



CORDUROY



Teacher Education Guide

an *Emerson Stage Production*

Based on the books by Don Freeman
Adapted for the stage by Barry Kornhauser

Directed by Melia Bensussen
Movement Dir. by Nathaniel Justiniano

October 29 to November 1, 2020

Live Online Performance: Transmedia Platform

*Education materials created by Leah Hamilton French for Emerson Stage,
with dramaturgy by Chandler David*

This **teacher guide** contains post-performance discussion questions, as well as ideas for how to connect the themes and content of the play to your classroom studies.

We have also provided resources that can be shared directly with students, either for them to explore on their own, or for use in whole class instruction. We have formatted these as powerpoint slides, so they will be easy for you to share in class, or for students to view on their devices at home. These resources are:

Student Guide for Grades K-2 [[HYPERLINK](#)]

Student Guide for Grades 3-4 [[HYPERLINK](#)]

Social Story [[HYPERLINK](#)]

The **student guides** contain information about the story, the play, the cast, and the historical context. There are also examples of fun activities that tie into language arts, drama, music, movement, and art. If your students are in grades 2&3, we recommend looking through both guides to determine which is the best fit for your students' skill level and interest.

The **social story** is a helpful tool to show students what to expect from the experience of watching Corduroy with Emerson Stage, structure social skills, improve appropriate behavior, and increase engagement. Social stories are a common tool for people with Autism Spectrum Disorders or sensory needs, but may also be helpful for young children who have never experienced a play before.

Essential Questions

Here are some of the essential questions raised by *Corduroy*. You may find them helpful in exploring the play and story further with your students.

- How can we use words, pictures, music, and our body movements to tell exciting stories?
- Is it important to work hard for the things we really want? Why or why not?
- How can we help others?
- How can we make amends when my actions harm others?

Pre-Performance Discussion & Writing Prompts

After [reading *Corduroy* by Don Freeman](#), use the following questions in your pre-performance discussion with students. You could also ask students to use these questions as prompts to write and illustrate their own picture books.

- Do you have a special stuffed animal? What is their name? What do they look like? How did you get your stuffed animal, and why are they special to you?
- Have you ever lost something important? What was it? Where did you look? Did you ever find it?
- Imagine you got to stay overnight in a department store with your friends. What would you do while no one was looking?
- Have you ever saved up to buy something special? What was it? Why did you want it so much? How did you earn the money?

Post-Performance Discussion Questions

Following the performance, talk with your students about what they saw. You may find the following questions a helpful jumping off point.

- What was the most exciting part of the play?
- Who was your favorite character? Why did you like them?
- How do you think Lisa felt when she made mistakes trying to help her mom? How do you think her mother felt?
- Why do you think the Night Watchman wanted to find Corduroy so much?
- How do you think Corduroy felt when Lisa came back for him?

Curriculum Connections

*In addition to the activities in the **student education guides**, here are some suggestions for ways to tie the performance into your classroom studies:*

MONEY & MATH

In the play, we watch Lisa try (and often spectacularly fail) to help her mother with household chores. She is trying to earn an advance on her allowance, so she can buy Corduroy for her very own. This is a great opportunity to teach students about money, from identifying different coins and bills to understanding the exchange of currency for goods and services in society.

Here are some [suggestions for money math activities](#) you could do with your students to both familiarize them with currency and practice other [math skills like patterning, counting, subitizing, graphing](#) and more.

LANGUAGE ARTS

The classic children's book, [We're Going on a Bear Hunt](#), written by Michael Rosen ([also a song](#)), is a great jumping off point for language arts. You can use it to discuss sequence of events, introduce adjectives (think long, wavy grass and thick, oozy mud), and spark creative writing by asking students to add more stops along the way to find the bear.

Write about it! Consider using the discussion questions provided in this guide as writing prompts. Encourage students to illustrate their stories, just like Corduroy author and illustrator Don Freeman.

DRAMA & MOVEMENT

Corduroy the play contains lots of physical comedy. [Consider using drama games](#) like the one below to make remote learning creative, active, and fun.

What are you doing? Ask students to turn their mics on, if able.

- Everyone covers their cameras with their thumbs, except one person. That person starts an action (such as brushing teeth).
- A second person uncovers their camera and asks, "What are you doing?" The person brushing their teeth answers by saying something other than what they are doing. For example, "I'm dribbling a basketball."
- The first person then "leaves" by covering their camera, and the second person starts "dribbling a basketball." A new person uncovers their camera and asks, "What are you doing?" And so on...no repeats!