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THE  SUN

Section B

Read aloud, first lady tells crowd

■ **Education:** Hillary Rodham Clinton takes time to impress on folks young and old the importance of reading.

By DAVID FOLKENFLIK
SUN NATIONAL STAFF

(With apologies to the late Theodor Seuss Geisel)
Hillary Clinton wants you to read. For kids, she said, it's a vital need. At the Learning Ideas store out in P.G. she would read to tots ages 4 and 3. (She also got heaps of publicity. When she arrives, so does TV.)

On the 94th B-day of Dr. Seuss, She put the spotlight to good use. And so she told the assembled crowd They need to read — and to read aloud. With hands to be held and books to be read. Thoughts of subpoenas turned tail and fled.

Some 50 adults were also there. They came to gawk. They came to stare. Union reps and vendors of books gave Mrs. Clinton adoring looks. They nodded with each reading refrain scripted as part of a U.S. campaign.

Steny Hoyer showed up, too. That Maryland pol knew just what to do. He winked at the throng and shook every hand and said every parent should take a firm stand. Ancient and new, about chores and glories, all children need to hear such stories.

Author Rosemary Wells, her books chart-topping, was there to help young minds stop stopping. Twenty minutes each day! Not much to ask! Mrs. Clinton called it a joyful task. Read books together! Don't read apart! She'd read to John Howard Elementary Head Start!

At last, waiting aides brought in the tykes who gazed agape at the TV mikes. Demetrius Harris, who is all of 4, sat on her lap. Others, the floor. Finally, reading took center stage. As young boy and first lady regarded each page.

Grown-ups grumbled as cameras whirled. Teachers were nervous as children stirred. Do you write stories? she asked. They make you smiley? To her query, a few kids raised hands shyly. They made Hillary's day. They made her night. To be read to, she said, is every kid's right.



LLOYD FOX: SUN STAFF

Reading cap: Holtzfield Station Elementary School preschooler Alpha Fokuo (above) smiles as teacher Sue Toller reads Dr. Seuss' "The Cat in the Hat" on Read Across America day. Below, first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton holds 4-year-old Demetrius Harris while reading to children at Learning Ideas in Prince George's County.



Reading by 9



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THE PRINCE GEORGE'S Journal

The daily newspaper of Prince George's County, Md.

Tuesday, March 3, 1998

Hillary happily concedes it's fun to read

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton celebrated the anniversary of the late Dr. Seuss' birth by reading to a group of children in District Heights and encouraging reading at a young age.

Clinton and children's author, Rosemary Wells, read "Read to Your Bunny," a children's book written and illustrated by Wells, to 15 children participating in Head Start from John E. Howard Elementary.

"We're here to celebrate the wonder and joys of reading to children," Clinton told 50 people gathered at Learning Ideas, a school supply store.

In addition to celebrating the birth of Theodor Geisel, who would have been 94 and is better known as Dr. Seuss, Clinton was on hand as part of a drive by a group called Prescription for Reading Partnership to distribute more than 200,000 free copies of the book to bookstores throughout the country.

The event, in which parents, teachers and others were encouraged to read to children, was called Read America Day.

—ASSOCIATED PRESS



Mario Tama/Journal

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton reacts playfully to a group of children from the John E. Howard Elementary School Head Start Program during a celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday at the Learning Ideas store in District Heights yesterday.