

**LIVE**  
ON STAGE

**tall**  
stories



The Gruffalo © Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler 1999 – Macmillan Children's Books

# THE GRUFFALO

## VISUAL GUIDE

# Table of Contents

What is a Visual Guide?	page 3
What is a play?	page 3
What will it be like when I go to the theatre?	page 5
Who are the characters in The Gruffalo?	page 15
What happens in the story of The Gruffalo?	page 20
What should I be ready for in the play?	page 26
What different kinds of shows are there?	page 34



# Hello!

Welcome to the Visual Guide for our performance of The Gruffalo. This guide will tell you about the show you are going to see. You might find this particularly helpful if you're a little nervous about your trip to the theatre, if you have any specific sensory sensitivities or if you've never been to see a theatre show before.

## What is a play?



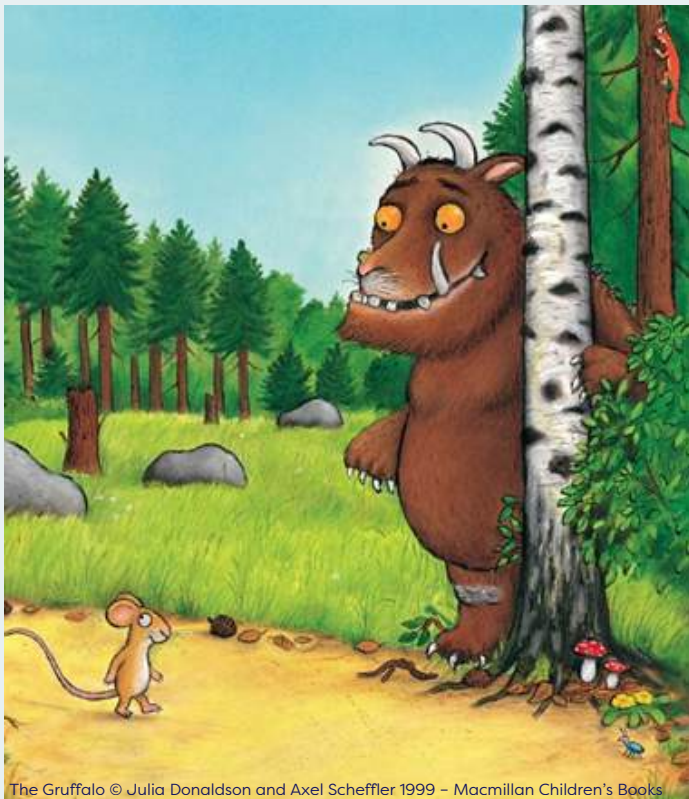
You are going to see a play called The Gruffalo. A **play** is a kind of story told by people called **performers**. The performers pretend to be different people in the play - these are called **characters**.

You will go and sit in a big room called a **theatre** with a lot of other people who want to see the play. The performers will wear special clothes called **costumes** and tell the story with singing, dancing and jokes.

THE  
GRUFFALO

Visual Guide

The Gruffalo play is based on a book that you may have read at home or at school, so you might already know who the characters are and what happens in the story.



This is what The Gruffalo book looks like. Do you recognise it?



This is what The Gruffalo play will look like. Does it look a bit like the book?

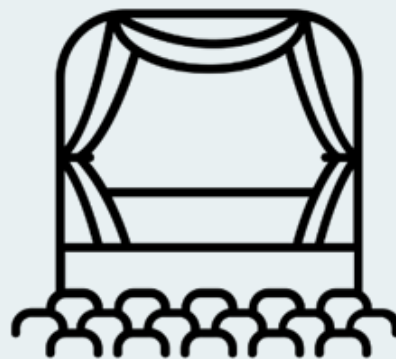
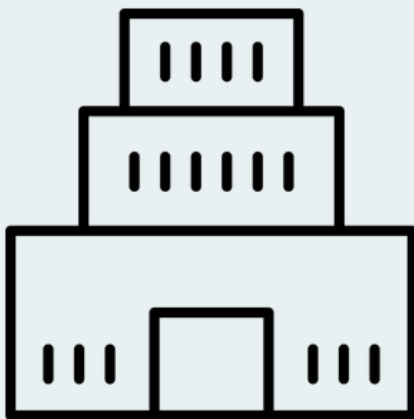
This purple picture is the logo for Tall Stories.  
Tall Stories is the name of the company that  
puts on the play you are going to see.



## What will happen when I go to the theatre?

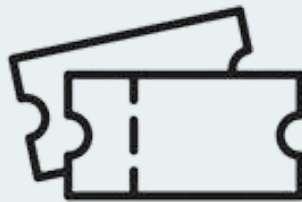


The theatre is a building with a big, open room where  
you watch the play. Some theatres have other activities  
too so you may have visited your theatre before.



You will need a ticket to see the play. You may already have yours or you may have to ask someone who works at the theatre.

When you go into the theatre you will be in a big room called the **foyer** and in here will be a desk called the **Box Office**. Someone there will help you with your tickets.



The theatre may have a café inside where you can sit down or get a treat before the play. There will also be toilets you can use.



When it's time for the play to start, there may be an announcement to let you know you can go and find your seats.

Every theatre is a bit different but there will be lots of seats. This part of the theatre is called the **auditorium**.

There will be an area at the front called the **stage**. This is the place where the performers will tell the story.

You will have seats just for you and someone who works at the theatre will help you find where you are supposed to sit.



On the stage is something called a **set**, which helps the performers to pretend to be in the story. The set for The Gruffalo has lots of trees which makes the stage look like this:



The people watching the play are called the **audience**.

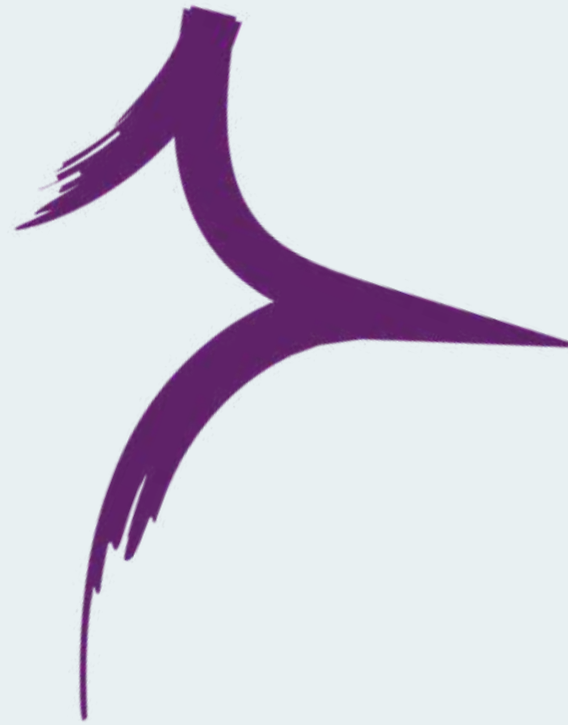
You may have to wait a bit while the rest of the audience finds their seats. This can be **busy and noisy** and you may have to move around to let people walk past you.

This may make you feel excited or impatient but everyone will settle down when the play starts.

While everyone sits down there will be some quiet music playing. You will be able to hear birds singing over the music too.



This will be your seat for the whole of the play. The play will last **nearly 1 hour**. If you need to get up and leave the room to take a break or use the toilet you can do that whenever you want.

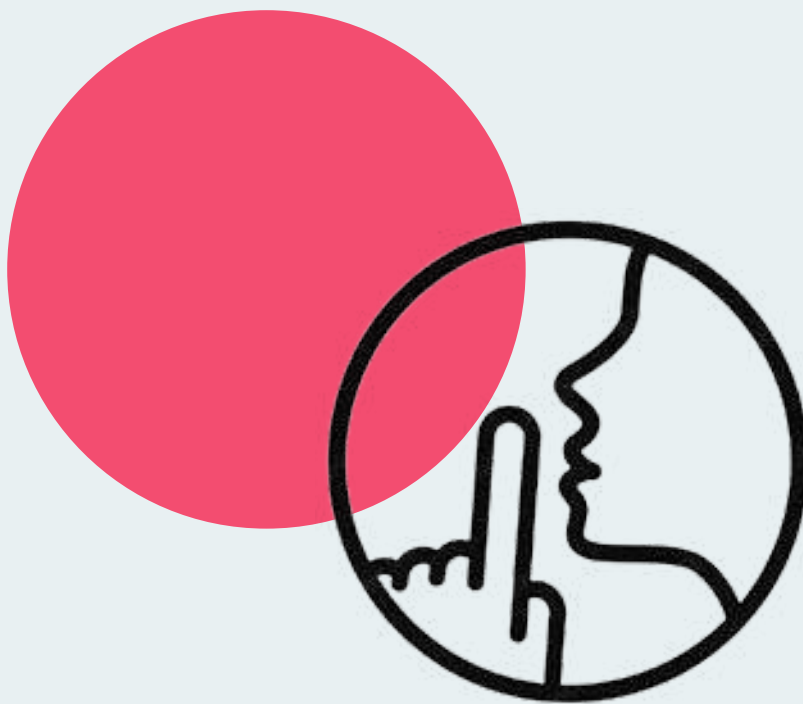


When the play is about to start the room will get a little **darker** and the stage will get a bit brighter. This might feel a bit scary but this helps you see the performers better.



It's good to try and be quiet in the theatre so that everyone can hear the performers but you might hear other people making noise sometimes and if you need to make a noise that's OK.

Sometimes the performers will even ask you to answer a question or make a noise. It's fun to join in but you don't have to if you don't want to.



The performers will come onto the stage to start the play. When they come out they will look like this:



As they start to tell the story they will dress up as different characters.

## Mouse



Mouse hasn't been in the deep dark wood for too long but she isn't scared of anything!

She wears a brown waistcoat with a white tummy and she has a long tail and little pink ears.

She is excited to have an adventure and she loves to eat nuts.

# Fox



Fox is a bit of a trickster. He's bold and brash and always rather pleased with himself.

He wears an orange coat with a furry white tummy. He has a furry orange tail with a black and white tip and a hat with furry orange ears.

THE  
GRUFFALO

Visual Guide

# Owl



Owl is a cheery older fellow. He is slightly clumsy but he knows all there is to know about flying.

He wears a brown aeroplane pilot jacket with wings and a cap with small brown feathers on it.

# Snake



Snake loves parties, dancing, and being the centre of attention.

He wears a gold waistcoat and flared gold trousers and a white shirt with a big pointy collar.

# Gruffalo



The Gruffalo is a big furry creature with horns on his head and purple prickles on his back.

He can be frightening, but he can also be very silly! He loves to stomp around the wood and eat all sorts of animals.

# What is The Gruffalo about?



The Gruffalo is a story about a little mouse who goes into the wood to find adventure. The mouse is hungry and is looking for a nut for her tea but on the way meets some of the other animals who live in the wood.



First, Mouse meets Fox. Fox is loud and friendly but he wants to eat Mouse for his tea and tries to trick her.

Mouse tries to think of something to stop Fox from eating her. She makes up that she's going to meet her friend, a monster called a Gruffalo - who likes to eat roasted fox. This scares Fox away.



After that, Mouse takes a nap and when she wakes up she meets Owl. At first Owl has fun telling Mouse about his flying adventures, but then he realises she is a mouse and that he is hungry.

He tries to eat her but she tells him about the Gruffalo and says he likes to eat owl ice cream, so Owl flies away scared.



Mouse is a little bit lost when she meets Snake. Snake is having a party and teaches Mouse how to dance. Then Snake realises Mouse is a mouse and wants to eat her.

Mouse tells him her story about the Gruffalo, and says he likes to eat scrambled snake. This makes Snake run away.



Mouse is excited to have tricked three animals so much bigger than her but then she hears a noise in the wood and out comes the Gruffalo. The Gruffalo looks just like she imagined him and he's hungry!

To stop the Gruffalo eating her she tells him she's the scariest creature in the wood. He doesn't believe her, but she has an idea of how to show him.



Mouse leads the Gruffalo back through the wood to the places she met Snake, Owl and Fox.

They all see the Gruffalo walking behind Mouse and run away scared, but Mouse tells the Gruffalo they are afraid of her.

The Gruffalo believes Mouse and when she tells him her favourite food is Gruffalo crumble he is scared of Mouse and runs away.



In the end Mouse finally finds her nut!

# What is going to happen in the play?

You've seen how the stage looks when you arrive, but some of the set can change. Some of the trees are on wheels and the performers will move them around.



During the show sometimes the lights will get **brighter or darker** or change colour.



There will be music and songs. Sometimes after a song people might clap and make **noise**.



Sometimes the performers will ask a question that you can answer, or they may ask you to join in by making a noise or doing an action. It's fun to join in but you don't have to if you don't want to. When this happens it can be **very noisy!**



Near the end of the play the Gruffalo will **leave the stage** and come into the auditorium. The Gruffalo doesn't want to scare anyone. It's OK to talk to the Gruffalo if you want but you don't have to. The lights will get a bit **brighter** (so the Gruffalo can see where he's going) and people might be very excited and **loud**.



Sometimes something that happens in the play may make you feel sad or scared. It's OK to have these feelings and it's good to remember that the end of the play will be happy.



At the end of the play the performers will all stand together. Everyone will clap and it will be **very loud**. If you think the performers did a good job you can clap too - clapping is like saying thank you to the performers. This is called **applause**.



After the performers exit the stage it is time for everyone to leave the theatre. This will be **busy and noisy**, because everyone will still be excited about seeing The Gruffalo.



# THE GRUFFALO

## Visual Guide

## Different ways you can see the play

You might be seeing a special version of the show called a Relaxed Performance or a show with Audio Description or British Sign Language (BSL) Interpretation.



In a Relaxed Performance the room won't be as dark and the sound won't be as loud. The other people watching the show may be making more noise and moving around more. The performers might stay on the stage the whole time - but if one of them comes into the auditorium, they won't come near you.



In an Audio Described performance you can get headphones and listen to someone describe what the stage looks like and what the performers are doing.



In a BSL performance someone called an interpreter will be on stage together with the performers. The interpreter will translate what the performers say into British Sign Language so that audience members who use BSL can understand what is happening in the play.

You may also be going to a Touch Tour. A Touch Tour will happen at the theatre before the play.



This is so you can see the stage, the set and costumes up close and touch some of them. One of the performers or someone who works at the theatre will let you go up on the stage and help you to look at and touch different things from the play.

Touch Tours are really helpful if you are visually impaired or if you would feel happier about seeing the play if you know what it's going to look like first.

# Enjoy the show!



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