Let the Cat in the Hat, assisted by Thing 1 and Thing 2, set your whole school buzzing with the wacky wisdom of Dr. Seuss as students take on reading challenges and explore the wonderful world of books. Oh, the stuff they will learn, with their eyes wide open!

Strengthen the bonds between school and home by inviting families to participate. Send a note home with students outlining the program, encouraging parents to reinforce your efforts by sharing books at home—especially Dr. Seuss books—and announcing events they’re welcome to attend.

**SETTING THE SCENE**

**Seuss Signposts:** Create Seuss-style signposts to direct kids to different sections of your school, library, or parts of the library collection. You’ll find examples in *Hooray for Diffendoofer Day* or on the Seussville.com website. Stick with bright colors and simple shapes and you can’t go wrong!

**Stove Hats and Bows:** Do you have a bust of the person your school is named for or another venerable figure? A statue of a school mascot? Where it’s appropriate, give these symbolic figures Cat in the Hat treatment by adding a Cat-style stove hat and red bow tie!

**Using the Progress Tracker:**
- Place individual cutouts of Thing 1 and Thing 2 cleverly around the school, peeking through windows or out from behind doors, standing on the office’s information desk or half-hiding behind books in the library… so students feel their presence everywhere they go.
- Use pieces from the “Reading Is Our Thing” progress tracker to anchor a bulletin board display. In the middle, feature photocopies of covers of Seuss books from your collection, your reading campaign goal, or upcoming special events.
- Each time a student finishes a book, he or she will write the title of the book on a character piece and sign it. Starting with a Thing 1 cutout from the “Reading Is Our Thing” theme materials, display a line of characters, representing individual books read, in the hall outside the library door. Keep adding to it, and see how long of a line you can create and how many halls you can cover with everyone working together. Let your line zig and zag up and down in fine Seuss fashion! End the line with a cutout of Thing 2.
- Use character pieces in classrooms to display titles recommended by students, or the names of students who have reached their reading
Dr. Seuss: Reading Is Our Thing!

goals or personal increments toward those goals, such as reading three titles or an hour of reading time.

• Use your display to conduct a school-wide survey of Seuss favorites. Add a sign reading, “What’s Your Favorite Dr. Seuss Book? Vote Here!” On a nearby table, place a ballot box (A Cat’s hat? A fish bowl? A red fun box as in *The Cat in the Hat*?), character pieces for ballots, and pencils or pens. Gather ballots and work with students to analyze results and present them in colorful graphic form, as a bar graph of titles, or a pie chart of the total votes cast.

• In his lifetime, Dr. Seuss wrote forty-some books to delight children, most of which are still in print.

  Challenge individual students, classes, or grades to see how many they can read, and bring their completed lists in for review. Post a character piece for each student, class, or grade that reads all, or the most, distinct Seuss titles, and offer small prizes as appropriate. “Reading Is Our Thing” or Upstart’s “The Fun Never Ends with the Cat in the Hat and His Friends!” theme award certificates, bookmarks, stickers, book bags, buttons, or banners could serve as prizes. Keep in mind that some Seuss books contain several different stories.

**Seuss Book Display:** Have your media specialist pull all Dr. Seuss titles to feature on a large table or bookshelf display for easy access. Use cutouts of Thing 1 and Thing 2 from the theme materials on bookends, or intersperse plush or toy figures of the Cat in the Hat, Thing 1, and Thing 2 with the books and movies. You’ll find such toys at www.amazon.com or www.seussland.com.

**NEA’s Read Across America:** Time your reading campaign to coincide with NEA’s annual Read Across America campaign, focused on March 2, Dr. Seuss’s birthday. You’ll find resources at Seussville.com, www.seussville.com/Educators/educatorReadAcrossAmerica.php.

**Seuss Scenery Hallway Mural:** Assign grades different Seuss books that show fantastic towns or landscapes as settings for the stories, such as “What Was I Scared Of?” from *The Sneetches and Other Stories*, *The Lorax*, *McEligot’s Pool*, or *Happy Birthday to You!* Provide painting shirts, pencils, large sheets of paper, washable paints, and a variety of brushes. Have children create large paintings of the Seuss scenery from their books, based on Seuss’s illustrations, information from the story, and their imaginations! Place the paintings, labeled with the name of the book and the grade, side by side in a hallway to create an impressive mural.

**Thing-tastic Helpers:** Cat-hatted teachers of younger grades might choose a general assistant or two each day, and honor them with Thing paper headbands from the “Reading Is Our Thing” theme materials to wear in the classroom.

**School-wide Special Events and Activities**

**Kick-off Assembly:** Arrange a rousing, all-school kickoff for your reading program. Enlist a staff member with a theatrical bent to perform a dramatic reading of *I Can Read with My Eyes Shut!* wearing a “Cat hat.” (These hats are available at www.upstartpromotions.com, or you can make your own using instructions at www.mamaslikeme.com/2012/03/easy-dr-seuss-hats.html.) Announce your school-wide reading goals for this campaign (total number of books read, minutes of reading, etc.). Use big, brightly colored charts and visuals, presented with flair by two staff members dressed as Thing 1 and Thing 2 (wigs and T-shirts available at www.seussland.com). Then motivate students with a challenge: If they complete the goal by the target date, their principal will wear a “Cat hat” around school for an entire day!

**Seuss Sing-Along:** Have a music teacher use the *Cat in the Hat Songbook* to lead a sing-along of lively, silly songs from the movie versions of Seuss’s most famous tales.

**Seuss Characters on Parade:** Invite children to come to school dressed as their favorite Seuss characters. Use music from the *Cat in the Hat Original Motion Picture Soundtrack* (see Resource list), and lead each grade in a parade through the halls during different times of the day.
Dr. Seuss: Reading Is Our Thing!

Reader's Theater: Invite students to form small groups and prepare reader's theater performances of their favorite Seuss books. Start at the classroom level, with voting for the best performance in the class. Move to the grade level, and have the classroom winners perform for their grade peers, who will choose a winner for their grade. Then feature the grade-level winners in an all-school assembly and vote for a best overall performance. Perhaps the overall winner or grade winners could perform for parents at a family literacy night event. Some shorter titles that lend themselves well to this challenge include Green Eggs and Ham, Gerald McBoing Boing, and several stories in The Bippolo Seed and Other Lost Stories.

Birthday Party: Dr. Seuss was born on March 2, 1904. Use Happy Birthday to You! as the model for a birthday party in the author's honor, or as a generic birthday celebration for students or staff.

Write Like Dr. Seuss: Challenge students to submit their own creative writing inspired by Dr. Seuss. You might name categories, like tongue-twisters (Oh Say Can You Say?), alphabet or counting books (Dr. Seuss's ABC), Seuss sequels (The Cat in the Hat Comes Back), or stories with a social message (The Lorax). Consider separating entries into age ranges as well. Seuss's silliness is surprisingly hard to imitate! Assemble a panel of teacher or peer judges and award first, second, and third prizes in each category. “Reading Is Our Thing” award certificates, bookmarks, stickers, or banners make good prizes.

Draw Like Dr. Seuss: Issue a challenge similar to the writing challenge above but for artwork instead. Encourage students to work in colored pencils or paint—Seuss's favorite media. Categories might include people, real animals, imaginary animals, landscapes, or moving vehicles—all given the Seuss treatment!

Diffendoofer Day: Close your campaign on a high note with a school-wide party based on Hooray for Diffendoofer Day! Serve pizza, milk, and cake or tasty treats from the Green Eggs and Ham Cookbook. Sing “The Diffendoofer Song,” substituting your school and town name. You'll need to make up a melody or do it as a chant; there's no official music for the song. Better yet, prepare and perform the book as a Reader's Theater play, using production notes for “A Diffendoofer Day Play” in the Teacher's Guide at www.seussville.com/activities/HOORAY_TeachersGuide_0.pdf. Display theme-related student work. Add the sing-along or the Seuss character parade above and you've got a Seuss-worthy celebration.

Family Literacy Night

Multilingual Story Time: If you serve an ethnically diverse population or offer foreign languages, try a multilingual story time. Seuss stories have been translated into many languages; Spanish and French versions, in particular, are readily available. Choose stories that come in at least two languages (see titles in the Resource list). Find readers fluent in each language—perhaps parent or grandparent volunteers—and share the stories a page or section at a time, alternating languages. Use visuals like enlarged illustrations, felt board figures, or puppet characters as you read the stories. Add crafts, games, songs, or snacks from other sections of this guide for a complete family story time program.

Reader's Theater: Feature all-school or grade-level winners of the Reader's Theater competition above, sharing their performances of Seuss stories.

Non-Seussical Feats of Strength and Skill! Assemble teams of students or families to run relay races featuring silly tasks worthy of Seuss's sense of humor. A leader or MC dressed as the Cat, assisted by staffers as Thing 1 and Thing 2, would add to the general mayhem and merriment. Here are some possibilities:

- Juggling two to three soft items (slippers, cloth balls) with handles
- Balancing items on wooden spoons while shuffling or hopping
• Stacking 10 to 15 brightly colored books into towers
• Skipping backward while counting backward or saying the alphabet backward.

**Movie Night:** Show short or feature films of Seuss stories. Many short stories or story collections are available on DVD; the feature-length (86 minutes) *Horton Hears a Who* is a family favorite.

**Food for Thought:** Use the recipes on page 5 or from *Green Eggs and Ham Cookbook* to serve to students and parents on family literacy night. Enlist the help of parent volunteers to make and bring these tasty treats!

**In the Classroom or Library**

**Language Arts**

**Seuss-ational Reading Corner:** Let cheerful chaos characterize a reading area dedicated to the good doctor. Start with colorful beanbag chairs or large pillows. Arrange them under a window, if possible. Hang floppy curtains in a colorful pattern. Take decorating cues from books like *The Cat in the Hat*, using small striped rugs and perhaps a framed portrait of Dr. Seuss on the wall. Add a container of books and stuffed Seuss characters—a small red crate or red bushel basket would be perfect. An end table could hold the Cat’s famous hat and a fishbowl with water and a plastic fish. Set up a DVD player with an assortment of animated Seuss stories.

**Creative Rhyming:** Much of the charm of Seuss’s books comes from his wildly creative, unconventional use of rhyme. Create a word wall of source words that are familiar and ordinary, such as the names of animals or food items. Have students work individually or in pairs to list as many rhymes or near-rhymes as they can. Then encourage them to add made-up words with short definitions. For example, you might start with “sparrow” and get responses like “narrow, arrow, wheelbarrow …” and then “Zumping Zarrow—a cross between a grasshopper and a kangaroo.” Compare lists and have children use the lists to help them write Seuss-like stories.

**Wubbulous Words:** Introduce *The Cat in the Hat Beginner Book Dictionary* to early elementary students and use it in the classroom. With older students, share aloud *Dr. Seuss’s ABC* and *On Beyond Zebra*. Assign each student a letter or two of the alphabet. He or she will make up a new word starting with that letter and write it like a dictionary entry with spelling, pronunciation, part of speech, and definition. Early elementary students might enjoy this too, by simply saying their words and explaining their meanings. Compile your new words into a totally wubbulous alphabet book.

**Interactive Reading Games:** Dr. Seuss Reading Games, listed in the bibliography below, offers interactive games that exercise beginning reading skills for early elementary students.

**Board Games:** *I Can Do That!* Games makes board and activity games based on Seuss characters and titles, designed for ages four to eight. Check them out at [www.icandothatgames.com](http://www.icandothatgames.com). They’re available at Toys-R-Us.

**Writing Projects**

**Nonsense Names:** Read aloud “Too Many Daves” from *The Sneetches and Other Stories*. What if Mrs. McCave had daughters instead of sons? Work with students to rewrite the story, starting: “Did I ever tell you that Mrs. McCave / had twenty-three daughters and she named them all Maeve?” Have fun making up new nonsense names for the McCave sisters.

**Seuss Sequel:** Display Seuss stories on a table with paper, pencils, and crayons. Include these pairs: *The Cat in the Hat* and *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*, *Horton Hears a Who* and *Horton Hatches the Egg*, and *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* and *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*. Add other titles that might lend themselves to sequels. Invite students to pick up on a favorite character or carry on the plot from one of the books in a sequel—written in rhyme, of course.
**Body Part Stories:** Set out *The Foot Book* and *The Tooth Book* at a table or learning center, with paper, pencils, and crayons. Challenge students to write and illustrate similar stories about other body parts—perhaps “The Hand Book” or “The Knee Book.” Display the resulting anatomically inspired masterpieces.

**Inspired Imagination:** Many of Seuss’s books give free reign to imagination run amok. Share some of these titles: *McElligot’s Pool, And to Think that I Saw It on Mulberry Street, Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are?, If I Ran the Circus,* or *Oh, the Thinks You Can Think!* Invite kids to borrow a theme and write their own wildly imaginative stories in rhyme. They could expound on things they might see on their own street on the way home from school, never-before-seen wildlife they’d feature on a one-of-a-kind African safari, more things to be thankful you aren’t, more “thinks you can think,” etc. You might choose rotating themes, for daily wit and writing workouts.

**Arts and Crafts**

**Seuss-ism Calendars:** Provide separate calendar sheets for each month of the year. Have students choose a different witty Seuss saying to write on each sheet, as a “Seuss-ism” for that month, and decorate the calendars with small drawings, borders, or stickers. Have students work from the various books or display a copy of *Seussisms: Wise and Witty Prescriptions for Living from the Good Doctor.* Provide paper to make a Seuss-inspired cover. Then use a three-hole punch and colorful yarn or ribbon to bind the calendars. Sayings might be profound (“… Sneetches are Sneetches / and no kind of Sneetch is the best on the beaches.”) or inspiring (“I meant what I said / and I said what I meant … / An elephant’s faithful / One hundred percent!”) or just plain silly (“From there to here, from here to there, funny things are everywhere.”)

**Cat Hats for Everyone!** Make red and white stove hats for teachers or for students, using instructions at www.mamaslikeme.com/2012/03/easy-dr-seuss-hats.html.

**Character Sock Puppets:** Using a variety of socks, felt and fabric scraps, beads, pipe cleaners, scissors, stick-on eyes, yarn, ribbon, feathers, and glue, make puppets of your favorite Dr. Seuss characters to use in retelling the stories. For a more advanced challenge, invite students to create new Seuss-worthy characters and stories to share in a craft, writing, and performing workshop.

**Recipes**

**Cat Hats and Seuss-aparilla:** Top small round sugar cookies with stacks of alternating red and white lifesavers (gummy savers are easier to eat), glued together with white icing, to make “Cat Hats.” Serve them with “Seuss-aparilla” (root beer).

**Silly Seuss-tenance:** Try a few of the recipes in the *Green Eggs and Ham Cookbook*—a whole book of recipes inspired by Seuss stories. Schlopp or Noodle-Eating-Poodle Noodles are good choices for a cooking adventure; make Blueberry Bumplings or Nupboards’ Nuggets with Silly Sammy Slick’s Sodas or Circus McGurkus Pink Lemonade to serve as snacks.

**One Fish, Two Fish …** Mix up batches of Berry Blue Jell-O and fill clear, plastic glasses halfway. Chill until partially set and add two to three gummy fish to each glass. Serve with spoons as the perfect accompaniment to stories like *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish,* *The Cat in the Hat,* or *McElligot’s Pool.*

**Math/Science Activities**

**Science Seuss-alikes:** Many Seuss-style books, of varying merit, have emerged since Seuss’s death in 1991. Random House publishes the Cat in the Hat’s Learning Library Series of nonfiction titles that effectively present science, health, and even economic information in Seuss-like rhyme, using Seuss characters. Build fun science lessons around *Miles and Miles of Reptiles; Oh, the Things You Can Do that are Good for You!; If I Ran the Rain Forest;* or other titles in this series written by Tish Rabe or Bonnie Worth.

**Outrageous Oozy Oobleck:** Visit The Exploratorium’s Science Explorer website, www.exploratorium.edu/science_explorer/ooze.html. Use the recipe there, colored
green, of course, to make Oobleck. Try the experiments and discuss the science of this delightfully ooky “non-Newtonian fluid.”

**Seuss Story Problems:** Make up math word problems appropriate to your grade level based on Seuss stories, and post them in the hall outside your classroom or library. Invite students to copy the problems and turn them in to you with answers. Here are some samples to get you started:

- At the end of *Ten Apples up on Top*, the lion, the tiger, and the dog each has ten apples on his head. How many apples do they have all together?
- The first Who’s-Asleep-Score in *The Sleep Book* is 40,404. The next is 8,000,808. How many sleep talkers, sleep walkers, snorers, and other assorted creatures fell asleep between those two counts?
- In *Horton Hatches the Egg*, Horton the elephant is captured by hunters and sold to a circus, where he is put on display for “10 cents a peek.” If 435 people pay to see Horton, how much money does the circus take in?
- If I Ran the Circus was first published 56 years ago. In what year did it come out?
- In *Thidwick the Big-Hearted Moose*, how many different kinds of animals make their homes in Thidwick’s horns? How many individual critters, total (counting from the pictures and not including the fleas)?

You’ll find more at [www.mathstories.com/bookstories/Book_12_Dr_Seuss.htm](http://www.mathstories.com/bookstories/Book_12_Dr_Seuss.htm).

**History/Geography Activities**

**The Doctor Himself:** Encourage teachers to share grade-appropriate biographies of Dr. Seuss with their classes. These titles from the resource list below are good for different grade levels: *Dr. Seuss* (First Biographies), *The Boy on Fairfield Street: How Ted Geisel Grew up to Become Dr. Seuss*, and *Oh, the Places He Went: A Story about Dr. Seuss*. The 90-minute video, *In Search of Dr. Seuss*, is an excellent and entertaining survey of the author and his work for middle to upper elementary grades, including insights about what motivated Seuss to write some of his social message stories, like *The Sneetches* and *The Lorax*.

**The Map on My Lap:** Introduce a lesson on maps and globes by reading the Cat in the Hat’s Learning Library series title, *There’s a Map on My Lap*. Author Tish Rabe packs a surprisingly comprehensive overview into a few entertaining pages.

**INTERNET ACTIVITIES**

**A to Z Teacher Stuff: Dr. Seuss Activities:** [http://lessons.atozteacherstuff.com/80/dr-seuss-activities/](http://lessons.atozteacherstuff.com/80/dr-seuss-activities/) suggests classroom activities across the curriculum based on 15 favorite Dr. Seuss stories.

**Dr. Seuss Art:** [www.drseussart.com/index.html](http://www.drseussart.com/index.html). While this is a sales catalog, it allows Seuss fans to browse many examples of familiar and surprising artistic creations by this unique artist.

**Dr. Seuss beyond the Cat:** [http://library.thinkquest.org/CR0210462](http://library.thinkquest.org/CR0210462). This student-generated Thinkquest site offers a biography of the author and explores several of his best-known books, including why they were written. Interesting for middle grade or upper elementary students to explore.

**Seussville!** Bookmark this Dr. Seuss Enterprises site: [www.seussville.com](http://www.seussville.com). It’s bright and busy with a biography of the author, Seuss-inspired click-and-play games, videos, story maker, and more. It’s a little noisy, but lots of fun, with dozens of printable word games, mazes, coloring pages, and matching games great for early grades.

**PBS Kids: The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot about That!** [http://pbskids.org/catinthehat/index.html](http://pbskids.org/catinthehat/index.html). Check out this site full of science and math-based games, videos, printables, etc. for early and middle grades.

**DR. SEUSS RESOURCES**


• The Cat in the Hat Original Motion Picture Soundtrack, music by David Newman. Decca, 2003 (music CD). ASIN B0000DZE4X. All ages.


• Dr. Seuss Reading Games. Creative Wonders, 2004 (Interactive CD). ASIN B00000JLAM. Pre-2.


• Dr. Seuss’s Horton Hears a Who, directed by Jimmy Hayward and Steve Martino. 20th Century Fox, 2008 (feature film DVD). ASIN B001DPHDCY. Family.

• Dr. Seuss’s the Cat in the Hat Soundtrack by David Newman. Decca, 2003 (music CD). ASIN B0000DZE4X. All ages.


• Horton Hears a Who, directed by Jimmy Hawyard and Steve Martino. 20th Century Fox, 2008 (feature film DVD). ASIN: B001DPHDCY.


• **There’s a Map on My Lap** by Tish Rabe. Random House Books for Young Readers, 2002. 1-4.
