Dr. Seuss

Theodor Seuss Geisel was born in Springfield, Massachusetts in a wealthy family of brew masters of German background. Before launching a career as a children’s author, he was a successful advertising artist and political cartoonist.

The demand for beginner books increased in America during the post-war baby boom. Besides, as the article “Why Can’t Johny Read?” by Rudolph Flesch suggests, there was a concern with children’s literacy. The conventional “Dick and Jane” readers were not appealing to children. There was a need for more lively primers and Dr Seuss was offered the challenge to illustrate and write a primer using only 220 words. His answer to this call was The Cat in the Hat (1957), of which he said “It is the book I’m proudest of because it had something to do with the death of the Dick and Jane primers”. It was followed by Hop on Pop (1963), and Green Eggs and Ham (1960), a masterpiece of minimalism and nonsense poetry written using only 50 different words.

Seuss is a true artist of the picture books. He explores the tension between text and pictures, the gaps between what we read and what we see—which makes good picture books. He is a central figure in the history of nonsense literature, heir to Edward Lear. He created bizarre creatures and new words. “Nonsense wakes up the brain cells”, he pointed out. His playfulness and nonsense encourages children to be creative, to ask questions of their world, it stimulates thought. His ABC (1965) invites children to experiment with language, to delight in its pleasures, and to increase the associations that they assign to words. The author believed that “children welcome good writers who talk, not down to them as juveniles, but clearly and honestly as equals”.

Some of his books convey social messages, addressing the major issues of the time, such as Civil Rights in The Sneetches (1961) or environmental conservation in The Lorax (1971). The Lorax became a symbol of ‘American Forests’, a non-profit organization encouraging the protection of forests, and therefore was attached by the logging industry. Responding to criticism of his book Seuss said “the Lorax doesn’t say lumbering is immoral. I live in a house made of wood and write books printed on paper. It’s a book about going easy on what we’ve got. It’s anti-pollution and anti-greed”. In How the Grinch Stole Christmas (1957), he criticizes those who exploit Christmas just for profit.

Seuss’s style was initially disliked by critics in the children’s literature establishment. A librarian said: “we’d rather children read something better, something more like A.A. Milne”. English critics also disliked him: “compared with Lear and
Carroll he seems madly common, slick, unmemorable … the style is overpoweringly American”; it is brash and slangy, the standard is better for children”. Nowadays, he continues to be an icon of children’s literature in America, where one out of every four born children receives as his first book a Dr Seuss book. He is in the top 20 of the best-selling children’s books, where his closest rival is J.K. Rowling; Beatrix Potter is his closest competitor in the top 100. He is also a source of inspiration for modern writers such as Sandra Boynton in her Pajama Time! (2000) and Oh My Oh My Oh Dinosaurs! (1993). Seuss’s book One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish is read as a celebration of diversity and tolerance. It directly influenced Johny Valentine’s One Dad Two Dads Brown Dad Blue Dads.

Dr. Seuss’s verses are still enormously popular in the USA today, to the extent that they form part of the universal American heritage, as the construction of the Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden in his hometown Springfield, Massachusetts, indicates.

**Bibliography**


**Photographs:** 1. “Dr Seuss star on Hollywood Boulevard”. (c) hankoss, 2007. In flickr with cc licence. 2. “Dr Seuss tree in La Jolla, California”. (c) slworking2, 2008. In flickr with cc licence
This might not work on harder difficulties but on normal, I didn’t really think too deeply about what units to make, or where to position them, I pretty much had a random mix of units, had everyone follow me, and we walked around the battlefield kicking ass. There’s a small bit of strategy in capturing fan geysers before attempting to take on the enemy stage, but aside from that, the strategy parts played almost the same as the action parts, except I had people helping me.

Dr. Seuss Worksheets. “I know it is wet and the sun is not sunny, but we can have lots of good fun that is funny.” Who doesn’t want to know more about “Whoville,” “Green Eggs and Ham,” and “The Cat in the Hat”? Theodor Seuss Geisel authored more than 60 children’s books under his pen name, Dr. Seuss. There are art projects, word builder puzzles, glyphs, books, and Dr. Seuss literature units. You can make learning fun with Dr. Seuss.

- Short Reading Comprehensions Very Quick Readers
  - Dr. Seuss - A Man with an Imagination (Very Quick Reader; Grades 2-4 Readability)
  - Want to Bet? The Story of Green Eggs and Ham (Very Quick Reader; Grades 3-5 Readability)
  - The Dr. Seuss Memorial Sculpture Garden (Very Quick Reader; Grades 6-8 Readability)

Dr. Seuss. There are lots of American folklore heroes. Johnny Appleseed stories are based on the life of a real person. Other folklore tales talk about imaginary characters like Paul Bunyan. We don’t know who started the stories about Paul Bunyan but somehow the tales of his adventures became part of American culture as they were recited over and over again. The Cat in the Hat and the Grinch are among the many imaginary characters invented by Dr. Seuss. Even though Dr. Seuss is an imaginary name, there is a real person who wrote all Dr. Seuss stories. His name is Theodor Seuss Geisel.

Theodor Seuss Geisel