

# The Places You'll Go

## *Instructions:*

- As a class, read the Dr. Seuss poem “Oh! The Places You’ll Go” By Dr. Suess [A]
- As a class, discuss the Class Discussion [B] topics
- Individually think about the specific quotes found in the Dissecting the Story chart and complete the chart [C]
- In groups, have students compare their responses for the chart [C] by identifying the theme and the message of each quote. Recreate class responses to the chart, by putting together everybody’s response - It should be visible how people interpret things differently
- Upon completion, have students complete the Reflection Questions [D] individually

## **[A] OH! THE PLACES YOU’LL GO BY DR SEUSS:**

Congratulations! Today is your day. You’re off to Great Places! You’re off and away!

You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You’re on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the guy who’ll decide where to go.

You’ll look up and down streets. Look’em over with care. About some you will say, “I don’t choose to go there.” With your head full of brains and your shoes full of feet, you’re too smart to go down a not-so-good street.

And you may not find any you’ll want to go down. In that case, of course, you’ll head straight out of town. It’s opener there in the wide open air.

Out there things can happen and frequently do to people as brainy and footsy as you.

And when things start to happen, don’t worry. Don’t stew. Just go right along. You’ll start happening too.

Oh! The Places You’ll Go!

You’ll be on your way up!

You’ll be seeing great sights!

You’ll join the high fliers who soar to high heights.

You won’t lag behind, because you’ll have the speed. You’ll pass the whole gang and you’ll soon take the lead. Wherever you fly, you’ll be best of the best. Wherever you go, you will top all the rest.

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Except when you don't. Because, sometimes, you won't.

I'm sorry to say so but, sadly, it's true that Bang-ups and Hang-ups can happen to you.

You can get all hung up in a prickle-ly perch. And your gang will fly on. You'll be left in a Lurch.

You'll come down from the Lurch with an unpleasant bump. And the chances are, then, that you'll be in a Slump.

And when you're in a Slump, you're not in for much fun. Un-slumping yourself is not easily done.

You will come to a place where the streets are not marked. Some windows are lighted. But mostly they're darked. A place you could sprain both your elbow and chin! Do you dare to stay out? Do you dare to go in? How much can you lose? How much can you win?

And if you go in, should you turn left or right...or right-and-three-quarters? Or, maybe, not quite? Or go around back and sneak in from behind? Simple it's not, I'm afraid you will find, for a mind-maker-upper to make up his mind.

You can get so confused that you'll start in to race down long wiggled roads at a break-necking pace and grind on for miles across weirdish wild space, headed, I fear, toward a most useless place.

The Waiting Place...for people just waiting.

Waiting for a train to go or a bus to come, or a plane to go or the mail to come, or the rain to go or the phone to ring, or the snow to snow or waiting around for a Yes or No or waiting for their hair to grow. Everyone is just waiting.

Waiting for the fish to bite or waiting for wind to fly a kite or waiting around for Friday night or waiting, perhaps, for their Uncle Jake or a pot to boil, or a Better Break or a string of pearls, or a pair of pants or a wig with curls, or Another Chance. Everyone is just waiting.

No! That's not for you!

Somehow you'll escape all that waiting and staying. You'll find the bright places where Boom Bands are playing. With banner flip-flapping, once more you'll ride high! Ready for anything under the sky. Ready because you're that kind of a guy!

Oh, the places you'll go! There is fun to be done! There are points to be scored. There are games to be won. And the magical things you can do with that ball will make you

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the winning-est winner of all. Fame! You'll be famous as famous can be, with the whole wide world watching you win on TV.

Except when they don't. Because, sometimes, they won't.

I'm afraid that some times you'll play lonely games too. Games you can't win 'cause you'll play against you.

All Alone! Whether you like it or not, Alone will be something you'll be quite a lot.

And when you're alone, there's a very good chance you'll meet things that scare you right out of your pants. There are some, down the road between hither and yon, that can scare you so much you won't want to go on.

But on you will go though the weather be foul. On you will go though your enemies prowl. On you will go though the Hakken-Kraks howl. Onward up many a frightening creek, though your arms may get sore and your sneakers may leak. On and on you will hike. And I know you'll hike far and face up to your problems whatever they are.

You'll get mixed up, of course, as you already know. You'll get mixed up with many strange birds as you go. So be sure when you step. Step with care and great tact and remember that Life's a Great Balancing Act. Just never forget to be dexterous and deft. And never mix up your right foot with your left.

And will you succeed? Yes! You will, indeed!  
(98 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  percent guaranteed.)

Kid, you'll move mountains! So...be your name Buxbaum or Bixby or Bray or Mordecai Ale Van Allen O'Shea, you're off to Great Places!  
Today is your day!  
Your mountain is waiting.  
So...get on your way!

## **[B] CLASS DISCUSSION:**

1. What is the theme of the book?
2. What are some of the obstacles Dr. Seuss mentions?
3. What are some of the good things along the road?
4. What are some things we all should know? How does this relate to your personally?

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## [C] DISSECTING THE STORY:

Quote	Theme (A word or sentence)	Message
<p>“ You’re on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the guy who’ll decide where to go.”</p>		
<p>“ You can get all hung up in a prickle-ly perch. And your gang will fly on. You’ll be left in a Lurch.”</p>		

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“You will come to a place where the streets are not marked. Some windows are lighted. But mostly they're darked. A place you could sprain both your elbow or chin! Do you dare to stay out? Do you dare to go in? How much can you lose? How much can you win?”

I'm afraid of those times you'll play lonely games too. Games you can't win cause you'll be against you.”

“So be sure when you step. Step with care and great tact and remember that life is a Great Balancing Act.”

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## [D] REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. Do you feel “YOU” are the “guy who’ll decide where to go?” How does that shape your future?

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2. Have you ever met the “prickle-ly perch” on your path? What obstacles have you overcome in your life? What skills or strengths did you learn from overcoming these obstacles?

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3. If you got to “a place where streets are not marked” would you go in? What “risks” have you taken in your life and where did they get you?

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4. Is your life currently balanced? What steps do you need to take in order to find a balance in your everyday life?

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**Final Part of this assignment - You must write a story about your life so far. What types of obstacles have you faced and overcome, what types of things have you accomplished, what lessons have you learned and what is the motto of your life so far?**