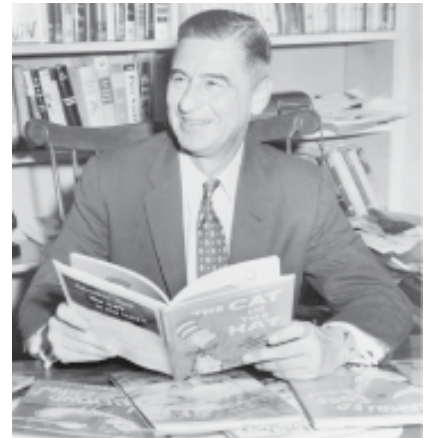


# Hey Kids, Meet Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss)

American Cartoonist (1922-2000)

**Theodor Seuss Geisel** was born March 2, 1904 in Springfield, Massachusetts. His father, Theodor Robert Geisel, and grandfather were brewmasters in the city. His mother, Henrietta Seuss Geisel, often put Ted and his sister Marnie to sleep with rhymes she remembered from her childhood. It was his mother that Ted credits for his ability to create rhymes.



Ted's memories of his youth in Springfield can be seen throughout his books. Illustrations of Horton along streams in the Jungle of Nool recall the watercourses in Springfield's Forest Park while the truck driven by Sylvester McMonkey McBean in *The Sneetches* may very well be the tractor that Ted saw on the streets of his hometown.

In the fall of 1921 Ted left Springfield to attend Dartmouth College. While there he became editor-in-chief of the Dartmouth College's *Jack-O-Lantern* humor magazine. Each contribution was signed "Seuss". It was the first time we would use his middle name to identify his work.

In an attempt to please his father, Ted went on to Oxford University in England after graduating from Dartmouth. While at Oxford he met his wife Helen Palmer. He also discovered that academic studies bored him so he left the university and traveled Europe instead.

When Geisel returned to the United States he began to pursue a career as a cartoonist. The *Saturday Evening Post* published a few of his early cartoons but most of his efforts were devoted to creating advertising campaigns for Standard Oil.

When World War II approached, Ted began creating political cartoons for a magazine. He also worked with Frank Capra's Signal Corps (U.S. Army) to make training movies. It was here that he received his first introduction to the art of animation.



## Hey Kids, Meet Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss), p.2

Geisel's illustrations began to get noticed. With this came his first "big break" into children's literature. The first book, which he wrote and illustrated was *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*. Even though the book was rejected 27 times, Geisel persisted until it was finally accepted and published by Vanguard Press.

*The Cat in the Hat*, Geisel's most popular book, was created as part of an association between Houghton Mifflin (Vanguard Press) and Random House. Houghton Mifflin asked Geisel to write and illustrate a children's primer using only 250 vocabulary words. Nine months later, Geisel returned with *The Cat in the Hat* which uses only 236 words.

Ted's first wife, Helen Palmer died in 1967. He later married his old friend Audrey Stone.

Theodor Seuss Geisel died on September 24, 1991. His life yielded some of the most celebrated children's books of all-time including *Green Eggs and Ham*, *Oh, The Places You'll Go*, *Fox in Socks*, and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. His books are rich with optimism and morals. His legacy of lighthearted, masterfully crafted stories will long be remembered and will always be recognized as uniquely Dr. Seuss.

