

# Life Lessons from Dr. Seuss

## Course Syllabus

**Facilitator:** Jessica Huang (jahuang@mit.edu)  
**Class Email:** seuss-sleuths@googlegroups.com

**Course Structure:** Through case studies and open discussions, we will explore the historical context behind Dr. Seuss' stories and the relevance of his lessons to the issues we face today. Some topics may have a guest speaker. In every class, we will also spend some time brainstorming ways we can work on the challenges brought up in these books. If students are interested, we can set aside time for working on a plan to address an issue of our choice. The last class may include an opportunity for students to present their action plans and get feedback from fellow students and guest reviewers.

**Prerequisites:** An open mind & the willingness to try green eggs and ham (vegetarian options available)

### Readings:

- 1. Dr. Seuss Books:** We will take turns reading Dr. Seuss books in class, occasionally watching the original animated short films or listening to audio recordings. To allow for more discussion time in class, books and supplemental reading materials may occasionally be assigned as homework, not to exceed 20-30 minutes a week.
- 2. Case Studies:** We will also go over articles and case studies on topics related to the Dr. Seuss books of the week. Students are encouraged to regularly share information and recommended reading with the class.

### Class Schedule:

Date	Topics (Subject to change, depending on student interest)
April 17	<i>Green Eggs and Ham</i> & the advantage of being open-minded <i>The Lorax</i> & the importance of environmental conservation <i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas!</i> & the dangers of materialism
April 24	<i>The Butter Battle Book</i> & the drawbacks of an arms race <i>Yertle the Turtle</i> & the dangers of unchecked ambition <i>The Zax</i> & the importance of compromise
May 1	<i>What was I scared of?</i> & overcoming our fears of the unfamiliar <i>Horton Hears a Who!</i> & the downside of isolationism <i>The Sneetches</i> & the importance of equality
May 8	<i>The Cat in the Hat</i> & thinking outside of the box to promote literacy <i>The Foot Book</i> & avoiding the tendency to prejudge <i>Oh, the Thinks You Can Think!</i> & the potential of imagination and creativity
May 15	<i>Bartholomew and the Oobleck</i> & the importance of humility <i>Horton Hatches the Egg</i> & the value of perseverance <b>Reviewing Our Action Plans</b> <i>Oh, the Places You'll Go!</i> & the opportunities ahead of us