

Little People, BIG DREAMS™

TEACHERS' GUIDE



Corazon Aquino

Little People, BIG DREAMS™

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Even from a young age, Corazon Aquino showed that she was brave and responsible and had an inherent sense of justice. She followed her passions to law school, where she met her future husband Ninoy. Both Cory and Ninoy felt strongly about fairness in their home country of the Philippines, which was led by at the time by a corrupt man who wanted all the power for himself. Ninoy decided to become a politician to help bring about change for good. After his sudden death, Cory followed on his political path, running for election against a leader who wanted to be a dictator. The faked results of the election caused the people of her country to revolt against the leader in support of Cory, and she became the first female president of the Philippines. Her unwavering bravery through tumult to become a democratic leader continues to inspire children of all ages with the knowledge that, in big and small ways, we all have the power to defend freedom.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS IN THIS UNIT

1. What is Corazon Aquino famous for doing?
2. How did Cory meet her husband Ninoy?
3. What did Cory and Ninoy think about their country's president?
4. What actions did they take to express their thoughts and beliefs?
5. When Cory's family returned to the Philippines after being forced to leave, what happened to Ninoy?
6. What important leader did Cory eventually become?

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Cory moved around a lot, both as a kid and as an adult. Ask the class if they think living in different places and meeting different people possibly gave Cory a perspective other leaders might not normally have. Has anyone in the class moved around a few times? Do they think different perspectives will be useful as they get older?

2. When Ninoy told Cory he wanted to become a politician, she “sold her most beloved heirlooms to support him.” Ask the students to think of things they own that they love. Would they sell those things to help a friend? Is friendship worth more than the value of those things?
3. The book explains that both Ninoy and Cory wanted a democratic government for the Philippines, but the current president wanted to be a dictator. Using the book as a guide, ask the students to name some of the qualities of a democracy, then compare them to the qualities of a dictatorship. Which do they think is the better system, and why?
4. When Cory’s husband died, “millions of people threw aside their fear and stayed by her side at the funeral, showing her their love and support,” and when the presidential election results were clearly faked, “millions of people armed with courage took to the streets and proclaimed Cory president of the Philippines.” Ask the class to discuss the reasons why they think so many people supported Cory. To the people, what do the students think Cory and the memory of Ninoy represented?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. Cory became the first female president of her country. As a class, make a list of the character traits she needed in order to achieve this remarkable accomplishment. Post the list at the front of the room and discuss. What stands out the most? Did anyone suggest anything surprising? Is there a trait that should have been added but wasn’t?
2. Cory began giving speeches at a very young age. Have students split into groups and create two-minute speeches about something the group feels passionate about (perhaps longer lunch times or wanting to stay up later). What elements are needed to form a convincing speech? Have the groups elect someone to present the speeches to the class.
3. In the book, the Filipino people revolt against the harsh rule of their current president. Using the library or the internet as a resource, find out more about this revolution. What was it called? Was it violent? What does it mean to have a peaceful revolution?
4. Since Cory moved around a lot, she had experiences with a wide variety of people, environments, governments, etc, all of which informed how she ruled. Using her flexibility as inspiration, spend the next week asking students to keep an open mind when they are introduced to something new – a new person, a new food, an idea they’ve never heard before. Ask students to journal their encounters and avoid reserving judgement, but rather have them stick to the facts. At the end of the week, ask volunteers to share their experience and offer up different perspectives on why waiting to judge can be beneficial.

