



Creating a Cat in the Hat Classroom



The **Cat in the Hat** knows a thing or two about designing a great learning adventure! Full of curiosity, he always invites his friends Nick and Sally to go on an exciting journey together on the Thing-a-ma-jigger. Likewise, we have included some ideas to invite your students on a learning adventure where they tackle problems and solve them like engineers. Along the way, they will play, pretend, discover and have lots of fun! As teachers, you want to seek a balance between preparing students to tackle new things and providing a learning environment that supports all students and eases transitions. We have included a suggested and consistent learning pattern to incorporate in each lesson to help students feel comfortable taking risks and trying new things during each engineering adventure.

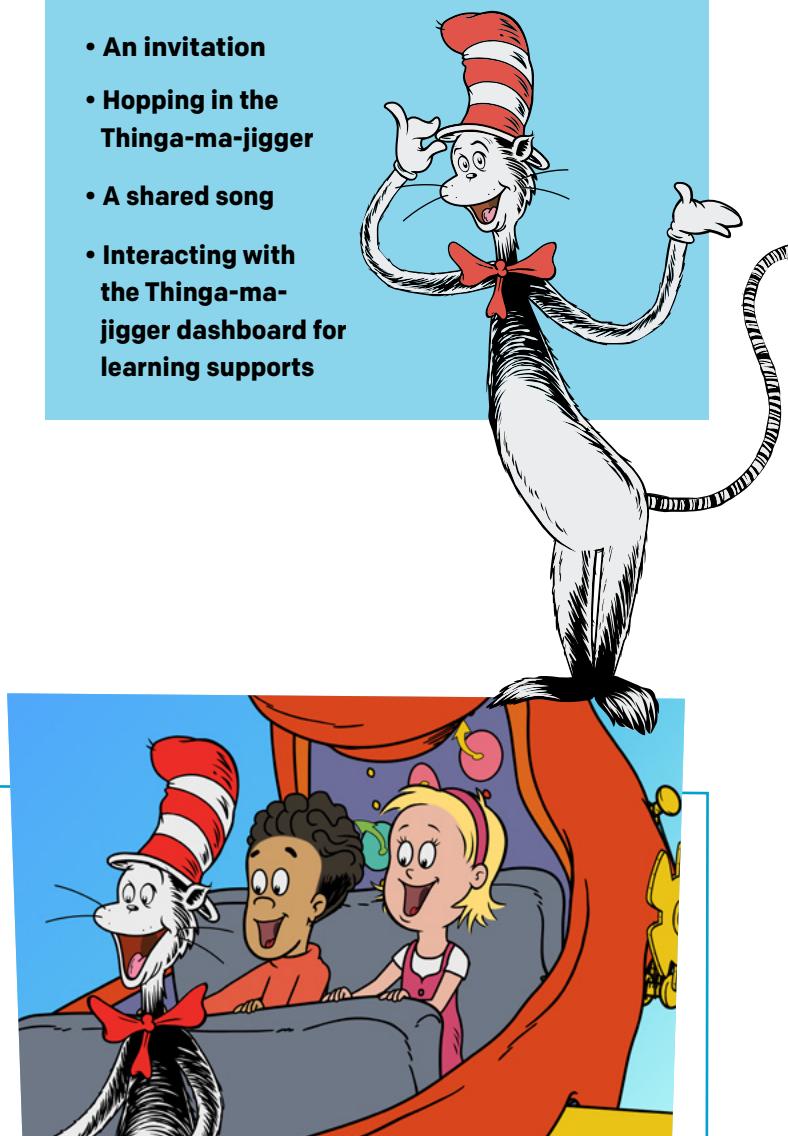
Invitation to a Learning Adventure: To the Thing-a-ma-jigger!

Every classroom can have a Thing-a-ma-jigger! In the Support Materials section, you will find the resources to help make your very own Thing-a-ma-jigger. Pretend play allows young students to try on different roles and think in new ways. Hopping in a pretend Thing-a-ma-jigger and engaging in a little dramatic play can help students think like an engineer.

Students will see themselves as part of the *Cat in the Hat* action if you invite them to hop in a pretend Thing-a-ma-jigger. You might print out the Thing-a-ma-jigger dashboard and glue it onto some empty boxes. Depending on your resources, you can make a Thing-a-ma-jigger for every student or a large one for the class to share. You can have the students line up chairs and

The Learning Pattern Includes:

- An invitation
- Hopping in the Thing-a-ma-jigger
- A shared song
- Interacting with the Thing-a-ma-jigger dashboard for learning supports



boxes, or invite students to sit on the carpet in rows just like in an airplane to pretend they are ready to fly with the Cat in the Hat. You can even get creative and make a set of rotor blades to hang from the ceiling. Your budding engineers may have lots of other ideas to contribute as you build a Thing-a-ma-jigger. Get creative!

Ready for Takeoff

Nothing gets an adventure started like a great song! When you are in the Thinga-ma-jigger, you can lead the students in the song from *The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!* to set the stage for an adventure!

[Click here to watch and listen to the song.](#)

Song Lyrics

[Cat in the Hat]

Here we go, go, go, go
On an adventure
The Thinga-ma-jigger is up and away!

[Nick and Sally]

Go, go, go, go
On an adventure
We're flying with the Cat in the Hat today!

We are Problem Solvers

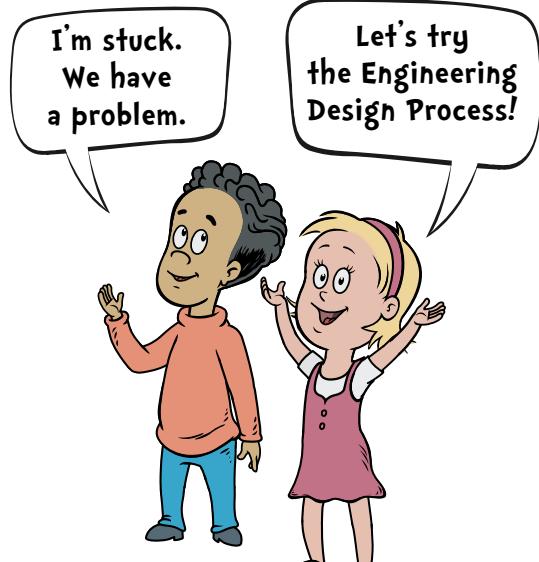
Have your students interact with the Thinga-ma-jigger dashboard to support them in their learning adventure.

The Engineering Design Process

You can have printouts of the Engineering Design Process on the dashboard or at each learning station to help students talk about what they need to do to solve their problem. It is a great tool to use if they feel stuck. You can ask them a question related to each part of the design process that will help them get rolling again. Think of it as a map that you can pull out whenever your students feel lost.

The Engineering Design Process inspires some great resiliency call outs or partner conversations that will help students when things do not go as they had anticipated. For example, if one student says they are stuck, another might say, "Try the Engineering Design Process."

The table below offers some sentence stems to pair with each section of the Engineering Design Process. When you begin teaching engineering, you may need to model how to ask questions and define the problem. After a few engineering design challenges, the students will begin to ask the questions and rely less on your prompting. At that point you can suggest, "Try the Engineering Design Process" and they will think of questions to ask each other.



| Define a Problem | Imagine & Plan | Create | Test | Improve | Communicate & Collaborate |
|------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| What are we trying to solve? | Brainstorm three wild ideas – no editing! Have you looked at it upside-down? | How would you build that? Is there something else to build with? | What would Thing 1 and Thing 2 try? | What is one thing you could change? | Tell me what you are thinking? Can you draw that? Can I add to the drawing? Everyone say one idea, solution, problem, etc. |

Ready, Set, Discover

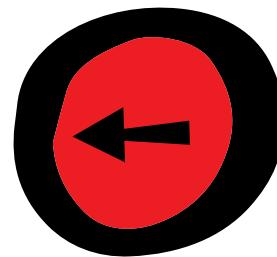
In each lesson, we have included a set of resources from PBS LearningMedia to be downloaded and discovered. Students can pretend to download information from the Thinga-ma-jigger by pressing the Discovery Button. There are many fun ways that you can present the Discovery Button to your students. It may be glued on top of an upside-down box, and underneath it are printed handouts that students will be working with during the lesson. When your students press the Discovery Button, they can lift the box and discover the information. A second option is to print out the button, have it on top of the pile of resources at each station, and students can press it and find their materials.



Rewind Button

The dashboard also has a Rewind Button. Students can press this button when they want to go back and watch a section of the video again. Lesson sets will also include clips from the show that highlight specific teachable moments that you can reference.

Curiosity and a sense of adventure are great ways to engage your students. Creating a learning space with an invitation to learn, a pretend Thinga-ma-jigger, and a learning support framework are just the things to encourage young problem solvers. Now that you have a pretend Thinga-ma-jigger, you are ready to fly on a lot of great adventures with the Cat In The Hat!



pbskids.org/catinthehat



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