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Seussical

THE MUSICAL^{TYA}

October 27 – November 5, 2023

Spotlight: Literacy is a Playhouse program supported by

**Cole-Belin Education
Foundation**



Original funding provided by Joanne and Milt Brown.



Getting to Know You:

The Cast of *Seussical™ TYA*

The cast of *Seussical™ TYA* was asked, “What Seuss character are you most like and why?” Here are their responses.



Dani Boal (*Mayzie La Bird*) I love everything about the fall and winter holiday season, so Cindy Lou Who and I have a lot in common!



Natalie Jo Lourens (*Gertrude McFuzz*) I feel a lot like Horton and I hope to have his big caring heart. I care a lot about all people, big and small.



Anastasia Cezar (*Bird Girl*) I'm most like Sam I Am because I love to cook and share things with my friends.



Jake Mentzer (*Wickersham Brother*) Personally, I relate most to the Grinch, not only for his charming personality, but for his ingenuity and problem-solving skills.



Blake Clyde (*The Cat in the Hat*) I love living in the moment, taking risks, and going on adventures, so I am most like The Cat in the Hat!



Kaitlyn Meylor (*Mrs. Mayor*) I relate to Gertrude McFuzz because she is chaotic. I also love the confidence she finds throughout her journey.



Laila Collier (*Wickersham Brother*) I relate to JoJo because I am an adventurous person. I'm always looking forward to my next adventure!



Grace Powell (*Bird Girl*) Gertrude McFuzz and I have a lot in common. Sometimes I make a lot of mistakes, but I always learn from them in the end. Making mistakes is one of the best ways to learn!



Taryn Cook (*Wickersham Brother*) I love helping others no matter what, so I like to think Horton and I are alike.



Emma Salgado (*Baby Kangaroo*) I think I am mostly like JoJo because I have a good imagination. I also love being creative.



Dawson Huinker (*Bird Girl*) I am most like Horton because I keep to my promises and am really dedicated to keeping my friends and family happy.



Scott Silipino (*Mr. Mayor*) I identify with Horton because I'm a big person and I care a lot about people because “a person's a person no matter how small.”



Aria Huizenga (*Sour Kangaroo*) I am most like Mayzie as I am very dramatic. In fact, I am a fun-loving drama queen. I love theatre and I hate being too tied down.



Nina Spahr (*JoJo*) I'm most like Thing 1 and Thing 2 because I love having fun. They can be mischievous and live life to the fullest, just like me!



Jeremy Jorgenson (*Horton the Elephant*) I like causing mischief so I am most like The Cat in the Hat. I always make sure it's harmless fun and I stay to put things right!



About the Author

Theodor Seuss Geisel (1904-1991)

Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known to the world as the beloved Dr. Seuss, was born in 1904 on Howard Street in Springfield, Massachusetts. His mother, Henrietta Seuss Geisel, often soothed her children to sleep by “chanting” rhymes remembered from her youth. Ted credited his mother with both his ability and desire to create the rhymes for which he became so well-known. His first book, *And to Think I Saw it on Mulberry Street*, was rejected 27 times before a publisher agreed to print it.

Did you know?

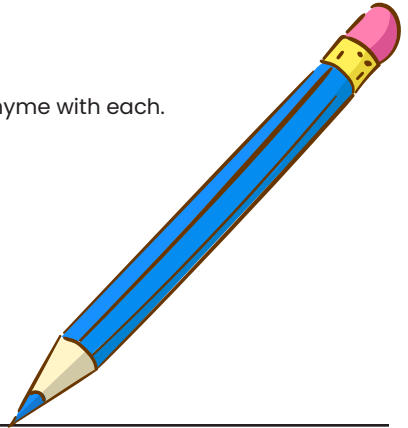
Dr. Seuss wrote *Green Eggs and Ham* on a dare from a friend that he could not write a book in 50 words or less. It went on to become one of his most famous books!

Rhyme Time

Dr. Seuss was really, really good at rhyming. How about you? Look at the list of words below and see how many words you can think of that rhyme with each.

CAT	WHO
BIRD	EGG
TREE	SKY
NEST	THINK

Once you've thought of some really great rhymes, see if you can use the words above to write a poem of your very own!



SEUSSICAL™ TYA

TYA

TYA stands for Theatre for Young Audiences. This is a shorter version of the original musical, revised to accommodate the attention span of young theatregoers.

Synopsis

Most of the script for this play is based on three books: *Horton Hears a Who*, *Horton Hatches an Egg*, and *Gertrude McFuzz*, with additional materials from *McElligot's Pool*, *The Cat in the Hat*, and *If I Ran the Circus*. The John Viars Theatre will house The Jungle of Nool, Whoville, and other familiar places from the imagination of Theodor Geisel. The Cat in the Hat serves as a guide for both the audience and a small child, JoJo, who must learn to find the strength of character to speak out loudly and proudly.

What exactly is a musical?

A musical tells a story through dialogue, song, and dance. Characters sing songs to tell what they want or how they feel. For instance, Horton the Elephant is the only animal in the Jungle of Nool who believes that there are small creatures called Whos living on a speck of dust that he wants to protect. He sings a song called "Alone in the Universe" to describe how sad he feels that no one believes him, but he also sings "A Person's a Person, No Matter How Small" to describe why he is determined to protect the Whos.

Thinks, thinks, thinks!

Name one of your favorite songs. Then decide who might sing this song and what the person singing could want or feel. For example, a simple song like "Twinkle, Twinkle" may be sung by a small child who has stayed up late for the first time and is fascinated with the night sky.

After the show

A benefit to reading some of the books after the show is that it will ignite a lively discussion about the similarities and differences between the books and the play.

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." – Dr. Seuss

Oh, the Thinks You Can Think!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Dr. Seuss books are valuable for many reasons. Beginning readers can pick up these books and happily declare, “I can read this by myself!” All readers find pleasure in the silly rhymes, fantastic drawings, and the comical predicaments in which Seuss characters find themselves. However, the stories that endure are the ones that stay with us because there is a lesson to be learned.

- Gertrude McFuzz thought that more feathers would make her as glamorous as Mayzie La Bird and more attractive to Horton the Elephant. To her, more feathers made her more important. Name five things that people wear or things people buy that make them feel more important than others. **Does that really make them more important?**
- In the end, Gertrude finds out that it is what she does and who she is that makes her important to Horton, not what she looks like. **What are the ways in which people can do things – no matter what they wear or have – to be important to others?**
- **What does it mean to make a promise?** Is keeping a promise a difficult thing to do? What happens when someone breaks a promise?
- **Why is it so difficult for Horton to convince the other jungle animals that Whos are real and need to be saved?** Why do you think they get so upset with him?
- JoJo gets in big trouble for splashing water all over the bathroom as she imagines all the wonderful things that could be in McElligot’s pool. What things do you remember seeing from JoJo’s imagination? **When you daydream, where does your imagination lead you?**
- Daydreaming is something almost everyone does. What exactly is daydreaming? **When is daydreaming a good thing?** When is it good to daydream? When does daydreaming get a person into trouble?

FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Children are rarely congratulated for daydreaming in school, particularly when there is another task before them. The ability to create, problem-solve, and relax comes from a chance to escape into the imagination, so children shouldn’t just get a negative response for daydreaming. It is possible, however, to establish that there is a time and place for everything! Instead of 10 minutes of “quiet time,” try assigning 10 minutes of daydream time.

OH, THE THINKS YOU CAN WRITE!

Dr. Seuss used a combination of real words and imaginary words to compose his rhymes. For example, “tree” is a real word that describes a real object, but Dr. Seuss added “Truffula” to “tree” because he wanted to create a brand-new kind of tree.

You can create brand new objects by adding an imaginary word to a real word. Give it a try!

_____ truck: What does this kind of truck look like? What does the horn sound like? What kind of hubcaps does it have? What does this kind of truck do? Draw a picture of what one looks like.

_____ dog: What does this kind of dog look like? What special things can it do? What does it sound like? Where does it come from? Who likes to own this kind of dog? Draw a picture of what one looks like.

_____ machine: What does this kind of machine do? Who invented it? What does it run on? How much does it cost? Remember that you can use imaginary words to answer these questions. Draw a picture of what one looks like.

HOW TO WRITE A REVIEW

A review is a way to tell others if you liked the play that you saw. Here are some prompts to help you write your own review. Share your review with family and friends when you're done!

THE STORY

What is the play about? Do you think it's a good story? Why? Describe your favorite moment.

THE ACTORS

What did an actor do that made you laugh? What did an actor do to convince you that they were perfect for the part?

THE SET AND COSTUMES

What did the theatre do to recreate the places from Dr. Seuss books? Which costumes were like the drawings in the books? Is there anything you would change about the costumes?

THE SONGS

If it's a good musical, you're probably humming a song on your way home. Which song was your favorite and why?

CONCLUSION

What did you like about the play? What didn't you like? What would you write to recommend this play to a friend in school?

Elephant Thinks

Elephants are fascinating and complex animals. We were curious to learn more about them and wanted to share what we found out!

- There are three different species of elephants: Asian, African savannah, and African forest. The African forest elephant is the smallest of the three and is just about half the size of the African savannah elephant. What kind of elephant do you think Horton is?
- Newborn elephants weigh around 200 pounds and can walk within a few hours after being born. By contrast, a human baby's average weight is a little over 7 pounds and it takes about a year for them to walk.
- After humans, elephants are the second-longest living land mammal and live an average of about 70 years.
- Elephants are distant relatives of mammoths and mastodons, animals who lived thousands of years ago.
- Elephants are great swimmers! Not only can they use their long trunk as a snorkel, but they also have a layer of body fat that helps keep their body afloat.
- Elephants can hear airborne calls from approximately a mile away. No wonder Horton can hear the Whos!
- Elephant herds are led by a matriarch, which is usually the oldest and most respected female in the group. They are usually the daughter of the previous matriarch.
- Elephants have an excellent memory, which helps them remember where to find food and water, among other things.
- Elephants are very intelligent and can feel a complete range of emotions. That means they can be happy, sad, or angry, just like you!



Scan the QR code to learn more interesting facts at Elephant Aid International!



Where to find other great elephants in children's literature

- *Elephant & Piggie* by Mo Willems
- *The Story of Babar* by Jean de Brunhoff
- *The Magician's Elephant* by Kate DiCamillo
- *The Saggy Baggy Elephant* by Kathryn Jackson
- *The Eleventh Hour* by Graeme Base
- *Elmer* by David McKee
- *Strictly No Elephants* by Lisa Mantchev



AUTOGRAPHS