

Dr. Seuss Is On The Loose
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Overview

The main goal of this unit is to exemplify and celebrate the importance that Dr. Seuss brings to literacy. *Dr. Seuss Is On The Loose* is designed for students on an elementary level, grades first through third. However, this unit can be adapted for any grade level. This unit will be presented to my third grade, self-contained class at Mifflin Elementary School. The goal is to use this curriculum unit by integrating it into the existing curriculum to help meet the standards and student requirements set forth by the Pittsburgh Public School District. The students are required to complete pieces of work which are to be entered into their standards-based portfolios.

The students are also required to complete a reading requirement of books consisting of different genres by various authors. For example, in the third grade, students are required to have read 25 books by the end of the school year. With the use of the Carnegie Library, fellow teachers, and librarians, I will seek materials that relate to or are inspired by the work of Dr. Seuss. I will also make use of various websites that will aid me in completing this curriculum unit. The websites mentioned will be used as an interactive tool to help engage students as well as inspire them to become active readers if they are not already.

Elementary students are exposed to all sorts of different types of literature, especially at an early age. For many students, they will be able to identify and/or recall some popular Dr. Seuss books such as, *The Cat In The Hat*, *Green Eggs And Ham*, and *The Grinch That Stole Christmas* just to name a few. These stories may release an interest from a child based on the rhythmic nature that Dr. Seuss exudes in his literature. Keeping this unit educational, fun, and inspiring will be the factors in determining if it will be successful or not. I do not want to “teach” the unit so to speak, but I want the students to use their own thoughts, ideas, and imagination to allow them to explore the world of literature.

To add to the curriculum, I will incorporate the literature and the magic of Dr. Seuss through reading, writing, visual, and online activities. Students will read the works of Dr. Seuss and complete writing activities that involve summaries and personal responses to the literature. The third grade curriculum requires students to complete responses to information, personal narratives, responses to literature, research writing, persuasive writing, and other writing pieces. In early elementary grades, especially preschool and first grade, the work of Dr. Seuss plays an important role in starting students to read through the use of rhyming. Much of Dr. Seuss's work utilizes rhyming in such a way the students can enjoy and follow along when reading his works. I want this unit to help students to become more interested in reading literature, not just the work of Dr. Seuss but the works of other children's authors as well. Ultimately, the importance of this unit is to make our students more fluent and more comprehensive readers to help insure their reading success as they move along on their educational journeys. At the same time, I think their experiences in literacy should be fun and enjoyable as well as educational. With this unit, I want that to occur. The unit I introduce here will help me in fulfilling the requirements that have been put forth by the school district.

Rationale

Before I became a teacher, I was a child and a student. Looking back at my early educational experiences, I realize that reading and the joy of literature took me places that I've never been to before. It helped me to imagine places in my mind. The literature helped me to visualize what the characters looked like and how they felt by reading about them in the books that my mother bought for me as I was growing. Dr. Seuss was a part of that imaginative experience. His work was fast paced and fun to follow and read along to. Even today, Dr. Seuss's work is just as alive and vibrant as it was when I was just a child. In my third grade class, my students seem to be familiar with Seuss's work whether it's *The Cat In The Hat* or *The Grinch That Stole Christmas*. His work continues to inspire children to want to read all across the world.

My focus here is not to prescribe Dr. Seuss's work to my students, but to use his work to catapult them into enjoying the excitement and joy of literature. Dr. Seuss's stories also help the less experienced reader to quickly feel as capable as their more experienced classmates. The use of rhyme enables the difficult learners to succeed and jumpstart them in wanting to read through self-motivation.

Because of Dr. Seuss's literature and his love for children (of all ages), the first ever Read Across America Day was held on March 2, 1998, Dr. Seuss's birthday. Dr. Seuss's birth name was Theodore Geisel. He would have been 102 years old this year. The Read Across America Day is sponsored by the National Education Association (NEA). This event continues to grow each year. Read Across America Day is said to be one of the largest celebrations of literacy in the United States because it encourages every child in America to have a book at hand and read it on March 2nd. It's no coincidence at all that this annual event falls upon the birthday of the late Dr. Seuss. He's contributed a lot to the success of children's ability to read and succeed. We need to promote literacy in fun and engaging ways year-round, not just on March 2nd.

Why celebrate and utilize Dr. Seuss's work for this particular curriculum unit? Many educators agree that Dr. Seuss epitomized a love for children and learning. This is why he started writing children's books. The latest research indicates that Dr. Seuss's books, with their heavy utilization of rhyme, is an effective way of introducing reading to children. So the NEA's Read Across America in conjunction with Dr. Seuss's birthday sends a clear message: Reading is very important, and it can be fun as well. March 2nd is a wake up call to see how families are doing in reading to their children and how those in education are doing in teaching children to read. Research also shows and tells us that students who read outside of school perform much better in the classroom. It's important for families and teachers to be involved in their children's reading success.

Throughout this curriculum unit, I want to make clear that not only do my students enjoy reading, but they also enjoy responding by writing about what they know and what they have learned. Many of my third graders like to imagine and create their own stories during writing workshops and recess. What makes me feel good is to see what impact reading has made on my students. It's a great feeling when my students come up to me after writing and they ask me to read their work. I believe that the link between reading and writing through the use of this unit will help keep my students motivated and interested even more through what they learn. It's a reward to see students' using their imagination and knowledge to create their own writing and to be inspired even more to continue to read. As an educator, I find that to be a gift to experience.

To understand the importance that Dr. Seuss brings to reading, it's important to know his background and to know how he has been given such acclaim for his work in children's literature. We may know this famous author by the name of Dr. Seuss, but his real name is Theodor Seuss Geisel. He was born in Springfield, Massachusetts on March 2, 1904. When he was a child, his mother would always read stories and sing songs to him and his sister Marnie. When Dr. Seuss was five years old, he started to sketch drawings of animals in the zoo. He also found himself reading comic strips in the newspaper. In school, he really enjoyed drawing cartoons and making up silly poems. In 1921, Dr. Seuss went to Dartmouth College. He drew many cartoons for the college's magazine. In 1925, he went to Oxford University in England. While he was there, he met his future wife, Helen, and two years later they got married and moved to New York.

In New York, Dr. Seuss began working by drawing cartoons for magazines such as the Judge, Life, Vanity Fair, and Liberty. He also drew cartoons for advertisements. This is the time that Theodor Seuss Geisel began to sign his name as Dr. Seuss. In 1937, Dr. Seuss wrote his very first children's book called *And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street*. This story is about a boy whom makes up stories about the things that he sees on his way home. In 1949, he and his wife moved to San Diego, California. He had a studio there where he drew, painted, and worked on writing his books. In May of 1954, *Life Magazine* published a report on illiteracy in school children. The report claimed that children were having trouble reading because the regular text books were boring. This report inspired Dr. Seuss's publisher to send Dr. Seuss a list of 400 words he felt were

important for children to learn. Dr. Seuss asked if he could cut the word list to 250 words and use them to write an entertaining, funny, children's book. In 1957, Dr. Seuss only used 220 of the words given to him to write *The Cat In The Hat*. In this classic book, the Cat in the Hat made a lot of messes. Children especially enjoyed this story because it was funny and easy to read.

Dr. Seuss and his wife started a company to make books that were easy to read for children. In 1960, he wrote *Green Eggs And Ham* which became his most famous book. The pictures in all of his books were drawn by Dr. Seuss himself. He wrote and illustrated 44 books in his lifetime. What people really liked about his books were the way the words rhymed and were continuously repeated, as well as the funny illustrations that accompanied the text. Dr. Seuss won many prizes for his books. He won the Pulitzer Prize in 1984, and three Academy Awards. In 1990, he wrote his final book, *Oh, The Places You'll Go*. On September 24th in 1991, Dr. Seuss died at the age of 87.

Today, the work of Dr. Seuss is still very much alive. Books by Dr. Seuss can be found on CD-ROM, written in different languages, audiocassettes, videos, and made into fully animated shows. The library at the University of California in San Diego has a whole room full of artifacts from the life of Dr. Seuss.

According to the research by the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC), an NEA affiliate, Every single child should read at grade level by the end of third grade (WEAC 1). Learning to read starts a lot earlier than we think. Most of us may not realize this, but we were getting prepared to read from the time we were infants from hearing the words and chants spoken by our parents. Our parents were laying the groundwork to get us started on our reading experiences.

Rhyming is said to be a major factor to get students started reading and to help them read successfully. Research, according to the Hong Kong International School, shows that children find it easier to learn to read words when they use rhyming word families (hat, mat, rat, etc.). Dr. Seuss rhyming works such as *The Cat In The Hat* and *Green Eggs And Ham* for example, are great models to support the research. You can use these books to rhyme orally and use variations of the rhyming words to make other new silly words that rhyme (HKIS 1). Readers sort words that rhyme and we take those rhyming patterns to decode and spell new words (Month-by-Month Phonics 2).

Analogy and onset-rime phonics programs teach children to use parts of written words that they are already familiar with to identify new words. The parts that are utilized are the beginning letters (onsets) and the rhyming pattern (rime) (Month-by-Month Phonics 4) In this research, the analogy-based decoding strategies were found to be quite effective in teaching children to decode words. For even better success, research reviews state that analogy strategies, along with other strategies, are effective in teaching decoding (Month-by-Month Phonics 4). Previous findings have suggested that the use of rhyme enhances early reading skills because it strengthens and increases the knowledge of the similarities and differences between consonant and vowel sounds. For example, a study was done with a group of 40 children between the ages of three and five. The forty

children were split in two groups. The first group listened to a rhyming version of a story called “*Can Kate Come To Play?*” The second group listened to a non-rhyming version of the same story. Immediately after listening to the story, the children were shown pairs of pictures that compared 12 sets of words (bus-lip, ring-king, sled-bed, bear-man, etc.). The children were then asked if the words in each pair sounded alike or different. The results of the study found that the group who had listened to the rhyming story were much more accurate in distinguishing words that were similar versus words that were not similar than the group of children who heard the non-rhyming story. (Hayes 7). The research mentions that students who do well on tasks focusing on phonological awareness are the students who have had language and literacy rich backgrounds.

Reading of books that use rhyme, rhythm, and text that is predictable, are the means by which a child begins to develop a mental bank as well as having the ability to attend to sound and print, and later to map sound to print and print to sound (Maurano 2). Using children’s books that manipulate speech sounds through rhyme is one of the easiest ways to improve a child’s recognition to the phonemes that make up the English language.

In the article, “Go Class, Go: Using Dr. Seuss In Early Reading Instruction,” Tamby Allman, a teacher who was looking for beginner-level books that would help students become fluent readers and to increase their sight vocabulary, found that Seuss’s texts appealed to children because they followed a rhyming pattern with pictures to match. This drew in the children who remained focused as they chimed in on the rhyming patterns throughout the story. Ultimately they became interested in reading through self-motivation. Allman’s students would sort sight words into word families like pink and wink and bed and red. The result was that her students began to show that they could recognize and identify spelling words with similar spelling patterns much faster and more often. Allman also did an activity with the students called “making words.” She found that the Dr. Seuss book, *Hop On Pop*, worked well when the students would take a small set of letters and discover the similar patterns in different spelling words (all, tall, small, hall, fall, wall, etc.). The making words activity helped the students to internalize word families (30). Another strategy that Allman also used was repeated reading to increase fluency with expression. Repeated reading is when a student reads a passage several times so that the words are eventually read with automation. Increased word recognition and fluency can transfer to other reading passages. However, Allman found that most students do not want to read a passage more than once. Dr. Seuss, though, had the opposite effect on the students. Even the struggling readers can feel the rhythm of the words and experience fluency. By using the literature of Dr. Seuss, beginning readers can become more confident.

Dr. Seuss books have been especially significant in the development of beginning readers for two important reasons. First, Dr. Seuss books are fun to read aloud, whether it’s at home or school. Research shows that reading aloud is the single most crucial factor in young children’s success in learning to read, because it exposes them to a variety of books, builds their background knowledge, expands their vocabularies, develops their awareness of fluency, and increases their listening comprehension (Turner 9). Second,

using Dr. Seuss books are a great way to introduce beginning readers to independent reading. Dr. Seuss took traditional sight words and wrote books using those words in creative ways. His books continue to give children a sense of pride and accomplishment to emerge as independent readers. The humor, rhythm, and rhyme of Dr. Seuss's books help to build children's confidence in their ability to read and gives them the self-esteem to help them feel that they are good readers. These reasons are important for reading success to occur both in and outside of the classroom.

This unit will meet many of the Communication Standards used in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. My unit, which primarily deals with reading and writing, will include a math activity that will show how rhyming can help aid students in moving forward with multiplication skills. Although the math curriculum does not play a large role in this curriculum unit, it is important to show that cross-curricular connections can be made in other subjects other than Communications. Since I teach the third grade, the activity that I will present will focus on the skill of multiplication. This activity coincides with several units in the Everyday Math curriculum focusing on multiplication. Since this unit focuses mostly on the Communications standards that the third grade is expected to meet, most of the skills will apply to reading fluency, reading comprehension, writing, and grammar conventions. This curriculum unit can be adapted and adjusted to any subject area. Also, this type of unit could also be used with other reading and writing instructional materials that utilize rhyme and not exclusively using the work of Dr. Seuss.

My decision to do this particular unit was inspired by the students that I teach along with my desire to write children's literature myself. I have used Dr. Seuss in my classroom before. I've even had parents come into my class to read to the students and I found that Dr. Seuss was the favorite among the adults as well. The stories have a flow. They have that rhythm that you can shake your foot to or a bouncy flow that makes you want to keep on reading. On a personal level, I think that learning should be fun because when it is, the magic of learning happens without much effort. If serious learning can occur while students are enjoying themselves, then I feel that my job as an educator has been worth it at the end of the day. My teaching style is very high energy and animated. That is why I chose Dr. Seuss as my unit focus. His stories come with a moral at the end, but they are presented in a fast-paced, high-energy, rhythmic style that can hook anyone into wanting to read one story after another. So with this unit, I want the students to enjoy it as it comes to life. We as educators need to do what is right to help students read and write with success. We need to take into account the strategies that are proven most successful and use any resources that we can to help ensure that success. Young students however, don't think about learning in such an analytical way. They are just starting out on their educational journeys. They do need to know learning is important in their lives. It doesn't hurt them however, to have students feel that school is fun when not even realizing that they are indeed learning the skills that will become crucial to their success in the future. The activities that I include in my unit should achieve just that. They will be educational, but extremely enjoyable at the same time. This is why I present this curriculum unit. I hope you feel the energy that comes from this unit and that you pass it along to your students as well as your peers.

This unit can be integrated into the existing curriculum. It can be used during Dr. Seuss Month in March, or it can be used by a librarian to introduce Dr. Seuss to the younger elementary population. This unit can also be adapted and modified for special education students. I will more than likely start this unit at the beginning of the second semester so that it will coincide with Dr. Seuss's birthday. I will start the unit by asking the class, "Has anyone ever heard of Dr. Seuss?" If that does not evoke much of a response, then I will ask them if they ever heard of the story of *The Cat In The Hat* or *Green Eggs And Ham*, for example. I will be interested to see how they respond to this question and take mental notes of what they know and don't know to start a discussion without having to prompt them to do so. Vocabulary such as fiction, non-fiction, fantasy, reality, imagination, illustrations, illustrators, main idea, figurative language, setting, character, plot, conflict, resolution, and other story elements will be defined and discussed with the class. Dr. Seuss has been mentioned in my class throughout the school year. I often hear my students mention the television specials and the movies that have been produced as a result of Dr. Seuss's work. I intend to have my students work independently on some of the activities, while also having them work in groups for other activities as well. Students will use an arsenal of book that they will read and share with the class. They will explain why they chose a particular story and give their reaction to it. Students will also find a story that they can react to or relate to on a personal level. A personal narrative can be written describing their reaction or personal experience. In groups, students can use the stories that they chose, and summarize them along with the stories of the other group members. I expect that my unit will last approximately nine weeks, which is one grading report quarter. As a culminating event, the students may create their own story using the rhythmic style of Dr. Seuss and have a day to celebrate the works that the students have created topped off by a viewing of a Dr. Seuss classic on the large screen in the auditorium.

Objectives

As mentioned previously, students in the Pittsburgh Public School District are required to develop new skills and compile a Standards Based Portfolio. As students continue to complete activities put forth in this curriculum unit, they will meet many of the reading and writing requirements. Also, students will be expected to present their portfolios to their class as a part of an in-school portfolio viewing activity. The math activity in this unit will briefly touch upon the mathematics curriculum as well with the focus on the skill of multiplication. To help students successfully reach the communication goals, rubrics will be created and utilized in aiding the students to understand the importance of the standards and requirements that they are expected to meet and achieve. As a result, students will meet and hopefully exceed the expected criteria for each individual piece of work. The objectives that will help the students progress through the unit are as follows:

1. The students will be able to identify, recite, read, and define important key literary terms.

2. The students will choose a Dr. Seuss book that they want to read, and give a summary to the class. The students will be able to read fluently after repeated reading activities using the books of Dr. Seuss.
3. The students will be able to use rhyming in order to achieve success when practicing the mathematical skill of multiplication.
4. The students will be able to discuss how Dr. Seuss's books affect them personally. The students will be introduced to the history of Dr. Seuss and discuss why his work is important.
5. The students will be able to use the computer by utilizing the internet and Microsoft Word to navigate and complete written activities that focus on the literature of Dr. Seuss.
6. The students will be able to choose a Dr. Seuss book that they want to read, and give a summary to the class.
7. The students will be able to compare and contrast the many books written by Dr. Seuss.
8. The students will be able to discuss which story elements are fantasy and which elements could actually take place in reality.
9. The students will be able to complete a K-W-L chart on what they know about Dr. Seuss.
10. Students will listen to poems and rhymes, clap out syllables, and make up tunes to go along with the words in the story. The students will develop their use of rhythm and rhyme to write a story modeled on *Green Eggs and Ham*.
11. Students will explore the connection with letters and letter combinations and sounds by identifying sound words, or onomatopoeia, in texts they hear or read and matching words to sounds they hear. They will also know basic sight words, and demonstrate comprehension of simple stories.
12. The students take or collect pictures of themselves reading in a variety of places.
13. The students will write a letter to the Zax giving them some advice explaining what the students would do and how their advice has worked for them in the past after reading *The Sneetches and Other Stories*.
14. The students will write what their teacher would be like if they attended Diffenddoofer School after reading the story, *Hooray For Diffenddoofer Day*.

15. The students will complete a written response after reading the story, The Butter Battle Book. The students will also write a few more verses to a popular rhyming Dr. Seuss story by completing a cloze activity.
16. The students will write a persuasive paragraph based on a popular Dr. Seuss character from one of his books. The students will be able to write responses to any questions or prompts in complete sentences. The students will read their written work.
17. The students will utilize the library, the card catalog, and other resources to complete a research activity to answer information pertaining to Dr. Seuss.
18. The students will create a bookmark to help them become motivated to read.
19. The students will use familiar rhyming patterns to help themselves identify familiar chunks of words that they can use in their own writing.
20. The students will be able to work in cooperative learning groups for various activities.
21. The students will be able to expand vocabulary through listening, reading, and writing opportunities.
22. The students will read to be informed and entertained.
23. The students will initiate new topics for discussion and add new ideas to topics being discussed.

Strategies

To help students reach an understanding of the elements of literature, it is important for them to make sense of the vocabulary utilized when discussing the stories of Dr. Seuss. My class will need to know what elements make up a story and how they are used when putting a story together. For this to happen successfully, I will take my students step by step through a story discussing the various elements as I read a story accompanied by specific terms and vocabulary. Most of my students are visual learners and that is the teaching style that seems to captivate and maximize my students' knowledge. The use of visuals such as illustrations in books, overhead transparencies, video, and other visual aids will be used in order to prepare my students to understand the concepts of this curriculum unit.

Also to aid me in introducing this curriculum unit, I will review the concept of rhyming accompanied with examples to illustrate how the concept is used. Research shows that rhyming helps even the struggling reader achieve success with fluency and word recognition. In order to test the research myself, I will take excerpts from three Dr. Seuss book and time the students reading each excerpt for one minute to measure their

reading fluency and words per minute. I will also administer this reading inventory at the midpoint of the curriculum unit and once again at the end of the unit to measure progress and fluency over time. This strategy coincides with the Dibels activity incorporated into the standards based reading assessment given by the district three times a year to measure students' progress in reading fluency.

Since rhyming involves repetitive patterns, it makes sense to use repeated reading to help students becoming more fluent readers. In my classroom, I use the concept of repeated reading quite often. My students are instructed to read their story from their reader each night at home, but I also give them ample amounts of time throughout the week to continue along with their repeated reading of the story. I can definitely see a difference when the students read the story repeatedly throughout the week. Even my struggling readers show improvement when reading the story multiple times over and over during the week. The benefit of using Dr. Seuss's books for repeated reading is that children love the rhythm of rhymes and can identify the word families associated with rhyming more quickly because of the flow of the words. When the students recognize the patterns, they can read the words quickly and be confident in increasing their fluency rates. By the time this unit has started in the classroom, my students will already have an understanding of repeated reading through previous experience with their reader which begins at the start of the school year.

For this curriculum to have meaning for my students, it is important for them to understand Dr. Seuss's place in the history of children's literature. Since this curriculum unit evolves around the great work of Dr. Seuss, the justification of using him to teach this curriculum unit should be touched upon and discussed. A short biography and timeline of Dr. Seuss will be compiled and shared with the class so they can see how important Dr. Seuss has been when it comes to children reading and learning. This discussion will also tap into the prior knowledge of students to see what they already know about Dr. Seuss. This will get the students more interested and the discussion will continue to build from the knowledge that they share with each other.

Part of this curriculum unit involves the use of the library, the card catalog, and the computer lab for a few of the activities put forth in this unit. In order to insure that the class can navigate through websites, a training session utilizing the internet is strongly recommended. I will take my students to the computer lab and show them the proper steps to access the websites that they will be using. The "smart board" will be used to show the class the proper step by step guide in how to reach and navigate a website. I will display a couple of the websites that the class can use while explaining the features that the website has to offer.

Once the students are more prepared in understanding how story elements work, then I can begin to introduce the activities that will be completed throughout the course of this curriculum unit. All the activities in this unit are directly related to the requirements and standards set forth by the Pittsburgh Public School District for communications. A story from Dr. Seuss will be taken and discussed with the class briefly. For my students, I will take that story and have various types of paragraphs

already written and displayed to use as models to teach the class the following formats: a persuasive paragraph, an informational paragraph, a narrative, a compare and contrast paragraph, a how-to paragraph, and research writing. The formats will be taught and modeled to the class before the activities begin. These examples will help my students to get a kickstart to prewriting their own paragraphs when given writing prompts associated with the stories of Dr. Seuss. This will piece together the students' entries to be included in their communication portfolios.

Classroom Activities

These are the activities that I have compiled to complete this curriculum unit over a nine week period. Here are the detailed descriptions of the activities that will be used to meet the requirements and standards of the Pittsburgh Public School District. These activities are the core of the unit. These activities were designed and evaluated by me with the interests on my students in mind. All of these activities can be modified and adapted for special education students as well as students in middle school.

Activity 1 – Vocabulary Terms Here, There, and Everywhere

For this activity, the students will read, recite, identify, and define terms used in literature. The use of these terms through discussion and example will make the activities throughout this unit more understandable and interesting for the students. They need to know these terms in order to identify the elements in a story as well as extending these terms in their discussions and writing assignments. Here is a list of terms that students should recognize and understand when discussing story elements and the work of Dr. Seuss:

<i>Character</i>	<i>Sequence</i>	<i>Personification</i>
<i>Metaphors</i>	<i>Similes</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>Fact</i>	<i>Opinion</i>	<i>Narrative</i>
<i>Point of View</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Fiction</i>
<i>Non-Fiction</i>	<i>Fantasy</i>	<i>Reality</i>
<i>Imagination</i>	<i>Illustrations</i>	<i>Illustrators</i>
<i>Main Idea</i>	<i>Figurative Language</i>	<i>Setting</i>
<i>Conflict</i>	<i>Resolution</i>	<i>Author</i>
<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Dialogue</i>	<i>Rhyming</i>
<i>Fluency</i>	<i>Phonemes</i>	<i>Graphemes</i>

Activity 2 – The K-W-L Will Start To Tell What We Know Well And Where We Need To Dwell To Make This Unit Gel

Before jumping into the core of this unit, a check on the students' knowledge will be surveyed through a discussion using a K-W-L chart. This is used to activate students'

prior knowledge by asking them what they already **Know**; then students (collaborating as a classroom unit or within small groups) set goals specifying what they **Want** to learn; and after reading students discuss what they have **Learned**. Students apply higher-order thinking strategies which help them construct meaning from what they read and help them monitor their progress toward their goals. A worksheet is given to every student that includes columns for each of these activities. This is a skill that is taught, reviewed, and reiterated not only in the third grade, but in all of the elementary grades in general. A brief overview/review of the K-W-L chart will be conducted prior to the start of this activity. Once the activity has been modeled, the students will complete the chart with me on the overhead projector. First, the class will record what they already know about Dr. Seuss. Next, the students will give me questions concerning what they would like to learn about Dr. Seuss. This will give them the opportunity to discuss what they would like to find out about Dr. Seuss among their classmates. Lastly, the students will share what they have learned about Dr. Seuss after reading the biographical handout titled, "*About the Author.*" I am really curious to see what they do know about Dr. Seuss before they read the handout. Once the activities of the unit have been completed and the requirements set forth by the district have been met, I will end the unit by discussing what the students have learned throughout the course of the unit.

Activity 3 - Persuasive Writing Is Quite Exciting

This activity will be based on the Dr. Seuss book, *The Grinch That Stole Christmas*. The students will be given a template in the form of a letter in which they will write to the Grinch to persuade him to give Christmas back to the Whos in Whoville. A persuasive letter will be modeled for the class and displayed on the overhead projector as the students use it to help start their prewrite. The student must persuade the Grinch to think as the students think. The writing should make sense to the audience who reads this letter. All pieces of writing from the prewrite, rough draft, and final copy must be turned into the teacher. A pictorial rubric will be used to evaluate the writing of the class. Before the teacher evaluation is given, each individual student will fill out a small form evaluating their own work using the rubric. After the final copy has been approved, the class can create an illustration to go along with their letters. This a good piece of work to hang in the hall or in the classroom.

Activity 4 – Would You, Could You In A _____?

For this activity, the students will write a few more verses to the popular Dr. Seuss story, *Green Eggs And Ham* by completing a cloze activity. For this activity, each line of the verse is started for the students, but they have to fill in the blanks at the end of each line with a rhyming word. The students will use familiar rhyming patterns to help themselves identify familiar chunks of words that they can use in completing this activity. The activity looks something like this:

Would you eat them with a _____
Or would you eat them in a _____

I could not eat them with a _____
I could not eat them in a _____

I can not eat them Sam I am,
I can not eat green eggs and ham.

Would you, could you in a _____
Could you, would you with a _____

I can not eat them Sam I am.
I _____ .

Activity 5 – Don't Be A Log, It's In The Catalog

For this activity, the students will utilize the library, the card catalog, and other resources to complete a research activity to answer information pertaining to Dr. Seuss. To preface this activity, read a Dr. Seuss book to the class and discuss it with your students. Ask your students questions to see if they have an understanding of what is happening in the story. This activity is recommended middle school aged children, but can be used with the third grade if the teacher helps them with the use of *The Junior Book Of Authors*. Encyclopedias can also be used to complete some of this activity. Part two of this activity will make use of the card catalog. It's a good idea to ask your school librarian to review with the class how the card catalog is utilized. Pass out the handout *Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss* to the class. Allow the students to work in cooperative learning groups to complete this activity if you choose to do so. It makes the activity more fun and it helps to make the students more resourceful when they look for the answer as a "team." See Activity 7-1 in the appendix of this unit. By the way, you should think about doing your second reading inventory to see how your students' fluency is progressing. What? I was just giving you a friendly reminder. ☺

Activity 6 – Playing With Phonics And Spelling Can Be Very Compelling

In this activity, students will explore the connection with letters and letter combinations and sounds by identifying sound words, or onomatopoeia, in texts they hear or read and matching words to sounds they hear. By practicing sound words, this lesson helps students to come up with spelling strategies that help them move from using phonemes (sounds words make) to graphemes (the written form of sounds). To get this activity going, read the Dr. Seuss story, *Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?* to get the students familiar with the story. Have the students come up with sound words that they can recall from the story. Allow some time for discussion and make sure that your students can see the text as you read the story to them. Once you've read the

book a second time, display the list of sound words on the board or overhead. Once your students have found all of the sound words in the text, have them come up with other sound words to add to the list. Hee-Haw! Have Fun!

Activity 7 - Hooray For Diffendoofer Day

This is a fun and engaging activity. The students will write what their teacher would be like if they attended Diffendoofer School after reading the story, *Hooray For Diffendoofer Day*. The students are asked to use their imagination and think silly. The students have to pretend that they attended Diffendoofer School. They are asked to think up what their teacher's name could be and what that teacher teaches. This activity links the importance of learning. Once the students finishes the written response to this activity, they get to draw a picture of their teacher teaching. You can find this activity in the appendix of this unit.

Activity 8 – Be A Yook Or A Zook, But Only After You Read The Butter Battle Book!

The students will complete a written response after reading the story, *The Butter Battle Book*. To complete this activity, the students choose to be Yook or a Zook. They have to defend their position by responding how their bread is buttered and eaten. To conclude this written response, the class has to give the Yooks and Zooks some helpful advice to lead them to a peaceful solution to their problem. While your at it, have the students practice reading the book with each other. Rhyming research shows that the rhythmic patterns help increase fluency by recognizing and identifying words with similar patterns much faster and more often.

Activity 9 – $7 \times 7 = 49$, You Are Cool, You Are Fine!

This is a great and fun cross-curricular activity that I stumbled across in my research. The students use rhyming in order to successfully maintain the mathematical skill of multiplication. Rhyming to teach the times table can really be another strategy a student can use to arrive at a correct answer when multiplying. This strategy is used best for students who find difficulty remembering certain multiplication facts. This strategy should be combined with another method to achieve success. Do not use this method solely to solve all multiplication facts. Here are a few of the sample rhymes teachers have shared:

$3 \times 8 = 24$ - A tree on skates fell on the floor, three times eight is twenty-four.

$5 \times 5 = 25$ – Two fives jump off the high dive, five times five is twenty five.

$9 \times 9 = 81$ – He stood in line and ate a ton, nine times nine is eighty one.

For more examples, visit www.multiplication.com/rhyming.htm. To extend the activity, have your students make up their own rhymes for any multiplication facts that they may have difficulty learning.

Activity 9 – No Time To Hesitate, Let's Culminate

As a culminating event, the students may create their own story using the rhythmic style of Dr. Seuss and have a day to celebrate the works that the students have created topped off by a viewing of a Dr. Seuss classic on the large screen in the auditorium. Whether it is a Dr. Seusslike creation, poem, or song, allow the students to run wild with their imaginations and create their own piece of rhythmic work. Young students love to create and display their own work. Let them shine like the lights that they are. Give them their time in the spotlight. This is their day. Allow some time for the students to work on their written, rhythmic creations. Once the class has completed the activity, leave some time for them to rehearse. I guarantee that they will love you for this! Once they have rehearsed, take them to the auditorium or the library and let them loose like Dr. Seuss with their work. Invite other classes to watch if you like. They did such a great job with this unit. Give them a treat. Vote on a Dr. Seuss special for the class to watch and view it on the big screen in the auditorium. If you don't have that option, then use the school television and vcr/dvd player. Either way, your students will be happy. Well I hope you enjoyed the unit. Good luck. Oh, one more thing. Don't forget to do your final reading inventory to see if the students' fluency has increased. Thank you and goodnight!

Professional Bibliography

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Websites

www.bridgew.edu/Library/CAGS_Projects/MMAURANO/SharedReading.htm
This article outlines rhyming research and how phonological awareness plays a large role.

www.nea.org
National Education Association (NEA), the nation's largest professional employee organization, is committed to advancing the cause of public education. They sponsor the "Read Across America Day" annually on March 2nd.

<http://www.newsdesk.umd.edu/culture/print.cfm?articleID=886>
This article uses testimonials from educators on how Dr. Seuss is important when linked to literacy.

http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=104
Focusing on these sound words, this lesson helps students develop spelling strategies that help them move from phonemes, the sounds they make, to graphemes, the written representations of those sounds.

www.seussville.com
This site has activities and games associated with the works of Dr. Seuss.

Student Bibliography

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Seuss, Dr., How The Grinch Stole Christmas, Random House, New York, 1957. *The Grinch, whose heart is two sizes too small, hates Who-ville's holiday celebrations, and plans to steal all the presents to prevent Christmas from coming. To his amazement, Christmas comes anyway, and the Grinch discovers the true meaning of the holiday.*

Seuss, Dr., Mr. Brown Can Moo, Can You?, Random House, New York, 1970. *Mr. Brown is an expert at imitating all sorts of noises. Not only can he moo like a cow, but he can blurp like a horn, sizzle like an egg in a frying pan, pop like a cork, eek eek like a creaky shoe, and even imitate the sound of a hippopotamus chewing gum.*

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Website

www.seussville.com

This site has activities and games associated with the works of Dr. Seuss.