



Dr. Seuss's Birthday 2013

Hats Off TO Reading





Reading is where it's HAT
this March 2!

No matter what hat you wear for work or for play, Dr. Seuss's Birthday is a day of reading for everyone. Everyone is invited to connect a child with a book on March 2.

This Hats Off to Reading activity offers a hatful of ideas for classroom-based activities and school-wide events to celebrate Dr. Seuss's Birthday, generate enthusiasm for reading, and recognize the talents and genius of Dr. Seuss. Activities are designed to help students make a reading connection in a variety of curricular areas, all while having a hatful of fun on Dr. Seuss's birthday.

**Whether it's a celebration large or small,
there's something here for one and all:**

Salute Dr. Seuss with Dr. Seuss's Birthday activities that honor the man behind the pseudonym:

-  Commemorate Dr. Seuss's birthday with author study and hat-themed projects.
-  Make crazy hats that show how wild your class is for reading.
-  Celebrate the 75th anniversary of *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*—and make understanding idioms a piece of cake with a special writing activity!
-  Have students use their heads to spread the Lorax's message of conservation.



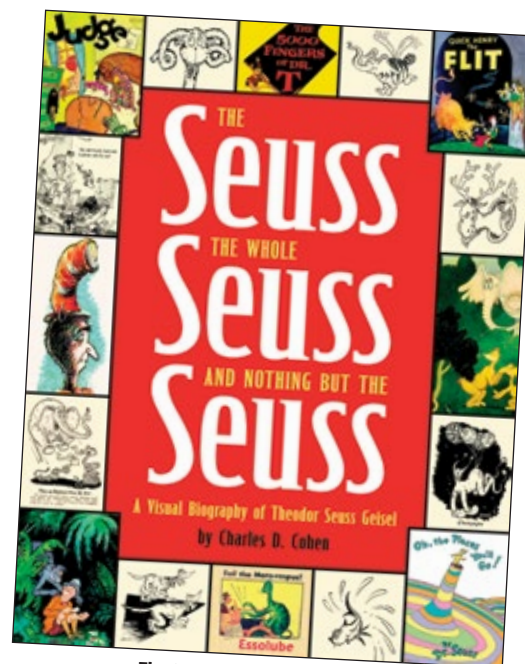
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The Many Hats of Dr. Seuss

Though best known as a writer and illustrator of beloved titles like *The Cat in the Hat* and *The Lorax*, Dr. Seuss wore many other hats throughout his life and career. He was a cartoonist, worked in advertising, made movies, served in the military, loved gardening and cared about the environment, was a painter and a sculptor, and championed social justice and peace.

Any one of Dr. Seuss's many hats are ideal for students to don to celebrate his birthday and the joys of reading this March 2. Kids can read, explore, and learn more about his interests and his work through these activities.



The Seuss, the Whole Seuss, and Nothing but the Seuss
HC: 978-0-375-82248-3

SEUSS THE CARTOONIST

As a young boy, Dr. Seuss would take his father's newspaper each day so he could read the comics page. When he was 12, he even entered a drawing contest held by his local newspaper—and won first prize with his cartoon! He went on to write and draw cartoons and jokes for his high school paper and also for his college's literary arts magazine. Then for many years he created editorial and political cartoons for *Judge* magazine and the newspaper *PM*.



Talk with your students about the different comics and cartoons that they know. Choose a few to look at and compare them with some of Dr. Seuss's from *The Seuss*, *the Whole Seuss*, and *Nothing but the Seuss* by Charles D. Cohen. Discuss how a cartoon can be effective in getting a story or message across to a wide audience. Then give students the opportunity to try their hand at reaching out to the public with a Read Across America issue of your own school newspaper or a "special edition" of a classroom newsletter or literary magazine.

Have students plan for sections in their "Seusspaper" such as Cartoons and Comics, Jokes and Puzzles, and Book Reviews. Other items to consider are an interview with a librarian; results of a reading poll; op-eds with opinions on books, reading, and literacy; and a feature

story on Dr. Seuss. Those interested in doing some real investigative reporting could search for facts about how many books their school or public library buys each year or what the literacy rate is in their community. In addition to the edition you print or publish online, see if your local newspaper is interested in publishing student work. Kick off your project with a visit from a journalist or journalism student and be sure to ask him or her back for a publishing party on Dr. Seuss's Birthday.

Where It's Hat

Though you won't want your students to fold their "Seusspaper," have newspapers handy for folding up some hats for your pressmen. Long ago, press operators—called pressmen—wore boxy hats made of newspaper to keep grease, dust, and ink out of their hair. Find instructions for the ideal hat for your publication party here: www.instructables.com/id/Newspaper-Hat!/

SEUSS THE ADMAN

Dr. Seuss first wore his advertising hat in the late 1920s, making ads for insect repellent based on his clever cartoons. He instinctively knew that good advertising has to really grab people's attention. For more than a decade he created interesting and unusual characters to advertise products like motor oil, lightbulbs, shaving cream, sugar, furnaces, and fountain pens.

For Dr. Seuss's Birthday, the product to advertise is a book! Have each student choose a Seuss favorite (or another title) and create an advertisement for the book. Depending on available resources, student ads can be hand-drawn, created using computer graphics, or produced as a video commercial. Be sure to take some time to gauge students' understanding of the basic elements of advertising and to offer some guidelines on how to advertise a good book. The ultimate goal is to get readers excited about books and authors, so encourage ads that arouse curiosity and stimulate the imagination. Have the books on hand when students share their ads and give everyone a chance to test these products!

If you're looking for a more collaborative activity, host an ad campaign competition. Small groups of students, classrooms, or grade levels can work together to design persuasive promotional items for the Dr. Seuss title they want read aloud by the principal or a special guest reader on March 2.



Where It's Hat

Sports teams, movies, and branded products all get advertised on hats—why not books? Have students get creative by assembling a hat that promotes their favorite story. They might reproduce a scene from their book in miniature on the bill of a ball cap or fashion a paper crown with each point decorated with characters from the book.



SEUSS THE FINE ARTIST

Dr. Seuss had a secret he didn't share with many people. He loved to make art—paintings and sculptures—that he worked on at night for himself. During his lifetime, he rarely showed these works to anyone. But now his secret is out, and the world can see that his artistic talent went far beyond the printed page! Today, his sculptures and paintings can be found in art galleries and museums. Images can be viewed at www.drseussart.com.

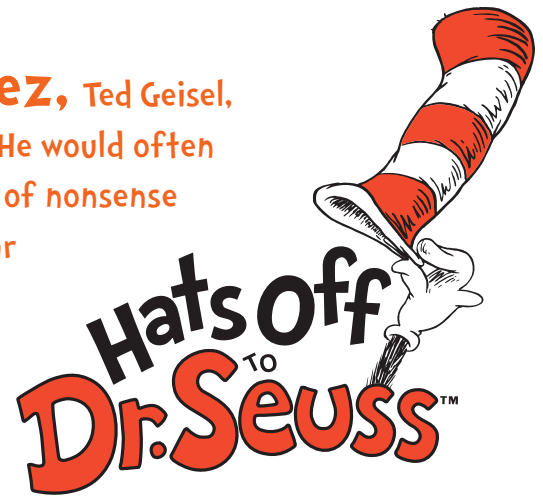
We're used to seeing Dr. Seuss's art in pen and ink, but in his "secret" art, he experimented with other mediums like watercolor and oils. He tried out different styles as well, like surrealism, abstract expressionism, and impressionism.

Where It's Hat

If your students are thinking like artists, they are making connections between different things and ideas—just what you want them to do as readers. What kind of hat would help them think like an artist? Or reflect as a reader? Have them design an Artrageous Reading Hat that shows they are willing to go beyond ordinary ways of thinking and doing things. Let imaginations take over. The only limits are the materials you provide.

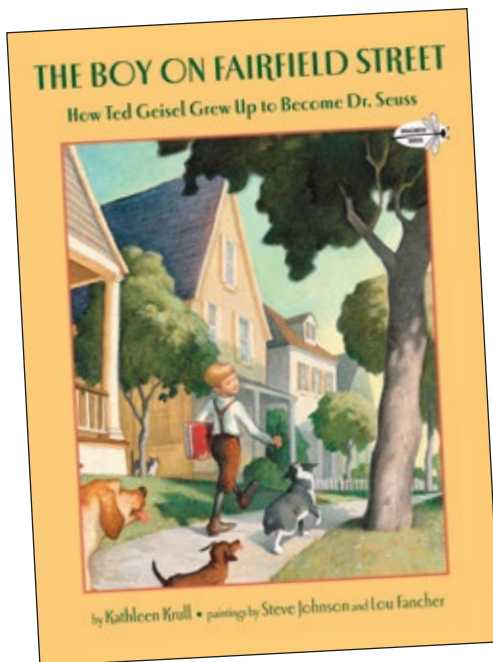
In celebrating Dr. Seuss, let students experiment with bringing a character to life through art. First, ask students to test their own powers of observation. Have them record their observations on the school bus, in the cafeteria, or on the playground. As they observe, ask them to think about how something ordinary takes on new life when you run it through your imagination. A cat is pretty ordinary. But a cat wearing a red bow tie and a striped hat is not. A plastic fork in the lunchroom is ordinary. But a fork that's a finicky eater and refuses to pick up peas is a new and unusual character. Discuss shading techniques if you plan to have students work in pencil. If you have access to art supplies, give students a chance to try a new medium for their artistic endeavors. Ask them to create an artist's statement to be read on his birthday when you showcase their work.

From a firefighter's helmet to a fez, Ted Geisel, aka Dr. Seuss, really *did* have many hats—hundreds, in fact. He would often put on a hat from his collection as a “thinking cap” for a bit of nonsense and fun when he was writing and drawing. Other people wear hats for their jobs, the sports they play, or simply because they like hats! Hats express things about their wearers.



Ask students to make or wear a hat to show off what their future career might be or that says something about them right now, such as a team they play for or support, or a club they participate in. To further accessorize, have students visit your classroom, school or public library to find a book or information that relates to their hat. This is a show-and-tell activity, so prepare students to share their books with others and explain what their hats mean.

HAT TRICKS



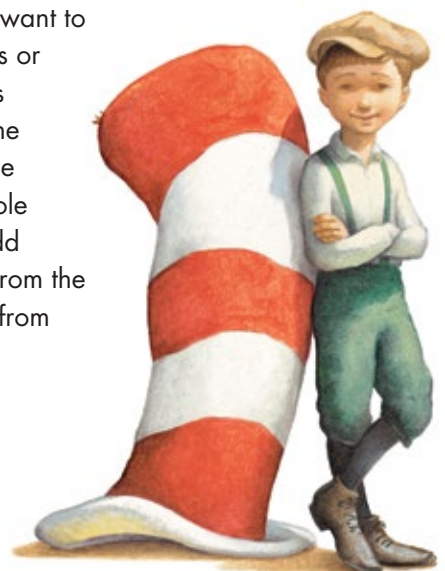
The Boy on Fairfield Street
978-0-375-85550-4

An author study of Dr. Seuss is a natural activity to lead up to the birthday week. (If you've never done an author study with your class or are looking for ideas, the Author Study Toolkit from Reading Rockets is a helpful place to start: www.readingrockets.org/books/authorstudy.) Kids love having the chance to read, discuss, and reflect on books by and about their favorite author. In a hats-off salute to Dr. Seuss, consider these project ideas:

A 27-Hat Salute

Make a mobile. Provide a large paper cutout of the Cat in the Hat's famous hat where students can write what they've learned and admire about Dr. Seuss. Also provide smaller cutout versions of the Hat—à la the Little Cats—where students can include a number of interesting Seuss facts—from A through Z. On the reverse of the hat, they can decorate with red-and-white stripes or add images that relate to their facts. Provide red-and-white yarn or cut spirals from red-and-white paper and let students attach the little hats to the large one. Depending on the number of facts they have and how they want

the mobile to look, they may want to have a number of long strings or spirals with several small hats attached, or stagger where the small hats hang from the large hat. Punch and reinforce a hole in the top of the large hat, add string, and hang the mobile from the ceiling for everyone to learn from and enjoy.



Where It's Hat

Dr. Seuss's Birthday is the perfect time to extend invitations to hat wearers in your community. Firefighters, police officers, construction workers, chefs, beekeepers, baseball players, members of the military, pilots, train conductors, park rangers, cowboys, clowns, and more can talk about the hats they wear on the job and read aloud titles related to their work.

Hard-Hat Area

Showing an understanding of character and setting is often a goal for an author study. Give your students a chance to display their knowledge—and build on it—by using LEGO bricks to make Seuss scenes, creatures, and contraptions. If you have access to enough LEGO bricks, this can be a fun group activity with everyone working together to design and find pieces that fit. LEGO and the Association for Library Service to Children have partnered (www.readbuild-play.com) to bring the power of imaginative play to your library, so check with your local public library to see if they would be willing to host your group and share bricks. You can also ask for brick donations—there are more than 400 billion LEGO bricks in the world today! Though you'd need a large brick collection for these Seuss LEGO creations, share them with your students for inspiration:

www.brothers-brick.com/2012/03/01/catch-calls-the-once-ler/

www.brothers-brick.com/2011/03/10/lego-in-the-style-of-dr-seuss/



History Through Hats

When Dr. Seuss was growing up, people wore hats much more than they do today. Have students show what they've learned about the man who was Dr. Seuss by creating a time line using hats! Students can draw or find pictures of the types of hats that might have been worn by Ted Geisel during different parts of his life. Or create a display using actual hats and then let students wear the hats as they present the life of Dr. Seuss.



The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins
HC: 978-0-394-84484-8 • GLB: 978-0-394-94484-5

MAD AS A HATTER

When you “wear many hats,” is a stack of caps really perched on your head? If you say “My hat is off to you,” did you actually take a hat off your head? Very likely not! These figures of speech are *idioms*, expressions that have meanings beyond the actual words used in the phrase. But in *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*, “Hats off to the King!” really meant that everyone wearing a hat should take it off when the king passed as a sign of respect for the ruler of the Kingdom of Didd.

Read Bartholomew's story aloud and discuss it, bringing the conversation around to why Bartholomew was supposed to take off his hat. Check their familiarity with the expression “hats off to you,” and share examples of how idioms work in daily life and culture. Then see how many idioms about hats you can come up with together. Make a list and talk about what these expressions mean. Here are a few to get you started:

Hold on to your hat

If someone tells you to hold on to your hat, that means something exciting or surprising is about to happen.

Tip of the hat

A tip of the hat is a gesture of respect or appreciation. Saying “I tip my hat to you” conveys the same message.

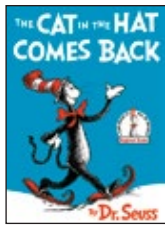
Keep it under your hat

When you learn a secret and are told to keep it under your hat, that means you can't tell anyone about it.



Where It's Hat

More idioms! Declare that you (or the principal or special guest reader) will “eat your hat” on March 2 if students meet a reading goal. Your students can help you make one that is actually edible using rice paper as papier-mâché (Food Finger Tips has instructions: www.foundationtv.co.uk/f-tips/illeatmyhat.html). Or go Carmen Miranda-style and fashion a hat of fabulous fruit.



The Cat in the Hat Comes Back

HC: 978-0-449-81084-2 • GLB: 978-0-394-90002-5



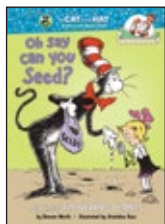
Oh Say Can You Say What's the Weather Today?: All About Weather

HC: 978-0-375-82276-6 • GLB: 978-0-375-92276-3



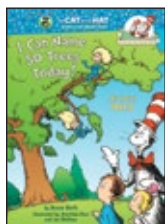
The Lorax

HC: 978-0-394-82337-9 • GLB: 978-0-394-92337-6



Oh Say Can You Seed?: All About Flowering Plants

HC: 978-0-375-81095-4 • GLB: 978-0-375-91095-1



I Can Name 50 Trees Today!: All About Trees

HC: 978-0-375-82277-3 • GLB: 978-0-375-92277-0



Hats Off to Reading!

WHATEVER THE WEATHER



The Cat's hat is all-weather and multipurpose. Not only is it festive for any season, it houses Little Cats! In *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*, Sally and her brother are dressed for snowy weather—including warm headgear—but the Cat and Little Cats have only their red-and-white stovepipe hats (and fur!) to keep them warm.

Bring in—or have students bring in—hats worn for different types of weather: visors, rain hats, warm stocking caps, furry winter hats, sun hats, etc. Have them wear their hats during a reading of *Oh Say Can You Say What's the Weather Today?* (a Cat in the Hat's Learning Library book) and then talk about each hat, how it works in different types of weather, and how to choose a hat that is best for each weather situation. Then enjoy some weather-themed treats, like “clouds” (meringue drop cookies) or “snow” (snow cones)!

CRAZY ABOUT READING

Dr. Seuss was wild about books. Getting kids to enjoy reading was something he was passionate about. He didn't see any reason why you couldn't have fun and learn at the same time.

Let children show off their enthusiasm for reading and learning on Dr. Seuss's birthday with a Crazy Hat Day. Put a Seussian spin on Crazy Hat Day and raise reading spirit by having students make crazy hats of their own. Try one of these themes or go crazy and come up with your own:

Lorax Approved

Gather kudzu or other invasive plants and weeds for kids to use (check for allergies and watch out for poison ivy!) to create crazy woven head wear. Demonstrations of weaving and braiding techniques may be in order, and you'll want to have some twist ties on hand to help hold everything in place. After hats are made, enjoy an outdoor reading of *The Lorax* or titles from The Cat in the Hat's Learning Library such as *Oh Say Can You Seed?* or *I Can Name 50 Trees Today!*. Then plant some seeds of native plants in containers for transplanting where they're needed.

Stately Hat

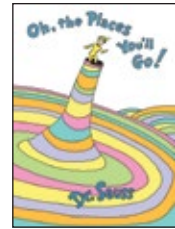
Go crazy for reading and geography with hats that represent our 50 states. Have students choose a state and then research and read all about it, looking for details about the state, such as the capital city, state motto, what the state is known for, or the state bird. Encourage them to seek interesting book-related facts, such as which authors and illustrators were born or live in that state (Dr. Seuss was born in Springfield, Massachusetts and lived in La Jolla, California), or titles of books that are tied to a unique location (Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House on the Prairie* is set in Kansas). To use their heads to share what they learned, have students cut the shape of their state from a flattened cereal box and cover it with paper. Add drawings, pictures, or models, and details about the state and then attach the decorated state to a paperboard headband. Kick off a pageant or parade that gives students the opportunity to explain their hat to others with a reading of *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*

Animal Hats

Animals abound in Dr. Seuss's books, his cartoons, and his fine art. Bring this wild menagerie to life atop the heads of your students! Offer inspiration for making hats that transform them into Seussian birds and beasts by reading aloud Seuss titles and sharing images from *The Seuss*, *the Whole Seuss*, and *Nothing but the Seuss* by Charles D. Cohen. Or "get real" with the animals in *The Cat in the Hat's Learning*

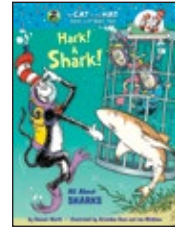
Library books, such as *Hark! A Shark!*; *Fine Feathered Friends*; *Is a Camel a Mammal?*; *On Beyond Bugs!*; and *Oh, the Pets You Can Get!* Colorful materials such as tissue paper, cardstock, fabric, felt, and yarn are ideal for adorning an old stocking cap or ball cap. Sheets of newspaper or wrapping paper can be formed into a hat by fanning them out on a child's head, and then folding and gathering the paper all the way around the brow. Secure the crown of the hat with a brow band of several layers of masking tape, and then remove the hat for trimming or rolling up the brim. Depending on the

animal, students may want to incorporate the excessive brim into their design by cutting and shaping it into plumage, ears, or a beak. Poster paint, tissue paper, and construction paper all work well to complete an animal hat made of paper. Give out Seussian honors to the crazy hat makers, such as the "If I Ran the Circus (or Zoo), You'd Be in It Award," the "Faithful Elephant Award," and so on. Host a party for all these creatures with the things they most like to eat and drink: pink ink for Yinks, noodles for the poodles, and birthday cake (made of Grade-A peppermint cucumber sausage-paste butter) for everyone!



Oh, the Places You'll Go!

HC: 978-0-679-80527-4 • GLB: 978-0-679-90527-1



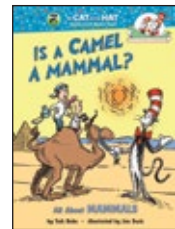
Hark! A Shark!

HC: 978-0-375-87073-6 • GLB: 978-0-375-97073-3



Fine Feathered Friends

HC: 978-0-679-88362-3 • GLB: 978-0-679-98362-0



Is a Camel a Mammal?

HC: 978-0-679-87302-0 • GLB: 978-0-679-97302-7

Where It's Hat

Crazy hats aren't just for students. For a class that meets a reading goal, reward them with the chance to make a crazy hat for their teacher or special guest reader. Or set up a bigger schoolwide challenge so that the class that reads the most gets to make or choose a crazy hat for the principal, or lead the crazy hat parade!

SERIOUS SEUSS

Dr. Seuss never learned how to use computers, but he was fascinated by them and thought that technology held enormous possibilities for reading, teaching, and learning. Since his death in 1991, technology is more prevalent in classrooms than many ever imagined.

While younger students would enjoy trying computer games based on the PBS TV series *The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!* (www.pbskids.org/catinthehat/games) as part of their celebration, older readers might be more engaged by coming up with ideas to help solve some of the real problems presented in Seuss titles. Honor the innovative and creative mind of Dr. Seuss by holding a special Seuss Forum for students to read and discuss *The Lorax* and managing our natural resources, *The Sneetches* and ending racism, or *The Butter Battle Book* and preserving peace. If possible, invite members of the community to participate, speak, and read aloud. Make sure a record is kept of the discussion and that students are given time and encouragement to follow through on their ideas.



Where It's Hat

The Seuss Forum could be an excellent opportunity to use technology in the classroom. Use Skype, FaceTime, or other web conferencing to include scientists, professors, or other professionals in your conversation.



Hats Off to the Environment!



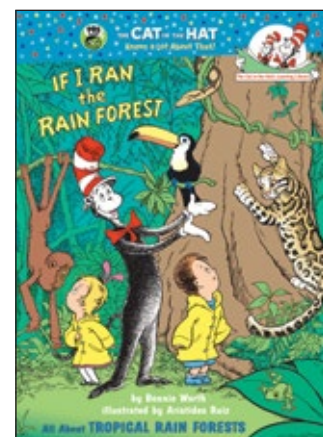
HABITAT HELPERS



"I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees." In *The Lorax*, the Lorax looks out for the trees and all the creatures that inhabit his forest. But when the Once-ler wreaks havoc on this habitat, the plants and animals don't have time to adapt. When you read *The Lorax* with your students, explain that plants and animals can sometimes adapt to changes in their environment, but when a fast change happens, may will have trouble surviving. And if they have trouble, that is likely to mean trouble for people too.

Whom do your students wish to speak for? Titles from The Cat in the Hat's Learning Library like *If I Ran the Rain Forest*; *Why Oh Why Are Deserts Dry?*; or *Safari, So Good!* can help with ideas and background knowledge for choosing a plant or animal species threatened by a loss of habitat.

Then it's time for making a hat that promotes habitat protection. A good model for the Habitat Helper Hat is the Big Hat pattern at www.enchant-edlearning.com/crafts/hats/big that reuses paper grocery bags. Students can write information and draw illustrations directly on this hat or easily tape or staple cut paper, small toy animals, or photographs to it. Plan for an Eco Fashion Show where everyone gets to wear and speak for his or her habitat. Students can speak as themselves, or create a character of their own, reminiscent of the Lorax.



**If I Ran the Rain Forest:
All About Tropical Rain Forests**

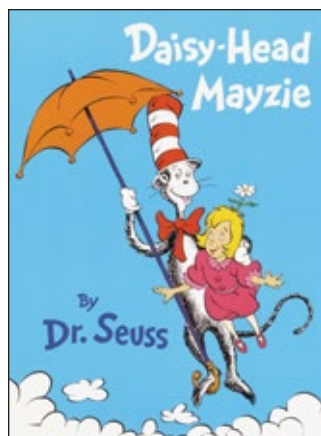
HC: 978-0-375-81097-8 • GLB 978-0-375-91097-5



Where It's Hat

Is there a park or natural area nearby that needs habitat help? Have a park ranger, botanist, naturalist, or others who wear a conservation hat read aloud and share information about the plants and animals that need help in the habitat. Then have students pick up litter or remove invasive plants

FLOWER POWER



Daisy-Head Mayzie

HC: 978-0-679-86712-8 • GLB 978-0-679-96712-5

Have students give a twin salute to the environment with a flowerpot hat. Start with clean, empty plastic gallon milk jugs. Cut all around the jugs just below the handle. Recycle the handle portions and provide the bottom halves to students. With glue and fabric or paper scraps, have students decoupage (spreading glue both under and over fabric or paper) on all sides of the jug. Add a strip of paper or decorative trim around the cut edge and let projects dry. When dry, have students try on their recycled hats and go outside to share *The Lorax*; *Daisy-Head Mayzie*; or *Oh Say Can You Seed?* from The Cat in the Hat's Learning Library. Be sure to get a photo of everyone in their hats.

While you're out enjoying the fresh air, talk with students about the role trees and plants play in our air supply. Planting more plants and trees can help keep our air clean. Have students contribute their



Where It's Hat

See if your local Cooperative Extension agent, a master gardener, landscaper, or nursery owner can don a reading hat and offer lessons on gardening and advice on proper headgear for working outside.