



Sensory Guide: *I Come From Arizona*



[Image: I Come From Arizona production banner. Letters are all upper case.]

For receptive 8-year-olds and up

Approximately 2 hours including on 15-minute intermission

Cargill Stage

Sensory Friendly Guide: *I Come From Arizona*

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Introduction

CTC understands that patrons with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Sensory Processing Disorder have unique and varying sensory needs and sensitivities, as may individuals with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety, and other sensory, social, and cognitive disabilities and mental illnesses. CTC values creating accessible theatre experiences for all individuals and is committed to increasing the access and inclusion for individuals with sensory sensitivities. At our Sensory Friendly performances, sensory modifications are balanced with preserving the genuine theatre experience desired by all children and families.

This Sensory Guide is designed to help prepare individuals and families for attending *I Come From Arizona*. Included is information about Sensory Friendly performances at CTC, a list of potential triggers and moments of high anxiety in the show, a timeline of high visual and auditory stimulation and intense emotional moments, a synopsis of the show, and information to ready you and your family for a production on our Cargill Stage. On our website, there is an additional Social Narrative that maps out the process of attending a show on the Cargill Stage along with the experience of watching *I Come From Arizona*.

Please email access@childrenstheatre.org if you have additional questions.

Sensory Support at CTC Performances

For every performance, our Information Desk (next to the concession stand) has noise-reducing earmuffs and disposable earplugs available to be utilized by those with sensitivities to auditory stimuli. There are also stress stars available. When attending a show on the United Health Group Stage, patrons have access to the Quiet Room, a room in the back of the theatre where the performance can be viewed with some separation from the audience. Any usher can point this space out to you as you enter the theatre.

Audience members are also welcome to bring their own manipulatives, seat cushions, comfort objects, and additional support items. If special assistance or a buffer seat is needed, please call 612.874.0400.

'Meet Your Seat' opportunities are provided to reduce stress and support successful priming for the actual event. To schedule a Meet Your Seat visit prior to your scheduled performance date, email access@childrenstheatre.org.

Sensory Friendly Performance Modifications

At every Sensory Friendly performance, the lights on the audience are left on low. The volume is also reduced. For additional sound reduction, CTC's Information Desk (next to the concessions stand) provides noise-cancelling earmuffs and disposable earplugs. Additional potential modifications include further changes to lighting and sound, and other performance elements, such as eliminating strobe effects, lessening the intensity of a sound effect, or modifying actor-audience interaction. Not all aspects of the show may be modified due to their relevance to the story, the show's artistic integrity, or production constraints.

Please be advised: Entering an auditorium with many people can be challenging for some individuals. Added CTC staff and volunteers from Fraser and Autism Society of Minnesota will help provide a supportive and welcoming environment. During the show, audience members are free to talk or move and utilize our U.S. Bank Take-a-Break Space.

U.S. Bank Take-a-Break Space: The U.S. Bank Take-a-Break Space is set up at every Sensory Friendly Performance. It is located on the Cargill Mezzanine; there will be signs to direct you. This space is equipped with fidgets, weighted blankets, and additional sensory supports. It may be utilized at any point before, during, or after the performance. Patrons are welcome to exit and re-enter the theatre as needed.

What to Expect: *I Come From Arizona*

CTC's *I Come From Arizona* is a non-musical production performed by a small group of adult and student actors. This production is a world premiere – meaning that this is the first time it's ever been performed in the entire world. The show was commissioned, developed, and originally produced through our new play development lab here at Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis, MN. This play is bi-lingual and performed with a mix of Spanish & English. It centers on the experience of an undocumented family from Mexico and features characters from two contrasting perspectives on immigration.

Positive Themes: There are many positive themes in *I Come From Arizona*, including responsibility, stress-management, promises, finding courage, and belonging.

Bilingual Performance: Several characters speak in both Spanish and English throughout the show. Lines in Spanish are not translated into English. Frequently, the response to a line in Spanish is given in English to help non-Spanish speakers follow the conversation. Characters also use their tone of voice and body language to make the meaning of their words clear.

A few potential triggers and anxious scenes to prepare for in the show include:

The following are listed in detail in the “Timeline of Potentially Intense Moments in I Come From Arizona.”

Auditory Stimuli:

- Music plays before the show and fades in and out during transitions
- Sounds of traffic passing, trains moving, horns honking
- Mass transit announcement while Gabi is traveling to school
- School bell signals the start and end of classes
- Loud arguing at home among the Castillo family and at school between classmates
- Loud outbursts from characters during moments of intense emotion
- The apartment’s buzzer is rung on two separate occasions when Gabi and Jesús are alone. It is loud and surprising.
- The apartment’s buzzer and ominous voiceovers of lines Gabi has heard are repeated during her anxiety attack and nightmare.
- Fluorescent light hum/buzz used in the play’s lighting design

Visual Stimuli:

- Lit signs on the sides of the stage turn on and off before the show begins
- Lights fade down and up in different areas of the stage to light the action
- Lights in one area dim while lights in another area are brought up during quick transitions
- Set pieces are moved on and off in dim lighting as scenes begin tomorrow elsewhere
- Images change on a screen while Fiona gives her presentation
- Lights warp into red or green and then switch directly back to white during Gabi’s anxiety attack
- Lights change to teal during Gabi’s nightmare
- Lights flicker during Gabi’s anxiety attack and nightmare
- Blue lighting on Papi when he is far away

Emotional:

- Gabi and Papi before he goes on a long trip to see Abuelo
- Gabi is nervous about a starting a new school
- Gabi travels on public transportation for the first time to get to school
- Gabi struggles to feel like she belongs at school since many of her fellow students come from a much higher income bracket than her family does
- A student directly asks Gabi “What are you?” and her legal status is questioned by a fellow student
- There are arguments between Gabi and Jesús and between Gabi and Mami. These arguments get heated and are stressful for the characters involved.
- Jesús worried about ICE taking Mami and Papi away
- Gabi has an anxiety attack when it is her turn to present on her family’s origins because she is not prepared. Theatrical effects are used to convey this experience to the audience.
- Gabi receives the news via phone that Abuelo has died
- Gabi experiences a great deal of stress from her familial and academic responsibilities as well as social pressure from being at a new school
- Mami tells Gabi about the dangerous journey she and Papi took to come to America
- Mami tells Gabi that she and Papi are undocumented
- Different political ideologies and ethical beliefs about immigration are discussed

Timeline of Potentially Intense Moments for *I Come From Arizona*

Be warned: This contains show spoilers and complete descriptions of staging. Please read the "Plot Synopsis" for a full description of the plot.

Timeline may fluctuate due to when the show begins and the pace of the actors.

There are store signs and street signs on the edges of the stage. The floor of the stage is painted in earth tones and printed with large geometric shapes. At the front of the stage on the audience's left, there is a corner of a kitchen and a door; this is part of the apartment where Gabi's family lives. At the front of the stage on the audience's right is Gabi's bed. Towards the back of the stage on the audience's right, there is another door with a small bookshelf beside it; this will be a door in the school Gabi goes to. The back of the stage has a mural painted on it. There are construction workers, graduates, and dancers in Jalisco dresses.

7:00 The lights on stage and in the audience dim. The preshow announcement begins with the greeting "Good morning, class." The audience is prompted to respond with, "Good morning." The announcement is structured as students giving answers to communicate that it is time to turn off cell phones and electronics. The welcome announcement is also repeated in Spanish.

7:01 The lights on stage fade to black. The first light to reappear is the light from the refrigerator in the Castillos' kitchen. Papi is packing food into a bag. Gabi creeps in and startles him with her questions. Lights in the kitchen space fade up.

7:02 Papi and Gabi argue in the kitchen about where he is going and what he is doing. Papi tells her that her Abuelo, his father, is very sick, and he needs to go see him.

7:03 Gabi becomes stressed that Papi won't be able to take her to her first day at her new school, Northside College Preparatory. Papi tells her that Mami will take her. Gabi points out that Mami has other responsibilities.

7:05 Gabi confides in Papi that she is worried she won't be good enough and won't fit in at Northside. Papi reminds her thousands of students applied, and she is one of a few hundred who were accepted.

7:06 A car horn honks, signaling that it is time for Papi to leave. It is a difficult goodbye for Gabi. Music fades in.

7:07 Mami enters. Gabi expresses her anger that Mami did not tell her Papi was leaving. Gabi crosses the stage to go to bed, and the lights dim.

7:08 The lights come up brightly; it is morning. Mami wakes up Gabi and tries to dress her in a dress Gabi says will lead to her peers thinking she's Amish. Mami says she will commute with Gabi to her new school; Gabi tells her she can walk her to the bus stop, but she'll go the rest of the way on her own.

7:09 Music fades in as Jesús enters. It fades out as he talks to Mami and Gabi.

7:10 Mami gives Gabi a cell phone for emergencies. Jesús expresses his concern about Gabi going to school "a thousand miles away" and says there might be zombies.

7:11 Lights dim as Gabi runs offstage. Lights fade to light the front of the stage; a horn honks. Music plays. A crossing guard, Ms. D, enters and encourages the audience to clap to a beat while they dance.

- 7:12 Gabi, Mami, and Jesús enter. Jesús makes fun of Gabi for having her stuffed rabbit in her backpack. Mami is very worried about Gabi getting lost when traveling on the CTA (the metro train) for the first time all by herself. Gabi assures her it will be okay and recites her transportation itinerary.
- 7:13 Before saying goodbye and leaving to walk Jesús to school, Mami gives Gabi a whistle in case anyone tries to mug her. Mami reminds her as she leaves that if anyone asks where she's from to tell them that she comes from Arizona.
- 7:14 Gabi admits to the crossing guard that she does have butterflies in her stomach.
- 7:15 Music fades in. The back of the stage is lit. Actors push on the seats of a train. There are the sounds of traffic, people talking, and CTA announcements. Lights shakily pass across them. Gabi rushes on and sits between people. A man is asking folks for money. He talks about how he served the United States fighting in Iraq, but now that he's back home, he can't get or keep a job. He blames this on jobs being "sent down there."
- 7:16 Gabi offers the man her candy bar and he yells at her. She runs off the train. A spotlight shines on Gabi. Students and lockers move around her as the stage transitions to Northside Preparatory. She tries to find her way. As the lights fade up, she stands in front of a blue locker.
- 7:17 Gabi meets Ricardo, another student at Northside. Ricardo shows Gabi his iPad. He is surprised she doesn't have one.
- 7:18 Ricardo asks Gabi if she is Puerto Rican. When she says no, he asks, "What are you?" and after she tells him she's from Arizona, he asks if she'd Latina. Gabi says her background is Mexican. Ricardo then asks if she's legal. Gabi tells him she is, but that is none of his business.
- 7:19 As Gabi and Ricardo journey to class, they weave a path that crosses different portions of the stage. Lights change to illuminate solely the areas they are crossing, imitating hallways. Six desks are brought out and face a larger desk. A lighting fixture is lowered from above.
- 7:20 Gabi meets Fiona. Fiona calls Ricardo "Richie," despite him asking her to only call him Ricardo.
- 7:21 When Gabi shares that she is from the South Side, Fiona makes comments about that portion of the city being full of gangs and shootings. Gabi is firm it's not like that; she is proud to be from the South Side.
- 7:22 After Ms. Chan, the teacher, walks in, a bell rings. Ms. Chan prompts the students to say good morning to her.
- 7:26 To respond to Ms. Chan's question – "What is Global Perspectives, do they matter, and if so, why?" – Fiona says it's important to be able to protect yourself from others who don't belong and that the U.S. should only let in folks who are going to contribute.
- 7:27 Ricardo tells Fiona she sounds like "a total Republican." Fiona tells him he sounds like "a typical Democrat." The class erupts as everyone shouts their opinion. Ms. Chan shouts "CLASS" over the noise to quiet the students.
- 7:28 The class breaks into groups to debate if there should be a wall between the U.S. and Mexico. Lights dim on the main classroom space as Fiona, Ricardo, and Gabi move to the side to discuss their opinions.
- 7:29 After Fiona says she doesn't mind immigrants who "have skills, speak the language, fit in," Ricardo tells her, "That's totally racist." Fiona yells that she is not racist and demands an apology.
- 7:30 When discussing what happens when someone is born in the U.S. to undocumented parents, Ricardo brings up a story of a father who was sent away from his family after living in the U.S. for 30 years.

- 7:31 Lights fade up on the desks as students return to their seats. Ms. Chan has students raise their hand to indicate if they are for or against a wall being built along the U.S./Mexico border. The class is given the assignment to interview their family members to get their personal origin story.
- 7:32 A bell rings and voices fade in. Everyone but Gabi leaves. Gabi tells Ms. Chan she doesn't have anyone to interview because Papi is gone and Mami won't talk about it. Ms. Chan tells her that if she doesn't complete the assignment she will get an F. Ms. Chan encourages Gabi to talk to her mother about their origins.
- 7:34 Music fades in as Gabi leaves the classroom. The desks are moved away and the lockers return. At the lockers, Ricardo shares that his parents are divorced, so he won't be able to talk to his dad. Fiona says she wishes her parents were divorced because they fight all the time.
- 7:35 The bell rings, lockers slam shut, and the lights dim. The lockers move offstage. Lights come up in the Castillos' kitchen where Jesús and Gabi are doing homework.
- 7:36 Jesús is very upset that Gabi took so long to pick him up from school. He expresses his concern that she'll forget him and he'll be left there. Gabi promises she will be there earlier to pick him up the next day.
- 7:38 Gabi begins to tell Jesús a bedtime story. As Gabi says, "Messi got scared, so he said—," the buzzer for their apartment goes off. It is loud and jarring. Jesús yells and hides under the table. He insists that Gabi should ignore it. Gabi thinks maybe Mami forgot her keys; she calls uses their intercom to ask who it is. No one responds. Both Gabi and Jesús are rattled. Gabi sends Jesús off to bed without finishing his bedtime story. He yells, "You're the meanest sister ever!"
- 7:39 Music fades in. Gabi cradles her bunny. Lights fade.
- 7:40 Lights fade up. Mami is in the kitchen making breakfast. Gabi tries to ask Mami questions about where their family is from, but Mami won't give a direct answer.
- 7:42 Gabi and Mami raise their voices as they fight about Gabi's assignment. Gabi accuses Mami of lying about where Papi has gone.
- 7:44 Lights dim and music fades in. Two spots appear down center where Gabi and Fiona stand while conversing via phone. Fiona tells Gabi to come to her house after school for their project. Gabi tries to tell her that she has to pick up her brother, but Fiona has hung up.
- 7:45 A kitchen island is brought out and lights fade up. Fiona works on her computer, Ricardo uses his iPad, and Gabi has her notebook. Fiona talks about using Wikipedia to find information out about her parents.
- 7:47 When Ricardo talks about his family being from Puerto Rico, Fiona comments that even if Puerto Ricans are American citizens, "they're not really American." Gabi corrects her, saying, "They're Americans – from Puerto Rico."
- 7:48 When Yadira enters, Fiona exclaims that both Yadira and Gabi come from Mexico. Gabi says she is from Arizona and begins to get upset. Gabi remembers she has to pick up Jesús and leaves. Lights fade on Fiona's kitchen. Music fades in. The island is moved offstage.
- 7:49 Lights fade up in the Castillos' kitchen. Jesús is very upset that Gabi was late to pick him up, and he worried he would have to cross Ashland, a very busy street, by himself. He was the last one and the teachers were going to have to call the police because they did not have Gabi's phone number. As Gabi tries to soothe Jesús, he gets more upset. Both

he and Gabi raise their voices as they begin to fight. He heard Gabi call Mami a liar and is worried that “the ice cream truck” is going to take Mami and Papi away. Jesús says that the ICE truck took away his classmate’s father; Gabi explains ICE is the immigration police. He asks if they are here illegally; Gabi tells him no. When he refuses to start to do his homework, Gabi yells that she’ll make him cross Ashland all by himself.

7:53 The buzzer goes off interrupting their argument. Jesús hides under the table. Gabi presses the intercom button to listen, but all they hear is traffic. The lights dim.

7:54 A light comes up solely on Fiona at center. She texts Gabi to tell her their plan for their Global Perspectives project that weekend. She takes a selfie and there is a loud camera shutter noise. Loud music fades in. Lights go down. End of Act One.

7:55 Intermission: During intermission, a representative from Autism Society of Minnesota will lead the audience in exercises. Audience members are also free to talk, move around, visit the restrooms, concession, and U.S. Bank Take-a-Break Space. During this time, the stage is reset for the classroom.

8:10: Before Act Two begins, all of the lights go down briefly. Guitar music plays. When lights fade up, students are in the classroom.

8:11 Gabi is stressed about their project. She is unprepared because she was taking care of Jesús all weekend. Fiona volunteers them to go first. Her presentation utilizes the white board. Images change as she talks about her family’s origins.

8:10 While Fiona presents, Gabi begins to hear flashbacks of comments her family and new classmates have said. Ricardo appears from inside a locker and then slams it shut. The lights change to red and flicker. Fiona stands on top of the desk. There are grinding noises. The lights have jarring switches back to the present moments of Fiona’s presentation interject Gabi’s experience. Mami enters with an ice cream cart and the lights turn green. Jesús repeatedly rises up out of the ice cream cart. There is a pounding sound explosion and yelling from Gabi.

8:13 Lighting returns to normal as Fiona finishes her presentation. It is Gabi’s turn to present. She begins to have a panic attack; she struggles to take deep breaths, her eyes are wide, and she shakes a little. She runs out of the room. Ms. Chan runs after her.

8:14 Ms. Chan finds Gabi hiding in her locker. Gabi slams the locker when she gets out. She tells Ms. Chan people on the internet and in their class don’t want her family in the U.S.

8:15 Ricardo arrives. He and Gabi begin to fight. Gabi yells about all her responsibilities and the challenges she faces.

8:19 Fiona apologizes to Gabi and runs off crying.

8:20 Lights come up on Gabi talking with Ms. D, the crossing guard. Gabi shares her doubts that Mami wants her at her new school and Ms. D tells her how proud Mami was about Gabi’s test scores. Gabi asks questions about her family’s origin, and Ms. D encourages her to ask her mother.

8:22 Lights fade down at the front of the stage as they fade up on the Castillos’ kitchen. The phone rings. Gabi answers it; it is Papi. A blue light fades up on Papi who is stand upstage center. Papi tells her that Abuelo has died. Gabi presses Papi to tell her where he is, and he tells her he is in Mexico and on his way home.

- 8:24 Gabi falls asleep on the kitchen table. While she sleeps, her nightmare plays out on stage. The lights dim and music begins playing. The door buzzer repeatedly goes off. Teal light shines on stage, and the lights in the kitchen flicker. Ice cream music plays. Gabi shakes. The door to the apartment opens. Teal light floods through it. There is an ICE agent wearing a helmet and a bulletproof vest and wielding a large glowing popsicle. The ICE agent asks where Gabi's family members are in an intimidating deep voice. She hides under the table. Lights flash and there is the sound of chimes. Gabi wakes up at the table as Mami comes home.
- 8:27 After relaying Papi's message, Gabi and Mami begin to fight. Gabi tells Mami it is her fault Gabi wasn't prepared for the presentation. Both Mami and Gabi raise their voices as they fight. Gabi asks if they're undocumented; she tells Mami she won't be able to get scholarships for college if she is undocumented. Gabi yells that Mami has ruined her life. Mami yells at Gabi to sit down. Mami tells Gabi about the dangerous journey she and Papi took to get to the U.S. She talks about how Papi's cousin was killed due to gang violence and when Papi lost his job, they decided to come to the United States. Mami tells her about the dangerous trek they made across the desert and about how she gave birth to Gabi. Mami tells Gabi that she and Papi are undocumented.
- 8:37 Gabi is worried that Papi won't be able to get back to them. Gabi expresses her worry that Mami will get taken away too. Together, they kneel and pray for Papi. Lights dim.
- 8:39 Lights fade up and cymbals ring as Jesús wakes Gabi up to feed her cereal in bed. Gabi tells him that she'll take him to school but isn't going back to Northside. Jesús tells her that he heard what Mami told her last night and convinces her that she can handle going back. Gabi gives him her stuffed bunny.
- 8:40 Lights dim. The desks are moved back on stage. Lights come up. All of Gabi's classmates are in class, but Gabi is not there.
- 8:41 Gabi walks in late. She volunteers to share her origin story. She tells the class about not wanting to come back to school. Lights dim and focus on Gabi as she shares about the dangerous journey her parents took to get to the United States, that she was born somewhere between Mexico and Arizona, and how her parents were a lot like Fiona's great-grandparents who emigrated from Ireland many years earlier.
- 8:46 After Gabi has finished, the whole class claps. Lights fade down; music and talking fades in.
- 8:47 Lights come up on Gabi and Jesús playing soccer downstage. Ricardo shows up. He tells her that he thinks her presentation was "badass." Gabi confides in Ricardo that she is worried about Papi being able to make it back. Ricardo reassures her.
- 8:49 Gabi invites Ricardo to come to their apartment for dinner. When she clarifies that she's inviting him as a friend, Ricardo comes out to Gabi saying, "I'm not really into girls."
- 8:50 As Gabi, Jesús and Ricardo leave the stage, doors on the back drop of the stage open. Papi is behind them on his journey home. Lights dim. Music plays. Actors come out and bow.
- 8:52 End of show.

How to prepare for the Story (before the show):

Here is a full story synopsis – but, please be warned, as a *full* synopsis, it is full of spoilers!

Plot Synopsis

written by Ellie McKay, Director of Education

Early in the morning on Chicago's South Side, Gabi Castillo wakes up to find a suitcase waiting by the door and her Papi packing food into a plastic bag. She explains that she is nervous about starting school the next day at Northside Prep, an elite high school across town. Out of the thousands of people who apply to Northside Prep, Gabi was one of the few to be accepted. Gabi is confused about why Papi is packing. Papi confesses to her that he is heading home to Arizona because his father, Gabi's Abuelo, is sick and needs help. Papi promises that Mami will take Gabi to her first day of school but Gabi knows that will not work. Mami has to walk Jesús, Gabi's little brother, to school and Mami doesn't drive. Also, Mami did not want Gabi to go in the first place and hid her acceptance letter. Gabi will have to take the CTA (Chicago public transportation) by herself. Papi makes Gabi promise to be good and look after Mami and Jesús. He encourages Gabi to keep her head up and assures her that she belongs at Northside Prep.

The next morning Gabi wakes up to her Mami yelling that she will be late. Gabi asks Mami why she didn't tell her that Papi was leaving. She is frustrated that Mami is keeping a secret. Just then, Jesús enters the kitchen and asks what the secret is about. Mami announces that she has a present for Gabi: a cellphone to be used only for emergencies. When they head out for school, Gabi agrees to let Mami walk her to the blue line but no farther. Jesús notices that Gabi packed her stuffed rabbit and pokes fun at her. Mami reminds Gabi to use her whistle if someone is messing with her and if anyone asks where she is from, to tell them she is from Arizona. Gabi promises to pick up Jesús from school and they part ways. The crossing guard greets Gabi. She has known Gabi and her family since Gabi was a baby. She explains that even when Gabi was young, she knew that Gabi was smart and going to make something of herself. She tells Gabi that the whole neighborhood is proud of her. Gabi boards the blue line.

A ragged looking man stands up and asks for money from everyone on the train. While everyone else is ignoring him, Gabi offers a candy bar. The ragged man becomes angry and yells at Gabi about how some American jobs are "taken down there" to Mexico. Gabi runs off of the train. Ricardo, a new classmate of Gabi's, asks about the stuffed rabbit. Gabi lies that her little brother put it in her backpack for good luck. He pulls out a spider man action figure. They realize they are in the same first class. Ricardo pulls out a new iPad to look at a map and is shocked Gabi doesn't have an iPad also. Ricardo asks if she is Puerto Rican. Gabi is confused and tells him she is not Puerto Rican. Ricardo asks, "what are you?" and Gabi responds that she comes from Arizona. Ricardo keeps pushing and asks if she is Latinx. Gabi clarifies that she is Mexican. Ricardo assures her that he is okay with Mexicans. Ricardo asks if she is "legal." Gabi assures him that she was born here but that it isn't any of his business. Ricardo discloses that he is Puerto Rican and Polish.

They find their classroom where they meet Fiona. Fiona calls Ricardo "Richie" even though he asked her not to. It is revealed that Ricardo & Fiona have known each other since Junior Kindergarten. They both attended Parker, a private school. Fiona explains that it is the best private school in Chicago, and asks where Gabi went to school. When Gabi explains that she lives on the South Side, Fiona becomes nervous and explains that gangs and shootings happen on the South Side. Fiona declares that being from the South Side probably helped Gabi get into Northside Prep because the scores are weighted based on your neighborhood. Fiona explains that she was moved out of private school because her parents thought it would be good for her to see "the real world."

Ms. Chan walks in and asks the group why they should care about global perspectives. Ricardo suggests that global perspectives are important because, with the evolution of the internet, we can now see world events as they are happening. Fiona explains that it is important to learn about global perspectives so that you can protect yourself from people who don't belong. Gabi challenges her by stating it is a good thing to have people from different cultures living together. Fiona argues that you have to be careful that those people are safe. She states that we "can't just let anyone in" and need to be careful of terrorists, criminals, and people out to steal our jobs. Ricardo tells Fiona that she "sounds like a

total Republican" to which Fiona replies "so what if I am?" Ms. Chan breaks the class out into groups to debate whether or not there should be a wall between the United States and Mexico. Gabi, Ricardo, and Fiona are in a group. Gabi challenges Fiona by stating that you can't call people bad just because they come from another place. Gabi confesses that her parents are from Mexico and aren't terrorists or criminals. Fiona explains that Gabi's parents may be an exception but that companies are moving jobs to Mexico to pay people less which puts Americans out of work. Then, people come here illegally from Mexico so more Americans lose jobs. Gabi tells the group about her encounter on the train and that it isn't her fault the man didn't have a job. Fiona declares that it might not be her fault but some people don't work and take advantage of the system. Fiona explains that she doesn't mind if people "have skills, speak the language, or fit in." Ricardo calls her comment racist which causes Fiona to become angry and demand an apology. Fiona states that she thinks there should be a wall between the US and Mexico and that if people did not come to America legally they "should get in line like everyone else." Ricardo shares a story he saw on social media about a father who has been in the country for 30 years and was deported. Gabi begins to think about what would happen if her parents were sent back to Mexico.

Ms. Chan calls the class back to their seats and polls the class for who is pro-wall. Ricardo doesn't raise his hand for either pro or against. He explains that his grandfather was born in Poland and fled from the Nazis. If there had been a wall, he might not have been born. His statement inspires the first assignment and Ms. Chan instructs them to research their family history. Fiona, Gabi, and Ricardo are in a group to do the family history project together.

Gabi stays after class to talk to Ms. Chan. She explains to Ms. Chan that she doesn't have anyone to interview; her Papi is in Mexico and Mami won't want to talk about it. Ms. Chan encourages her to try talking to her mother. Gabi and Ricardo head to their next class. Ricardo asks if Gabi has ever been to Mexico. Gabi is not happy about this question and asks if he has ever been to Poland or Puerto Rico. Ricardo explains that every summer he either goes to Poland with his dad or Puerto Rico with his mom. Ricardo's parents are divorced. Fiona shares that she wishes her parents would get a divorce since they fight all the time. She blames it on the fact that her dad voted for Trump and her mom "would've voted for Bernie but got stuck with Hillary." They all exchange phone numbers. When Gabi pulls out her flip phone, Fiona pokes fun at the fact that it is so old. Fiona invites both Ricardo and Gabi over to her house the next day to work on the project.

Late that evening, Gabi sits at the kitchen table buried in homework. Jesús comes into the kitchen and asks when Mami is coming home. Mami had to pick up extra shifts while Papi is gone. Jesús asks if every day will be like this and expresses frustration that it took so long for Gabi to pick him up from school. Gabi promises that he will never again have to be the last kid picked up from school. Jesús asks about Papi but Gabi ignores the question and offers to tell him a bedtime story. The two become scared when the apartment buzzer sounds. Jesús tells her not to answer it but she rings down to ask who it is. She can hear nothing but the sounds of the street outside the door. Jesús asks her to finish the story but Gabi yells at him to go to bed. Jesús states that she is the meanest sister ever.

The next morning, Gabi tells Mami about someone ringing the buzzer. Mami is angry that she called down and reminds her to never answer the door. Gabi asks Mami why she and Papi came to Chicago. Gabi tells Mami it is for a school project but Mami becomes afraid. Gabi tries to continue the conversation but Mami changes the subject. Gabi asks if Mami will have time tonight to answer the questions but Mami has to work again. Gabi becomes angry and yells that Mami is trying to make her fail out of Northside. Mami agrees to answer one question: why did they come to America? Gabi learns that Mami and Papi came to America because Mami was pregnant with Gabi and they wanted a better life for her. Jesús asks again where Papi is. Mami tells Jesús that Papi is in California visiting a cousin. Gabi is still angry and pushes Mami about why she is lying. Gabi's phone rings; it is Fiona reminding Gabi that they are going to her house after school to work on the project. Gabi tries to explain that she has to pick up her brother from school but Fiona won't hear it.

Fiona's house is much different than Gabi's house; Fiona clearly comes from money. Fiona admits that she hasn't been able to talk to her mom or dad because they are on a business trip, but she did read their Wikipedia pages. According to Wikipedia, Fiona's family has been in America since the 1800's. Her dad's family emigrated from Germany and her mom's family emigrated from Ireland. Ricardo hasn't spoken to his dad because he is living at his mom's house right now. Fiona suggests that they talk to Ricardo's mother for the project since she emigrated from Puerto Rico. Ricardo explains that Puerto Rico is part of America so she can't emigrate from Puerto Rico. Fiona asks how Gabi's research is going and Gabi has to admit that she doesn't have much because her mom was busy working. Fiona introduces everyone to her

housekeeper, Yadira. Suddenly, Gabi remembers that she is supposed to pick up her brother from school.

Jesús is clearly upset that Gabi left him at school; she was so late that the school almost called the police. Gabi tries to comfort him but Jesús pulls away angrily and expresses his frustration that everyone is lying to him. Jesús tells Gabi about his friend Arturo whose father was taken by "the ice cream truck," confusing Ice Cream with ICE, and begins to worry that ICE will take away Mami and Papi. Jesús begins to cry and Gabi comforts him. The buzzer goes off again. Gabi goes to the receiver and pushes the button but only listens. Gabi promises that everything will be okay but Jesús doesn't believe her because she promised that she would pick him up from school but forgot.

Gabi arrives at school and finds out that Ricardo and Fiona finished the project over the weekend without her. Fiona is clearly upset that Gabi did not pull her weight in the assignment and volunteers them to present even though she knows Gabi is not ready. While Fiona showcases her beautiful family tree built on her iPad, Gabi begins to feel anxious about the assignment when the world shifts and we start to experience Gabi's waking nightmare. The stage is converted to Gabi's distorted nightmare with strobe lights, underlying ice cream truck music and flashbacks of conversations overlapping each other. As the chaos crescendos, we return back to the classroom where Fiona is finishing her presentation. Gabi begins to try to tell her story but starts to cry and flees the classroom.

Ms. Chan comforts Gabi in the hallway and offers to give her an extension on her assignment but Gabi explains that it wouldn't make a difference. Papi is in Mexico and Mami is always working and won't answer her questions. Gabi worries she does not belong at Northside Prep. Ms. Chan asks Gabi where she is from but Gabi refuses to answer. Ms. Chan encourages her to try to talk to Mami again.

Gabi confronts Fiona for forcing them to present when she wasn't ready. Fiona expresses that she wishes she was back at Parker. Gabi explains to Fiona that she feels the way Fiona's Irish and German ancestors felt hundreds of years ago which renders Fiona speechless. Ricardo invites Gabi to his house after school but she declines because she has too much to do. Ricardo offers to come over to her house to help. Gabi does not take the offer and vows to do everything by herself. Fiona apologizes for not being sympathetic about the assignment and admits that it is hard for her to imagine that not everyone lives like her.

Gabi leaves school and is traveling home when the crossing guard stops her to ask why she isn't in school. Gabi explains that she doesn't belong at Northside. Gabi asks the crossing guard where her parents came from. The crossing guard explains that her parents came to Chicago when Gabi was just a baby and barely spoke English. Gabi asks if her parents came here illegally but the crossing guard doesn't know. The crossing guard encourages her to ask her mother these questions.

Late that night, Gabi is working on homework at the kitchen table when the phone rings. It is Papi. Papi tells Gabi that her Abuelo passed away. Gabi asks Papi if he really is in Arizona and he admits that he is in Mexico. Papi assures her that he wasn't sent back by ICE and that he will be home soon. Papi asks Gabi to pass along the message to Mami that he is on his way home and promises to call again when he can. Gabi lays her head on the table and begins to sleep. We are transported to her nightmare. We hear the distorted apartment buzzer and an ICE agent bursts through the door wielding a giant popsicle. He demands to know where her mother and father are. Gabi is cowering under the kitchen table. Just then, Mami enters looking exhausted after a full day of work. Gabi tells Mami what she learned from Papi. Gabi stirs up the courage to ask Mami what she dreamed about when she was a kid. Mami is reluctant to answer but Gabi keeps probing. Gabi becomes hysterical while explaining what she has been through today. Mami tells her not to worry which makes Gabi angrier. Gabi expresses that Mami has, "no idea what it's like to be humiliated." Mami becomes angry and explains that she is humiliated to be cleaning other people's houses and take care of other people's kids and have them not even look at you. Mami starts to leave when Gabi asks if they are undocumented. Gabi explains that she knows she won't be able to go to college or get scholarships if she is undocumented. She asks what the point of her hard work is if she is only going to end up cleaning skyscrapers and babysitting like her mother. Gabi accuses Mami of ruining everything. A line has been crossed and Mami admits that she and Papi are undocumented. Gabi tries to storm away angrily but Mami demands she sit and listen to the whole story. Mami explains that she married Papi and became pregnant with Gabi. The town where they lived was dangerous and there were many fights between gangs. She explained that Papi's

cousin was shot and killed by one of those gangs. They decided to leave Mexico to ensure a better life for Gabi but didn't have much money so they borrowed from Gabi's Abuelo. Mami explains how they had to wait in the desert for the coyote who would get them to America. But, the coyote took their money and they had to walk across the desert. Mami went into labor and a man they met helped get her to safety in Arizona. Gabi apologizes for her anger and begins to cry. Gabi had no idea that Mami went through so much in order to get to America and worries that they will be forced to return to Mexico. Gabi realizes that Papi will have to make the same trek to get back to them.

The next day, Gabi is woken up by Jesús, who made her a bowl of cereal. Gabi explains that she is not going back to Northside and Jesús worries that she will not go back to school because of something he did. He admits that he heard Gabi and Mami's conversation last night. Gabi admits that she is scared and tells him she doesn't belong at Northside. Jesús tells Gabi that if she doesn't belong at Northside, how will he ever belong? He tells her that Mami almost died to get to America and didn't do that for her to give up. Jesús changes her mind and Gabi goes to Northside. Before she goes, she gives him the stuffed rabbit.

Back at Northside, students start to worry that Gabi isn't coming back. Gabi walks into the classroom and volunteers to present what she learned about her history. She explains to the class that she travels all the way across the city every morning for her education and her parents traveled all the way across the desert to make a better life for her and her brother.

Later that evening, Gabi and Ricardo watch Jesús play soccer at a nearby park. Ricardo compliments her presentation and admits that he learned a lot. Gabi tells him about Papi and that she is scared he will not be able to come home. Gabi invites Ricardo over for dinner and they make plans for Gabi to join Ricardo for dinner. Gabi ensures that she is inviting him over to her house just as a friend. Ricardo admits that he isn't into girls so it won't be a problem. Just then Ricardo's phone rings. It is Fiona hoping to join them for dinner as well. In the distance, we see Papi making his way home.

For additional means of preparing for and processing this production, check out our [Audience Resource Guide](#). It contains conversations prompts, a timeline of U.S. immigration history and policies, a list of resources for adults and youth, suggested reading materials, and additional activities and resources.

Preparing for the CTC Experience

Priming:

Adult audience members attending with youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other sensitivity issues may read our guidance and environmental mapping below to prepare for the total experience and excitement at CTC. These tips are for anyone attending any public performances on the Cargill Stage, not just the Sensory Friendly shows.

Getting Ready:

- Coming to CTC can be a special occasion or a casual family outing, but it's always fun. Some audience members dress up, and some do not – it's your choice.
- You can bring your own food and drink. The rules are that food must be consumed in the lobby and not the theatre, but drinks may be in the theatre.
- Children can bring weighted blankets, their own noise cancelling earmuffs or headphones, and comfort toys as needed. You can bring a camera and take photos in our lobbies, but not inside the theatre. Electronic devices including phones must be turned off in the theatre.
- Check out CTC's Study Guides and social media to learn more about the show you're going to see.
- Always feel free to call our ticket office 612.874.0400 or contact tickets@childrenstheatre.org if you have any questions.
- Families may select their own seats online. The seating in the Cargill consists of long padded benches. If you think you might need to leave the show during the performance, we recommend choosing an aisle seat. If additional special assistance or a buffer seat is needed, please call 612.874.0400.

Getting Here:

- Directions? [Click here.](#)
- Parking? [Click here](#) for ramp and lot instructions as well as a map of accessible parking locations.
- CTC shares a main entrance with Minneapolis Institute of Arts and can get fairly crowded.
- Our Ticket Office is immediately inside our main entrance. If you don't already have tickets, you can pick them up from the Will Call window. Sometimes there is a line.
- There are no bathrooms in the main entrance lobby. You'll need to go to further into the theatre's lobby to access restrooms.
- To get to our Cargill Stage, you'll need to go through the entrance to the right of the Ticket Office.

Before the Show:

- People gather in the Cargill Lobby for shows on the Cargill Stage.
- The Cargill Lobby often has coat racks, places to sit and features a gift shop with show-related and educational gifts on one side and concessions on the other. For the performance of *Corduroy*, we have a few activities in the lobby to do while you wait, including coloring a bear friend, a small library of books to read, and a camping tent that is strung with buttons so you can feel different styles of buttons.
- Tip: pre-order concessions at the concessions stand before the show to minimize the wait during intermission.
- Ushers can answer any questions you may have, including special needs requests such as audio devices for people with visual or hearing impairments, earplugs for people with Autism Spectrum Disorders or other sensitivity issues.

Restrooms:

- The restrooms for the Cargill Stage are near the entrance to the Stage and are accessible to all. If you need an all-gender restroom, please alert one of the ushers, and they would be happy to escort you to one.

Entering the Theatre:

- The House Manager will make announcements about how much time you have before the show, and when it's time to find your seats.
- When you are ready to go into the theatre, ushers will look at your tickets and direct you towards your seating section.
- The Cargill Stage does not have a balcony. The seating is padded benches on platforms, similar to what you might see at a football game.
- Ushers will scan the barcode on your tickets at the entrance to the theatre. Once the theatre is open, ushers will be there to direct you to the appropriate door to find your seats.
- There are no steps to reach the lobby or first row of the Cargill Stage. Rows B-L require walking up stairs.
- Accessible seating is located in Row A in the Cargill Stage.
- Ushers will hand out programs at the door.
- Your ticket number must match your seat. The seat numbers are attached with Velcro the back of your seat. There are only 12 rows of seating in the Cargill.
- Time to turn off electronic devices! Remember: no photography, texting or phone usage in the theatres.

Need a Break?

- INTERMISSION: The majority of shows at CTC have a fifteen-minute intermission between Act 1 and Act 2. Many people leave the theatre to use the restrooms or buy things at the concession stand or gift shop or just take the opportunity to walk and talk during intermission.
- The crowd can move slowly, and there may be lines.
- You do not have to leave your seats if you don't need or want to. A few minutes after intermission starts, a member of the Autism Society of Minnesota will lead some intermission exercises.
- During intermission for *I Come From Arizona*, the stage will be reset as the classroom.
- The House Manager will make announcements during intermission to let people know how much time they have left to find their seats again before Act 2.

If anyone needs a break *before* intermission or has trouble sitting quietly:

- The Cargill Stage has a large TV in the lobby that will have the show playing on it. The sound and viewing quality is not equal to the live experience inside, but it does serve those who want to continue watching the show but need to move around or make noise.
- Please note that the Cargill Stage does not have a quiet room.
- EXTRA HELP: Ushers can help with transitions between areas during the show.

After the Show:

- The cast always returns for a Curtain Call. Prepare for applause!
- When it's time to leave the theatre, the crowd can move slowly and there may be lines. If you need to wait for the crowd to thin, you can wait in your seats for a few minutes.
- The gift shop and restrooms remain open after the show for approximately half an hour. You are welcome to sit in our lobby and talk about the show during this time.
- CTC is located in a neighborhood with many restaurants. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Check out [CTC's website](#) and [social media](#) to learn more about CTC productions, classes, camps, and other programs and give us your feedback after the show.

Contact the CTC Ticket Office at 612.874.0400 or tickets@childrenstheatre.org for more information, seating questions, other requests and more.

This season's Sensory Friendly programming is made possible by



[Fraser logo: Beneath 'Fraser,' it reads: Special needs, bright futures. To the left of the words, simple lines depict a person with arms reaching upwards towards a star.]



the POWER of POSSIBLE™

[US Bank Logo: "US" is in a red banner next to "bank" in blue lowercase letters. Beneath is their slogan, "the power of possible." 'Power' and 'possible' are in uppercase letters. 'The' and 'of' are in lowercase italics.]



[AUSM logo: large lowercase letters spell "ausm;" beneath in lowercase letters: Autism Society of Minnesota.]