

Corduroy

by Don Freeman

Classroom Favorites

Teacher's Guide by Bernice Barth

A Perma-Bound Production

Notes to the Teacher

1. It would enhance the reading of this story if you had a stuffed animal available.
2. You may want to tell the children the story of *teddy bears*. President Theodore Roosevelt was the subject of many cartoons in his day. Several showed him protecting a bear cub from hunters. It caught the fancy of toymakers and soon stuffed bears were being sold as "teddy bears."
3. The word "corduroy" comes from the French word meaning "cord of the king." It was first used in 1787.

Synopsis

Corduroy is a toy bear living on the shelf of a department store. A little girl shopping with her mother sees him and is enchanted. She asks her mother to buy him, but is told "no." She says she has spent all she can and also suggests that the toy doesn't look new--a button is missing from his overalls. Corduroy is saddened by the rejection. That night, Corduroy searches for the button and explores the furniture department. Everything seems so large, so grand, he assumes he must be in a palace. An alert security guard returns him to his place on the shelf. The following morning, the little girl returns with money from her piggy bank--enough to buy the bear. She takes him home. Her room is not as large or as grand as the store, but it's warm and comfortable--a home. Corduroy says he has always wanted a home. Lisa, the little girl, has placed a bed his size by hers. She sews a button on his overalls. Corduroy knows he has a friend.

Biographical Sketch

Don Freeman was born in 1908, a native of San Diego, California. His art education took place at the Art Students League in New York City. A performing musician and graphic newspaper reporter, his love of music and theater is evident in many of his stories. He never writes down to his audience; his stories and illustrations are exciting, warm and easily available to children.

Critic's Corner

Corduroy is a warm and gentle story of friendship. The interplay of illustrations and text is superb. The story has literary merit and the illustrations enhance the text. It is listed in the California State Department of Education *Recommended Readings in Literature*.

Objectives

1. To connect the story with a personal experience
2. To understand shopping in a large department store
3. To know what a stuffed toy can be--a playmate who always gives and never demands anything.

Bibliography

Other books by Don Freeman available from Perma-Bound:

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Beady Bear | Dandelion |
| Pet of the Met | Bearymore |
| (with L. Freeman) | Hattie the Backstage Bat |
| Mop Top | Paper Party |
| Pocket for Corduroy | Rainboy of My Own |
| Space Witch | Tilly Witch |

Also:

- Fly High, Fly Low. Viking, New York, 1957.
- The Guard Mouse. Viking, New York, 1967.
- Norman the Doorman. Viking, New York, 1959.

Illustrated by Don Freeman:

- Cunningham, J. *Burnish me bright*. Pantheon Books, 1970.
- Sauer, J. L. *Mike's house*. Viking, 1954.

Student Activities

1. Paint or draw pictures of your favorite stuffed animal.
2. Construct teddy bears with construction paper using raisins for eyes, buttons and fake fur for clothes.

Beyond the Story

1. Read the second story by Freeman, *A Pocket for Corduroy*.
2. First and second graders could share the story, either reading or retelling it to younger children.
3. Have children use the story as a basis for a play and create another ending or sequel.
4. A science lesson can be developed studying bears (types, habitats) and could conclude with a visit to the zoo.
5. Expand the story with a reading of Robert McCloskey's *Blueberries for Sal*.
6. Use filmstrips on animal life.

Comprehension Test

Read each question. Circle the letter of the answer.

1. Where did Corduroy live in the beginning of the story?
A. in a cave B. in a department store C. at Lisa's house
2. Why wouldn't Lisa's mother buy Corduroy for her?
A. she doesn't like bears B. his pants were green C. she had spent too much money
3. What did Corduroy lose?
A. a button B. a friend C. his bed
4. What did Corduroy think when he stepped on the escalator?
A. it was a palace B. it moved too fast C. it was a mountain
5. Corduroy thought he found his button. Where did he find it?
A. on a lamp B. on a mattress C. under a bed
6. Who came running after Corduroy knocked over the lamp?
A. Lisa B. Lisa's mother C. the night watchman
7. Where did Lisa get the money to buy Corduroy?
A. she saved it in her piggy bank B. she borrowed it from her mother C. the night watchman gave it to her
8. Where did Lisa live?
A. in a house B. in an apartment C. in the store
9. What was waiting for Corduroy at Lisa's house?
A. a chair B. a palace C. a little bed
10. What had Corduroy always wanted?
A. a friend B. a button C. a bed



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