


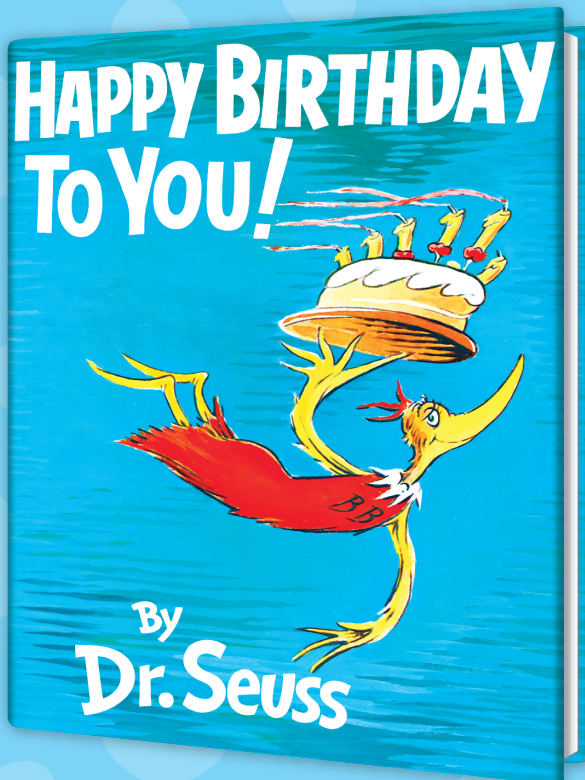
A READING
CELEBRATION

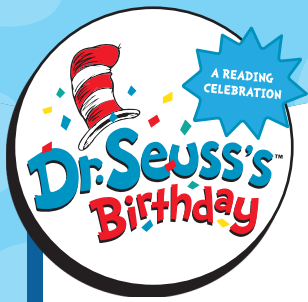
Dr. Seuss's™ Birthday



Happy Birthday to You!

by Dr. Seuss
Readers' Theater Script





PURPOSE:

- To allow students to experience Dr. Seuss's signature rhyme, rhythm, and alliteration
- To allow students to practice reading and speaking expressively
- To explore Dr. Seuss's fantastical storytelling style
- To prompt students to think about how birthday traditions vary from place to place

CAST:

1. **NARRATOR(s)**
2. **BIRTHDAY PERSON**
3. **BIRTHDAY BIRD**
4. **CHORUS**—everyone but the narrator(s), Birthday Bird, and Birthday Person
5. **HONK-HONKER** (birthday announcer)
6. **SMORGASBORD** (creature with platter of food)
7. **2 WHO-BUBS** (flower cutters)
8. **PETS** of varying heights
9. **SNOOKERS AND SNOOKERS** (bakers)
10. **DUTTER AND DUTTER** (cake cutters)

NOTE: Spoken lines are in regular font. Stage directions are in italics. You may choose to have more than one narrator. You may choose to break the Chorus into smaller groups or pairs, dividing up the Chorus parts.

SET AND PROPS:

As part of preparing for the performance, have students make the props for the story. Encourage them to use their Dr. Seuss—inspired imaginations when writing signs and making props.

SIGNS you will need:

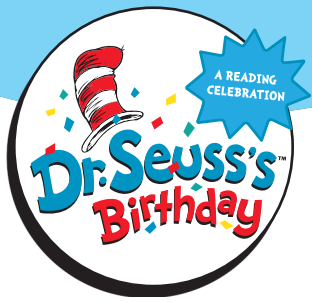
- Mt. Zorn
- Katroo Happy Birthday Asso-see-eye-ation
- Secret Katroo Birthday Hi-Sign-and-Shake
- Official Katroo Birthday Sounding-Off Place
- Birthday Flower Jungle
- Official Katroo Birthday Pet Reservation
- Birthday Pal-alace
- Official Katroo Birthday Cake Cookers

ITEMS TO MAKE out of paper, cardboard, papier-mâché, etc.:

- A horn, megaphone, or paper cone for Honk-Honker
- Scissors and colorful flowers for Who-Bubs (could make out of tissue paper or colored coffee filters)
- A platter with food for Smorgasbord
- A vase for flowers
- A string of hot dogs on a spool
- A bow to put on tallest pet
- A birthday cake
- 2 hatchets for cutting the cake

OTHER ITEMS:

- A pillow and blanket for the sleeping Birthday Person
- A step, box, or chair for Honk-Honker to stand on (Mt. Zorn), for Birthday Person to stand on (Sounding-Off Place), for Dutter and Dutter to stand on (poop deck)



*Narrator on one side of stage.
Sleeping Birthday Person is on the other side of the stage.
Chorus and Honk-Honker center stage. Birthday Bird off stage.*



NARRATOR: I wish we could do what they do in Katroo.
They sure know how to say "Happy Birthday to You!"

In Katroo, every year, on the day you were born
They start the day right in the bright early morn
When the Birthday Honk-Honker hikes up to **Mt. Zorn**

*Honk-Honker steps out of Chorus, climbs up on the step or box
(Mt. Zorn) and toots horn "honk honk."*

And let's loose a big blast on the big Birthday Horn.
And the voice of the horn calls out as it plays:



HONK-HONKER: Wake Up! For today is your Day of all Days!

Then the moment after my happy honk-honk is heard,
Comes a fluttering flip flap! And then comes THE BIRD!

Enter Birthday Bird.

HONK-HONKER: The Great Birthday Bird! And as far as I know,
Katroo is the only place where Birthday Birds grow.

NARRATOR: This bird has a brain. He's most beautifully brained.
With the brainiest bird-brain that's ever been trained.
He was trained by the most splendid Club in this nation,
The Katroo Happy Birthday Asso-see-eye-ation.



HONK-HONKER: And whether your name is Pete, Polly or Paul,
When your birthday comes round, he's in charge of it all.

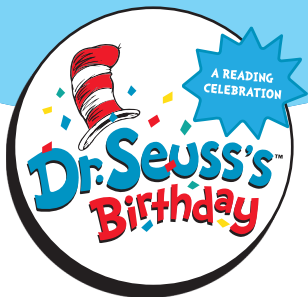
Honk-Honker steps back into Chorus.

BIRTHDAY BIRD: Whether your name is Nate, Nelly or Ned,
I know your address, and I head for your bed.
You hear a soft swoosh in the brightening sky.
You are not all awake. But you open one eye.
Then over the housetops and trees of Katroo,
You see me coming. To you. Just to you!

Birthday Bird flies across stage to sleeping Birthday Person.

NARRATOR: That Bird pops right in! You are up on your feet!





Birthday Person jumps up from bed.

You jump to the window! You meet and you greet
With the **Secret Katroo Birthday Hi-Sign-and-Shake**
That only good people with birthdays may make.



You do it just so. With each finger and toe.

Birthday Bird and Birthday Person stand facing each other, standing on one foot, touching fingers with the same hand as foot they are standing on. The other foot is raised behind each of them, with the corresponding hand touching a toe with a finger (See illustration in book)

NARRATOR: Then the Bird says,

BIRTHDAY BIRD: Come on! Brush your teeth and let's go!
It's your Day of all Days! It's the Best of the Best!
So don't waste a minute!
Hop to it! Get dressed!



Smorgasbord steps out of Chorus with a tray of food.

SMORGASBORD: Today you may eat whatever you want.
Today no one tells you you **cawnt** or you **shawnt**.
And, today, you don't have to be tidy or neat.
If you wish, you may eat with both hands and both feet.
So get in there and munch. Have a big munch-er-oo!
Today is your birthday! Today YOU ARE YOU!



Birthday Bird and Person eat from the tray.

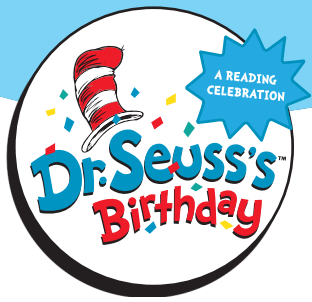
CHORUS: If we didn't have birthdays, you wouldn't be you.
If you'd never been born, well then what would you do?
If you'd never been born, well then what would you be?
You might be a fish! Or a toad in a tree!

Or worse than all that . . . Why, you might be a WASN'T!
A Wasn't has no fun at all. No he doesn't.
A Wasn't just isn't. He just isn't present.
But you . . . You ARE YOU! And, now isn't that pleasant?

Smorgasbord steps back into Chorus.

BIRTHDAY BIRD: Next, we'll go up to the top of the toppest blue space,
The **Official Katroo Birthday Sounding-Off Place!**





*Birthday Bird and Birthday Person
move to step or box. Birthday Person climbs up.*



BIRTHDAY BIRD: Come on! Open your mouth and sound off at the sky!
Shout loud at the top of your voice

BIRTHDAY PERSON: I AM !!
ME! I am !!
And I may not know why
But I know that I like it.
Three cheers! I AM !!



NARRATOR: And now, on this Day-of-All-Days in Katroo,
The Asso-see-eye-ation has built just for you
A **birthday flower jungle** with blooms of all hue.
The best-sniffing flowers that anyone grows
We have grown to be sniffed by your own private nose.



*Birthday Bird and Birthday Person leave step and move back to center stage.
Who-Bubs step out of Chorus with flowers and scissors, pretending to cut them.*

WHO-BUB 1: They smell like licorice! And cheese!
We've got lots of Who-Bubs up in the trees.

WHO-BUB 2: To snip with snippers! Nip with Nippers!
Clip clop with clapping clippers.

WHO-BUB 1: Nip and snip with clipping cloppers.
Snip and snop with snipping snoppers.



WHO-BUB 2: All for you, we Who-Bubs clip!
Happy Birthday! Nop and nip!

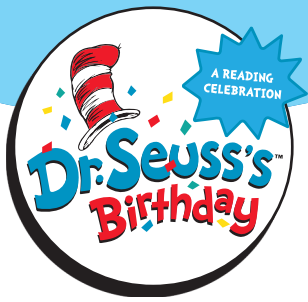


Who-Bubs hand the flowers to the Birthday Person and then step back to the Chorus.

NARRATOR: Now this is done, and I've got a hunch
It's time to eat your Birthday Lunch . . .
For Birthday luncheons, as a rule,
We serve hot dogs, rolled on a spool.

BIRTHDAY BIRD: So stuff and stuff
And stuff and stuff
And stuff until you've had enough.





*Birthday Bird takes flowers and puts them in a vase.
Birthday Person eats hot dogs.*

BIRTHDAY BIRD: Are you finished eating? Time really does fly.
Sing loud!

BIRTHDAY PERSON: I am lucky!

BIRTHDAY BIRD: Sing loud!



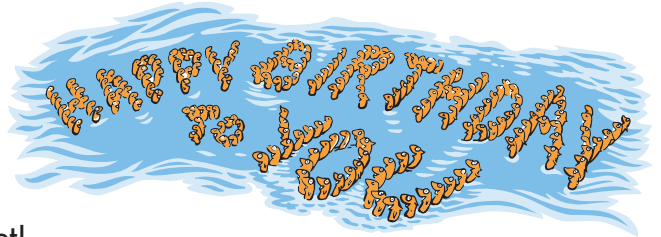
BIRTHDAY PERSON: I am !!

CHORUS: If you'd never been born, then you might be an isn't!
An Isn't has no fun at all. No he **disn't**.
He never has birthdays, and that isn't pleasant.
You have to be born, or you don't get a present.



BIRTHDAY BIRD: A present! A-ha!
Now what kind shall I give . . . ?
Why the kind you'll remember
As long as you live.

Would you like a fine pet?
Well, that's just what you'll get.
I'll give you the fanciest pet ever yet!



NARRATOR: As you see, we have here in the heart of our nation
The **Official Katroo Birthday Pet Reservation**.
From east of the East-est to west of the West-est
We've searched the whole world just to bring you the best-est.
They come in all sizes...small, medium, tall.

Pets of different heights step out from Chorus.

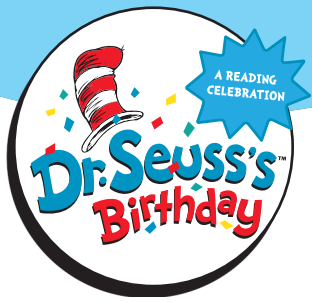
BIRTHDAY BIRD: If you wish, I will find you the tallest of all!
To find who's the tallest,
We start with the smallest.
We start with the smallest.



Birthday Bird finds the smallest pet.

Then what do we do?
We line them all up. Back to back, Two by two.

Pets line up by height, back to back, two by two.



Taller and taller. And when we're all through,
We finally will find out who's taller than who.

But you have to be smart and keep watching their feet.

PETS: Because sometimes we stand on our tiptoes and cheat.

Birthday Bird catches one of the Pets on tiptoe.

NARRATOR: And so from the smaller, we stack 'em up taller.

PETS: And taller. And taller. And taller and taller.

BIRTHDAY BIRD: And now! Here's the one who is taller than all-er!
He's yours. He's all yours. The's the very top tallest.
I know you'll enjoy him. The tallest-of-allest!

*Birthday Bird puts a bow on the tallest Pet and gives him
to the Birthday Person. Other Pets go back into Chorus.*

CHORUS: And now, as the sunset burns red in the west,
Comes the night of the Day-of-the-Best-of-the-Best!
The Night-of-All-Nights-of-All-Nights in Katroo!
Your Big Birthday Party soon starts to begin
In the finest Pal-alance you've ever been in!

*Birthday Bird, Birthday Person, and Pet
move to another space on stage.*

BIRTHDAY BIRD: And here comes your cake! Cooked by Snookers and Snookers.
The **Official Katroo Happy Birthday Cake Cookers.**

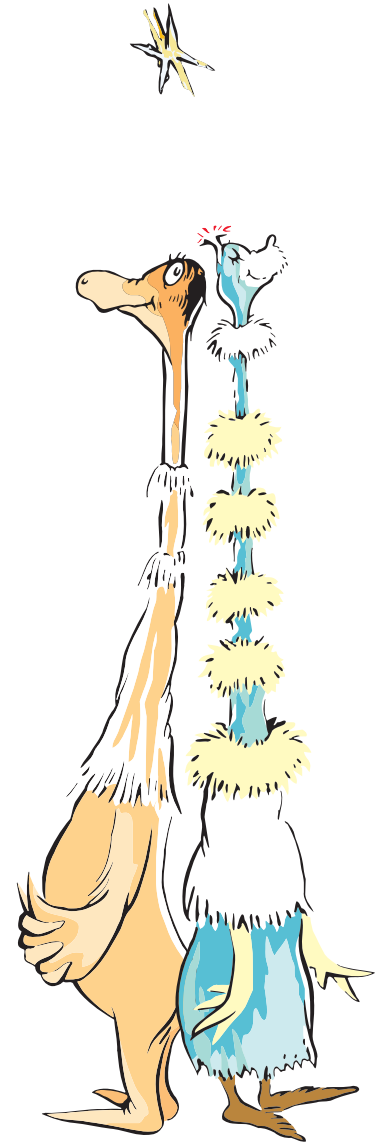
*Snookers and Snookers step out of Chorus
with a big cake and stand near step or box.*

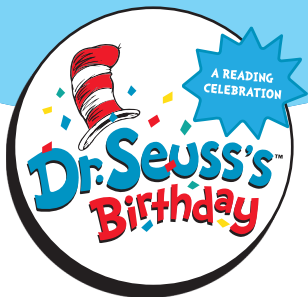
SNOOKERS AND SNOOKERS:

We're Snookers and Snookers, we're happy to say.
We're the only cake cookers who cook cake today.
Made of guaranteed, certified strictly Grade-A
Peppermint cucumber sausage-paste butter.

Dutter and Dutter step out of Chorus and climb up on step or box.

DUTTER AND DUTTER: We're the world's finest cake slicers, Dutter and Dutter.





Dutter and Dutter point to each other.

As Dutter and Dutter, with our hatchets a-flutter
High up on the poop deck, we stand ready to cut her.

Dutter and Dutter point to the cake.

BIRTHDAY BIRD: Today you are you! That is truer than true!
There is no one alive how is you-er than you!
Shout loud!

BIRTHDAY PERSON: I am lucky to be what I am!
Thank goodness I'm not just a clam or a ham
Or a dusty old jar of sour gooseberry jam!
I am what I am! That's a great thing to be!
If I say to myself, HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME!



NARRATOR: Now, by Horseback and Bird-back and Hiffer-back, too,
Come your friends! All your friends! From all over Katroo!

*Everyone in the Chorus comes to greet the Birthday Person, and
Snookers and Snookers pass out pieces of cake that the Dutter and Dutter are cutting.*

NARRATOR: And the **Birthday Pal-alace** heats up with hot friends.
And your party goes on!

Some friends play with the Pet, while others smell the flowers or dance or play games.

CHORUS: On and on
Til it ends.

BIRTHDAY BIRD: When it ends,
You're much happier,
Richer and fatter.

Friends step back into the Chorus.

BIRTHDAY BIRD: And I fly you home on a very soft platter.

Birthday Bird leads Birthday Person back to bed and flies away.

YOU DECIDE: Does the Birthday Bird leave the Pet or some flowers near the bed?

NARRATOR: So that's what the Birthday Bird does in Katroo.
And I wish I could do all these great things for you!