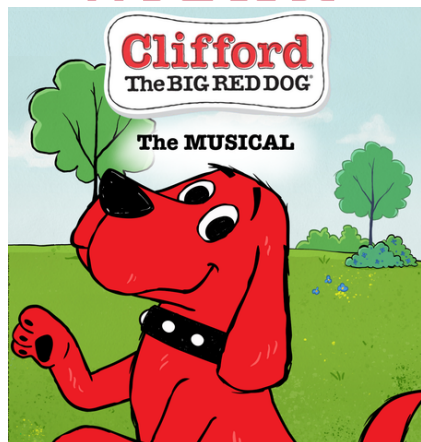




STUDY GUIDE

Thank you for attending TheaterWorksUSA's production of *Clifford the Big Red Dog: The Musical*. We hope this guide will help your students learn more about the musical and its content, as well as prepare you for the show and give you creative ways to make the show part of your curriculum. A trip to the theater is always very special and unique, and it can create a lifelong passion for performance and storytelling. We hope our production will inspire your students.

Feel free to use this guide as a starting point for you and your students to explore the show and its content, and to enhance your students' experience in seeing *Clifford the Big Red Dog: The Musical*. It will provide discussion points after your class has seen the production, along with lessons and in-class activities to extend the topic-specific ideas within the show. Feel free to adapt or change any discussion prompts or material to suit your classroom and style!

The Audience Has a Job, Too!

Being an audience member is a special experience that we are excited to share with you. Review expected theater etiquette with your students and any volunteers. Unlike a movie, the performers can hear and feel the response of the audience. You are encouraged to react, laugh, clap at the end of each song, and cheer for the performers at the end of the show. Remember to be respectful of the performers and other audience members.

Be Prepared!



Arrive early, use the restroom before the show starts, and stay at your seat. If your student(s) need to get up frequently, have a designated spot they can go to outside the theater with their grown up, and seat them where they can easily exit/return. If you are seeing the show in a theater, check in with your usher.

No Eating or Drinking



The noise from water bottles and snack wrappers can be distracting to the performers and other audience members. Please save your snacks and drinks until the performance is over.

Put Away Technology



No cell phones or tablets. Completely silence all devices and do not take them out during the show. This includes the adults!

Participate



Show the cast and crew your appreciation with applause at the end of songs and scenes. If you think something is funny, feel free to laugh! You can applaud and cheer during bows at the end of the show.

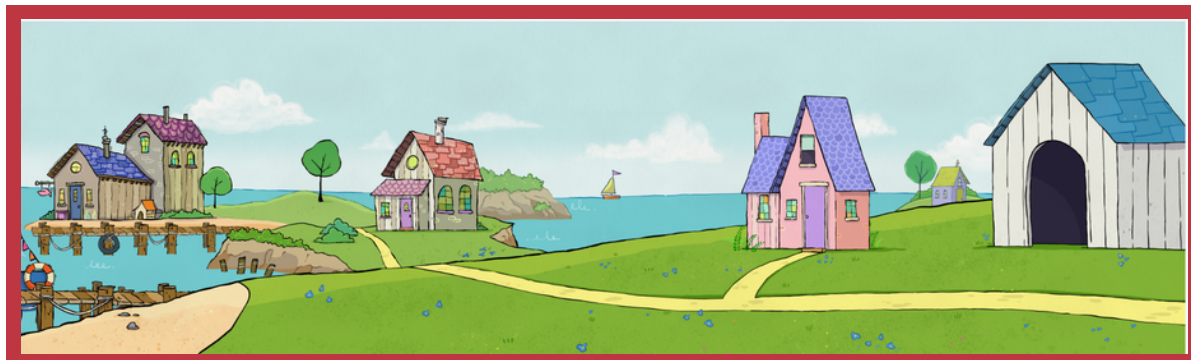
Be Respectful



Be respectful to other audience members. This includes listening quietly to the story, saving conversations for after the show, keeping phones in your pocket, staying focused on the show, and staying in your seat.

The Story

Emily Elizabeth absolutely adores her new puppy, the tiny red runt of the litter. But when her love makes Clifford grow into a giant dog, the family must trade their cramped city apartment for a home on Birdwell Island, where folks aren't so sure about a house-sized, playful pup. Worried his clumsiness is keeping Emily Elizabeth from making friends, Clifford wishes he never grew so big – and it works! He enjoys a fur-tastic small-dog-sized day... until his adventurous BFF and her new friends get stuck in a place from which only a BIG red dog can save them.



Before Seeing the Play

1. Review the following vocabulary words which will be helpful for the show: Tell students to listen for some of these words in the play.

Island

an area of land surrounded by water on all sides

Rescue

to save someone or something from danger or trouble

Inspire

to make someone feel excited or the confidence to try something new

Frontier

the edge of town where wild land begins, but often meaning new and unexplored places

2. In our play, there are fewer actors than characters. Ask children to observe the performance closely to see if they can tell which actors play more than one part.

3. Read a *Clifford The Big Red Dog* book as a class. How would you describe the characters in the book? What might it feel like for Clifford, being so much bigger than everyone around him? In what ways does being different help Clifford? What themes do you see come up in these stories?



Photo by Jeremy Daniel. L-R, Janna Linae, Izzy Figueroa, Jimmy Henderson

After Seeing the Play

Discussion Questions

1. Emily Elizabeth was introduced to Clifford when he was very small, but her love made him grow. You used to be small, but now you are bigger. What are some ways you have grown or what skills have you gained in the year? Discuss as a class.

2. Clifford and Emily Elizabeth move to a new home in a new town where Clifford can have space. What parts of moving would be scary, and what would be exciting? They move hoping that Clifford will be comfortable on a bigger island, but the neighbors are initially scared and nervous around him. How would you feel if someone was nervous around you? Did Clifford feel that way?

3. Emily Elizabeth's new friends are initially scared by how big Clifford is, and were hesitant to spend time with them. Have you ever been scared of something unfamiliar? How did you overcome it?



4. Clifford wishes on a star to become small, but by the end of the play he is big again. How did Clifford see the world differently when he was small? Clifford realized it was okay to be himself, and that being unique can be a good thing. In what ways are you unique? In what ways are the people you love unique?



5. Emily Elizabeth and her new friends overcame their fears by imagining themselves as Clifford; if they imagine having his courage, his strength, and his confidence, they can accomplish anything. When you are afraid, how do you get through it? What inspires you when you are hesitant or nervous to try something new?

6. Tucker is very attached to Little Squeakie, his squeaking toy. Toys can sometimes be a comforting item. If you have a pet, do they have a favorite toy? What is a toy or other item that makes you feel safe or happy? Your class can do a show and tell where you bring in toys that are special to each student!

7. This production showed some “out-of-this-world” elements- a magical star, talking animals, and a dog shrinking and growing big again! These things are not real, but they were real in the show. How did you know that the actor was portraying a star? How did you know when a dog/puppet was speaking? What are some elements of the show that told the story of unreal things happening? In what ways are these similar or different from the *Clifford* book series?

Photos by Jeremy Daniel

Top Photo: Chrissa Weir

Bottom Photo: Jimmy Henderson, Chrissa Weir

Extension Activities

1. Try reading some of the *Clifford the Big Red Dog* books out loud. How does it compare to the play you saw? How was the story told differently in the book and on stage? What are some things you can do in a book that you can't have in a show, and vice versa? Examples:

Books

Inner monologue can be expressed silently in a book, but needs to be spoken in a play. You can see more of what a character is thinking.

Plays

A play can show the characters interacting, you can see their facial expressions, and you can watch everything that's going on without having to rely on narration.

2. Clifford and Emily Elizabeth move to a new town, and they find a new way of creating a home together. Draw your home. What are some things that make your home special? Is there a room in your house that you like the best? What's a small part of your home that you love to be near? What people live in your home? Draw your home and the pieces of your home that you love in as much detail as you can.

3. A repeating theme in the musical is that "love makes you grow, like watering a tree," like in the opening song called *Love Makes You Grow*. We all grow physically and emotionally with love and care. Adopt a class plant, give it the right water and sunlight, and watch it grow as a class. As it changes with the seasons, how are we growing alongside this plant? What have we learned as a class in the time between the first leaf appearing and where the plant is now?



4. By imagining themselves having the positive qualities of Clifford, the children are able to overcome their fears and save the day themselves. They were inspired by Clifford. Who inspires you? What makes them inspiring to you? What do they do when they are afraid? Did they have any moments in their life that they had to overcome, and how did they accomplish their goals? Share with the class. For more advanced students, interview the inspiring family member or do some research on a famous person in history and present your findings.

5. Balloons help little Clifford and the other little dogs get up the mountain quickly. Experiment with balloons in your classroom; tie different things to the string of a balloon and see what will float up with the balloon and what will keep the balloon on the ground. Notice which things are light and which are heavy. Are there some items that take more than one balloon to lift?

6. A balloon game that doesn't need helium and also encourages teamwork is balloon tennis. Blow up a balloon and keep the balloon in the air. You can have individuals or small groups play against each other, or you can play as a large group and count how many times you tap the balloon to keep it in the air, and try to get as high a number as you can!



7. Clifford is a big dog, and Bailey and Tucker are smaller dogs, but they all have qualities that make them special. There are many different dog breeds with different sizes and abilities. Research different types of dogs and what they can do. How can you tell the difference between a Great Dane and a Chihuahua? What similarities do Basset Hounds have with Bulldogs? Learn some facts about your favorite breed and present these facts with a drawing of your dog in action. See further in this study guide for a dog breeds worksheet.

Extension Activities continued

8. Actors use their bodies to tell stories. Get your student moving with acting exercises!

- Act out what it would feel like to be big like Clifford. What does it feel like? Are you careful of where you step to avoid hurting anything? Do big things move fast easily, or do they move more slowly? Guide the class through this exploration- music helps set the mood! Now act out what it would feel like to be tiny. Where can you go that you couldn't before? How do you avoid being stepped on by bigger creatures? How quickly can you move? In what different ways does your body move to show how small you are? Use the space and take time to explore. For added contrast, have half the class act out big and the other half small, then switch.
- This production utilized puppetry to tell the story. Make your own puppets; there are many puppetry styles to explore depending on your supplies at hand. If you have socks, make sock puppets. If you have paper bags, make paper bag puppets. If you have dolls and strings, make marionettes. If you have paper and sticks, make shadow puppets. The possibilities are endless! Depending on how your puppet looks, what might your puppet sound like? Are there ways they can move and express themselves that are different from you? Get your puppets together and make a short play!
- Emily Elizabeth and her friends imagined themselves being like Clifford to overcome their fears and accomplish great things. Imagine yourself as someone that inspires you. This can be someone in your life, a famous or historical person, or a fictional character. How do they stand and move around in space? How do they speak? What do they do that is inspiring to you, and how can you show others what it means? After the exercise, notice how you feel. Did you feel more confident or capable when embodying this inspiring person? What about the way they move made you feel that way? Is there anything in this exercise that can help you when you need inspiration?
- The characters in this play climbed a big mountain, but in reality the actors were on a flat stage. Imagine yourself in a situation where you are far away from your classroom. Are you flying a plane? Swimming at the beach? Exploring a cave? Using only your bodies, tell the story of being in that space. How can others tell where you are? Explore how to move to tell the story, then show the class in turns. How can the audience tell where you are? What is clear to them and what needs to be changed to tell the story more accurately? For an added challenge, work in teams to build a larger scene.

For Further Reading

In addition to *Clifford the Big Red Dog: The Musical*, students may also enjoy:

[Clifford the Big Red Dog](#)

By Norman Bridwell, published by Scholastic
order books, watch videos, and learn more about Clifford

[Pete the Cat Book Series](#)

By James Dean & Kimberly Dean.
*TheaterWorksUSA also has a Pete the Cat musical!

[Monster Holidays](#)

By Norman Bridwell

We'd love to hear from you! Please let us know what you thought of *Clifford the Big Red Dog: The Musical*. Were your students familiar with the story before seeing the play? Did seeing it inspire them to read the book again? Send testimonials to marketing@twusa.org, or feel free to post on our social media accounts [@theaterworksusa](https://www.facebook.com/theaterworksusa). To learn more about this and other TheaterWorksUSA productions, visit twusa.org

Vocabulary Review

Review character names and vocabulary that appears in the show with this word search.

T	U	M	K	E	S	M	A	O	P	D	Y	J	T
F	R	O	N	T	I	E	R	B	W	L	C	S	U
E	I	U	A	B	A	I	L	E	Y	R	L	A	C
K	O	N	B	W	R	N	H	T	A	C	I	O	K
I	M	T	V	S	E	A	G	U	L	L	F	B	E
S	N	A	D	A	S	P	Y	R	O	C	F	E	R
L	B	I	L	K	C	U	I	M	F	N	O	G	I
A	C	N	F	A	U	I	N	S	P	I	R	E	D
N	S	T	A	R	E	T	E	B	M	P	D	O	G
D	A	V	L	U	S	O	F	R	V	T	N	W	D
Y	I	B	G	R	O	W	R	A	S	U	V	O	A



Bailey
Clifford
Dog
Frontier



Grow
Inspire
Island
Mountain



Rescue
Seagull
Star
Tucker



Vocabulary Review- Answer Key

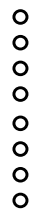


Review character names and vocabulary that appears in the show with this word search.

T	U	M	K	E	S	M	A	O	P	D	Y	J	T
F	R	O	N	T	I	E	R	B	W	L	C	S	U
E	I	U	A	B	A	I	L	E	Y	R	L	A	C
K	O	N	B	W	R	N	H	T	A	C	I	O	K
I	M	T	V	S	E	A	G	U	L	L	F	B	E
S	N	A	D	A	S	P	Y	R	O	C	F	E	R
L	B	I	L	K	C	U	I	M	F	N	O	G	I
A	C	N	F	A	U	I	N	S	P	I	R	E	D
N	S	T	A	R	E	T	E	B	M	P	D	O	G
D	A	V	L	U	S	O	F	R	V	T	N	W	D
Y	I	B	G	R	O	W	R	A	S	U	V	O	A



Bailey
Clifford
Dog
Frontier



Grow
Inspire
Island
Mountain

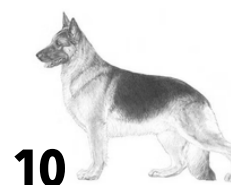
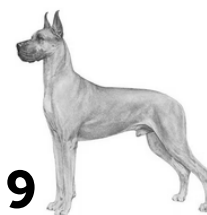
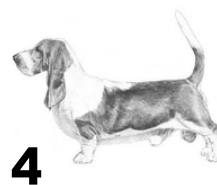
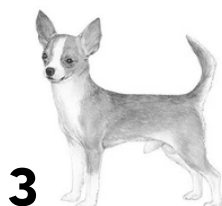


Rescue
Seagull
Star
Tucker



Match the Dog Breed

There are many different types of dogs, and they each have their own qualities.
 Match the image of the dog to their breed name.



_____ **Dalmatian**

- spotted coat
- bred to guard horses
- good runners

_____ **Dachshund**

- small legs with long back
- bred to hunt
- good watchdogs

_____ **Golden Retriever**

- feathery tail
- work as guides for the blind and many other jobs
- strong swimmers

_____ **Australian Cattle Dog**

- speckled coat
- related to the Dingo
- famously smart and loyal

_____ **Great Dane**

- one of the largest breeds
- sweet and patient nature
- good guard dogs

_____ **Pomeranian**

- small body with fluffy coat
- easily trained
- don't need much exercise

_____ **Basset Hound**

- long ears, wrinkled brow
- very good sense of smell
- loud barks and howls

_____ **German Shepherd**

- large dog with smooth back
- work in search & rescue and scent tracking
- courageous and loyal

_____ **Chihuahua**

- small body with upright ears
- one of the oldest American breeds
- good lap dog

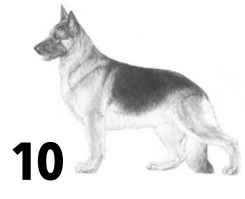
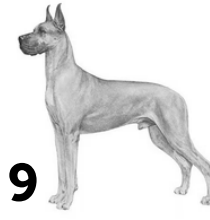
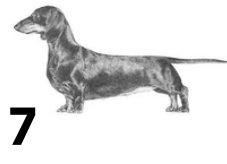
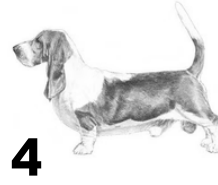
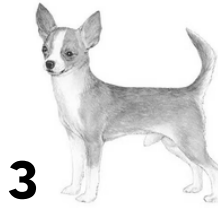
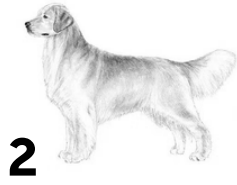
_____ **Poodle**

- curly coat
- intelligent and easily trained
- small and large varieties

Match the Dog Breed- Answer Key

There are many different types of dogs, and they each have their own qualities.

Match the image of the dog to their breed name.



5 Dalmatian

- spotted coat
- bred to guard horses
- good runners

7 Dachshund

- small legs with long back
- bred to hunt
- good watchdogs

2 Golden Retriever

- feathery tail
- work as guides for the blind and many other jobs
- strong swimmers

8 Australian Cattle Dog

- speckled coat
- related to the Dingo
- famously smart and loyal

9 Great Dane

- one of the largest breeds
- sweet and patient nature
- good guard dogs

1 Pomeranian

- small body with fluffy coat
- easily trained
- don't need much exercise

4 Basset Hound

- long ears, wrinkled brow
- very good sense of smell
- loud barks and howls

10 German Shepherd

- large dog with smooth back
- work in search & rescue and scent tracking
- courageous and loyal

3 Chihuahua

- small body with upright ears
- one of the oldest American breeds
- good lap dog

6 Poodle

- curly coat
- intelligent and easily trained
- small and large varieties

Wishing On A Star

Just like Clifford wished on the Dog Star, what would you wish for on a star? Imagine if that wish came true, and draw what it would look like? Describe your wish and what would happen if your wish came true.



