



The Gruffalo's Child © Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler 2004 – Macmillan Children's Books

# THE GRUFFALO'S CHILD

## VISUAL GUIDE

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# Hello!

Welcome to the Visual Guide for our performance of The Gruffalo's Child. 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's Child.

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's Child 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's Child book looks like. Do you recognise it?



This is what The Gruffalo's Child 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 and there will 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 will 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's Child has lots of trees and a moon 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 not to be too loud in the theatre so that everyone can hear the performers. You might hear other people making noises sometimes and if you need to make a noise that's OK too.

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.

## Gruffalo



The Gruffalo warns his daughter not to go into the deep dark wood because of the Big Bad Mouse.

The Gruffalo is a big furry creature with white horns and big claws.

He sleeps in his cave and snores really loudly!

# Gruffalo's Child



The Gruffalo's Child is bored and wants to explore the deep dark wood, even though her dad tells her not to.

She is covered in fur and has long claws and pink ears.

She is very brave and takes her stick called 'Stickman' with her everywhere she goes.



# 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 brown collar. He has a big, fluffy brown and white tail and an orange hat with furry ears.

# Owl



Owl is a cheery older fellow who runs a flying school in the wood.

He wears a cream cardigan with brown knitted feather wings. He has round glasses and a brown hat with pointy feathery ears.

# Snake



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

He wears a long snake print jacket with a black collar and he often wears his snake skin party hat.



# Mouse



Mouse meets the Gruffalo's Child in the wood and tricks her with his shadow pretending to be the 'Big Bad Mouse'.

Mouse wears a brown jacket with a white tummy, brown trousers with a braided leather tail. Mouse also wears a brown beanie hat with two pink pom poms for ears.



# What is The Gruffalo's Child about?



The story is about the Gruffalo's Child exploring the wood even though her dad tells her not to. She meets a lot of animals along the way including coming face to face with the Big Bad Mouse the Gruffalo warned her about.



In the first scene, some people enter the deep dark wood and have a snowball fight. They notice the audience watching and the story starts.

You meet the Gruffalo, who is snoring in his cave. The Gruffalo's Child comes running in and asks her dad what he was dreaming about. He explains the story of the big bad mouse and tells her to never go into the deep dark wood.



The Gruffalo's Child doesn't listen to her dad and when he falls asleep, she takes Stickman with her into the deep dark wood.

First, they come across Snake who is having a party and teaches her a dance. The Gruffalo's Child tells Snake all about the Big Bad Mouse. Snake finds out she's a gruffalo and he slithers away scared.





Then they come across Owl who is teaching a flying lesson. She tells Owl about the Big Bad Mouse but then Owl finds out she is a gruffalo and flies away scared.



Then they come across Fox, who likes selling things and he tries to sell the Gruffalo's Child! When Fox realises the Gruffalo is her dad, he runs away before she eats him.





Just as she is about to turn back, she meets a little mouse who she wants to eat as a snack. The mouse tells the Gruffalo's Child all about their friend, the Big Bad Mouse, who is coming to meet them for a midnight feast.

When the moon comes up, the mouse moves to create a big shadow that looks like the Big Bad Mouse. This scares the Gruffalo's Child away.



After she has left, the mouse realises that the Gruffalo's Child has left her friend Stickman behind.

Mouse decides to chase after her to return Stickman.

Eventually, the Gruffalo's Child makes it back home to her dad and climbs onto his lap to fall asleep.

Mouse creeps into the cave and returns Stickman.

At the end, the Gruffalo wakes to find himself face to face with the mouse!





# 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!**



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's Child.



## 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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