out what is important, and tell that story in another format.

#### Notes on Activity

- You may either split up students into groups or let students create their own groups (depending on your class).
- You may assign each group a story or let the students choose. Assigning stories will allow for every group to have a different one, and allow them to know each story, but it may also be interesting to have different renditions of the same story or for a group to pick a lesser known Seuss story.
- We recommend the more story-oriented Dr. Seuss stories as opposed to the more education-oriented (*One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish, Hop on Pop,* etc). However, you do not need to rule these out as students could make really interesting adaptations if they want to.
- Ask each student to use the next page to design a poster for their new play!

#### **Common Core Standards**:

SOCIAL STUDIES - utilizes the humanities and philosophies from Dr. Seuss to pinpoint specific ideals that students find of great importance.SS.IS.2.K-2 Explore facts from various sources that can be used to answer the developed questions.

HEALTH/WELLNESS - will allow students to prioritize themes from other Dr. Seuss books that will further their educational enhancement from the lesson. 1B.1a Identify one's likes and dislikes, needs and wants, strengths and challenges.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS - students will be able to artistically craft their own play and utilize their imaginations to create a new staged presentation based on other books they have read in the past. W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

# From Stage to Class!

Are you learning new vocabulary words in class? Time for some practice! Try writing a story that includes 3 words that you've studied, and try rhyming each of those words with a new word.

#### For Teachers

We recommend printing off copies of this page and distributing them to the class. *The Cat in the Hat* is all about playing with language. Would the story really be as fun if it didn't rhyme? This is a two-fold activity. First, it lets the students experiment with vocabulary and practice writing. Second, it allows them to practice telling a story in rhyme. This activity is a great jumping off point for a conversation about how phrasing and language help tell a story.

**Common Core Standards**: CCR.R.4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

# Color Your Own Cat in a Hat

Design your own Seussian character. You never know, it may end up in a story one day!





## See You Next Time!

We hope you enjoyed the play. We hope you learned something from this Teacher Guide. Most importantly, we hope to see you at the theatre again soon!



Bronze Statue of Theodore Geisel and the Cat in the Hat. Dr. Seuss Memorial Springfield, Massachusetts www.pinterest.com



The Cat in the Hat word cloud www.best-childrens-books.com

## Webliography

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## THEATRE SCHOOL

## 2017-2018 Chicago Playworks Season at DePaul's Merle Reskin Theatre, 60 E. Balbo Drive, Chicago



## Augusta and Noble

by Carlos Murillo directed by Lisa Portes recommended for ages 8 and up **October 5 - November 11, 2017** 

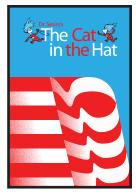
Tuesdays at 10 a.m.: 10/10, 10/17, 10/24, 10/31, 11/7 Thursdays at 10 a.m.: 10/5, 10/12, 10/19\*\*, 10/26, 11/2^, 11/9 Fridays at 10 a.m.: 10/20, 11/3+ Saturdays at 2 p.m.: 10/7>, 10/21, 10/28\*\*, 11/4+, 11/11; Sunday at 2 p.m.: 10/15



## Junie B. Jones is Not a Crook

by Allison Gregory, adapted from the book series by Barbara Park directed by Krissy Vanderwarker recommended for ages 5 and up **January 11 - February 17, 2018** 

Tuesdays at 10 a.m.: 1/16, 1/23, 1/30, 2/6, 2/13 Thursdays at 10 a.m.: 1/11, 1/18, 1/25\*\*, 2/1, 2/8^, 2/15 Fridays at 10 a.m.: 2/2, 2/9+ Saturdays at 2 p.m.: 1/13>, 1/20, 1/27, 2/10+, 2/17; Sunday at 2 p.m.: 2/4\*\*



### Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat

by Dr. Seuss directed by Jeff Mills recommended for ages 4 and up **April 19 - May 26, 2018** 

Tuesdays at 10 a.m.: 4/24, 5/1, 5/8, 5/15, 5/22 Thursdays at 10 a.m.: 4/19, 4/26, 5/10<sup>^</sup>, 5/17, 5/24 Fridays at 10 a.m.: 4/27\*\*, 5/11+ Saturdays at 2 p.m.: 4/21>, 4/28, 5/12 +, 5/19\*\*, 5/26; Sunday at 2 p.m.: 5/6~

+ASL/American Sign Language Interpreting \*\*Post-Show Discussion

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