

TEACHERS' GUIDE

**Imagine That!
How Dr. Seuss
Wrote**

The Cat in the Hat

by Judy Sierra
illustrated by Kevin Hawkes
(Random House, 2017)

A Standards-Based Discussion Guide to
Imagine That!
How Dr. Seuss Wrote ‘The Cat in the Hat’
by Judy Sierra, illustrated by Kevin Hawkes
Random House, 2017

Vanessa Bramlett created this guide. She is a Literacy Coach, Literacy Consultant, Trained Reading Recovery Teacher Leader, Retired Principal, wearer of hats, and lover of all things Seuss.

The purpose of this guide is to support the teacher in facilitating conversations with students while recognizing that most comprehending occurs implicitly. The goal is to support students’ understanding and interpretations while at the same time giving import to addressing the writer’s intentions. The emphasis is not on the “right answers” but on the reasoning and problem solving of students. Both open-ended questions and text-dependent questions are encouraged as well as giving students lots of opportunities to explain their thinking to others.

Common Core Standards Used in This Guide

The standards listed here are from the third grade. If you are teaching another grade, visit the [Common Core State Standards website](#) to find equivalent standards at your grade level.

Reading Literature

Key Ideas and Details – RL 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6

Craft and Structure – RL 3.6

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas – RL 3.7, 3.8

Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration – SL 3.1a, 3.1b, 3.1c, 3.1d

A suggestion before reading: Create a T-chart together with students:

| <i>What I Know about Dr. Seuss</i> | <i>What I Wonder</i> |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| | |

Open-Ended Sample Questions

What do you think?

What do you wonder?

What surprised you?

Did your thinking change? If so, how?

Does anyone have a different idea?

What if ...?

Is there anything new you are wondering about?

Is there anything you are confused about? Why?

Text-Dependent Sample Questions

What might be the significance of the author's choice for the title of this book?

What surprised you?

The author clearly admires Dr. Seuss (Theodor Seuss Geisel). What qualities about him do you find admirable?

Discuss the time period covered in this book. What do you know about the time period (the 1950s)? How do the illustrations support your understanding of this period?

How could you learn more about Dr. Seuss and/or this time period?

Do you notice any patterns (in Dr. Seuss's life or in the way the author organizes the writing)?

Do you share any of Dr. Seuss's characteristics? What are they? Why are they important to the person you are?

How does the author draw us in and keep us engaged with the text?

What do you think motivated Dr. Seuss?

What evidence does the author give to support the ideas written?

The author states in her *A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR* that she “stuck mostly to the truth, leavened with a pinch of Seussian mischief.” What do you think is “mostly the truth,” and why?

What is your favorite quote or passage from the book and why?

What do you notice about the way the author structures this book?

Text-Dependent Sample Questions (continued)

How do you think the author might have been changed by the experience of writing this book?

What do you think is original about this book? How is it like and how is it different from other biographies?

Why do you think the author wrote this book?

Would you be interested in reading other books by this author? Why or why not?

Compare the illustrations in *Imagine That! How Dr. Seuss Wrote 'The Cat in the Hat'* with illustrations in several of Dr. Seuss's books. What do you notice?

Choose a favorite illustration in this book and discuss with a partner? Why is this your favorite? Does the illustration deepen your understanding of the text, and if so how?

In what ways does the illustrator of *Imagine That! How Dr. Seuss Wrote 'The Cat in the Hat'* demonstrate the creative process of Dr. Seuss?

What have you learned from reading this book that you could try or expand on in your own creative process?