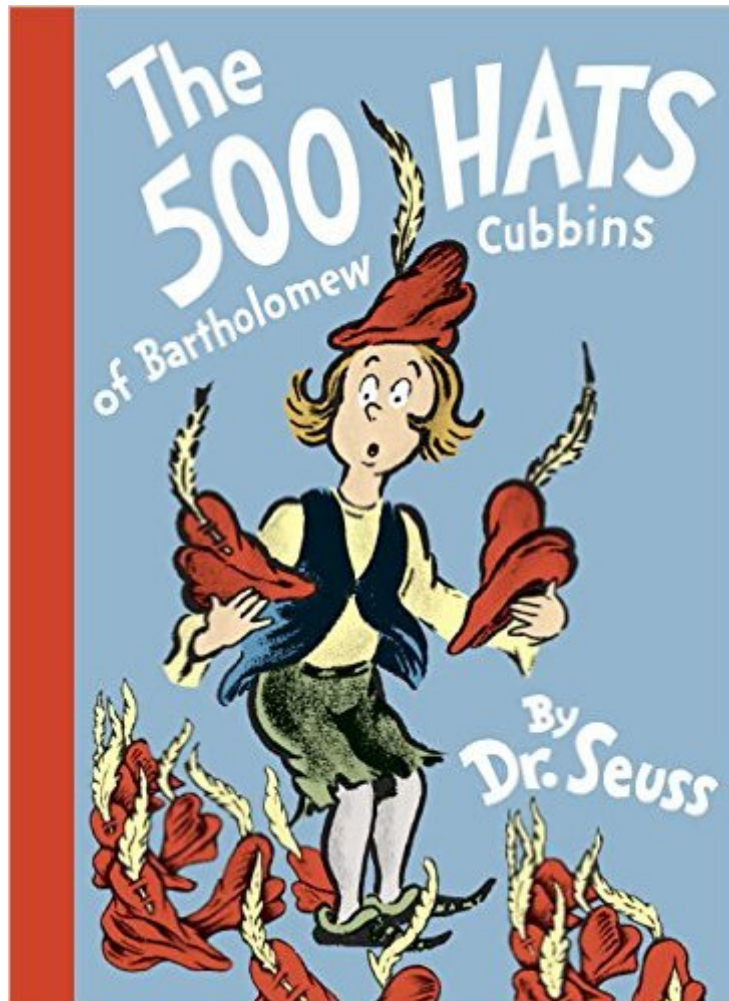


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The 500 Hats Of Bartholomew Cubbins (Classic Seuss)



Synopsis

Celebrate the 75th birthday of this classic treatise on bullying by Dr. Seuss with our new foil-covered, color-enhanced Anniversary Edition! As topical today as when it was first published in 1938, *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* is the story of a young peasant (the same as in *Bartholomew and the Oobleck* a Caldecott Honor Award-winner), and his unjust treatment at the hands of King Derwin. While *The 500 Hats* is one of Dr. Seuss's earliest and lesser known works, it is nevertheless totally Seussian and addresses subjects that we know the good doctor was passionate about throughout his life: the abuse of power (as in *Yertle the Turtle* and *Horton Hears a Who!*); rivalry (as in *The Sneetches*); and of course, zany good humor (as in *The Cat in the Hat* and the 43 other books he wrote and illustrated)! Available for a limited time only, this is a perfect way to introduce new readers to an old classic, or to reward existing fans.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD520L (What's this?)

Series: Classic Seuss

Hardcover: 56 pages

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Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Dr. Seuss #525 in Books > Children's Books > Classics #789

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Readers

Age Range: 5 - 9 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 4

Customer Reviews

The Bartholomew Cubbins books are examples of Dr. Seuss's early children's stories ("The 500 Hats..." having been published in 1938), and thus they lack the sing-song poetry and bright colors of his later works. They are my favorite Seuss books, however, as they speak to any child

who is frustrated and put upon by adults who talk down to them. The theme of *The 500 Hats...* is as relevant, if not more so, than it was when the book was originally published. The magically re-appearing hats is frustrating to Bartholomew, but to the adults around him it is a terrifying and disturbing thing, not because it is dangerous but because it threatens their sense of what should be. The interventions they try range from the simple (calling in "experts" like a tailor, wise men and magicians) to the desperate and frightening (ordering Bartholomew's head and the offending hats cut off). Throughout it all, Bartholomew's desires and needs are forgotten, and he is looked upon merely as an extension of this "problem." Also involved is the king's nephew, a "normal" child who spearheads the movement to do away with Bartholomew, not out of fear or concern but out of simple spite. In the end, however, the magic and wonder of the event is recognized and celebrated rather than condemned. I would particularly recommend this book to parents of children with learning disorders. The themes described above would be particularly familiar, and the conclusion especially satisfying. The grim sections of the book (such as when the king orders Bartholomew's execution) should not scare anyone off from what is a wonderful and inspiring story.

This volume differs from most of the Dr. Seuss books we are familiar with in that the text is unrhymed, and the book takes a good 20 minutes to read aloud. This is no liability; the story's interest develops immediately, and never lags. There is an impressively idiosyncratic cast of characters to enjoy and dramatize, and Seuss's use of language is a joy. Bartholomew himself is a gutsy, honest kid without a trace of arrogance or swagger. In addition, the drawings are more detailed than in later books, and really exhibit Seuss's skill as a graphic artist, along the lines of Robert McCloskey's *Make Way for Ducklings*. I loved this book as a child, and my children adore it now. As enduring children's literature, I would place it above *Cat in the Hat* and *Horton Hears a Who* any day!

Bartholomew Cubbins, lowest of the subject of King Derwin has gone into town to sell some cranberries for his parents. When the king passes by, he doffs his hat, only have the king stop and accuse him of not taking his hat off. Surprised to find it is true, he takes his hat off, only to find a third hat on his head. The king has him arrested and begins trying to figure out ways to keep the hat off. His wise men and magicians are certainly no help. Meanwhile, Bartholomew must figure out a way to get his hat to stay off his head before the consequences become drastic. This is an early Dr. Seuss book, and a lesser known of his works. Still, it tells a fun story about a boy in trouble for something he didn't do. Everyone can relate to that. Even when the king becomes obsessed with

the hat, Bartholomew never loses his respect for the king. This doesn't have the charm, creativity, or poetry of some of his other works, but is still fun for kids because of the absurd length they reach to try to get rid of that hat.

I love this book. But not just because it is a great children's story, which is deservedly so. This book is great, because it illustrates what I believe to be the principle of creative repetition. The 500 hats, start simply -- each hat is as simple as the one before it. Yet, the magic of each new hat, propels the story forward through all the attempts of people to stop the flow of hats. All sorts of nay-sayers, dis-believers, and the supposedly wise are challenged by what they see. Eventually, this creative process creates such conflict that takes the situations to new heights, which somehow inspire spontaneous improvement and variety. What used to be simple, becomes increasingly ornate and valuable, culminating in a creation that transcends the entire situation. So rather than a simple story, I take this as a metaphor to inspire the creative process. Rather than attempt to create the great works, just do the simple acts repeatedly and notice the small variety accumulate into something great. (However, it would be silly, to take this as a metaphor for compound interest. ;) My art teacher described it this way. "Even with the simplest of subject matter, if you create many versions, over and over, it gives your work strength, a backbone, if you will, that will allow you to see the great art among your own work." So, even though this is a children's book, it is worth buying, because it represents a value that can be meaningful to adults. And it's a fine tale as well.

Theodor Geisel (a.k.a. Dr. Seuss) Wrote rhythms and rhymes guaranteed to amuse. Bartholomew Cubbins is a tale you may know Of a lad who has 500 feathered chapeaux. Each time he removes one, another's revealed (As far as the end goes, my lips must be sealed.) I marveled at Cubbins when I was a lad. Now my daughter is thrilled when it's read by her dad. Unless by fine writing you're gravely offended This Dr. Seuss classic is much recommended.

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