

Dr. Seuss

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Dr. Seuss



Born Theodor Seuss Geisel
 March 2, 1904
 Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.

Died September 24, 1991 (aged 87)
 La Jolla, California, U.S.

Pen name Dr. Seuss Theo LeSieg Rosetta Stone *Theophrastus* Seuss

Occupation Children's author, political cartoonist, illustrator, poet, animator, screenwriter, filmmaker

Education Dartmouth College (BA)
 Lincoln College, Oxford

Genre Children's literature

Years active 1921–1990^[1]

Spouse *Helen Palmer Geisel*
 (m. 1927; died 1967)
 Audrey Stone Dimond (m. 1968)

Signature

Website

seussville.com

cartoonist, illustrator, poet, animator, screenwriter, and filmmaker. He is known for his work writing and illustrating **more than 60** books under the **pen name Dr. Seuss** (/ˈsuːs, zuːs/,^[4]^[6]). His work includes many of the most popular children's books of all time, selling over 600 million copies and being translated into more than 20 languages by the time of his death.^[7]

Geisel adopted the name "Dr. Seuss" as an undergraduate at **Dartmouth College** and as a graduate student at **Lincoln College, Oxford**. He left Oxford in 1927 to begin his career as an **illustrator** and **cartoonist** for *Vanity Fair*, *Life*, and various other publications. He also worked as an illustrator for **advertising campaigns**, most notably for **FLIT** and **Standard Oil**, and as a **political cartoonist** for the New York newspaper *PM*. He published his first children's book *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street* in 1937. During **World War II**, he took a brief hiatus from children's literature to illustrate political cartoons, and he also worked in the animation and film department of the **United States Army** where he wrote, produced or animated many productions – both live-action and animated – including *Design for Death*, which later won the 1947 **Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature**^[8]

After the war, Geisel returned to writing children's books, writing classics like *I Ran the Zoo* (1950), *Horton Hears a Who!* (1955), *If I Ran the Circus* (1956), *The Cat in the Hat* (1957), *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* (1957), and *Green Eggs and Ham* (1960). He published over 60 books during his career, which have spawned numerous **adaptations**, including 11 television specials, five feature films, **a Broadway musical**, and four television series.

Geisel won the **Lewis Carroll Shelf Award** in 1958 for *Horton Hatches the Egg* and again in 1961 for *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*. Geisel's birthday, March 2, has been adopted as the annual date for **National Read Across America Day**, an initiative on reading created by the **National Education Association**.

Life and career

Early years

Geisel was born and raised in **Springfield, Massachusetts**, the son of Henrietta (*née* Seuss) and Theodor Robert Geisel.^[9]^[10] His father managed the family brewery and was later appointed to supervise Springfield's public park system by Mayor **John A. Denison**^[11] after the brewery closed because of **Prohibition**.^[12] **Mulberry Street** in Springfield, made famous in his first children's book *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, is near his boyhood home on Fairfield Street.^[13] The family was of German descent, and Geisel and his sister Marnie experienced anti-German prejudice from other children following the outbreak of World War I in 1914.^[14]

Geisel attended **Dartmouth College**, graduating in 1925.^[15] At Dartmouth, he joined the **Sigma Phi Epsilon** fraternity^[9] and the humor magazine *Dartmouth Jack-O-Lantern*, eventually rising to the rank of editor-in-chief.^[9] While at Dartmouth, he was caught drinking **gin** with nine friends in his room.^[16] At the time, the possession and consumption of alcohol was illegal under Prohibition laws, which remained in place between 1920 and 1933. As a result of this infraction, Dean **Craven Laycock** insisted that Geisel resign from all extracurricular activities, including the *Jack-O-Lantern*.^[17] To continue working on the magazine without the administration's knowledge, Geisel began signing his work with the pen name "Seuss". He was encouraged in his writing by professor of rhetoric W. Benfield Pressey, whom he described as his "big inspiration for writing" at Dartmouth.^[18]

Upon graduating from Dartmouth, he entered **Lincoln College, Oxford**, intending to earn a **D.Phil.** in English literature.^[19]^[20] At Oxford, he met **Helen Palmer**, who encouraged him to give up becoming an English teacher in favor of pursuing drawing as a career.^[19] She later recalled that "Ted's notebooks were always filled with these fabulous animals. So I set to work diverting him; here was a man who could draw such pictures; he should be earning a living doing that."^[19]

Early career

Geisel left Oxford without earning a degree and returned to the United States in February 1927,^[21] where he immediately began submitting writings and drawings to magazines, book publishers, and advertising agencies.^[22] Making use of his time in Europe, he pitched a series of cartoons called *Eminent Europeans* to *Life* magazine, but the magazine passed on it. His first nationally published cartoon appeared in the July 16, 1927, issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*. This single \$25 sale encouraged Geisel to move from Springfield to New York City.^[23] Later that year, Geisel accepted a job as writer and illustrator at the humor magazine *Judge*, and he felt financially stable enough to marry Helen.^[24] His first cartoon for *Judge* appeared on October 22, 1927, and the Geisels were married on November 29. Geisel's first work signed "Dr. Seuss" was published in *Judge* about six months after he started working there.^[25]

In early 1928, one of Geisel's cartoons for *Judge* mentioned **Flit**, a common bug spray at the time manufactured by **Standard Oil of New Jersey**.^[26] According to Geisel, the wife of an advertising executive in charge of advertising Flit saw Geisel's cartoon at a hairdresser's and urged her husband to sign him.^[27] Geisel's first Flit ad appeared on May 31, 1928, and the campaign continued sporadically until 1941. The campaign's catchphrase "Quick, Henry, the Flit!" became a part of popular culture. It spawned a song and was used as a punch line for comedians such as **Fred Allen** and **Jack Benny**. As Geisel gained notoriety for the Flit campaign, his work was in demand and began to appear regularly in magazines such as *Life*, *Liberty*, and *Vanity Fair*.^[28]

The money Geisel earned from his advertising work and magazine submissions made him wealthier than even his most successful Dartmouth classmates.^[28] The increased income allowed the Geisels to move to better quarters and to socialize in higher social circles.^[29] They became friends with the wealthy family of banker **Frank A. Vanderlip**. They also traveled extensively: by 1936, Geisel and his wife had visited 30 countries together. They did not have children, neither kept regular office hours, and they had ample money. Geisel also felt that traveling helped his creativity.^[30]

Geisel's success with the Flit campaign led to more advertising work, including for other Standard Oil products like Essomarine boat fuel and Essolube Motor Oil and for other companies like the **Ford Motor Company**, **NBC Radio Network**, and Holly Sugar.^[31] His first foray into books, *Boners*, a collection of children's sayings that he illustrated, was published by **Viking Press** in 1931. It topped *The New York Times* non-fiction bestseller list and led to a sequel, *More Boners*, published the same year. Encouraged by the books' sales and positive critical reception, Geisel wrote and illustrated a **ABC book** featuring "very strange animals" that failed to interest publishers.^[32]

In 1936, Geisel and his wife were returning from an ocean voyage to Europe when the rhythm of the ship's engines inspired the poem that became his first

children's book: *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*^[33] Based on Geisel's varied accounts, the book was rejected by between 20 and 43 publishers.^{[34][35]} According to Geisel, he was walking home to burn the manuscript when a chance encounter with an old Dartmouth classmate led to its publication by **Vanguard Press**.^[36] Geisel wrote four more books before the US entered World War II. This included *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* in 1938, as well as *The King's Stilts* and *The Seven Lady Godivas* in 1939, all of which were in prose, atypically for him. This was followed by *Horton Hatches the Egg* in 1940, in which Geisel returned to the use of poetry.

World War II-era work



Play media

"The Goldbrick", Private Snafu episode written by Geisel, 1943

As World War II began, Geisel turned to political cartoons, drawing over 400 in two years as editorial cartoonist for the left-leaning New York City daily newspaper, *PM*.^[37] Geisel's political cartoons, later published in *Dr. Seuss Goes to War*, denounced **Hitler** and **Mussolini** and were highly critical of non-interventionists ("isolationists"), most notably **Charles Lindbergh**, who opposed US entry into the war.^[38] One cartoon^[39] depicted **Japanese Americans** being handed TNT after a "call from home", while other cartoons deplored the racism at home against **Jews** and blacks that harmed the war effort.^{[40][41]} His cartoons were strongly supportive of **President Roosevelt's** handling of the war, combining the usual exhortations to ration and contribute to the war effort with frequent attacks on Congress^[42] (especially the **Republican Party**),^[43] parts of the press (such as the *New York Daily News*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Washington Times-Herald*),^[44] and others for criticism of Roosevelt, criticism of aid to the Soviet Union,^{[45][46]} investigation of suspected Communists,^[47] and other offences that he depicted as leading to disunity and helping the Nazis, intentionally or inadvertently.

In 1942, Geisel turned his energies to direct support of the U.S. war effort. First, he worked drawing posters for the **Treasury Department** and the **War Production Board**. Then, in 1943, he joined the Army as a **Captain** and was commander of the Animation Department of the **First Motion Picture Unit** of the **United States Army Air Forces**, where he wrote films that included *Your Job in Germany*, a 1945 propaganda film about peace in Europe after World War II; *Our Job in Japan*, and the *Private Snafu* series of adult army training films. While in the Army, he was awarded the **Legion of Merit**.^[48] *Our Job in Japan* became the basis for the commercially released film *Design for Death* (1947), a study of **Japanese culture** that won the **Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature**.^[49] *Gerald McBoing-Boing* (1950) was based on an original story by Seuss and won the **Academy Award for Best Animated Short Film**.^[50]

Later years

After the war, Geisel and his wife moved to **La Jolla, California**, where he returned to writing children's books. He published most of his books through **Random House** in North America and **William Collins, Sons** (later **HarperCollins**) internationally. He wrote many, including such favorites as *If I Ran the Zoo* (1950), *Horton Hears a Who!* (1955), *If I Ran the Circus* (1956), *The Cat in the Hat* (1957), *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* (1957), and *Green Eggs and Ham* (1960). He received numerous awards throughout his career, but he won neither the **Caldecott Medal** nor the **Newbery Medal**. Three of his titles from this period were, however, chosen as Caldecott runners-up (now referred to as Caldecott Honor books): *McElligot's Pool* (1947), *Bartholomew and the Oobleck* (1949), and *If I Ran the Zoo* (1950). Dr. Seuss also wrote the **musical** and **fantasy film** *The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T*, which was released in 1953. The movie was a critical and financial failure, and Geisel never attempted another feature film. During the 1950s, he also published a number of illustrated short stories, mostly in *Redbook* Magazine. Some of these were later collected (in volumes such as *The Sneetches and Other Stories*) or reworked into independent books (*If I Ran the Zoo*). A number have never been reprinted since their original appearances.

In May 1954, *Life* magazine published a report on **illiteracy** among school children which concluded that children were not learning to read because their books were boring. William Ellsworth Spaulding was the director of the education division at **Houghton Mifflin** (he later became its chairman), and he compiled a list of 348 words that he felt were important for first-graders to recognize. He asked Geisel to cut the list to 250 words and to write a book using only those words.^[51] Spaulding challenged Geisel to "bring back a book children can't put down."^[52] Nine months later, Geisel completed *The Cat in the Hat* using 236 of the words given to him. It retained the drawing style, verse rhythms, and all the imaginative power of Geisel's earlier works but, because of its simplified vocabulary, it could be read by beginning readers. *The Cat in the Hat* and subsequent books written for young children achieved significant international success and they remain very popular today. For example, in 2009, *Green Eggs and Ham* sold 540,000 copies, *The Cat in the Hat* sold 452,000 copies, and *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish* (1960) sold 409,000 copies — all outselling the majority of newly published children's books.^[53]

Geisel went on to write many other children's books, both in his new simplified-vocabulary manner (sold as **Beginner Books**) and in his older, more elaborate style.

In 1956, Dartmouth awarded Geisel with an honorary doctorate, finally legitimizing the "Dr." in his pen name.

On April 28, 1958, Geisel appeared on an episode of the panel game show *To Tell the Truth*.^[54]

Geisel's wife Helen had a long struggle with illnesses. On October 23, 1967, Helen died by suicide; Geisel married Audrey Dimond on June 21, 1968.^[55] Although he devoted most of his life to writing children's books, Geisel had no children of his own, saying of children: "You have 'em; I'll entertain 'em."^[55] Dimond added that Geisel "lived his whole life without children and he was very happy without children."^[55] Audrey oversaw Geisel's estate until her death on December 19, 2018, at the age of 97.^[56]

Geisel was awarded an honorary **Doctor of Humane Letters** (L.H.D.) from **Whittier College** in 1980.^[57] He also received the **Laura Ingalls Wilder Medal** from the **professional children's librarians** in 1980, recognizing his "substantial and lasting contributions to children's literature". At the time, it was awarded every five years.^[58] He won a **special Pulitzer Prize** in 1984 citing his "contribution over nearly half a century to the education and enjoyment of America's children and their parents".^[59]

Illness, death, and posthumous honors

Geisel died of **cancer** on September 24, 1991, at his home in **La Jolla, California**, at the age of 87.^{[19][60]} His ashes were scattered in the **Pacific Ocean**. On December 1, 1995, four years after his death, **University of California, San Diego's** University Library Building was renamed **Geisel Library** in honor of Geisel and Audrey for the generous contributions that they made to the library and their devotion to improving literacy.^[61]

While Geisel was living in La Jolla, the **United States Postal Service** and others frequently confused him with fellow La Jolla resident **Dr. Hans Suess**, a noted **nuclear physicist**.^[62]

In 2002, the **Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden** opened in **Springfield, Massachusetts**, featuring sculptures of Geisel and of many of his characters. In 2008, he was inducted into the **California Hall of Fame**. On March 2, 2009, the **Web search engine** Google temporarily changed its **logo** to commemorate Geisel's birthday (a practice that it often performs for various holidays and events).^[63]

In 2004, U.S. children's librarians established the annual **Theodor Seuss Geisel Award** to recognize "the most distinguished American book for beginning readers published in English in the United States during the preceding year". It should "demonstrate creativity and imagination to engage children in reading" from **pre-kindergarten** to **second grade**.^[64]

At Geisel's alma mater of Dartmouth, more than 90 percent of incoming first-year students participate in pre-matriculation trips run by the **Dartmouth Outing Club** into the New Hampshire wilderness. It is traditional for students returning from the trips to stay overnight at Dartmouth's **Moosilauke Ravine Lodge**, where they are served green eggs for breakfast. On April 4, 2012, the Dartmouth Medical School was renamed the **Audrey and Theodor Geisel School of Medicine** in honor of their many years of generosity to the college.^[65]

Dr. Seuss's honors include two **Academy Awards**, two **Emmy Awards**, a **Peabody Award**, the **Laura Ingalls Wilder Medal**, the **Inkpot Award**^[66] and the **Pulitzer Prize**.

Dr. Seuss has a star on the **Hollywood Walk of Fame** at the 6500 block of **Hollywood Boulevard**.^[67]

Pen names and pronunciations

Geisel's most famous pen name is regularly pronounced /suːs/,^[3] an **anglicized** pronunciation inconsistent with his German surname (the standard German pronunciation is **German pronunciation:** [ˈzɔʏ̯s]). He himself noted that it rhymed with "voice" (his own pronunciation being /sɔɪs/). Alexander Laing, one of his collaborators on the ***Dartmouth Jack-O-Lantern***,^[68] wrote of it:

*You're wrong as the deuce
And you shouldn't rejoice
If you're calling him Seuss.
He pronounces it Soice^[69] (or Zoice)^[70]*

Geisel switched to the anglicized pronunciation because it "evoked a figure advantageous for an author of children's books to be associated with **Mother Goose**"^[52] and because most people used this pronunciation. He added the "Doctor (abbreviated Dr.)" to his pen name because his father had always wanted him to practice medicine.^[71]

For books that Geisel wrote and others illustrated, he used the pen name "Theo LeSieg", starting with ***Wish That I Had Duck Feet*** published in 1965. "LeSieg" is "Geisel" spelled backward.^[72] Geisel also published one book under the name Rosetta Stone, 1975's ***Because a Little Bug Went Ka-Choo!*** a collaboration with **Michael K. Frith**. Frith and Geisel chose the name in honor of Geisel's second wife Audrey, whose maiden name was Stone.^[73]

Political views

Geisel was a liberal **Democrat** and a supporter of President **Franklin D. Roosevelt** and the **New Deal**. His early political cartoons show a passionate opposition to fascism, and he urged action against it both before and after the United States entered World War II. His cartoons portrayed the fear of communism as overstated, finding greater threats in the **House Un-American Activities Committee** and those who threatened to cut the United States' "life line"^[46] to Stalin and the USSR, whom he once depicted as a **porter** carrying "our war load".^[45]



Dr. Seuss 1942 cartoon with the caption 'Waiting for the Signal from Home'

Geisel supported the [internment of Japanese Americans](#) during World War II. On the issue of the Japanese, he is quoted as saying:

But right now, when the Japs are planting their hatchets in our skulls, it seems like a hell of a time for us to smile and warble: "Brothers!" It is a rather flabby battle cry. If we want to win, we've got to kill Japs, whether it depresses [John Haynes Holmes](#) or not. We can get palsy-walsy afterward with those that are left.^[74]

After the war, though, Geisel overcame his feelings of animosity, using his book *Horton Hears a Who!* (1954) as an [allegory](#) for the American post-war [occupation of Japan](#),^[75] as well as dedicating the book to a Japanese friend, though Ron Lamothe noted in an interview that even that book has a sense of "American chauvinism" and doesn't mention the [atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki](#).^[76]

In 1948, after living and working in Hollywood for years, Geisel moved to La Jolla, California, a predominantly Republican community.^[77]

Geisel converted a copy of one of his famous children's books *Marvin K. Mooney Will You Please Go Now!* into a [polemic](#) shortly before the end of the 1972–1974 [Watergate scandal](#), in which United States president [Richard Nixon](#) resigned, by replacing the name of the main character everywhere that it occurred.^[78] "Richard M. Nixon, Will You Please Go Now!" was published in major newspapers through the [column](#) of his friend [Art Buchwald](#).^[78]

The line "a person's a person, no matter *how* small!!!" from *Horton Hears a Who!* has been used widely as a slogan by the [pro-life](#) movement in the United States. Geisel and later his widow Audrey objected to this use; according to her attorney, "She doesn't like people to hijack Dr. Seuss characters or material to front their own points of view."^[79] In the 1980s Geisel threatened to sue an anti-abortion group for using this phrase on their stationery, according to his biographer, causing them to remove it.^[80] The attorney says he never discussed abortion with either of them,^[79] and the biographer says Geisel never expressed a public opinion on the subject.^[80] After Seuss' death, Audrey gave financial support to [Planned Parenthood](#).^[81]

In his books

Geisel made a point of not beginning to write his stories with a moral in mind, stating that "kids can see a moral coming a mile off." He was not against writing about issues, however; he said that "there's an inherent moral in any story",^[82] and he remarked that he was "subversive as hell."^[83]

Geisel's books express his views on a remarkable variety of social and political issues:*The Lorax* (1971), about environmentalism and anti-consumerism; *The Sneetches* (1961), about racial equality; *The Butter Battle Book* (1984), about the arms race; *Yertle the Turtle* (1958), about Adolf Hitler and anti-authoritarianism; *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* (1957), criticizing the materialism and consumerism of the Christmas season; and *Horton Hears a Who!* (1954), about anti-isolationism and internationalism.^{[52][76]}

Poetic meters

Geisel wrote most of his books in anapestic tetrameter, a poetic meter employed by many poets of the English literary canon. This is often suggested as one of the reasons that Geisel's writing was so well received.^{[84][85]}

Anapestic tetrameter consists of four rhythmic units called anapests, each composed of two weak syllables followed by one strong syllable (the beat); often, the first weak syllable is omitted, or an additional weak syllable is added at the end. An example of this meter can be found in Geisel's "Yertle the Turtle", from *Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories*

*And today the Great **Yertle**, that **Marvelous he**
Is **King** of the **Mud**. That is **all** he can **see**.^[86]*

Some books by Geisel that are written mainly in anapestic tetrameter also contain many lines written in amphibrachic tetrameter wherein each strong syllable is surrounded by a weak syllable on each side. Here is an example from *If I Ran the Circus*

*All **ready** to **put** up the **tents** for my **circus**.
I **think** I will **call** it the **Circus McGurkus**.*

*And **NOW** comes an **act** of **Enormous Enormance!**
No **former performer's** **performed** this **performance!***

Geisel also wrote verse in trochaic tetrameter, an arrangement of a strong syllable followed by a weak syllable, with four units per line (for example, the title of *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish*). Traditionally, English trochaic meter permits the final weak position in the line to be omitted, which allows both masculine and feminine rhymes.


Geisel generally maintained trochaic meter for only brief passages, and for longer stretches typically mixed it with iambic tetrameter, which consists of a weak syllable followed by a strong, and is generally considered easier to write. Thus, for example, the magicians in *Bartholomew and the Oobleck* make their first appearance chanting in trochees (thus resembling the witches of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*):

Shuffle, duffle, muzz**le, **muff

They then switch to iambs for the oobleck spell:

*Go **make** the **Oobleck tumble down**
On **every street**, in **every town!**^[87]*

Artwork

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Geisel at work on a drawing of the [Grinch](#) for *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* in 1957

Geisel's early artwork often employed the shaded texture of pencil drawings or [watercolors](#), but in his children's books of the postwar period, he generally made use of a starker medium—pen and ink—normally using just black, white, and one or two colors. His later books, such as *The Lorax*, used more colors.

Geisel's style was unique – his figures are often "rounded" and somewhat droopy. This is true, for instance, of the faces of [the Grinch](#) and [the Cat in the Hat](#). Almost all his buildings and machinery were devoid of straight lines when they were drawn, even when he was representing real objects. For example, *If I Ran the Circus* shows a droopy hoisting crane and a droopy [steam calliope](#).

Geisel evidently enjoyed drawing architecturally elaborate objects, and a number of his motifs are identifiable with structures in his childhood home of [Springfield](#), including examples such as the [onion domes](#) of its [Main Street](#) and his family's brewery.^[88] His endlessly varied but never rectilinear palaces, ramps, platforms, and free-standing stairways are among his most evocative creations. Geisel also drew complex imaginary machines, such as the *Audio-Telly-O-Tally-O-Count*, from *Dr. Seuss's Sleep Book*, or the "most peculiar machine" of Sylvester McMonkey McBean in *The Sneetches*. Geisel also liked drawing outlandish arrangements of feathers or fur: for example, the 500th hat of *Bartholomew Cubbins*, the tail of *Gertrude McFuzz*, and the pet for girls who like to brush and comb, in *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish*.

Geisel's illustrations often convey motion vividly. He was fond of a sort of "voilà" gesture in which the hand flips outward and the fingers spread slightly backward with the thumb up. This motion is done by Ish in *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish* when he creates fish (who perform the gesture with their fins), in the introduction of the various acts of *If I Ran the Circus* and in the introduction of the "Little Cats" in *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*. He was also fond of drawing hands with interlocked fingers, making it look as though his characters were twiddling their thumbs.

Geisel also follows the **cartoon** tradition of showing **motion with lines**, like in the sweeping lines that accompany Sneelock's final dive in *If I Ran the Circus*. Cartoon lines are also used to illustrate the action of the senses—sight, smell, and hearing—in *The Big Brag*, and lines even illustrate "thought", as in the moment when the Grinch conceives his awful plan to ruin Christmas.

Recurring images

Geisel's early work in advertising and **editorial cartooning** helped him to produce "sketches" of things that received more perfect realization later in his children's books. Often, the expressive use to which Geisel put an image, later on, was quite different from the original.^[89] Here are some examples:

- An editorial cartoon from July 16, 1941^[90] depicts a whale resting on the top of a mountain as **parody** of American **isolationists**, especially **Charles Lindbergh**. This was later rendered (with no apparent political content) as the Wumbus of *On Beyond Zebra* (1955). Seussian whales (cheerful and balloon-shaped, with long eyelashes) also occur in *McElligot's Pool*, *If I Ran the Circus* and other books.
- Another editorial cartoon from 1941^[91] shows a long cow with many legs and udders representing the conquered nations of Europe being milked by **Adolf Hitler**. This later became the Umbus of *On Beyond Zebra*.
- The tower of turtles in a 1942 editorial cartoon^[92] prefigures a similar tower in *Yertle the Turtle*. This theme also appeared in a *Judge* cartoon as one letter of a hieroglyphic message, and in Geisel's short-lived comic strip *Hejji*. Geisel once stated that Yertle the Turtle was Adolf Hitler.^[93]
- Little cats A, B, and C (as well as the rest of the alphabet) who spring from each other's hats appeared in **ford Motor Company** ad.
- The connected beards in *Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are?* appear frequently in Geisel's work, most notably in *Hejji*, which featured two goats joined at the beard, *The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T*, which featured two roller-skating guards joined at the beard, and a political cartoon in which **Nazism** and the **America First movement** are portrayed as "the men with the Siamese Beard".
- Geisel's earliest elephants were for advertising and had somewhat wrinkly ears, much as real elephants do.^[94] With *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street!* (1937) and *Horton Hatches the Egg* (1940), the ears became more stylized, somewhat like **angel** wings and thus appropriate to the saintly Horton. During World War II, the elephant image appeared as an emblem for India in four editorial cartoons.^[95] Horton and similar elephants appear frequently in the postwar children's books.
- While drawing advertisements for **FLIT**, Geisel became adept at drawing insects with huge stingers,^[96] shaped like a gentle S-curve and with a sharp end that included a rearward-pointing barb on its lower side. Their facial expressions depict gleeful malevolence. These insects were later rendered in an editorial cartoon as a swarm of Allied aircraft^[97] (1942), and again as the Sneedle of *On Beyond Zebra*, and yet again as the Skritz in *I Had Trouble in Getting to Solla Sollew*.
- There are many examples of creatures who arrange themselves in repeating patterns, such as the "Two and fro walkers, who march in five layers", and the Through-Horns Jumping Deer in *If I Ran the Circus*, and the arrangement of birds which the protagonist of *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* walks through, as the narrator admonishes him to "... always be dexterous and deft, and never mix up your right foot with your left."

Publications

Geisel wrote more than 60 books over the course of his long career. Most were published under his well-known pseudonym Dr. Seuss, though he also authored more than a dozen books as Theo LeSieg and one as Rosetta Stone. His books have topped many bestseller lists, sold over 600 million copies, and been translated into more than 20 languages.^[7] In 2000, *Publishers Weekly* compiled a list of the **best-selling children's books** of all time; of the top 100 hardcover books, 16 were written by Geisel, including *Green Eggs and Ham*, at number 4, *The Cat in the Hat*, at number 9, and *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish*, at number 13.^[98] In the years after his death in 1991, two additional books were published based on his sketches and notes *Hooray for Diffendoofer Day!* and *Daisy-Head Mayzie*. *My Many Colored Days* was originally written in 1973 but was posthumously published in 1996. In September 2011, seven stories originally published in magazines during the 1950s were released in a collection titled *The Bippolo Seed and Other Lost Stories*^[99]

Geisel also wrote a pair of books for adults: *The Seven Lady Godivas* (1939; reprinted 1987), a retelling of the **Lady Godiva** legend that included nude depictions; and *You're Only Old Once!* (written in 1986 when Geisel was 82), which chronicles an **old man**'s journey through a clinic. His last book was *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*, which was published the year before his death and became a popular gift for graduating students.^[100]

List of screen adaptations

Theatrical Shorts films

Year	Film	Format	Director	Writer	Distributor	Length	Budget	Ref(s)
1942	<i>Horton Hatches the Egg</i>	traditionally animated	Bob Clampett	Michael Maltese and Rich Hogan	Warner Bros. Pictures		–	–
1943	<i>The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins</i>						–	–
1944	<i>And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street</i>	stop motion	George Pal		Paramount Pictures	10 min.	–	–
1950	<i>Gerald McBoing-Boing</i>	traditionally animated	Robert Cannon	Phil Eastman and Bill Scott	UPA and Columbia Pictures		–	–

Theatrical feature films

Year	Film	Format	Director	Writer	Distributor	Length	Budget	Ref(s)
2000	<i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas</i>		Ron Howard	Jeffrey Price and Peter S. Seaman	Universal Pictures	104 min.	\$123 million	[101]
2003	<i>The Cat in the Hat</i>	live-action	Bo Welch	Alec Berg, David Mandel, and Jeff Schaffer	Universal Pictures and DreamWorks Pictures	82 min.	\$109 million	[102]
2008	<i>Horton Hears a Who!</i>		Jimmy Hayward and Steve Martino		20th Century Fox		\$85 million	[103]
				Cinco Paul and Ken		86		

2012 <i>The Lorax</i>	computer-animated	Chris Renaud and Kyle Balda	Daurio		min.	\$70 million	[104]
2018 <i>The Grinch</i>		Scott Mosier and Yarrow Cheney	Michael LeSieur and Tommy Swerdlow	Universal Pictures	90 min.	\$75 million	[105]
TBA <i>The Cat in the Hat</i>		–	–	Warner Bros. Pictures	–	–	–

TV specials

Year	Film	Format	Director	Writer	Distributor	Length
1966	<i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas!</i>		Chuck Jones	Dr. Seuss, Irv Spector, and Bob Ogle	MGM	
1970	<i>Horton Hears a Who!</i>					
1971	<i>The Cat in the Hat</i>					
1972	<i>The Lorax</i>		Hawley Pratt		CBS	
1973	<i>Dr. Seuss on the Loose</i>					
1975	<i>The Hooper-Bloob Highway</i>	traditionally animated	Alan Zaslove			25 min.
1977	<i>Halloween Is Grinch Night</i>		Gerald Baldwin	Dr. Seuss		
1980	<i>Pontoffel Pock, Where Are You?</i>				ABC	
1982	<i>The Grinch Grinches the Cat in the Hat</i>		Bill Perez			
1989	<i>The Butter Battle Book</i>		Ralph Bakshi			
1995	<i>Daisy-Head Mayzie</i>		Tony Collingwood		Turner	

TV series

Year	Title	Format	Director	Writer	Network
1996–1998	<i>The Wubbulous World of Dr. Seuss</i>	live-action/puppet			Nickelodeon
2010–2012	<i>The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!</i>	traditionally animated	Various	Various	Treehouse TV
2019–present	<i>Green Eggs and Ham</i>				Netflix

Adaptations



Seuss Landing at Islands of Adventure in Orlando, Florida

For most of his career, Geisel was reluctant to have his characters marketed in contexts outside of his own books. However, he did permit the creation of several animated cartoons, an art form in which he had gained experience during World War II, and he gradually relaxed his policy as he aged.

The first adaptation of one of Geisel's works was a cartoon version of *Horton Hatches the Egg*, animated at Warner Bros. in 1942 and directed by Bob Clampett. It was presented as part of the Merrie Melodies series and included a number of gags not present in the original narrative, including a fish

committing suicide and a [Katharine Hepburn](#) imitation by Mayzie.

As part of [George Pal](#)'s [Puppetoons](#) theatrical cartoon series for [Paramount Pictures](#), two of Geisel's works were adapted into stop-motion films by George Pal. The first, *[The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins](#)* was released in 1943.^[106] The second, *[And to Think I Saw It on Mulberry Street](#)* with a title slightly altered from [the book's](#), was released in 1944.^[107] Both were nominated for an [Academy Award for "Short Subject \(Cartoon\)"](#).

In 1959, Geisel authorized [Revell](#), the well-known plastic model-making company, to make a series of "animals" that snapped together rather than being glued together, and could be assembled, disassembled, and re-assembled "in thousands" of ways. The series was called the "Dr. Seuss Zoo" and included Gowdy the Dowdy Grackle, Norval the Bashful Blanket, Tingo the Noodle Topped Stroodle, and Roscoe the Many Footed Lion. The basic body parts were the same and all were interchangeable, and so it was possible for children to combine parts from various characters in essentially unlimited ways in creating their own animal characters (Revell encouraged this by selling Gowdy, Norval, and Tingo together in a "Gift Set" as well as individually). Revell also made a conventional glue-together "beginner's kit" of [The Cat in the Hat](#).

In 1966, Geisel authorized eminent cartoon artist [Chuck Jones](#) – his friend and former colleague from the war – to make a cartoon version of *[How the Grinch Stole Christmas!](#)* Geisel was credited as a co-producer under his real name Ted Geisel, along with Jones. The cartoon was narrated by [Boris Karloff](#), who also provided the voice of the Grinch. It was very faithful to the original book and is considered a classic to this day by many. It is often broadcast as an annual [Christmas television special](#). Jones directed an adaptation of *[Horton Hears a Who!](#)* in 1970 and produced an adaptation of *[The Cat in the Hat](#)* in 1971.

From 1972 to 1983, Geisel wrote six animated specials that were produced by [DePatie-Freleng](#): *[The Lorax](#)* (1972); *[Dr. Seuss on the Loose](#)* (1973); *[The Hooper-Bloob Highway](#)* (1975); *[Halloween Is Grinch Night](#)* (1977); *[Pontoffel Pock, Where Are You?](#)* (1980); and *[The Grinch Grinches the Cat in the Hat](#)* (1982). Several of the specials won multiple [Emmy Awards](#).

A Soviet [paint-on-glass-animated](#) short film was made in 1986 called *[Welcome](#)*, an adaptation of *[Thidwick the Big-Hearted Moose](#)* The last adaptation of Geisel's work before he died was *[The Butter Battle Book](#)* a television special based on the book of the same name, directed by [Ralph Bakshi](#).

A television film titled *[In Search of Dr. Seuss](#)* was released in 1994, which adapted many of Seuss's stories. It uses both live-action versions and animated versions of the characters and stories featured; however, the animated portions were merely edited versions of previous animated television specials and, in some cases, re-dubbed as well.

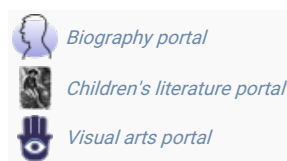
After Geisel died of cancer at the age of 87 in 1991, his widow Audrey Geisel was placed in charge of all licensing matters. She approved a live-action feature-film version of *[How the Grinch Stole Christmas](#)* starring [Jim Carrey](#), as well as a Seuss-themed [Broadway musical](#) called *[Seussical](#)*, and both premiered in 2000. *[The Grinch](#)* has had limited engagement runs on Broadway during the Christmas season, after premiering in 1998 (under the title *[How the Grinch Stole Christmas](#)*) at the [Old Globe Theatre](#) in San Diego, where it has become a Christmas tradition. In 2003, another live-action film was released, this time an adaptation of *[The Cat in the Hat](#)* that featured [Mike Myers](#) as the title character. Audrey Geisel spoke critically of the film, especially the casting of Myers as the Cat in the Hat, and stated that she would not allow any further live-action adaptations of Geisel's books.^[108] However, a first animated [CGI](#) feature film adaptation of *[Horton Hears a Who!](#)* was approved, and was eventually released on March 14, 2008, to positive reviews. A second CGI-animated feature film adaptation of *[The Lorax](#)* was released by [Universal](#) on March 2, 2012 (on what would have been Seuss's 108th birthday). The third adaptation of Seuss' story, the CGI-animated feature film, *[The Grinch](#)*, was released by [Universal](#) on November 9, 2018.

Four television series have been adapted from Geisel's work. The first, *[Gerald McBoing-Boing](#)*, was an animated television adaptation of Geisel's 1951 cartoon [of the same name](#) and lasted three months between 1956 and 1957. The second, *[The Wubbulous World of Dr. Seuss](#)* was a mix of live-action and puppetry by [Jim Henson Television](#), the producers of [The Muppets](#). It aired for one season on [Nickelodeon](#) in the United States, from 1996 to 1997. The third, *[Gerald McBoing-Boing](#)*, is a remake of the 1956 series.^[109] Produced in Canada by [Cookie Jar Entertainment](#) (now [DHX Media](#)) and North America by [Classic Media](#) (now [DreamWorks Classics](#)), it ran from 2005 to 2007. The fourth, *[The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!](#)* produced by Portfolio Entertainment Inc., began on August 7, 2010, in Canada and September 6, 2010, in the United States and is producing new episodes as of 2018.

Geisel's books and characters are also featured in [Seuss Landing](#), one of many islands at the [Islands of Adventure](#) theme park in [Orlando, Florida](#). In an attempt to match Geisel's visual style, there are reported "no straight lines" in Seuss Landing.^[110]

[The Hollywood Reporter](#) has reported that [Warner Animation Group](#) and Dr. Seuss Enterprises have struck a deal to make new animated movies based on the stories of Dr. Seuss. Their first project will be a fully animated version of *[The Cat in the Hat](#)*^[111]

See also



- [The Cat in the Hat \(play\)](#)
- "The Sidewinder Sleeps Tonite" – a 1992 [R.E.M.](#) song referencing a reading from Seuss.

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- ↑ "How to Mispronounce "Dr. Seuss" It is true that the middle name of Theodor Geisel – "Seuss," which was also his mother's maiden name – was pronounced "Zoice" by the family, and by Theodor Geisel himself. So, if you are pronouncing his full given name, saying "Zoice" instead of "Soose" would not be wrong. You'd have to explain the pronunciation to your listener, but you would be pronouncing it as the family did.

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- **Dr. Seuss / Theodor Geisel artwork can be viewed at American Art Archives web site**
- **Dr. Seuss on IMDb**
- **The Dr. Seuss That Switched His Voice**– poem by Joe Dolce, first published in *Quadrant* magazine.
- **Register of the Dr. Seuss Collection, UC San Diego**
- **Dr. Seuss at Library of Congress Authorities**, with 190 catalog records
- **Theodor Seuss Geisel** (real name), **Theo. LeSieg** (pseud.), and **Rosetta Stone** (joint pseud.) at LC Authorities with 30, 9, and 1 records

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Dr. Seuss

Characters

- The Cat in the Hat
- The Grinch
- Horton the Elephant
- Bartholomew Cubbins
- The Lorax

Bibliography

- *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*
- *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*
- *The King's Stilts*
- *The Seven Lady Godivas*
- *Horton Hatches the Egg*
- *McElligot's Pool*
- *Thidwick the Big-Hearted Moose*
- *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*
- *If I Ran the Zoo*
- *Scrambled Eggs Super!*
- *Horton Hears a Who!*
- *On Beyond Zebra!*
- *If I Ran the Circus*
- *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*
- *The Cat in the Hat*
- *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*
- *Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories*
- *Happy Birthday to You!*
- *Green Eggs and Ham*
- *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish*
- *The Sneetches and Other Stories*
- *Dr. Seuss's Sleep Book*
- *Dr. Seuss's ABC*
- *Hop on Pop*
- *Fox in Socks*
- *I Had Trouble in Getting to Solla Sollew*
- *I Wish That I Had Duck Feet*¹
- *Come over to My House*¹
- *The Foot Book*
- *I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today! and Other Stories*
- *My Book about ME*
- *Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?: Dr. Seuss's Book of Wonderful Noises!*
- *The Lorax*
- *Marvin K. Mooney Will You Please Go Now!*
- *Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are?*
- *The Shape of Me and Other Stuff*
- *There's a Wocket in My Pocket*
- *Great Day for Up!*
- *Wacky Wednesday*¹
- *Oh, the Thinks You Can Think!*
- *The Cat's Quizzer*
- *I Can Read with My Eyes Shut!*
- *Oh Say Can You Say?*
- *Hunches in Bunches*
- *The Butter Battle Book*
- *You're Only Old Once!*
- *I Am Not Going to Get Up Today!*
- *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*
- *Daisy-Head Mayzie*²
- *My Many Colored Days*²
- *Hooray for Diffendoofer Day!*²
- *The Bippolo Seed and Other Lost Stories*²
- *Horton and the Kwuggerbug and More Lost Stories*²
- *What Pet Should I Get?*²
- *Horse Museum*²

	Television series	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Gerald McBoing-Boing Show</i> (1956–1957) • <i>The Wubbulous World of Dr. Seuss</i> (1996–1998) • <i>Gerald McBoing-Boing</i> (2005–2007) • <i>The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!</i> (2010–2018) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ episodes • <i>Green Eggs and Ham</i> (2019–present)
	Television specials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!</i> (1966) • <i>Horton Hears a Who!</i> (1970) • <i>The Cat in the Hat</i> (1971) • <i>The Lorax</i> (1972) • <i>Dr. Seuss on the Loose</i> (1973) • <i>The Hooper-Bloob Highway</i> (1975) • <i>Halloween Is Grinch Night</i> (1977) • <i>Pontoffel Pock, Where Are You?</i> (1980) • <i>The Grinch Grinches the Cat in the Hat</i> (1982) • <i>The Butter Battle Book</i> (1989) • <i>In Search of Dr. Seuss</i> (1994) • <i>Daisy-Head Mayzie</i> (1995)
Adaptations	Film	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Horton Hatches the Egg</i> (short; 1942) • <i>Gerald McBoing-Boing</i> (short; 1950) • <i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas</i> (2000) • <i>The Cat in the Hat</i> (2003) • <i>Horton Hears a Who!</i> (2008) • <i>The Lorax</i> (2012) • <i>The Grinch</i> (2018) • <i>The Cat in the Hat</i> (TBA)
	Video games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dr. Seuss' Fix-Up the Mix-Up Puzzler</i> (1984) • <i>The Grinch</i> (2000) • <i>The Cat in the Hat</i> (2003) • <i>Dr. Seuss: Green Eggs and Ham</i> (2003) • <i>Dr. Seuss: How the Grinch Stole Christmas!</i> (2007)
	Other media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Welcome</i> (Russian short film) • <i>Seussical</i> (musical) • <i>Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical</i> • "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch" (song) • <i>The Cat in the Hat</i> (play) • <i>The Lorax</i> (play)
Other works		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Private Snafu</i> • <i>The Pocket Book of Boners</i> • <i>Your Job in Germany</i> • <i>Our Job in Japan</i> • <i>Design for Death</i> • <i>The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T.</i> • <i>Hejji</i> • Society of Red Tape Cutters • Flit
Related		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Fish out of Water</i> • Amazing World of Dr. Seuss Museum • Beginner Books • <i>Dr. Seuss Goes to War</i> • <i>The Secret Art of Dr. Seuss</i> • Dr. Seuss National Memorial • Geisel Award • Geisel Library • Geisel School of Medicine • Helen Palmer • <i>PM</i> • Political messages of Dr. Seuss • Read Across America • Seuss Landing

¹ as "Theo. LeSieg". ² Posthumous.

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Dr. Seuss's *The Cat in the Hat*(1957)

Live-action film	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Cat in the Hat</i> (2003)
Television	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Cat in the Hat</i> (1971) • <i>Dr. Seuss on the Loose</i> (1973) • <i>The Grinch Grinches the Cat in the Hat</i> (1982) • <i>In Search of Dr. Seuss</i> (1994) • <i>The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!</i> (2010–2018) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ episodes
Books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Cat in the Hat</i> • <i>The Cat in the Hat Comes Back</i> • <i>The Cat's Quizzer</i> • <i>I Can Read with My Eyes Shut!</i> • <i>Daisy-Head Mayzie</i>
Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seussical</i> (2000 musical) • <i>The Cat in the Hat</i> (2009 play)
Video game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Cat in the Hat</i> (2003)
Related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Seuss Memorial • <i>I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today! and Other Stories</i> • <i>In Search of Dr. Seuss</i> (1994)

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Dr. Seuss's *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*

Characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grinch
Book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas!</i> (1957)
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch" (1966) • "Green Christmas (2000) • "Lonely Christmas Eve" (2000) • "Where Are You Christmas?" (2000) • <i>Music Inspired by Illumination & Dr. Seuss' The Grinch</i> (2018)
Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!</i> (1966, TV special) • <i>Halloween Is Grinch Night</i> (1977, TV special) • <i>The Grinch Grinches the Cat in the Hat</i> (1982, TV special) • <i>Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical</i> (1994) • <i>Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas</i> (2000 live action film) • <i>The Grinch</i> (2000 video game) • <i>Dr. Seuss: How the Grinch Stole Christmas!</i> (2007 video game) • <i>Dr. Seuss' The Grinch</i> (2018 animated film) • <i>Dr. Seuss' The Grinch Musical Live!</i> (2020 musical TV special)
Related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whoville • Dr. Seuss Memorial • <i>Grinchmas</i>

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Pulitzer Prize Special Citations and Awards
(**Letters**)

- *Love Songs* by Sara Teasdale (1918)
- *Corn Huskers* by Carl Sandburg (1919)
- *Old Road to Paradise* by Margaret Widdemer (1919)
- Kenneth Roberts (1957)
- Garrett Mattingly for *The Armada* (1960)
- *American Heritage Picture History of the Civil War* (1961)
- James Thomas Flexner for *George Washington, Vols. I-IV* (1973)
- Alex Haley for *Roots* (1977)
- E. B. White (1978)
- Theodor Seuss Geisel (1984)
- Art Spiegelman for *Maus* (1992)
- Edmund Morgan (2006)
- Ray Bradbury (2007)

- Complete list
- (Journalism)
- (Letters)
- (Arts)
- (Service)

- BIBSYS: 2077781
- BNE: XX846595
- BNF: cb12044517b (data)
- GND: 107380153
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- RKD: 431824
- SELIBR: 184009
- SNAC: w6vd6zsw
- SUDOC: 030083303
- Trove: 1052619
- ULAN: 500116672
- VIAF: 7408695
- WorldCat Identities: viaf-7408695

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Theodor Seuss Geisel (March 2, 1904 – September 24, 1991) is the author of several classic children's books, which he wrote under the pen name of Dr. Seuss. Among his most famous books are *The Cat in the Hat*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, and *Green Eggs and Ham*. Geisel created a world of whimsical characters, and his use of rhythm and rhyme made him a pioneer in techniques for facilitating reading skills in children. Also a cartoonist, he illustrated all his own books. About Dr. Seuss. Theodor Seuss Geisel was born to Theodor and Henrietta Geisel in Springfield, Massachusetts on March 2, 1904. Theodor, known as Ted by his family and friends, was the grandchild of German immigrants and had one sister, Margaretha Christine (known as "Marnie"). Dr. Seuss's first children's book was published in 1937 after it was previously rejected by publishers 27 times. And *To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street* was based on his recollections from life in Springfield. Dr. Seuss, Writer: *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. Acclaimed writer, Dr. Seuss was born Theodor Geisel in Springfield, Massachusetts, on



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