

## **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SHEL SILVERSTEIN ON EARLY LITERACY**

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I have enjoyed reading Shel's books since I was young. Shel was a musician, composer, cartoonist, poet, as well as an author of children's literature. His books are filled with interesting stories and beautiful illustrations. Shel referred to himself as Uncle Shelby. The book *Lafcadio, the Lion Who Shot Back*, started with the lines, "And now, children your Uncle Shelby is going to tell you a story about a very strange lion- in fact, the strangest lion I have ever met." By introducing his stories like this, it gave the stories a more personal touch and created a relationship between Shel and his young readers. Shel's unique style and eye-drawing comics draw the attention of thousands of children. I specifically remember reading many of his poems as a child such as *The Giving Tree*, *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, *A Giraffe and a Half*, etc. Silverstein strongly influenced children and their desire for reading.