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# The King's Stilts (Classic Seuss)



## Synopsis

A seventy-five-year-old King gets new vintage cover art for his anniversary! Celebrate the 75th birthday of Dr. Seuss's classic treatise on the importance of a balanced life with our Anniversary Edition featuring cover art from the book's original publication! A Seussian spin on a conventional fairy tale, *The King's Stilts* is as topical today as when it was first published in 1939. It's the story of a devoted king who works hard and plays hard—and whose entire kingdom is threatened when his beloved stilts are stolen and he is too distraught to do his job. Written in prose instead of rhyme (unlike Seuss's later works), *The King's Stilts* nevertheless addresses subjects that we know Dr. Seuss was passionate about throughout his life: duty (as in *Horton Hears a Who* and *Horton Hatches the Egg*); the abuse of power (as in *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* and *Yertle the Turtle*); deceit (as in *The Bippolo Seed* and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*)—and even cats (as in *The Cat in the Hat* and *I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today*)! A perfect way to introduce new readers to an old classic, or to reward existing fans with a collectible new edition. Follow the Good Doctor's advice: After a hard day of work, have fun with a great book like *The King's Stilts*!

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD480L (What's this?)

Series: Classic Seuss

Hardcover: 56 pages

Publisher: Random House Books for Young Readers; First Edition edition (October 12, 1939)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0394800826

ISBN-13: 978-0394800820

Product Dimensions: 8.2 x 0.4 x 11.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars See all reviews (72 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #69,719 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #105 in Books > Children's Books

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Cultures > Royalty #3200 in Books > Children's Books > Humor

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

Theodore Seuss Geisel, using his famous pen name of Dr. Seuss, wrote and illustrated his first

children's book, "And to Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street," in 1937. Two years later he wrote "The King's Stilts." Even at this early point in his career Dr. Seuss was able to emphasize the idea that reading could be fun without have to be moralistic and that it was important that the illustrations actually had a close relationship with the text of the story. Geisel once declared: "I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells. Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living, it's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope. Which is what I do, and that enables you to laugh at life's realities." Certainly "The King's Stilts" evidences that point. The story begins with the point that King Birtram on the Kingdom of Binn NEVER wore his stilts during business hours and that he worked very hard, continuing to sign important papers of state even while he was taking a bath. However, the king's most important job was caring for the mighty Dike Trees that protected the people of Binn from the sea. Their heavy, knotted roots held back the water. However, those roots were also very tasty to Nizzards, a kind of giant blackbird with a sharp and pointed beak. If the Nizzards were to eat the roots of the Dike Trees then the roots would soon give way, the sea would pour in, and every last soul in the Kingdom of Binn would drown. But King Birtram did not allow this to happen and by gathering together a thousand of the largest and smartest cats in the world to function as Patrol Cats (wearing badges that say "P.C."). These cats were so important that the Cat Kitchen was bigger than that of the King and even had the best cooks in the land.

Many young people are unsure about the proper balance between work and fun. As a result, they tend to overemphasize one or the other. Dr. Seuss has created a wonderful book here to relieve youngsters of the sense that they should work hard all of the time. This is an early book by Dr. Seuss, and it is written in prose rather than rhyme. Despite this, the prose often has a definite meter, and he sneaks in rhyming words now and again. The illustrations are predominately in black and white, but splashes of red are used for emphasis to good effect. The story is quite funny. The king's passion is to run around the kingdom on his red stilts. But he never does so until after putting in a full twelve hours of grueling work. Never was there a harder working king than Birtram. He even signs papers while taking a bath at five in the morning! He feels very responsible, because he kingdom is threatened by natural disaster if he lets down his guard. Who could begrudge such a fine king his fun? Well, there is one who does. Where could that lead? I also found the book very good for introducing the concept of how we all rely on one another for our well-being. For example, this story can also help a parent explain the need to go to work, despite a sincere desire to stay and play with her or his child. I think the book is good, too, for helping children think about what kind of work they might want to do when they are older. What benefit would they like others to receive from their

work? How hard would they like to work? What difficulties would be bearable, and which would be too much? After you finish enjoying this book, I suggest that you and your child spend time planning how you can have more fun playing together, and still meet your responsibilities.

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