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The Cat In the Hat, I Can Do That! Seuss Poetry Contest Lesson Plan

In honor of Dr. Seuss, Childsplay and First Things First invite you to create a rhyming poem together as a class. Up to three classes will be chosen to have their poems read onstage at each performance of *The Cat in the Hat*. One grand prize winner will receive a free future class field trip for up to 20 students.

Lesson Plan Objectives: Students will:

- Be introduced to the works, words and rhymes of Dr. Seuss
- Define and use specific words in the creation of original poems
- Incorporate the rhyming, four line structure of *The Cat in the Hat* in an original poem

Arizona Early Learning Standards: Language and Literacy: Phonological Awareness (S.2 C.3); Vocabulary Development (S.2 C.5); Comprehending Stories (S.2 C6)

Arizona Common Core Standards: Reading Standards: Phonological Awareness: (K-1.RF.2); Craft and Structure (K-2.RI.4); **Writing Standards:** Text Types and Purposes (K-2.W.3); **Speaking and Listening Standards:** Comprehension and Collaboration (K-2.SL.1)

Topic Introduction

Dr. Seuss is known worldwide as the imaginative master of children's literature. His books include a wonderful blend of invented and actual words, and his rhymes have helped many children and adults learn and better their understanding of the English language. Theodor Seuss Geisel, "Ted" to his friends and Dr. Seuss to his many fans, wrote and drew pictures for most of his life, publishing his first children's book, *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street*, in 1937. Twenty years later, a book called *Why Johnny Can't Read* and an article of the same name claimed that most books and illustrations intended for children were boring and unimaginative. That's when two publishing companies gave Dr. Seuss a challenge: use 220 vocabulary words for new readers to write a dynamic children's primer. Thus, *The Cat in the Hat* was created.

Setting the Stage

Read *The Cat in the Hat* to your class. For younger students, be sure to stop at the rhymes, clap them out, and think of other words that might also rhyme. For older students, analyze the story by reviewing the structure, stanzas and the use of rhyming words. Point out that the second and fourth lines per stanza are where the rhyming words occur.

Target Activities

- 1: Using the attached word sheets, pick two or three vocabulary words to use in your poem and write them on the board. Define, spell, and sound out the syllables of each word. Ask your students to think of as many words that rhyme with your chosen vocabulary words as possible and write them all down on the board. If you'd like, encourage them to play with sounds and syllables to make up their own words that rhyme with your chosen vocabulary words.
- 2: Review the fact that a beginning, middle and end, character development, conflict and resolution are all embedded within the poetic structure of the story. Review Dr. Seuss' creation of original characters such as the Things in *The Cat in the Hat*.
- 3: Using your chosen words, work with your students to create the story for your poem. Pick a subject...it could be a person or an animal. Imagine what is unusual about your subject...a particular habit or job or thing they like to do...the sillier, the better! Think about a problem that your subject encounters and a way they might solve that problem. For example, you could write a poem about a fox named Fred who hates the cold and won't get out of bed because he lost his socks!
- 4: With your class, turn your story into a rhyming poem of up to three stanzas. Follow Dr. Seuss's ABCB rhyming structure:

I know it is wet (A)

And the sun is not sunny (B)

But we can have (C)

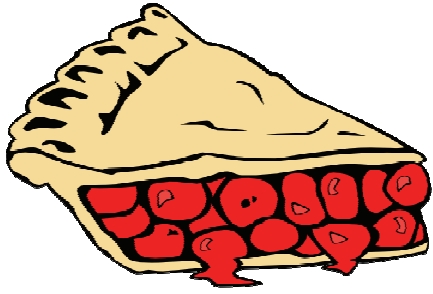
Lots of good fun that is funny (B)

Assessment

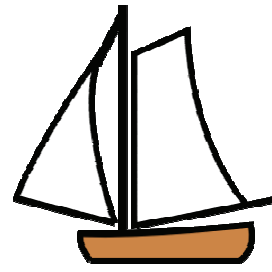
- Re-read your class poem out loud. Ask your students to identify the rhyming words. As developmentally appropriate, ask them to identify the rhyming letters, sounds or syllables and/or ask them to spell the words.
- Ask your students to identify the problem/conflict of the story. Ask them to identify the resolution of the story.

Enter the Contest

Submit your class poem using the attached entry form to jmillinger@childsplayaz.org or Seuss Poetry Contest, 900 S. Mitchell Drive, Tempe, AZ 85281. **Entries must be received by 5pm on the Wednesday of the week before your scheduled field trip.** One entry per class, please.



Pie



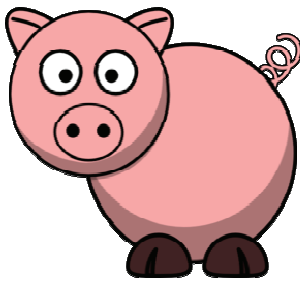
Boat



Fox



Band



Pig



Frog



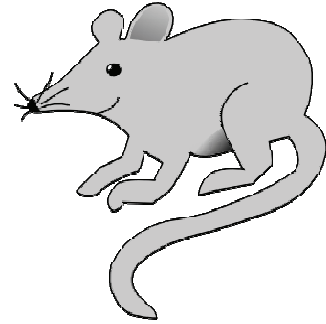
Tree



Rain



Rake



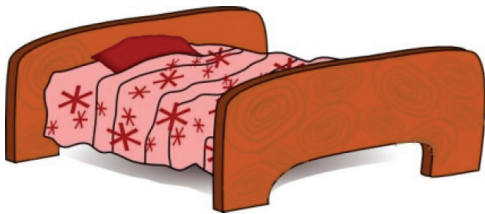
Rat



Socks



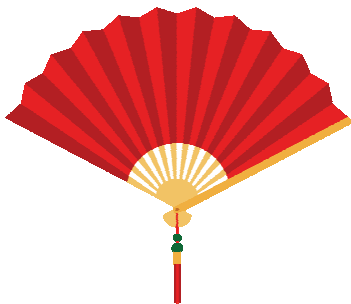
Sing



Bed



Sun



Fan



House



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Official Entry Form

Name of Poem

_____	A
_____	B
_____	C
_____	B
_____	A
_____	B
_____	C
_____	B
_____	A
_____	B
_____	C
_____	B

School Name

Grade

Teacher name

Contact e-mail address

Phone Number

We are attending *The Cat in the Hat* on _____
at _____ am.