

2022 – 2023

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

# EDUCATOR GUIDE

children's  
theatre  
company

# Dr. Seuss's **HOW** The **GRINCH** **STOLE** **CHRISTMAS!**

**November 15, 2022 - January 6, 2023**

## *A Children's Theatre Company Original Production*

A miserly and miserable, ever-so-cantankerous Grinch has observed the despicable Christmas joy of the Whos with disdain, from a distance, for decades. Enough! In this favorite holiday story, filled with music and Seussian rhymes, he conceives a dastardly plot to destroy the holiday they love. It's the smallest of the Whos, tiny Cindy Lou, who extends a hand. Through the combination of kindness and community, we witness not only a change in the course of Who-History, but the size and capacity of the cantankerous Grinch's heart.

based on the book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* by **DR. SEUSS**

book and lyrics by **TIMOTHY MASON**

music by **MEL MARVIN**

directed by **PETER C. BROSIUS**

choreography by **LINDA TALCOTT LEE**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>About Dr. Seuss</b> .....	<b>page 4</b>
<b>Springboard:</b> Discussion questions & curriculum ideas .....	<b>page 5</b>
<b>Class Act:</b> Classroom activities based in theatre .....	<b>page 6</b>
<b>Write it Out:</b> Classroom activities based in writing .....	<b>page 8</b>
<b>Team Builder:</b> Classroom activities to build collaboration ....	<b>page 9</b>
<b>Worksheet Station:</b> Copyable worksheets & projects .....	<b>page 14</b>
<b>Further Resources</b> .....	<b>page 20</b>

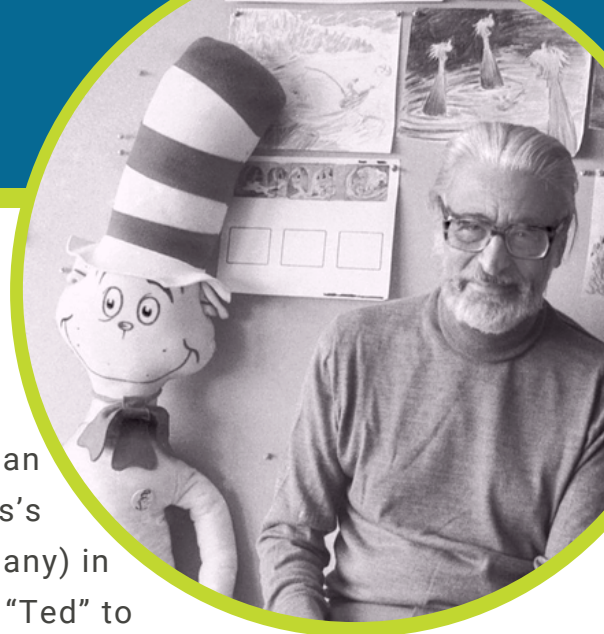


For virtual activities, videos, and more, join the creativity on the

**[Flipgrid Discovery Library!](#)**

# About Dr. Seuss

Born on March 2, 1904, in Springfield, Massachusetts, Theodor Geisel published his first children's book, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, under the name of Dr. Seuss in 1937. If you want to pronounce the name the way his family did, say Zoice, not Soose. Seuss is a Bavarian name, and was his mother's maiden name: Henrietta Seuss's parents emigrated from Bavaria (part of modern-day Germany) in the nineteenth century. Theodor Seuss Geisel – known as "Ted" to family and friends began signing his work under the mock-scholarly title of "Dr. Theophrastus Seuss" in 1927 as a magazine cartoonist. He shortened that to "Dr. Seuss" in 1928.



After a year of scraping by, Ted stumbled into the career that would make him famous: advertising. For a 1928 issue of *Judge* magazine, Seuss drew a cartoon in which a knight says, "Darn it all, another dragon. And just after I'd sprayed the whole castle with Flit!" Flit was a popular insecticide at the time and the wife of an advertising executive saw the cartoon and asked her husband to hire Seuss to write ads for Flit.

In a typical Flit cartoon ad, Seuss would use the phrase "Quick, Henry, the Flit!" and the Father (Henry) looks for the Flit to save the day. Dr. Seuss's ad campaign was a hit. "Quick, Henry, the Flit!" became a catchphrase that everyone knew. Seuss went on to create ads for many other products, large and small and for the next thirty years, advertising would remain his main source of income. *The Cat in the Hat* changed all that.

At the Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden in his hometown of Springfield, Massachusetts, a bronze Ted Geisel sits in a chair next to the Cat in the Hat. Nearby are some of the other characters he created— the Lorax, the Grinch and his dog Max, Yertle the Turtle, Horton the Elephant, and Thidwick the Big-Hearted Moose. Seuss's second wife founded the Dr. Seuss Foundation, which provides primary support for over one hundred medical, cultural, and socially active institutions. As curator of the Seuss legacy, she reminds us that – in the words of the Lorax –



***"UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot,  
nothing is going to get better. It's not."***



Through the art and poetry of his books, Seuss encourages us to think creatively, participate in society, and do what we can to make it better.

# Springboard

## Ideas of what to talk about, write about, or explore while connecting *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* to your classroom curriculum



Write a review of the performance or a letter to the actors.

Have you ever hated something the way the Grinch hates Christmas? Do you still hate it or did you change your mind?

Do you think the Grinch is the hero or the villain of this story? Why?

What holiday traditions are important to your family? What foods do you eat? What songs do you sing?

Decorate your classroom for the holiday season and plan a Grinch-themed party!

What do you think caused the Grinch's heart to grow 3 sizes? What makes your heart grow?

Why do you think the Grinch hated Christmas? Why do you think he hated the Whos? Write a prequel to this story that explains the origins of his hatred.

What do you think the Grinch's goal is in stealing all of the Who's presents and decorations?

The Who's were sad when they discovered that all of their presents were stolen. How did they cope with their big feelings? When you are sad, how do cope with the big feelings? What makes you feel better?

Retell the story from Cindy Lou Who's perspective. How does it change?

Discuss poetic devices such as alliteration, simple, and metaphor. Find evidence of these in the book.

Explore rhyme, repetition, and rhythm in the story.

In the musical, Old Max retells the story of what happened when he was a puppy. Write a version where Old Grinch is retelling the story. What has he learned? How has he changed?

Write an article for the Who-ville newspaper retelling the events of the story.

The Grinch is not very nice to his pet dog, Max! Do you have any pets at home? How do you ensure they are taken care of? What advice would you give the Grinch?

Compare and contrast the original book with the musical? What other adaptations can you find?

Plan a healthy meal for the Who-Christmas feast!

The Grinch feels overwhelmed when the Whos make too much noise. What makes you feel overwhelmed? What helps you feel calm?



# ***Class Act: Actor's Tools***

Actors use many tools to help them tell a story; three we focus on at CTC are body, voice, and imagination.

Explain that projecting means using a loud voice and enunciating means speaking clearly. Have students practice projecting and enunciating by saying "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" as a group, and then individually.

Brainstorm emotions that actors might portray. Try saying "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" using those emotions. Students will naturally begin to use their body to portray the emotion as they say the line. Brainstorm how your body looks or feels different when you are feeling these emotions. Allow a few students to showcase their work as a solo.

List some of the characters in the play along with characteristics of each. How would each of those characters say the title? Say the line as a group, using different characters as inspiration. Then, ask for volunteers to perform the line individually.

Then, try saying some of these Seuss tongue twisters!

- "He stares down from his cave with a mean grinchy frown."
- "Wind up the Whapper!"
- "Springing a sprocket up to the sky."
- "Luke Luck likes lakes."
- "Fox in socks on box on Knox."

# ***Class Act: This Story Needs...***

**Objective:** This activity challenges students to create original dialogue and examine the emotions of characters. Students will use observation skills and defend their observations using evidence from the scene.

**Directions:** Brainstorm with students important moments from the story or play. Choose a specific moment to build a tableau. Tableau is an acting word for frozen image. Choose five students to be actors. Have the first student come to the front of the class and say, "This story needs..." For example, if the scene is Who's shopping for Christmas, a student might say, "This scene needs a present." The student will then use their body to become that character or object. The remaining four students add into the scene, one at a time, until all five students are working together to create the objects or characters in the scene.

Once all the students are frozen in the scene, allow each to make up a line of dialogue their character or object would say. Challenge the students to connect to what the other actors are saying to create a conversation. Ask the rest of the class to make observations about the scene and defend their analysis with evidence from the scene (facial expressions, levels, etc.).

With the actors still frozen in tableau, allow each to say what their character might be thinking or feeling in the scene. Reflect on how what we say and what we think are different. How do you decide what to say out loud and what to keep to yourself?



## Class Act: Narrative Picture

**Objective:** This activity challenges students to compare and contrast characters, infer meaning in a picture, and practice creative problem solving skills. Students will use their imagination to create imagined situations within a sequence of events.

**Directions:** Show the class the illustration below from the book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. Give each student an opportunity to share with the class what they observe about this picture.

Divide students into small groups and have them re-create the picture with their bodies. Once all the students are frozen in the scene, allow each to make up a line of dialogue their character/object would say. Allow each student in the scene to say what their character/object is thinking in the scene. Reflect on how what we say and what we think are different. How do you decide what to say out loud and what to keep to yourself?

Dismiss students back to their small groups to brainstorm what might have happened right before this photo was taken. Create a tableau of this situation.

As a large group, analyze the conflict of this scene and brainstorm how this conflict might be solved. Dismiss students back to their small group to create a tableau of a potential solution to the conflict. Allow each group to showcase all three tableaux (beginning, middle, and end) in front of the class.

Ask the audience to make observations about the created scenes. How was the conflict solved?



# Class Act: Character Interview

**Objective:** In this activity, students will use their imagination to invent backgrounds, justify actions, and answer questions from a character’s perspective. Students will generate questions to better understand a variety of characters and build empathy. Students will offer advice and ideas to help the characters.

**Directions:** Place a chair at the front of the room. Ask for a volunteer to come to the front of the class and pretend to be the Grinch.

The rest of the students will play the role of the school guidance counselor and the Grinch has just been sent to the office for trying to steal the schools holiday decorations, gifts, etc. Invite the “counselors” to ask the Grinch questions that a school counselor might ask and have student playing the Grinch respond as the character. It may be helpful to model asking the Grinch a couple of starter questions before opening up to the class. It is helpful to remind counselors that it is their goal to help the Grinch, not to yell at him.

Sample questions:

- “Why did you take all of the school’s holiday decorations?”
- “What were you feeling when you decided to take them.”
- “How do you think the students felt when they saw their decorations had been taken?”
- Give students an opportunity to offer some advice to the Grinch.

After interviewing the Grinch, do the same activity for other characters in the story such as Cindy Lou Who, Max the Dog, Mayor Who, or Grandma Who.

## Write it Out: Paper Bag Stories

**Objective:** This activity challenges students to create an original story with unconventional characters. This activity also encourages students to challenge perspective.

**Directions:** Collect two paper bags and assign a prompt from the table below for each bag. For example, you might choose to have a “common objects” bag and a “settings” bag. Write examples of these things on slips of paper and place them in the matching bag. Write enough slips to have one for each student in each bag.

Paper Bag Prompts	
Common Objects	Emotions
Animals	Physical Actions
Settings	Characters

Allow each student to choose one prompt from each bag and challenge them to write a story about those things.



# Write It Out: Role on the Wall

**Objective:** This activity allows students to brainstorm external and internal factors for characters and create deeper, more empathetic understanding of character motivations.

**Directions:** Draw an outline of a person on the board. Choose a character from the play such as the Grinch, Cindy Lou Who, or Max the Dog for your shape to represent. Brainstorm all the external things that impact the character (other characters, incidents we see and those we hear about, societal pressures, etc.) and write those around the outside of the figure. Next, fill the inside of the character with ideas of how the character feels about all the things on the outside.

Dismiss students to work individually on the activity focusing on a different character. Retell or rewrite the story of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* from the perspective of that character. How does that change the story? Did this activity change your opinion of that character? Have you ever experienced similar feelings or events?

## Team Builder: Whatchama, Whatchama, Who!

**Objective:** This activity gives students a kinesthetic anchor to remember characters. Students will listen to prompts and respond accordingly.

**Directions:** Everyone stands in a circle with one player in the middle of the circle. That person points at someone in the circle and says, as quickly and clearly as possible, “Whatchama, Whatchama, Who!” In the interest of clarity, the person who gets pointed at will be called “Z.” Z tries to say “Who!” before the pointer can finish saying “Whatchama, Whatchama, Who!”

When students are comfortable, add this twist. If the person in the center says only “Who!” then Z must remain silent. If Z says “Who!” then they are out.

If the students are familiar with the story, ask them to describe the Grinch character and write their descriptions on the board. Invite students to consider how the Grinch’s voice sounds. Practice by having students say: “How the Grinch Stole Christmas” as the Grinch. What does the Grinch’s body look like? Practice by making a frozen image of the Grinch. With students, choose one frozen image to represent that character. When you point at a student and say “Grinch” they have 5 seconds to recreate the frozen picture and say “How the Grinch Stole Christmas” in the Grinch voice. Go from student to student using any of the prompts to test students’ focus and response. Add more characters if you like such as Cindy Lou and Max the Dog. Create tableaux and sounds for each character you add in. Example prompts are below if you need inspiration.

Prompt	Gesture
Max	Hands up to represent paws and panting like a dog.
Grandpa Who	Slouch shoulders and holds an invisible cane in front.
Whos	Z poses with a giant smile and hands out. The two students on either side of Z do the same and the three people sway from side to side.



## Team Builder: Stand Up If...

**Objective:** This exercise activates prior knowledge around concepts or topics in life, reading, and writing. The exercise also builds community as participants share and observe common experiences and celebrate differences.

**Directions:** Ask students to stay seated at their desks. Tell students they will hear a series of prompts starting with “Stand up if...” If the statement applies to them, they should stand. Choose a couple of students to ask follow-up questions related to the statement. All students sit again before being prompted with another “stand up if” statement.

Begin with non-content related prompts to establish the pattern and get everyone moving and listening. Then move to content related statements that will gradually get more sensitive and/or detailed as the exercise progresses.

Sample Dialogue:

“Stand up if...”:

General Statements:

- You like pizza.
- You like to read.
- You play an instrument.
- You have seen a play before.
- You have been in a play before.

Statements related to *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*:

- You like to sing.
- You enjoy receiving presents.
- You have read the book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.
- You celebrate a holiday with your family.
- You have felt grumpy.
- You have felt like an outsider in your community.

# Team Builder: Seuss Sequencing

**Objective:** This activity allows students to explore lines from the story and create a kinesthetic anchor to remember the meaning of the line.

**Directions:** Cut up the lines of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* provided on the next page. Mix up the slips of paper and pass out one slip to each student. One at a time, have students read their lines aloud. Challenge the students to order themselves so their lines create a sequenced story from left to right. Students can use context clues, rhyming schemes, and storyline to put themselves in order.

Read the lines aloud from left to right. Does the story make sense? If it doesn't, what changes need to be made? Allow students to make the necessary edits before reading it again.

Once the students have their lines in order, have the students:

1. Read the lines to themselves.
2. Read the lines aloud altogether a couple of times to help the students feel confident.
3. Say the lines quietly.
4. Say the lines loudly (without screaming).
5. Try saying them with different emotions such as happy, excited, or sad.
6. Try saying the line with your nose up in the air and again with your nose down.

Once you have tried lots of different ways to say the line and everyone feels confident, allow students to choose a specific way to say the line. Then, have each student make a tableau or frozen image with their body that represents their line. Practice saying the line with emotion while making the tableau a couple of times to feel confident.

When everyone is ready, have students perform their line one at a time, in order.

For younger students, you can number the line cards to work on number sequencing. For pre-reading students, give them a set of 4 illustrations from the book and challenge them to put them in order. Once they have put them in order, ask them to tell you the story of those 4 images.



# Team Builder: Seuss Sequencing cont.

Every Who down in Who-ville like Christmas a lot...

But the Grinch, who lived just north of Who-ville did NOT.

The Grinch hated Christmas! The whole Christmas season!

Now, please don't ask why. No one quite knows the reason.

It could be his head wasn't screwed on just right.

It could be, perhaps, that his shoes were too tight.

May have been that his heart was two sizes too small.

But, whatever the reasons, his heart or his shoes,

He stood there on Christmas Eve, hating the Whos,

Staring down from his cave with a sour, Grinchy frown

At the warm lighted windows below in their town.

For he knew every Who down in Who-ville beneath

was busy now, hanging a mistletoe wreath

"Any they're hanging their stockings!" he snarled with a sneer.

"Tomorrow is Christmas! It's practically here!"

Then he growled, with his Grinch fingers nervously drumming

"I MUST find a way to stop Christmas from coming!"

# Team Builder: Late for the Party

**Objective:** This activity challenges students to create a story that justifies why they are late for the Who Christmas party including a beginning, middle, and end. Students will use their bodies to physically communicate the story.

**Directions:** Choose one student to play the late Who. This student will leave the classroom for a moment. Once the student is out of the room, work as a class to decide the story of why they are late for class. Include a beginning, middle, and end (example: First, their alarm clock didn't go off, then their bus got a flat tire, finally got to the party on a pogo stick). NOTE: first time around, choose a simple story that is easily acted out. Give students an opportunity to think about how they will act each part of the story out.

Bring the student back into the classroom and let them know that they are late for the party! They must come to the front of the class and tell you exactly why they are late. You will stand with your back to the rest of the students. Students can physically communicate to the Who the reasons they were late. However, if you turn around and look at the class, they must appear as though they were sitting still, not telling the Who anything. If you hear them, you can eliminate certain players as speaking is not part of the game. Once the Who has listed the beginning, middle, and end of their story correctly, they (and the rest of the class) have won! If they cannot correctly tell the story, the teacher wins!

You can coach your students along by reminding them to slow down, repeat information, clarify the movement, etc. Once class has the hang of it, you can challenge them with more specificity or more relation to the book (they were late because Max was begging for a bone, then they had to stop and shop the big sale at Who-mart, and then Grinch stole all their presents).

# Team Builder: Grinch Grams

**Objective:** This activity helps students understand that words have the power to make hearts grow—just like the Grinch's heart grew.

**Directions:** Randomly assign each student another student's name using popsicle sticks, names in a hat, or another method of your choosing. Have the students keep their assigned person a secret. Give each student a pre-cut heart. Ask students to think about the person they drew and write one positive comment about that person on the heart.

If you would like to extend the activity, students can decorate the heart or layer hearts of different colors to symbolize the heart growing three sizes just like the Grinch's. When everyone is finished, hang the hearts on a bulletin board or the wall for everyone to see. Students can guess which heart is for which person or guess which student gave them the compliment.

These Grinch grams can also be used to decorate lockers or cubbies. Extend the experience by making hearts for people outside your classroom such as family members, community members, or volunteers!

# Grinch Mad-Lib

Songwriting takes a lot of work by people with a lot of different skills. For example, in “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch,” Dr. Seuss wrote the lyrics (words of the song), Albert Hague composed the music (the notes of the song) and Thurl Ravenscroft sang the song. Not to mention the band who played the music and the audio engineers who recorded it. Now it’s your turn.

Fill in the blanks below to create your own song describing Mr. Grinch. Use the categories listed below the blanks as a guide. Try to use the first word you think of rather than trying to create logical sentences. Remember, an adjective is a descriptive word, a noun is a person, place or thing and a verb is an action word. Perform your Seussian creation!

---

You’re a \_\_\_\_\_ one, Mr. Grinch.  
(emotion)

You really are a \_\_\_\_\_.  
(body part)

You’re as \_\_\_\_\_ as a \_\_\_\_\_.  
(adjective) (noun)

You’re as \_\_\_\_\_ as a \_\_\_\_\_, Mr. Grinch.  
(adjective) (animal)

You’re a \_\_\_\_\_ with a \_\_\_\_\_.  
(adjective) (fruit) (adjective) (color) (part of a fruit)

You’re a \_\_\_\_\_ one, Mr. Grinch.  
(something scary)

Your \_\_\_\_\_’s an empty \_\_\_\_\_.  
(internal organ) (noun)

You’ve got \_\_\_\_\_ in your soul, Mr. Grinch.  
(something stinky)

I wouldn’t \_\_\_\_\_ you with a \_\_\_\_\_.  
(verb) (number) (unit of length) (noun)

You’re a \_\_\_\_\_ one, Mr. Grinch.  
(negative adjective)

You have \_\_\_\_\_ in your \_\_\_\_\_.  
(plural insect) (facial expression)

# Grinch Mad-Lib Continued

You have all the \_\_\_\_\_ sweetness of a sea sick \_\_\_\_\_, Mr. Grinch.  
(adjective) (animal)

You're a \_\_\_\_\_, Mr. Grinch.  
(adjective)

You're a \_\_\_\_\_  
(adjective) (nonsense word that rhymes with previous adjective) (animal)

Your \_\_\_\_\_ is full of \_\_\_\_\_  
(internal organ) (adjective) (plural article of clothing)

Your soul is full of \_\_\_\_\_  
(something sticky)

The three words that best describe you are as follows, and I quote:

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_!  
(adjective) (adjective starting with the same sound) (adjective starting with the same sound)



# Traditions

Traditions can include: clothing (Santa hat, kente and kaftans) food or meals (roast beef, latke, corn) greetings (Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Habari gani?), songs (hymns or carols), decorations or symbolic items (trees, menorah, kinara), colors (red, green and black; blue and white)

Brainstorm the holidays your family celebrates. Choose your favorite and fill in your traditions in the boxes below with either words or drawings.

Songs We Sing	
Decorations We Put Up	
Words We Say	Foods We Eat
	Clothes We Wear
	Places We Go



# Who-ville Inventions

What will be under the Who Christmas tree this year? A Thing-a-ma-ding or Zing-a-ding? Or a brand new invention created by you? Using all recycled materials, create an invention that could be a Who-ville holiday gift. Take a moment to brainstorm possible inventions answer the questions below to guide your creation. Then draw a picture of what you hope your invention looks like on the next page. When you are finished planning, grab your materials and start building!

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What problem will your invention solve or what want/need will it fulfill?

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What materials do you need and why?

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What are you going to name your invention and why?

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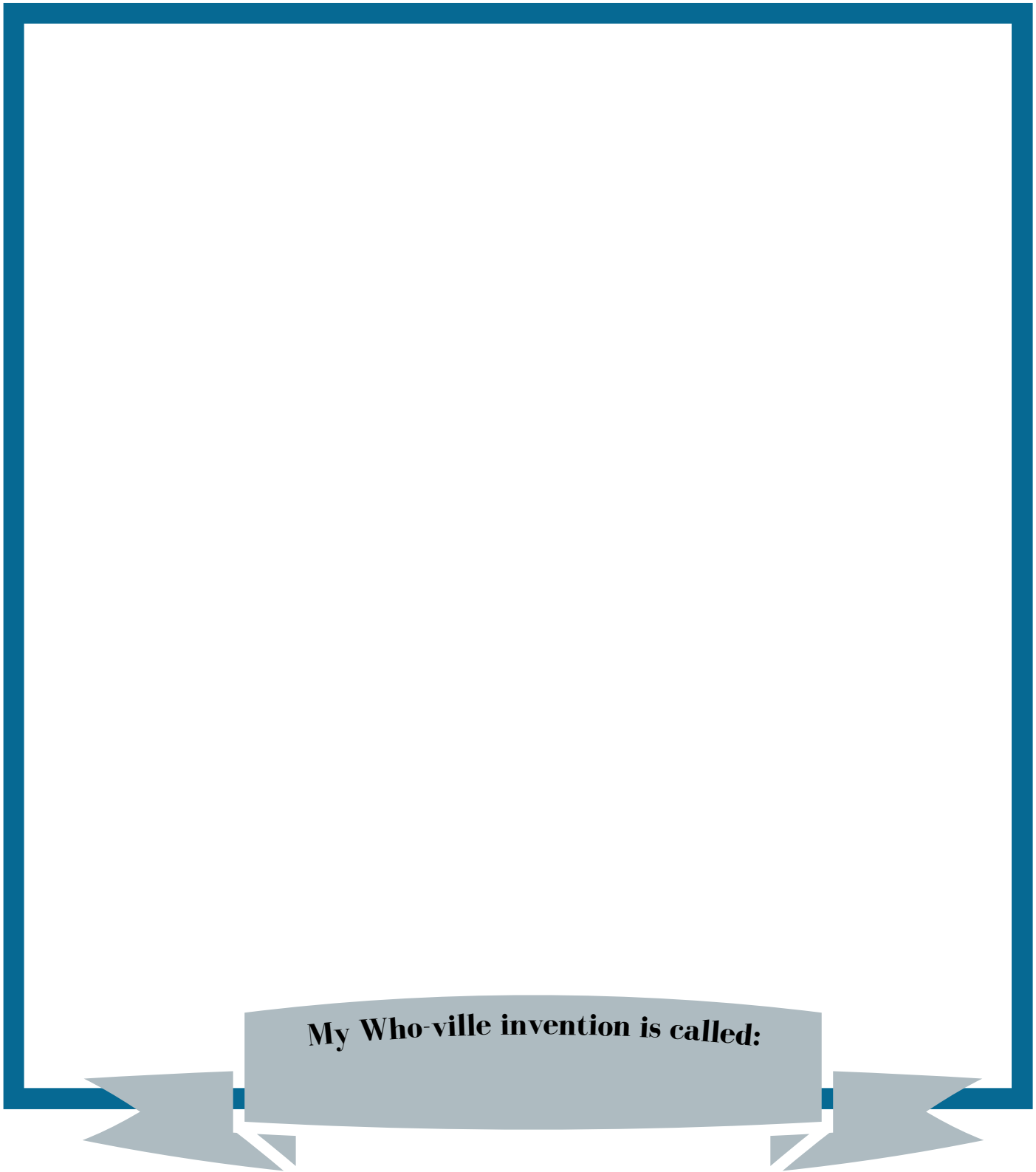
What are the possible road blocks or problems that you could encounter during construction? How can you avoid these problems?

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Now that you've brainstormed, create a drawing of what your invention will look like when it is finished in the box below. Don't forget to include it's name!



**My Who-ville invention is called:**

When your invention is finished, create an infomercial to present in front of the class. Don't forget to include the name of the product, how it is used, and what it costs.

# Corkboard Conversations

Use the sticky notes below to think critically about *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.

Three adjectives that describe this play are...

- 1
- 2
- 3

This play made me feel...

This play made me think about...

A status I would post on my social media after seeing this show is...

A question I still have is...

This play taught me...



My Rating of  
*How the Grinch Stole Christmas*  
at Children's Theatre Company

# FURTHER RESOURCES

## More About *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*

History of Dr. Seuss by  
Learn Bright

[Watch](#)

Mr. Grinch Rhythm  
Recess

[Watch](#)

Grinch Reader's  
Theatre Script

[Learn More](#)

Kid's Questions  
Answered by the Grinch

[Read More](#)

Post-show  
Activities

[Resources](#)

Building Who-Shoes by  
CTC Artizens

[Read More](#)

Building Who Costumes by  
CTC Artizens

[Read More](#)

Behind the Scenes of  
The Wild Ride

[Watch](#)

## More Fun!

Seussville  
Online Games

[Play](#)

Seussville Classroom  
Resources

[Learn More](#)

Seuss in Springfield  
Online Activities

[Explore](#)

Scholastic Dr. Seuss  
Activities

[Read More](#)

Mail Letters to:

**Children's Theatre Company**  
2400 Third Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Submit Student Questions at:

[www.childrenstheatre.org/offbookquestions](http://www.childrenstheatre.org/offbookquestions)

Check out more activities on:



Flipgrid

Questions? Email:

[schools@childrenstheatre.org](mailto:schools@childrenstheatre.org)

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