



# PRESCHOOL TEACHER'S GUIDE

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The Arts Start program is supported by



Grow Up Great

# THE CAT IN THE HAT

Friday, October 23, 2015

10:30 AM & 12:30 PM

SANGAMON AUDITORIUM 

The text 'SANGAMON AUDITORIUM' is written in a black, serif font. A light gray, brushstroke-like underline is positioned beneath the text. To the right of the text is the logo for the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS), which features a black silhouette of a dome above the letters 'UIS' in a black, serif font.



## Welcome!

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This guide was created for use by teachers in the Springfield Urban League Head Start program, but it will also be sent to other teachers attending the performance who indicate they teach preschool students. Another Teacher's Guide, with content for older students, is available on the Sangamon Auditorium website at <http://www.sangamonauditorium.org/education/class-acts/>. We hope the information and activity ideas included in this guide will help your students better understand the performance they see.

We look forward to seeing you!



Youth programming in the *Class Acts* series and in conjunction with other Sangamon Auditorium events is supported in part by the Helen Hamilton Performing Arts Endowment for Youth Fund, gifts from Elizabeth and Robert Staley, and a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.



The Arts Start program is an initiative of **University of Illinois Springfield's Sangamon Auditorium** and the **Springfield Urban League Head Start**, funded by **PNC's Grow Up Great**® initiative. Through this arts education program, Head Start students, their teachers, and their families will become involved in live performances, enhancing the students' educational opportunities and school readiness.



## Write to Us

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We would love to hear from you and your students! If your students write about the performance they saw or create artwork related to it, you are welcome to send it to us via email to [azepp2@uis.edu](mailto:azepp2@uis.edu) or through the mail to

*Class Acts*  
Sangamon Auditorium, UIS  
One University Plaza, MS PAC 397  
Springfield, IL 62703-5407

We love sharing student work with our *Class Acts* sponsors, so they can see the impact of their donations.



## Attending a Live Performance

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Please use the information below to help prepare your young students for attending a live theatrical performance. For many, this will be their first experience with live theater.

Going to a live theatrical performance is different than watching a movie or TV show – the members of the audience are very important, and the way they behave will affect the performance. That’s why theaters have their own special rules about behavior.

- Tell your students that when they arrive in the parking lot, there will be a lot of other buses there too. They will need to follow the instructions of their teachers and walk in a straight line (or maybe in a buddy-system line) to come into the building. Once inside, they need to stay in line because of all the other students who will be there.
- Ask your students how they think an audience should behave at a live performance. What are some of the things they should do and not do? If it is not covered by the student answers, make sure you talk about:
  - *\*Listen\** to the performance (this ties into “don’t talk,” but it can be helpful to keep all the discussion points phrased in the positive and not in the “don’t-do-this” mode); use a “cupped ear” gesture to emphasize listening when it is mentioned
  - *\*Watch\** the performance; point at both sides of your face near your eyes with your index fingers to emphasize watching when it is mentioned
  - *\*Clap\** at the end of songs and at the end of the performance when the performers take their bows. Take the time to practice clapping with the students. Call one student forward who will pretend to take a bow at the end of a performance and the rest of the room will practice clapping for this student.

Repeat the gestures for the three points above and have the students do it with you.

- Let your students know that like in a movie theater, the area where the audience sits for the performance will be rather dark, but there will be lights on the stage and some small lights will remain on in the aisles. If they need to use the bathroom in the middle of the show, they can come to the end of the row and an usher will use a flashlight to make sure they can find their way to the correct bathroom.



## Activities

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The activities can be used together in any combination that works for the teacher. It would be best to do some activities before the performance, to help students understand the plot of the story, and some activities after the performance, to reinforce what they have seen.

### Pre-show Discussion Questions

Discuss the different types of performing arts (music, dance, theater) to help students understand that they are going to see people perform. Ask if they have ever experienced a live theater performance before. What did they see? What was it like?

How is live theater different than movies and TV?

- There are real people on the stage.
- The performance will never be exactly the same again.

Familiarize your students with the following words – theater, play, actor, stage, costume, usher

### Literacy and Writing

In the story, The Cat in the Hat wants to play a game called “Fun in a Box.” Inside The Cat in the Hat’s big red box are Thing 1 and Thing 2. Ask your students to imagine that they each have their own big red box to keep fun things inside. Ask them to write about or draw a picture of what fun things they would each keep in their own box.

**Vocabulary** – This book does not use many large or difficult words, but it does provide a wonderful opportunity to talk about words that rhyme. Below is a list of all the rhyming words in the story.

- play – day – say – away – way
- two – do – you – new
- ball – all – fall
- sit – bit – hit
- bump – jump
- mat – hat – that – cat – pat
- sunny – funny

- about – out
- wish – fish – dish
- now – how – bow
- cake – rake
- man – fan
- pot – not – lot
- lit – bit
- go – so – know – no
- fox – box
- hook – look
- fun – one
- not – pot
- hall – wall – tall – all
- down – gown
- red – bed
- kicks – tricks
- fear – hear – near
- net – bet – yet
- plop – stop
- game – shame
- yes – mess

## Fine Arts

**Dance/Movement** – The Cat in the Hat tells Sally and her brother that he knows “a lot of good tricks” to help pass the time on a rainy day. He can balance a fish on his umbrella and balance on a ball at the same time. What are some tricks your students can do? Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Jump on one foot
- Wiggle your eyebrows
- Flap your arms
- Curl your tongue
- Shimmy your shoulders
- Wiggle your nose
- Do 10 jumping jacks
- Touch your toes without bending your knees

You can also play a “Simon Says” game with these movements, changing it up to be “The Cat in the Hat says”. The teacher can be The Cat (and wear a hat) and ask the students to do particular movements.



**Music** – An important part of music is feeling the beats or rhythm. This entire story is written in rhythm. Ask your students to clap in a steady rhythm as you read a section of the story. For example:



CLAP -           x                    x  
READ -        I sat there with Sally.

CLAP -           x                    x  
READ -        We sat there we two.

CLAP -           x                    x  
READ -        And I said, "How I wish

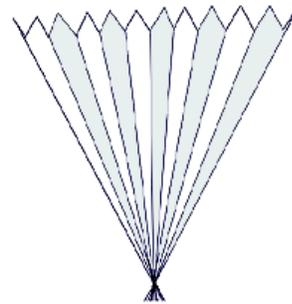
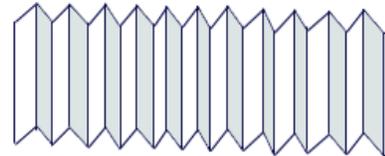
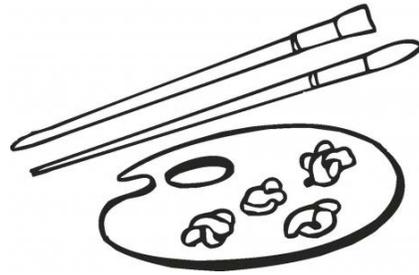
CLAP -           x                    x  
READ -        We had something to do!"



**Theatre** – Ask your students to pretend to be The Cat in the Hat. How does The Cat sound when he talks? Have students repeat a line from the story in their "Cat" voice. How does The Cat move? Look at the illustrations in the book when The Cat is doing his tricks (pages 14-19). See if your students can copy The Cat's poses. For example, have everyone look at the picture on page 15 and see if they can stand on one foot and cross their arms.

**Visual Art** – One of the many objects that The Cat balances as a trick is a red fan. Students can each make their own fan.

1. Give each student a piece of red construction paper. Encourage them to each decorate their fan any way they want. They can decorate both sides of the paper if they wish.
2. Show the students how to accordion-fold/zig-zag-fold their paper. (Fold the short side of the paper up approximately 1 inch. Flip the paper over and fold it again, on top of your previous fold. Keep flipping and folding until you get to the end of the paper.)
3. The teacher will have to help each student pinch the bottom edge of the folded paper and staple or tape it together.



## **Other Activities**

**Take home activity** – Before or after the performance, send home the coloring sheet found on the last page of this study guide.

**Science** – Use this story to talk about different types of weather. The first page of the story states, “The sun did not shine. It was too wet to play. So we sat in the house all that cold, cold, wet day.” Talk about what activities you can do on a sunny day and what you can do on a rainy day.

**Introductions** – On pages 34-35, Sally and her brother introduce themselves to Thing 1 and Thing 2 by shaking hands. Have your students practice introducing themselves to each other by saying their names and shaking hands. The teacher can demonstrate by introducing himself/herself to each student and shaking each student’s hand.

**Snack** – One of The Cat’s tricks is to balance milk on a dish, so include milk with a snack. Also, one of the characters is a goldfish, so goldfish crackers would be a fun snack.

## **Post-show Discussion Questions**

After attending the performance, it is very important to talk to your students about their experience, memory, and reaction to the live performance. These are some possible questions:

- Tell me about what you saw on the field trip.
- Tell me about what you heard on the field trip.
- What will you remember about the performance?
- What surprised you about our field trip?
- What was the most exciting part of our field trip for you?

