

Dr. Seuss's
THE CAT IN THE HAT

STUDY GUIDE



Based on the book by Dr. Seuss
Play originally produced by the National Theatre of Great Britain
Adapted and originally directed by Katie Mitchell

directed by N.D. Seibel

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SchoolFest student matinees and the accompanying materials fulfill the following standard objectives:

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.RL.11-12.1-3 Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA. RL.11-12.7 Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry); evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist)

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

- TH.Re7.1 Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- TH.Re8.1 Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- TH.Re9.1 Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
- TH.Cn10.1 Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- TH.Cn11.1 Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

SHOW SPECIFIC STANDARDS

- RL.K.1 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- RL.K.3 With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
- W.K.2 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative or explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.
- RL.1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- RL.1.3 Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.
- SL.1.2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

PLOT

The Cat in the Hat recounts the rainy-day adventures of Sally, her brother, and the most mischievous cat ever! From the moment his tall, red-and-white-striped hat appears at their door, the Cat and his antics transform the kids' afternoon. Will their house ever be the same? Can the kids clean up before their mom comes home? With some tricks (and a fish) and Thing Two and Thing One, with the Cat in The Hat, the fun's never done!

CHARACTERS

Boy
Sally
Cat in the Hat
Fish
Kitten 1
Kitten 2
Thing 1
Thing 2
Mother (voiceover)



The Cat in the Hat balances many things in Dr. Seuss's picture book.

SETTING

The Cat in the Hat takes place inside Sally and her brother's house on a rainy day.

ABOUT DR. SEUSS AND THE ASF FELLOWSHIP COMPANY

ABOUT DR. SEUSS

Theodor Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, was a popular American cartoonist and children’s book author. He published his first children’s book, *And to Think I Saw it On Mulberry Street*, in 1937 and eventually went on to write and illustrate more than 60 books. His most famous work, *The Cat in the Hat*, was inspired when Random House asked him to write a children’s book using 220 vocabulary words for early readers. His delightful story of a mischievous cat changed the way parents and teachers taught children to read, using exciting storytelling, original illustrations, and rhyme scheme to catch young people’s interest. His books, which include *Green Eggs and Ham*, *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish*, and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, remain some of the most beloved in children’s literature.



Theodor Seuss Geisel, author and illustrator of *The Cat in the Hat*.

ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP COMPANY

Every year, eight young actors spend a season training at ASF. Through rehearsals and workshops, they learn skills in areas like text work, voice, and stage combat to prepare them for work in professional theatres. All of the characters you will see in *The Cat in the Hat* are played by this season’s Acting Fellowship Company. In addition, the Acting Fellows will play leading roles in *And Then They Came For Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and understudy for our larger mainstage productions. This spring, the Acting Fellows will be taking *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* on tour to middle and high schools all over Alabama.



This season’s Fellowship Company

AN INTERVIEW WITH OUR CAT IN THE HAT, VIVIENNE CLAIRE LUTHIN!

Why are you excited to be in *The Cat in the Hat*?

I'm super excited to be in *The Cat in the Hat* because this was a book my Dad read to me when I was little, and I loved it! I can't believe that I have the chance to perform it at ASF and bring this story to life!

How do you get into character?

To get into the character of the Cat in the Hat, I have three main steps:

- #1: Putting on my costume! My cat costume really changes what I look like and helps me move more like the Cat.
- #2: I like to reread the book! The book and its drawings are a great reminder of how the cat moves, what the cat says, and what games he plays with Sally and Boy.
- #3: I like to practice my cat poses and voice! Practicing being a Cat can be a great warm up before the show, and what better way to get into character than to MEOW?!



Vivienne Claire Luthin, our Cat in the Hat!

How do you feel about playing such a classic character?

It's really exciting to play a character that a lot of people know. I get to transform into the Cat in the Hat the way Dr. Seuss wrote it, but I also get to add my own spin on who I think the Cat in the Hat is for me!

What's your favorite thing about being an actor?

My favorite thing about being an actor is being able to transform into lots of different characters. Many of the characters I play are really different from who I am as a person. That makes it really fun and special to step into someone else's shoes and see how they live their life — especially when it's a crazy CAT!

What do you hope audiences take away from watching this play?

I hope our version of *The Cat in the Hat* reminds you of the book, but also surprises you with our new additions and characters! *The Cat in the Hat* is all about fun and using your imagination, but it's also about knowing how to clean up and be responsible for a crazy mess! I hope you have as much fun watching *The Cat in the Hat* as we have performing it for you!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS

1. In the book, many impossible things happen. How do you think the theatre will make those magical moments happen live onstage?
2. The Cat in the Hat comes to entertain Sally and her brother on a rainy afternoon. What do you do for fun when it's too rainy to go outside? How do rainy days make you feel?

POST-SHOW QUESTIONS

1. Do you think Sally and her brother told their mother what happened? Do you think their mother would believe them if they did?
2. Why do you think Sally and her brother's fish wanted the Cat in the Hat to go away?
3. The Cat in the Hat shows Sally and her brother many new ways to play. When is a time someone taught you something new? Is trying new things hard sometimes? What do we learn from trying something new?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. At Your Desk: The play *The Cat in the Hat* has many fun and silly moments. Draw a picture of a scene you liked during the show. Underneath, write a sentence about why you liked it.
2. On Your Feet: As a class, form a circle with your teacher in the middle. Your teacher will play the role of the Cat in the Hat and all of the students will be Thing 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. The Cat in the Hat will begin the game by calling out different activities that happened during the play (i.e. flying a kite, rolling a ball, balancing a fish bowl). All of the Things (the students) will act out the activities the Cat calls out while standing in their spot in the circle. Once your teacher has called out several different activities from the play, they will call on one of the Things to become the new Cat in the Hat. This Cat will think of a new silly activity that **didn't** happen in the play and all the Things will act it out from their spots. The Cat will then call on a new Thing to takeover, and the game will continue.