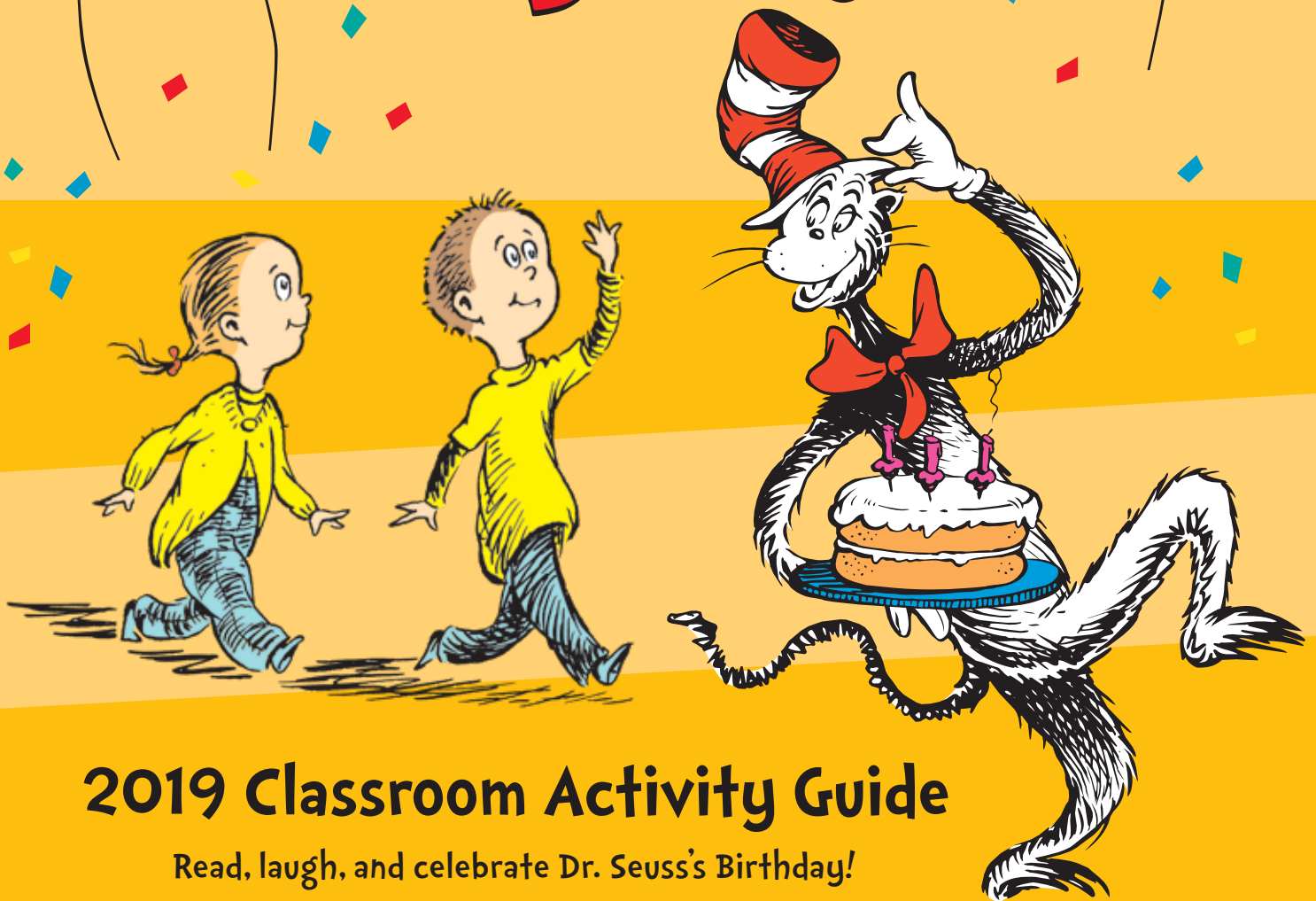


Celebrate



Dr. Seuss's Birthday



2019 Classroom Activity Guide

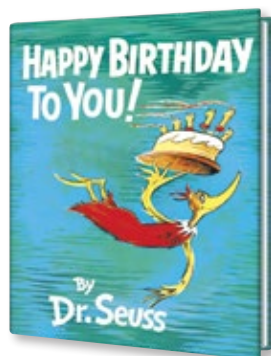
Read, laugh, and celebrate Dr. Seuss's Birthday!

This classroom activity guide includes resources for celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday that can help you create a fun, encouraging environment for your students!



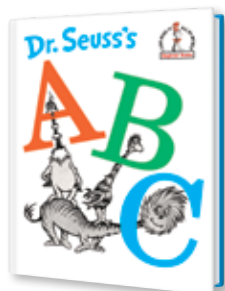
Birthday Celebrations!

March 2 is Dr. Seuss's birthday. This year, he would have been 115 years old. In honor of his birthday, explore how birthdays are celebrated around the globe and in Dr. Seuss's books.



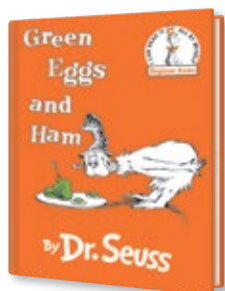
Read *Happy Birthday to You!* aloud to your students, and ask them to point out the different ways birthdays are recognized and celebrated in Katroo. Then ask them to think about how they celebrate birthdays and whether it is different from celebrations in Katroo.

Make three columns. In the first column, have the kids list ways to celebrate in Katroo. In the second, list ways kids in your class celebrate birthdays in their own families. Ask your students to research different birthday traditions around the world, and list their findings in the third column. Talk about how the celebrations are alike and different.

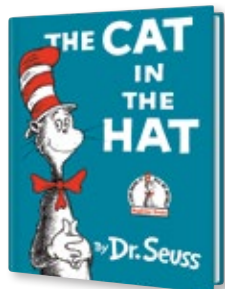


Some of the ways people celebrate birthdays are:

- Sending cards or other greetings
- Making wishes to foster good luck in the coming year
- Eating special foods
- Throwing parties (sometimes with games; often with food and gifts)
- Giving gifts
- Singing



Ask your students to create birthday cards, songs, or other greetings to celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday. Read *Dr. Seuss's ABC*, and introduce the idea of acrostic poems as a form of birthday card. Students can use "Happy birthday," "Dr. Seuss," "Theo LeSieg," or other words for their acrostics.



Different cultures emphasize different birthdays. A quinceañera celebrates coming of age at fifteen and is a big event for many Latinas. In the US, sixteen, eighteen, and twenty-one are important birthdays. Other cultures celebrate crown

birthdays, or the birthday when your age matches your date of birth. All around the world, Jewish people celebrate coming of age at thirteen. Ask your students to imagine what an especially important birthday might be for Dr. Seuss's characters. How would they celebrate? Students should illustrate their special birthday ideas with a poster, digital presentation, or skit.

Sometimes people play games or do other activities at birthday parties. Pin the tail on the donkey and musical chairs are common birthday games. At some parties, people whack a piñata until the candy falls out. Ask your students to come up with games that might be played at Dr. Seuss's birthday party. What kind of scavenger hunt or relay race would he have? Encourage your students to come up with games and make materials for them. Then play the games at your Dr. Seuss celebration. Students can make their own Dr. Seuss character piñatas and use them for decorations at the party.



Seusstastic Celebrations!



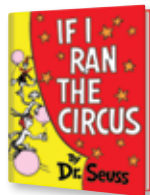
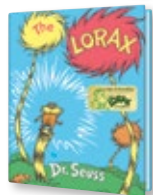
Imagination

Dr. Seuss is famous for his wild imagination. He created all kinds of new worlds, but he also reimagined everyday experiences—like making scrambled eggs and going to sleep—to make them extraordinary! A good birthday celebration calls for wild adventures!

Read *Dr. Seuss's Sleep Book* or *Scrambled Eggs Super!* to your class, and then ask them to reimagine an everyday experience, like walking the dog, going to soccer practice, or doing chores, just as Dr. Seuss did. Encourage

them to make the experience as wild as Dr. Seuss would and to write about and illustrate their creation. Give extra credit for rhyme, repetition, made-up words, and colorful art!

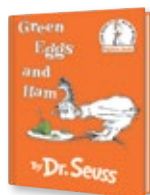
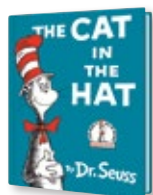
All of Dr. Seuss's books include something unusual. Peculiar animals, plants, machines, places, and people are his trademark. Invite kids to draw, sculpt, or build their own Seussian "thing." Students should provide a name, description, habitat or home, function, and other details about their creation.



Seussian Words and Tongue Twisters

Read any of Dr. Seuss's books and point out some of his silly words. Ask your students why they think he made up words instead of using words that already exist. What are the benefits and drawbacks of doing that? Then ask your students to make up their own words about birthdays and to share them and their meaning with the class.

Read *Fox in Socks* to your class and then explain what a tongue twister is: a word, phrase, or sentence that is difficult to say because of a succession of similar consonant sounds. Ask your students to make up their own birthday-inspired tongue twisters, and then have a tongue twister competition.



Favorite Characters

Dr. Seuss created dozens of memorable characters: the Cat in the Hat, Thing 1 and Thing 2, Sam-I-am, Horton, and the Lorax, to name a few.

After reading several Dr. Seuss books to your class or making them available for kids to read on their own, ask your students to identify their favorite character or characters. Who would they want to invite to their own birthday party?

Create a Dr. Seuss Wall of Fame with favorite characters. Have the kids create and complete a survey about their favorite character, or take a vote and tally who the favorite characters are. Then ask kids to create a display and chart with the results.

Have a favorite character costume party. Provide materials for students to make their costumes, and then have a party or a parade. Be sure to take photos!

How Old Are You?

Use this opportunity to get your students thinking about how we measure and keep track of time and age.



What Is a Year? How Do You Measure It?

On Earth, a year is the time it takes for our planet to go once around the sun: four seasons, twelve months, fifty-two weeks, 365 days, 8,760 hours, or 525,600 minutes.

- Ask your students: If you had to come up with a different way to measure a year, what would you use? (Sports seasons? Number of trips to library? Snowstorms? Rainbows?) Encourage them to brainstorm ideas, think about how these kinds of years would be different from the calendar year we use, and then share their ideas with their classmates.
- To find out what was happening the year they were born, have kids research online or interview their older siblings, parents, grandparents, and other relatives or family friends. Once they have some information, ask them to compare it with what is happening now. How have things changed and how have they stayed the same?



Calendars

How Do We Keep Track of Time?

Some calendars are based on the cycles of the moon (lunar calendars), some are based on the sun by observing solstices and equinoxes (solar calendars), and some combine parts of both lunar and solar calendars to balance out the cycles of the moon and the seasons of the year. There is even a calendar based on rice-growing cycles!

Introduce some different calendars: Gregorian (the most widely used civil calendar in the world), Chinese, Hebrew, Islamic, Iranian, Ethiopian, and Balinese Saka and Pawukon calendars, among many others. Some cultures have more than one calendar: they may use the Gregorian calendar for business and government but another one to determine the dates of holidays or religious observances.

- Explain to your students that the zodiac is an imaginary belt in the sky that includes the paths of the planets and is divided into twelve constellations or signs, each with a special name and symbol. The Chinese zodiac uses animals as its symbols. Ask your students to research what animal they are

according to the Chinese zodiac. Some people think the position of the planets and stars when you are born determines things about your personality. Do the students think their assigned animal matches their personality? If they could pick different animals for the zodiac, what would they be? Invite students to write stories or skits about their animals.

- If Dr. Seuss had a zodiac, what creatures or characters would it include? Kids can choose favorites from his stories or create new ones. Ask them to create profiles of their creatures, including traits, like the ones given for the animals in the Chinese zodiac. Compile all the creatures and choose twelve for a classroom Seussian zodiac.

How Old Are You?

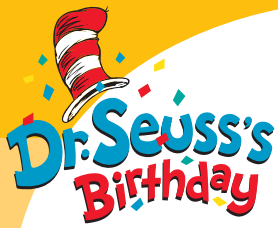
In many parts of Asia, babies are considered one the day they are born. In Vietnam, everyone turns a year older on Tet, the Lunar New Year, not on their birthdate. In school, students advance a grade higher each fall when school starts. In space—on a different planet—days and years are different lengths from ours. For example, a year on Mars is 687 days because that is how long it takes Mars to make a full trip around the sun. Have students research: If you lived on another planet, how many years old would you be?

Get students' imaginations going by asking how Dr. Seuss might measure age.

- By the number of teeth you have lost?
- By your shoe size?
- By the number of books you have read?

Their new unit of measurement should be a trait or experience that all people have or have access to, or a zany thing (like growing feathers or different-colored hair) that would be possible in Dr. Seuss's world. When they have come up with their unit of measurement, ask each student to share their idea with the class. Then ask each student to calculate their age or draw a picture of themselves showing how old they are using one of the new units of measurement.

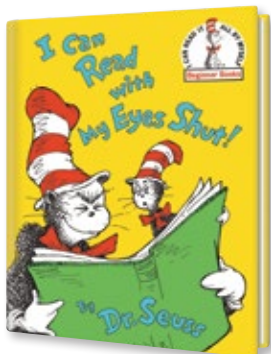
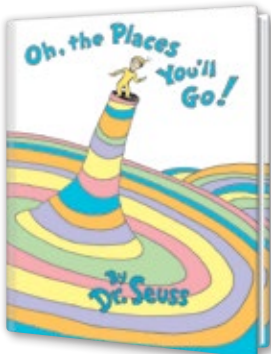
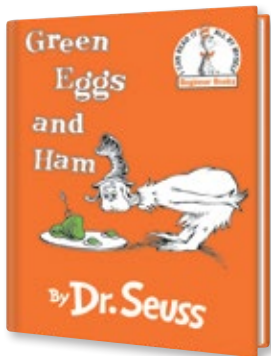




A Year of Reflection

Birthdays are a great time to reflect on what you've done and what you'd like to do. We've created four different opportunities to reflect on Dr. Seuss's stories and kids' experiences growing up:

- Try New Things, Learn New Things
- Gratitude
- New Beginnings and Sometimes Setbacks
- Make the World a Better Place



Try New Things, Learn New Things

Trying new things can be very exciting—and sometimes a little scary, too. But if you are willing to try something new, you can have all kinds of adventures, and you may find a new favorite thing or experience. Read *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* or *Green Eggs and Ham* to your students, and ask them how the characters in the book feel about trying new things or how they feel when things go wrong over the course of the story. Talk with your students about how new experiences can be challenging at first but often have positive outcomes.

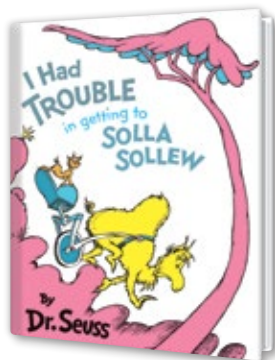
Provide something new for the class to try each day for a week—a food (being mindful of allergies and intolerances), a dance, a game or sport, a medium of art, or anything else you can think of. Have the kids keep a journal of what they like and don't like. You can even document favorite new experiences in a class bar graph.

Once they've had a chance to try new things, ask each of your students to brainstorm a list of new things they'd like to try. Allow them time to research how they could do those things. Next, have your students choose a couple of items from their list to share with the group. Once everyone has shared their

new things, have each student draw a picture or create a small advertisement for one of their choices. Create a bulletin board titled "Oh, the Things We'll Do!" featuring their goals.

Learning about new things is exciting, too. Read *I Can Read with My Eyes Shut!* with your class. Introduce a variety of nonfiction titles, and encourage kids to read about something they'd like to learn about and then share what they've learned with the class. They can share through oral presentation, drawings or posters, or hands-on experiences.





New Beginnings and Sometimes Setbacks

Life doesn't always go as planned. Sometimes goals get sidetracked or you just have a bad day. And trying something new often involves lots of setbacks.

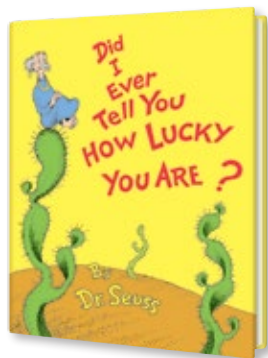
Read *I Had Trouble in Getting to Solla Sollew* aloud. Ask your students to think about how the main character handled his problems in the Valley of Vung.

- Was it reasonable for him to think he could find a place with no problems?
- Would they have done the same thing (left the Valley of Vung in search of a better place) or tried a different strategy? What else could he have done?
- Why did he decide to go back to the Valley of Vung? Would they have gone back, or stayed in Solla Sollew?

- What did he learn along the way?

Ask your students to think about a time in their own life when something went wrong. How did they handle the situation? Did they try to tackle the problem head-on, or did they decide to avoid it? How could they have handled the situation differently? Who could they have asked for help? Did they do something different the next time they were in a similar situation?

Working individually or in groups, have the kids think about goals and setbacks. Ask them to create a poster, digital presentation, or skit to share with the class that shows the meandering path they took to reach a goal, real or imagined.

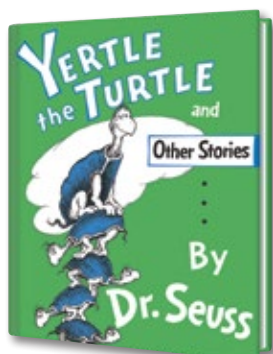
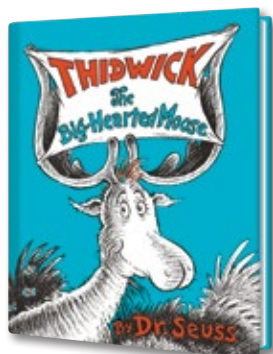
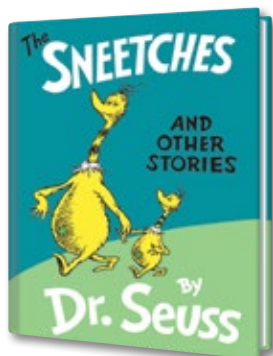
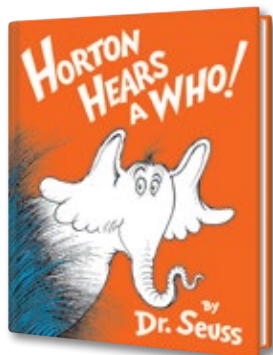


Gratitude

Read *Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are?* to your students. Ask them to think about the circumstances of the characters in the stories. Then ask your students to think about things they are thankful for: people, opportunities, even setbacks, or things we see, do, or use every day. Give a few examples of things you are thankful for.

As a group, brainstorm ways people can express gratitude. Make a list on the board or on a poster for the kids to refer to. Create a gratitude jar or bulletin board. Ask your students to write down or draw the things they are thankful for. Post their work on the bulletin board or put it in the gratitude jar. Then take a few minutes to read or look at what the kids are thankful for and discuss.

Ask your students to think about Dr. Seuss stories in which the characters face—and then solve—problems. Ask them to think about any other stories or movies they know in which the same thing happens. Have the students share the stories they've thought of, and compare and contrast them as a class. Then ask your students to recall a time when they thought something was bad, but it turned out to be good. Give an example from your life or the news. For example, after ripping your best item of clothing, you learned to sew, and now it is one of your favorite hobbies. Encourage them to write or draw a picture about this experience, and then share their work.



Make the World a Better Place

Read aloud one or more of these stories about helping to your class. Then talk about how the characters handle their problems. Some act with kindness and courage. Others are selfish, elitist, or hostile. Focus on the characters that are trying to help or improve the situation: for example, Horton, Mack, Thidwick, or, in the end, the Sneetches.

Ask your students what they think the main message of the story is. They may say:

- Stand up for others
- Embrace equality and inclusion
- Resist injustice
- Be kind

Ask the class to think of other ways the characters could have resolved each situation in a positive way. Then brainstorm problems or issues they see in their classroom, school, and community. Once they've identified some issues, break into groups and ask them to come up with a plan of action to solve a problem—from small things each person can do to big changes they can all support. Ask each group to describe their issue and their ideas for solutions.

As a class, choose one issue and work together to implement your solutions.

The plan should include:

- a description of the problem and an explanation of why it is a problem
- a list of ideas to improve the situation
- the resources they'll need to implement their plan (including people who can help)
- ways to let people know about the problem and how your class wants to work on it

- a step-by-step action plan
- an opportunity to reflect on the experience

To get your students excited about making the world a better place, create awards (you can give these out or have students nominate each other) that are given when a child behaves in a positive way. Read all four of the suggested titles and discuss them before introducing the awards.

- **The Horton Award:** for looking out and standing up for someone who needs help
- **The Thidwick Award:** for being kind and welcoming
- **The Mack Award:** for speaking out about injustice
- **The Bright-Bellied Sneetch Award:** for being inclusive and finding ways to unify the group

