

# Clifford in the Classroom

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 [scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/clifford-classroom](https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/clifford-classroom)

Who can resist Clifford the Big Red Dog? Norman Bridwell's lovable crimson canine creation has become an all-time favorite literary character with a permanent home in classroom libraries everywhere. Clifford will delight your students with all of his wacky adventures and the dozens of titles available lend themselves to teaching all kinds of themes. Here, you'll find teaching ideas and extension activities for books in the Clifford series. The universal appeal of Clifford makes this series an excellent choice for a primary-level author study with possibilities for integrating subject matter across the curriculum.

For a complete list of Clifford titles, see [Norman Bridwell's list of works](#).

## Integrating Across the Curriculum With Clifford

### Write a Clifford Storybook!

After your students are familiar with Clifford and his escapades, why not let them write and illustrate their own Clifford stories? Depending on the age and skill development of your students, they can work individually, in pairs, or in small groups, and can write their own drafts or dictate to an adult. Some students will want to trace Clifford, others will want to take a stab at drawing him freehand, but give everyone plenty of time to work on the illustrations as well as the story itself. Laminate the pages, bind into a big book, and have a read-along session where everyone can share their wonderful new Clifford stories! You may even want to let students take the classroom book home overnight to share with their families.

### Clifford and Math

After reading [Count on Clifford](#), the children can work with manipulatives on a variety of story problems. For example: Emily Elizabeth invited four dogs and four children to Clifford's birthday party. How many dogs and children came to Clifford's party? If students solve that problem quickly, challenge them further by asking them how many plates, forks, and spoons will be needed to serve all the people at the party, including Emily Elizabeth and Clifford? At Clifford's birthday party there were five children, five dogs and ten cats, how many animals and people were there all together? Total up all the feet and all the tails. The numbers will get large quickly, so the children will need to find ways to organize and total this information. Again, encourage the use of any manipulatives you have on hand as a strategy.

Other story problems can be generated by you or the students themselves. Encourage your students to show their work with pictures, numbers or words, and display their Clifford math stories for all to see!

### Social Studies With Clifford

For example, starting the school year with an active group of children who often have their own agendas is sometimes very difficult. Try reading [Clifford's Manners](#) to inspire your students to think more about their manners and how they affect other people. After reading the story, children can brainstorm a list of as many good manners as they can think of. Make it fun by encouraging role playing or by using a Clifford

puppet or stuffed animal to help bring your students ideas to life. Suggest that children choose a favorite manner each day and make a special effort to use it with everyone they interact with that day. Create a bulletin board of paper Cliffords (see the [Make-and-Take Clifford Art Project](#) below) with each student's favorite manner written on Clifford's bone.

It is also helpful if you and your students begin reminding each other to use their "Clifford Manners" on a daily basis. You'll be well on your way to establishing a climate of respect in your classroom.

## Clifford Cooks Up Some Kitchen Science

After you read *Clifford Wants a Cookie* or [Cooking With Clifford](#), it's an excellent time to actually make the cookies! Some preplanning is needed for this activity. Send home a note to parents requesting additional adult help, the necessary ingredients, cooking utensils, and potholders. Reserve time to use the school stove.

Cookie cutters shaped like Clifford and his bone are enclosed with the book. Use the recipe included in the book, or try your own favorite sugar cookie dough, just take care that the dough is not too thick because it will get stuck in the cookie cutter. Let children take turns in small groups carefully measuring and mixing the ingredients and talk about how the texture changes as you mix, and what changes the application of heat will cause. When all the cookies are done, it's fun to decorate them with red icing. This enhances the Big Red Dog theme. Your students will enjoy sharing their cookie creations with other adults in the school, so bake plenty of extras and send children out in pairs to deliver their cookies.

## Sing About Clifford!

For loads of fun, sing "How Much Is that Doggie in the Window?" and bark at the end of each line. The first time, ask children to bark like a tiny dog; the second time, like a big dog; and the third time, like Clifford!

[Clifford's Sing Along](#), published by Scholastic, is a fun collection of some of Clifford's favorites. In [Clifford, We Love You](#), Emily Elizabeth writes a happy song to cheer up Clifford. What kind of music do your students think dogs like?

## Make-and-Take Clifford Art Project

Your students will love making their own Cliffords. Here's how your class can make the Big Red Pooch out of paper and take him home, or decorate the classroom!

### What You Need

- Square of red construction paper (9", 10" or 11" inch squares work well), one per student
- Pieces of white or tan construction paper for Clifford's bone, one per student
- Small pieces or scraps of black and white construction paper for eyes and noses, at least one of each per student (**Tip:** If you are working with very young children, precut black and white ovals for eyes and noses to save time.)
- Scissors
- Crayons

### What You Do

1. Show the children how to fold the square in half diagonally so that a triangle is created.

2. Have the students use scissors to round off the two smaller corners.
3. Help students fold the smaller corners down an inch or two to create ears.
4. Have students shape Clifford's nose by trimming the third corner (the last remaining right angle) into a scallop shape. **Tip:** Draw a sideways 3 across the corner and cut along the scalloped line.
5. Help students cut a bone shape from the white or tan piece of construction paper.
6. Hand out the precut black and white ovals or have students cut out ovals from the black and white construction paper pieces to make the eyes and nose shapes.
7. Let the students glue the eyes, nose, and bone in place on their Clifford faces.
8. Show students how to add whiskers with a black crayon.

**Optional:** Older students can write their favorite "Clifford Manner" or a reason why Clifford is special on the bone before pasting it in Clifford's mouth.

It's amazing to see how everyone in the class can start with the same materials, but each child's Clifford will have his own distinct personality!

### **Just for Fun....Have a "Big Red Day!"**

Plan to have everyone wear something red to school one day, and allow plenty of time to read aloud some Clifford books throughout the day. Let your Clifford stuffed dog or puppet oversee the festivities. Draw a large outline of Clifford on butcher paper and have students cover it with bits of red construction paper or crushed red tissue paper. Children will enjoy sharing red riddles, poems, and stories, and can even go on a red scavenger hunt in your building or in the neighborhood. Top off your Big Red Day with red fruit punch, apples, cherries, strawberries, or red jello!

- Part of Collection:

[Clifford the Big Red Dog](#)

- Subjects:

Arts and Crafts, Literature, Literature Appreciation, Math through Literature, Colors, Early Math, Early Science, Science through Literature

- Skills:

Science