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Seussical

Study Guide

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This study guide is also available at
www.arvadacenter.org/education/study-guides

Study Guide
Presented by:



Children's Theater
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“Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage.” - Anais Nin

Summary: This lively musical full of singing and dancing is based on beloved books by Dr. Seuss. When Horton the elephant hears a sound coming from a speck of dust he discovers young JoJo and other Whos of the city of Whoville living in danger of being blown away by the wind. *Seussical*TM is the tale of imagination, friendship and having the courage to face big challenges.

Instructional Focus: The focus of this study guide is reading and writing, theatre, visual arts and music. It was written with the Colorado Model Content Standards and differentiation in mind. Specific Standards are listed below:

Colorado Model Content Standards

For more information on these standards visit:

http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/OSA/k12_standards.html



Reading and Writing

- Standard 1: Students read and understand a variety of materials.
- Standard 2: Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.



Theatre

- Standard 2: Students understand and apply the creative process to fundamental skills of acting, playwriting and directing.



Visual Arts

- Standard 2: Students know and apply elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features of visual arts.



Science

- Standard 1: Students understand the processes of scientific investigation and design, conduct, communicate about and evaluate such investigations.
- Standard 3: Students know and understand the characteristics and structure of living things, the processes of life, and how living things interact with each other and their environment.

Before the Performance

Before coming to the Arvada Center to see the performance, you may want to engage your student's interest with one of the following activities:

1. *Seussical™* is based on several Dr. Seuss books: *Horton Hears a Who*, *Horton Hatches the Egg*, *Gertrude McFuzz*, *McElligot's Pool* and *The Cat in the Hat*. Look for the following characters: Cat in the Hat, Horton, Mayzie LaBird, Gertrude McFuzz, Sour Kangaroo and the Wickersham Brothers. Get a feel for the way their characters behave and talk.
2. Find out more about Dr. Seuss.
<http://www.seussville.com>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dr._Seuss
<http://www.catinthehat.org>
3. Discuss the difference between seeing a play and a movie. A play happens in front of an audience. The actors need to recreate the same play over and over again giving the audience the illusion that it is the very first appearance. Since theatre happens live, each performance may be a little bit different than the next. When a production closes, the play is no more than a memory. In movies, a performance is captured on film, can be accessed any time and becomes part of history.
4. As members of the audience, you play an important part in the success of a theatrical performance. Please make clear to your students that the rules of attending a live theatre performance are different than watching television at home or a movie in a cinema. As it is a live performance, it cannot be stopped and restarted.
We want you to laugh, cheer, clap and really enjoy your time at the Arvada Center, but there are a few rules that need to be followed. Please review the following theatre etiquette rules with your students prior to your visit:

- Food, drinks, candy and gum chewing are not permitted in the theatre.
- Do not talk, whisper, sing or hum during the performance unless encouraged by the actors on stage.
- Keep feet on the floor, not on the seats.
- Performers appreciate enthusiastic applause, but not whistling or shouting.
- No photography or videotape recording of any kind.
- Please turn off all cell phones!

5. Discuss these theatre terms with your students and before the performance see if your students notice any of these items while at the Arvada Center.

House: The area the audience sits in to view performances.

House Lights: The lighting in the theater which is usually faded right before a show.

Actors' Spotlight: A light that shines down on a group of people or one person on the stage.

Stage left/right: the actors' point of view when looking at the audience.

Backstage: The part of the stage and theater which is out of the sight of the audience.

Improvisation: When an actor who is "in character" makes up action or dialog without prior scripting.

After the Performance

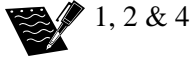
1. All performances have three Ps: *People* in a *Place* with a *Problem*. Where does this performance take place? Who are the people (or characters)? What are the problems?



2. Gertrude thinks more feathers will get her noticed. Name some things your students wear or have that make them feel more important. Does having certain things really make people more important? In the end Gertrude realizes it's what she does not what she looks like that makes her important to Horton. What can people do to make them more important to others?



3. Horton is rejected for being different. He is bullied because no one believes that he can hear the Whos. Why are people bullied for being different? Discuss the value of all people despite their differences (a person's a person no matter how small). You may want your class to create posters celebrating their differences.



4. The Wickersham Brothers called Horton dumb, slow and fat. Research elephants. What characteristics do real elephants have? Is Horton much like a real elephant? For information on elephants you may want to try these sites:

http://elephant.elehost.com/About_Elephants/about_elephants.htm

<http://www.zooschool.ecsd.net/elephant%20information.htm>

<http://www.planet-pets.com/plntelep.htm>

<http://www.elephant.se>



5. What did Horton do that made him a good friend? Make a list of adjectives you would use to describe a good friend.



6. In this production the residents of Whoville are played by actors. What if the director had decided to make them little puppets instead? What would they look like? Create Who puppets (finger or hand puppets) using cardboard, fabric, yarn, or socks. Next, play out a scene from one of Dr. Seuss' books using the puppets. For help with puppet construction visit:

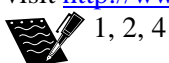
<http://www.freekidcrafts.com/finger-puppets.html>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Make-Finger-Puppets>

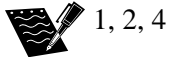
http://www.prekfun.com/Index_Page/ArtRecipes/PuppetFun/puppet_fun.htm



7. Seuss Read-a-Thon. Dr. Seuss wrote more than 50 books. How many of them can you read in one month? Create a chart with all of Dr. Seuss' book titles and all of the students in class. When you've read a book, check it off the list. At the end of the month have a green eggs and ham party to celebrate your reading success. For a list of Dr. Seuss books, characters and unusual creatures visit <http://www.primate.wisc.edu/people/hamel/seuss.html>



8. Oh, the things you can think! Daydreaming can be a valuable tool in writing. Set aside some time to think new thinks. Schedule a short period each week to allow students to let their imaginations and minds wander. You may want to create a class book of your new thinks!

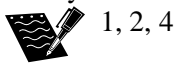


9. A friend of Dr. Seuss bet him \$50 that he couldn't write an entire book using only 220 words. So he wrote *Green Eggs and Ham* and won the bet. Read *Green Eggs and Ham* together as a class then take the challenge: write a story using 50 words or less!

Word List:

cat, hat, rat, run, fun, son, spun, race, case, chase, boy, girl, water, daughter, the a, an, tie, try, tug, but, hug, bear, stare, wear, tear, never, ever, weather, mad, sad, heart, smart, very, drew, who, was, once, there, slime, time, because, he, had, he'd, she, his, her, sled, bed

Note: You can only use these words, but you can use a word on the list as many times as you want. Can you make it rhyme?



10. Go through some of Dr. Seuss' books and compile a list of 10 words. Next, find at least two words that rhyme with each word. Using the new list of words, create a short poem in the style of Dr. Seuss.



11. Look carefully at the costumes from the production of *Seussical*. What do you notice about them? How are they different from what you saw in the books *Horton Hears a Who*, *Horton Sits on an Egg* and *Gertrude McFuzz*? Create a Venn Diagram to show how the costume for Gertrude McFuzz and the image of Dr Seuss' Gertrude are the same and different. Can your class use feathers, sequins, markers and other materials to create their own Gertrude?



12. Think about the planet Who. Have your students make a list of describing words and drawings of this mysterious planet. What would it be like to live on the planet Who?



13. Horton promises to care for Mayzie's egg and keeps his promise. Discuss with your students the importance of keeping one's word. Is this difficult to do? Why are so many promises broken and so many responsibilities ignored? Are people accountable for their actions?



14. Dr. Seuss is known for creating incredible imaginary animals and plants. You and your class can create collective imaginary animals. Have students work in groups of three. Fold a piece of paper in three sections horizontally so that you only see one third of the page. The first student draws a head on the top section and continues drawing a bit onto the middle third. Refold the paper so that the second student can see only the bit drawn on the middle section of the paper. The second student draws the torso and continues the drawing a bit onto the bottom third of the paper. In the same way, the third students draws the bottom half of the animal. Open up the paper to see the incredible new animal. Ask your students to name the animal and write a story about it. You may want them to include information on what habitat their new animal would live in, what it would eat and the new animal's general disposition.



15. Learn more about the theatre. Visit these web sites for games, history, terms and skits:

<http://library.thinkquest.org/5291>

<http://pbskids.org/zoom/activities/playhouse/index.html>



16. Perform a Dr. Seuss book Reader's Theatre style. Visit these web sites for information on reader's theatre:

<http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/Tips.html>

<http://bms.westport.k12.ct.us/mccormick/rt/RTHOME.htm>



Appendix

For a list of Dr. Seuss books, characters and unusual creatures:

<http://www.primate.wisc.edu/people/hamel/seuss.html>

For Dr. Seuss printables, additional resources and games:

<http://www.teachingheart.net/drsuessactivity.html>

http://www.atozteacherstuff.com/Themes/Dr_Seuss/

<http://www.seussville.com>

<http://www.edhelper.com/DrSeuss.htm>

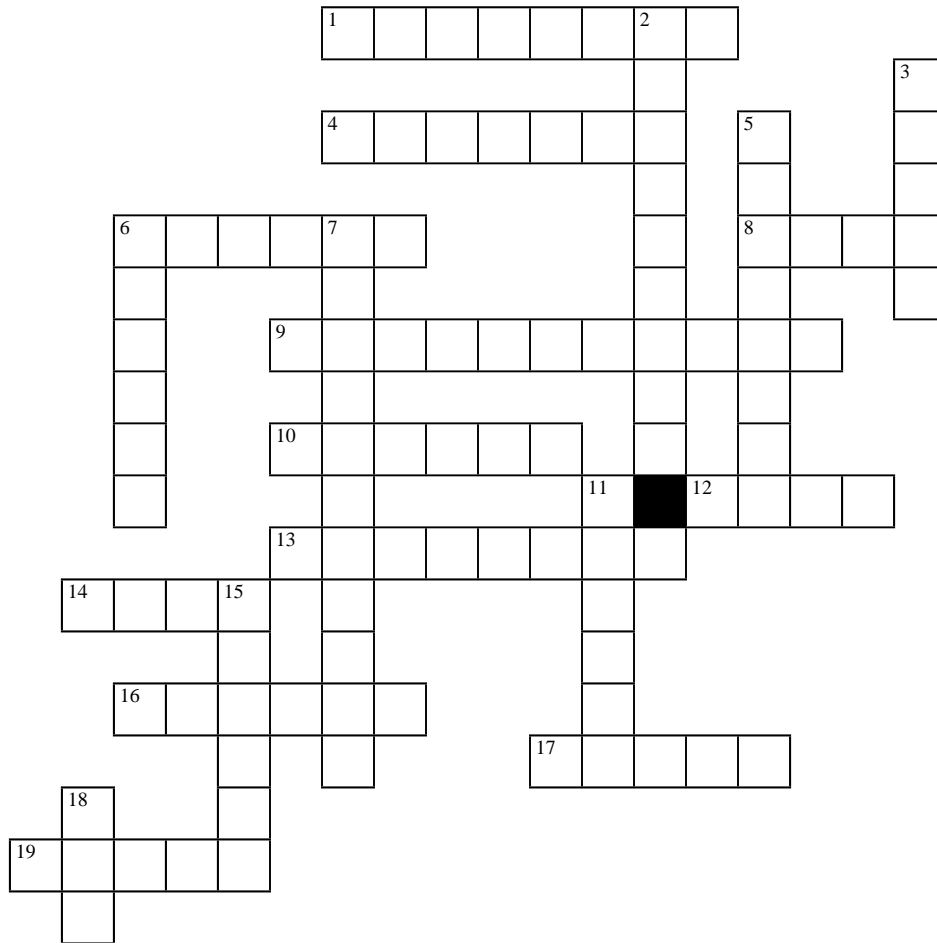
http://www.suite101.com/reference/dr_seuss

www.catinthehat.org

About the Author

Cayle Townsend is a happily retired teacher with 20 years experience teaching gifted students who currently consults with and coaches teachers of gifted students. She also spends lots of time with her 2 teenaged daughters and husband riding bikes, shopping and enjoying the mountains.

Seussical



ACROSS

- 1 The bird with a one-feather tail
- 4 The Wickersham brothers are this animal
- 6 Gave up her egg
- 8 The name of the jungle
- 9 Jojo's friend
- 10 Horton was sold to this
- 12 The chid with all the thinks
- 13 An elephant's _____, 100%
- 14 What Horton sat on
- 16 The elephant
- 17 The person who wrote the stories in this play
- 19 Dr. Seuss liked to write in this style

DOWN

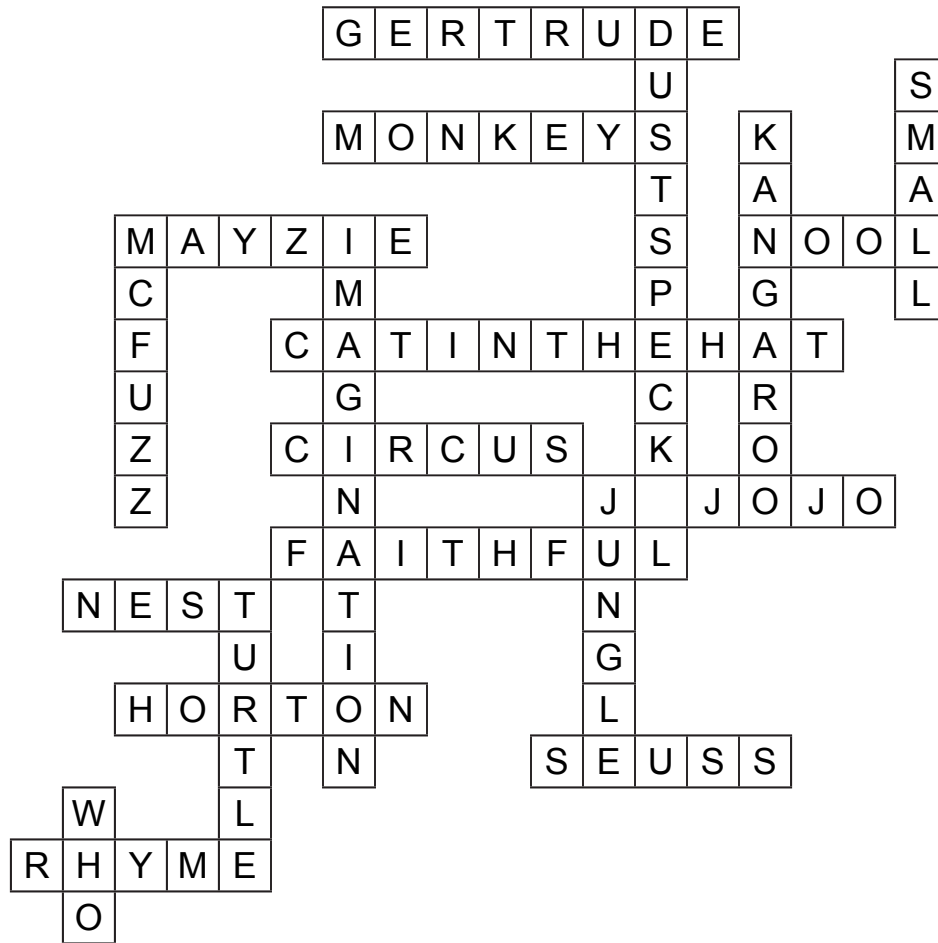
- 2 What Horton talked to
- 3 A person's a person no matter how _____
- 5 The sour character
- 6 Gertrude's last name
- 7 Jojo has a very active _____
- 11 Horton lives here
- 15 Judge Yertle is one
- 18 What Horton heard

WORD LIST:

Jojo	who	kangaroo	circus	small	Gertrude
rhyme	McFuzz	Mayzie	jungle	dust speck	Nool
next	Faithful	Seuss	monkeys	Horton	turtle
Cat in the Hat					

Answers

Seussical



Seussical™

PARENT/TEACHER EVALUATION

We value your input!

Please take a moment to fill out this evaluation and return to:
Rod A. Lansberry, Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities
6901 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada, CO, 80003
or hand it in at the Arvada Center Box Office.

Date of performance: _____

Name of School Group or Family: _____

PLAY

I. Youth Response

Enthusiasm Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

Understanding of the content Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

II. Content

Appropriate length Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

Appropriate for group Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

Ability to integrate into curriculum Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

III. Study Guide

Usefulness in preparing students for the production Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

Usefulness in conducting post viewing activities Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

Clarity and completeness of activity instructions Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

Age appropriateness of content Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

IV. Performance

Quality of overall production Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

Quality of scenic elements Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

Quality of costumes Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

Was the use of music important Low 1 2 3 4 5 High

Comments & Suggestions for Titles / Shows: _____
