THE VELVETEEN RABBIT

VISUAL STORY

This visual resource is for children and young adults visiting the Unicorn Theatre to see a performance of *The Velveteen Rabbit*.

This visual story is intended to help prepare you for a new experience and help you to become familiar with the surroundings and the performance.

This performance is bright with live piano music, high energy in places and contains some dark scenes with moderate threat and fantasy sequences. These sequences are not sustained.

We have made the usual amendments to the volume and lighting levels but due to the nature of the show you will experience moments of louder sound effects and darkness.
Welcome to the Unicorn Theatre. We are a theatre for children and adults. This is what the building looks like from the outside.

This is the main entrance of the theatre. There are some steps before you get to the front door. The words and pictures on the windows tell you what shows and activities are happening inside.
When you enter through the front door, you will see a big space with lots of tables and chairs in an area called the **Foyer**.

There are also some instructions on the floor tiles, you can choose to follow these instructions or you can ignore them.
The **Box Office** is also in the **Foyer**. This is where you can buy tickets or collect tickets that you have already paid for. There may be other adults and children waiting to buy or collect tickets when you arrive.
You will be met by one of the Ushers, who will be wearing a dark red shirt with white writing like the one above.

You can ask an usher if you have any questions and they will do their best to help you. When it’s time for The Velveteen Rabbit to start, you will hear a bell and an Usher will tell you where you need to go.
You might see some adults and children sitting at some of the tables having something to eat or drink from our Unicornershop.
There is a cafe in the Foyer called the Unicornershop where you can buy drinks and snacks. You can also bring your own drinks and snacks with you. You can also purchase a copy of The Velveteen Rabbit book or poster.
If you need to use the **Toilet**, they are downstairs from the **Foyer**. Look for the stairs going down or you can use the **Lift**.
These are the boys’ toilets.

These are the girls’ toilets.
When you enter the Weston Theatre you will see a **big open space**, a **very big white painted floor** and a **giant sock** surrounded by purple bench seats.

You can find your seats and make yourself comfortable. The usher can **help** you find your seat.

You will **hear** music all around the space. You might **hear waves, birds and other sound effects**. You will **hear background** sound like this throughout the performance.
There are 4 people in the show. They work together for the whole show.
The Narrator, The Nana, The Doctor.

The Pianist (plays the music you hear)
When the show begins there will be some **lights on stage** and the lights over your seats will *stay on*.

You will see a man wearing a suit, carrying a briefcase; another man will come down the stairs by the seats to meet the man on stage. A 3\(^{rd}\) man will come onto the stage and they all stand in the middle.

The stage will now get **a bit darker**.

The big sock at the back of the stage will move and **shock the men** with briefcases on stage.
There is a 4th man inside the sock. This is The Velveteen Rabbit.

The Narrator will now start to tell you the story and the men will move around the stage to get ready. They will change some of their clothes, change some of the set and the pianist will get the piano ready.

You will hear the piano and the stage will be filled with exciting toys to make it look like a nursery.

You might see toy soldiers, a dog on wheels, some robots and a castle.
The Boy plays make believe with all the toys and you will see him pretend to shoot some of the toy soldiers. You will hear some sounds like explosions. Don’t worry, it’s not real.

The lighting and sound will change when the boy is playing with the toys. You will hear sounds from the battle.

The Nana will tell The Boy he needs to tidy the nursery. Do you have to tidy your toys away?

The Boy and Nana march around putting toys away.
Now it is bed time and the lighting gets darker. A bed comes on to the stage.

The Boy wants a bedtime friend so Nana finds The Velveteen Rabbit and throws him onto the bed. This is funny.

The Boy moves around a lot in his sleep and The Velveteen Rabbit tries not to get squashed.

The Boy and The Velveteen Rabbits become very good friends and go on all sorts of adventures together when they play.

The bed and the stage will show you the adventures. The lighting and sound will change when the adventures begin.
You will see a boat in a storm. You will hear sounds from the storm and see lightening.

The Boy and The Velveteen Rabbit jump off the boat into the water. You will hear water, waves and a big splash.
The Velveteen Rabbit will create a fire to cook marshmallows for The Boy. Don’t worry; it’s not a real fire.

The Boy and The Velveteen Rabbit sleep on the beach but are woken by the sound of drums. The lighting and sound will change when they pretend they are being followed. You will hear sounds from the drums.
The Boy and The Velveteen Rabbit take the ends of the bed and turn them into swords to fight with. They are scared and hide under the bed but everything will be okay.

The next adventure they will turn the bed into an elephant. Can you see the big trunk?
After the elephant The Boy and The Velveteen Rabbit have a pillow fight, they are still friends. They like to see all the feathers fly about. They make a big mess.

During the pillow fight it begins to snow from high above. The Boy and The Velveteen Rabbit pretend they are in a snow storm. The lighting and sound will change. You will hear sounds of the wind and a storm.
There is now an INTERVAL.

This is a short break of around 15 minutes.

You can use this time to visit the toilet or get a drink from the Unicornershop. You can also sit in your seat and wait for the show to start again. It’s up to you.

During the INTERVAL you will see men and women in black clothing cleaning the stage and adding new items.

These are STAGE MANAGERS and TECHNICIANS.

These are the people who work behind the stage to make the show happen.
During the **INTERVAL** you will see a wooden bench, a small garden, a wheelbarrow of plants and a wooden swing.

The Narrator will come back onto the stage and sit in the bench to eat his sandwich, drink his tea and read the paper. He is having his break like you.
The show will start again when you see The Boy and **The Velveteen Rabbit** race across the stage sat in the wheelbarrow. **The Velveteen Rabbit falls out of the wheelbarrow, don’t worry, he is okay.**

The Boy and The Rabbit play in the garden and have more adventures, they will run around quite a lot and the **music will get much louder.**

When they are playing bows and arrows, one of the arrows **hits The Velveteen Rabbit in the eye.**

He will pretend to be **hurt** and The Boy will put a **bandage on his head.** He isn’t really hurt; **they are just playing a game.**
The Boy forgets The Velveteen Rabbit and he sits in the garden until it gets dark. You will hear night time noises. Can you hear an owl?
The Velveteen Rabbit meets two real rabbits on bouncy balls. They aren’t very nice to him but the boy comes back to get The Velveteen Rabbit and we don’t see the other rabbits again.
The Boy is **unwell** and the **doctor** comes to see him.

**The Velveteen Rabbit** hides in the bed so he can stay with his friend.

The Boy is not very well and the doctor visits a few times.

When the boy gets better **The Velveteen Rabbit** is **very happy** and they go outside for fresh air.
The Nana is busy tidying up again and asks The Boy to go inside.

The Nana is worried The Velveteen Rabbit is full with the germs that made The Boy unwell and says The Velveteen Rabbit must be put on the bonfire. This is sad, but don’t worry, it will be okay. Keep watching.

You will now see The Narrator telling you more of the story and The Velveteen Rabbit sat on the top of lots of wooden items. This is the bonfire.

The Velveteen Rabbit is sad but also very happy as he thinks of all the adventures he had with The Boy. His tears fall and create a beautiful flower.
A magic fairy is in the flower and you will see a small ball of light in the flower. The fairy will fly up to The Velveteen Rabbit and speak to him.

You will hear a woman’s voice.

**The Velveteen Rabbit** is flown to the ground away from the bonfire by the fairy and she makes him into a real rabbit. This makes **The Velveteen Rabbit very happy**.

The boy will come back and you will see him playing. He spots the real rabbit and recognises him as the friend he used to go on all the adventures with. **They are still friends.**
All the men in suits are back on stage and they look at the rabbit and then they look at you.

This is the end of the performance.

The performers will come out to the middle of the stage and bow for you.

The stage will get darker and the actors will move for you to clap. You can clap, if you want to.
This is the end of the show.

During the show you might find something funny, you can laugh if you want to.

During the show you might see or hear something that makes you feel sad. It's okay to feel sad but don’t forget it’s not real.

You might hear other people in the audience cheer, clap, shout out or scream. You can join in if you want to.

During the show you might feel that you need to take some time out. If you do, don’t worry about it, find an Usher and let them know. They will take you to the chill out space where you can relax and return to the show when you feel ready.