

The Gruffalo's Child Education Resource

A teaching resource for children 4-9 years

The Gruffalo's Child

A Magical Musical Journey Through the Deep Dark Woods



The Gruffalo's Child Education Resource accompanies CDP's magical musical performance of **The Gruffalo's Child**, a musical adaptation of the award winning picture book by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler.

Original Director: Olivia Jacobs

Creative Producer: Toby Mitchell

Tall Stories Director for CDP tour: Luanna Priestman

Associate Director: Jane Miskovic

Designer: Isla Shaw

Lighting Designer: James Whiteside

Puppet Designers: Yvonne Stone and Polly Laurence

Costume Maker: Matthew Aberline

Set Construction: Thomas Creative

Music and Lyrics: Jon Fiber and Andy Shaw for Shock Productions

Additional Lyrics: Olivia Jacobs and Robin Price

Music production and recording: Jon Fiber and Andy Shaw for Shock Productions

Original Cast Angela Laverick, Morag Cross, Alex Perkins.

About CDP

CDP is an award winning independent theatre production house specialising in boutique theatre of the highest quality. CDP has an unsurpassed track record for presenting high quality works which tour widely throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Introducing *The Gruffalo's Child*

The Gruffalo's Child is a children's picture book by Julie Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, first published by Macmillan Children's Books in 2004. It is the captivating sequel to the multi award winning *The Gruffalo*.

As the story begins we are introduced to the Gruffalo's little daughter. The Gruffalo tells her the legend of the Big Bad Mouse, and warns her never to go into the deep dark woods. As the Gruffalo drifts off to sleep the Gruffalo's Child sets off through the wild and windy night in search of the Big Bad Mouse. Along her path she meets with the snake, the owl and the fox. Each of these creatures tells her tales of the Big Bad Mouse, and his Gruffalo-eating escapades. The Gruffalo's Child grows increasingly frustrated, and concludes that the Big Bad Mouse doesn't exist. Just as she is about to give up her search she spies the little mouse. She grabs the mouse as she is hungry and ready for a midnight feast. The quick thinking mouse asks her to wait and meet with her friend the Big Bad Mouse. She leaps onto a hazel tree, and as the moon comes out she casts an enormous shadow on the snow. The Gruffalo's Child, seeing the shadow of the Big Bad Mouse, races in fear back to her cave. She snuggles down safely with the Gruffalo, watched by the triumphant mouse.

Meet the Author

Julia Donaldson (b. 1948) is one of the United Kingdom's most popular children's authors, playwrights and songwriters. Her early career as a songwriter for Children's BBC led her to the 1993 publication of her first book *A Squash and A Squeeze*, based on one of her songs, and illustrated by Axel Scheffler. This fruitful collaboration continued with the huge success of *The Gruffalo* in 1999. *The Gruffalo* has now sold over 3.5 million copies. *The Gruffalo's Child* was released in 2004, and won the WHSmith Children's Book of the Year 2005.

Julia is a prolific writer of songs, books, and plays and has published over 140 books. She currently lives in Glasgow with her husband Malcolm and their family and two cats.



Live Performance - The Ultimate Teaching and Learning Opportunity

Attending a live performance is a rich and engaging learning opportunity. Prepare children through explicit teaching to make the most of their theatre experience.

- **Talk about and practice being an audience member.** Audience members sit and listen quietly for most of the time. They join in the action when invited, and clap and cheer to show their appreciation. They allow fellow audience members to watch the show without interruptions.
- **Talk about and roleplay theatre conventions.** What is a theatre? What are actors? What are characters? What are costumes? What is a stage? What are props? What is a set? What is a script? Is theatre 'real'? How can song, dance and movement tell a story?
- **Familiarise children with *The Gruffalo's Child* picture book** in the lead up to the performance. There are many suggestions for how to use *The Gruffalo's Child* as a learning resource in the following pages. You may also want to read *The Gruffalo* to deepen children's understanding of the story.

Teaching and Learning Activities - Learning About and Through the Arts

Attending a live performance can be a stimulus for a huge range of rich learning experiences. Not only can you plan for learning **about** the arts, but for whole of curriculum learning **through** the arts.

Literacy and the Arts

The Gruffalo's Child picture book can be the impetus for a range of literacy and arts experiences, before, during and after the performance. Use this list below as a jumping off point for planning learning around the book in your setting.

Involve the children in Reader's Theatre by selecting a narrator and characters to read the story. Each character reads the spoken section of the text, with the rest read by the narrator, for example:

Gruffalo: I can't quite remember.

Narrator: the Gruffalo said. Then he thought for a minute and scratched his head.

Explore the different sounds of the character's voices – the snake's low hiss, the fox's sly tone, the owl's melodic voice.

Add percussion instruments, vocal sounds and other sound makers to the story. Use sounds to evoke the setting – the whistling wind, the Gruffalo's Child's footsteps, the falling snow, the snoring Gruffalo, the scampering Mouse.

Add a sound to key words in the text; for example every time you read the word "gruffalo" children play a growling guiro, every time you read the word "mouse" children play a triangle.



Learn sections of the text as a chant and perform as a round, poem, song or dance.

Learn *The big bad mouse is terribly strong, and his scaly tale is terribly long. His eyes are like pools of terrible fire. And his terrible whiskers are tougher than wire.*

Break the group into two or more sections and perform as a round. Ask one group to repeat the words *Big Bad Mouse* while another group performs the chant. Add a beat and repeated rhythms on bodies and instruments.

Develop the characters through music, movement and visual arts:

- Encourage students to move like a gruffalo or a mouse to music.
- Have students use their bodies to make freeze frames of key scenes in the story.
- Take digital photos of children representing each character and key scenes of the story.
- Make a drawing, painting, cartoon or plasticine sculpture of the characters.
- Choose a musical sound to represent each character.

Learn the song *Stick With Me*. The Gruffalo's Child sings the chorus throughout the show. A recording is found on the CDP website. The lyrics are in this resource.

- Perform the chorus by singing in a gruffalo voice, a snake voice, and a mouse voice.
- Ask groups of children to choreograph and share a dance. Add instruments.
- Use the lyrics as a text for reading activities.
- Create an album cover.

Explore the illustrations in depth:

- Ask students to look at the colours that the illustrator has chosen to use. Why has he selected these colours? Compare them to the colours used in *The Gruffalo* or another book.
- Create illustrations using only the colours found in the book. How do they make you feel?
- Take the text away and tell the story using only the pictures. The illustrator tells another story that is not told by words. Tell the story from the perspective of the Gruffalo's Child's Stickman, or the other creatures hiding in the woods.
- Take one picture and use it as a starting point for another story about the creatures in the wood. Look at the way the illustrator has brought the woods to life by adding expressions and faces to the trees. Create cartoons of trees and plants with faces. Look at the shadow cast by the Big Bad Mouse. Fill in the details from the description in the text.

Write an innovation on the text by adding another character:

- Choose a creature seen hiding in the woods. For example *Aha! Oho! Prints in the snow. Whose are these hoofprints? Where do they go? Two eyes peeked out of a shady house. Could these be the eyes of the Big Bad Mouse? Out stormed the creature. His eyes were brown. And his tail did not even reach the ground. "You're not the Mouse" "Not I" said the gnu. "He's down by the rocks eating gruffalo stew."*
- Illustrate your new animal addition.

Make shadow puppets using the outlines of the creatures from the story. Character cutouts are included later in this guide and also available from *The Gruffalo* website. Tell the story as a shadow puppet play using the overhead projector, or another movable light source.

Draw a story map of *The Gruffalo's Child*. Draw the different animals' tracks to join the different stages of the story.

Teaching and Learning Activities Across the Curriculum

There are countless ways to incorporate *The Gruffalo's Child* into all areas of the curriculum. Following is a list of jumping off points. The rest is up to your imagination.

Mathematics

- How many pages does the mouse appear on? How many other creatures are in the wood? How many footprints do you see?
- Draw a bird's eye view map of the deep dark woods. Make a scale drawing of the Gruffalo and the Gruffalo's Child, or the mouse and her shadow.
- Discuss the seasons, and night and day, by comparing *The Gruffalo* and *The Gruffalo's Child* picture books.
- Give and follow directions through the deep dark woods.
- Examine the animals. How many have tails, whiskers, eyes, wings, legs? Graph your results.
- How far does the Gruffalo's Child walk?

Health, Wellbeing and Physical Education

- Discuss the role of emotions in the story. How do the Gruffalo's Child's feelings change throughout the story?
- Graph or draw a pictorial representation of the Gruffalo's Child's changes of emotion through bored, brave, frustrated, annoyed, scared, and relieved. Mime the emotions or play them on an instrument.
- Move like the Gruffalo's Child when she experiences different feelings.
- Explore the relationship between the Gruffalo and his daughter.
- Make a trail through the deep dark woods by creating an obstacle course.
- Learn a monster dance.

Information and Communications Technology

- Take digital photos of children's characterisations and freeze frames. Use them to make a Powerpoint or other multimedia presentation.
- Record a soundtrack for the story.
- Create a talking book.
- Create digital pictures using a drawing program.
- Create a webquest through *The Gruffalo* website.
- Access the video clips, games, Gruffalo fan forum, and Gruffalo gallery.
- Email your creations to the Gruffalo forum or gallery.
- Chat on the Gruffalo fan forum.
- Create a Gruffalo digital game.

Design and Technology

- Cook a Gruffalo pie and make Gruffalo tea.
- Create new Gruffalo recipes.
- Design and build a stickman.
- Design and build the houses of the creatures
- Design and create a costume for a character from *The Gruffalo's Child*.
- Design and make a sensory book using different materials that uses texture to tell the story.



Science

- Explore the science behind shadows.
- Group the creatures into reptiles, mammals, birds, and other types of animals. What type of creature is a Gruffalo?
- Explore animal tracks.
- Consider climate and how snow is created.
- Examine the features of each animal and their purpose.
- What type of plants and trees grow in the wood? What is their function and purpose?

Studies of Society and Environment

- Where in the world is the wood?
- What would it be like to live in a whole country full of Gruffalos? Or mice?
- What types of houses do each of the creatures live in?
- What are legends? How are legends created?
- Examine the cave drawings in the Gruffalo's cave. Where else do you find cave drawings?

Including Children with Special Needs

The magic of theatre and story is a great springboard for rich learning for children with special needs. All of the activities listed above can be adapted to engage children of all abilities. Listed below are some additional ideas for including children with special needs in *The Gruffalo's Child*.

Create a sensory version of the text:

- Find ways to feel the snow, the snake's skin, the Gruffalo's fur, the owl's shiny beak, the mouse's tickly whiskers, the sticks and leaves, the rocks in the cave, the wood of the stickman.
- Taste the Gruffalo pie, smell the pine needles, listen to the wind.

Use sign language:

- Learn and use the Australian Sign Language signs for all of the animals in the story.
- Watch the British Sign Language version of *The Gruffalo* book.
- Learn a signed version of the song *Stick with Me*.

Work with symbols:

- Use Boardmaker or other picture symbols to create a simplified pictorial version of the story.
- Use picture symbols to tell the story, or to request the book, audio book or songs.

Spoken versions:

- Record repeated sections of the text onto a communication or a switching device to be played during the reading of the story.
- Make and use a spoken version of the story on a laptop or digital recording device.

Resources

The official Gruffalo website has a great range of resources including blackline masters, a fan forum, a gallery for student artworks and creations, games, video clips and recipes.

www.gruffalo.com

Author Julia Donaldson has an informative website that includes recordings of her songs and information about her publications.

www.juliadonaldson.co.uk

Visit the Auslan Signbank for a video dictionary of Australian sign language.

www.auslan.org.au

The British Sign Language website has a signed version of *The Gruffalo*

www.mybslbooks.com

The Pan Macmillan website includes author and illustrator information

www.panmacmillan.com

The Sparkle website has printable early years *The Gruffalo's Child* and *The Gruffalo* resources.

www.sparklebox.co.uk

The Fantasy Book Review website has an extensive biography of Julia Donaldson.

www.fantasybookreview.co.uk/Julia-Donaldson/biography.html

The Christine Dunstan Productions website has a downloadable audio file of *Stick With Me*.

www.cdp.com.au

Stick With Me

I'm not sure if this is a good idea, don't think I like it here,
Really, I'm not feeling that brave,
Outside's dark and shadows are listening, wind is a-whispering
Maybe I should stay in my cave
Now that I'm out on my own well it's not looking rosy
Rather be home with my dad eating toast by the fire

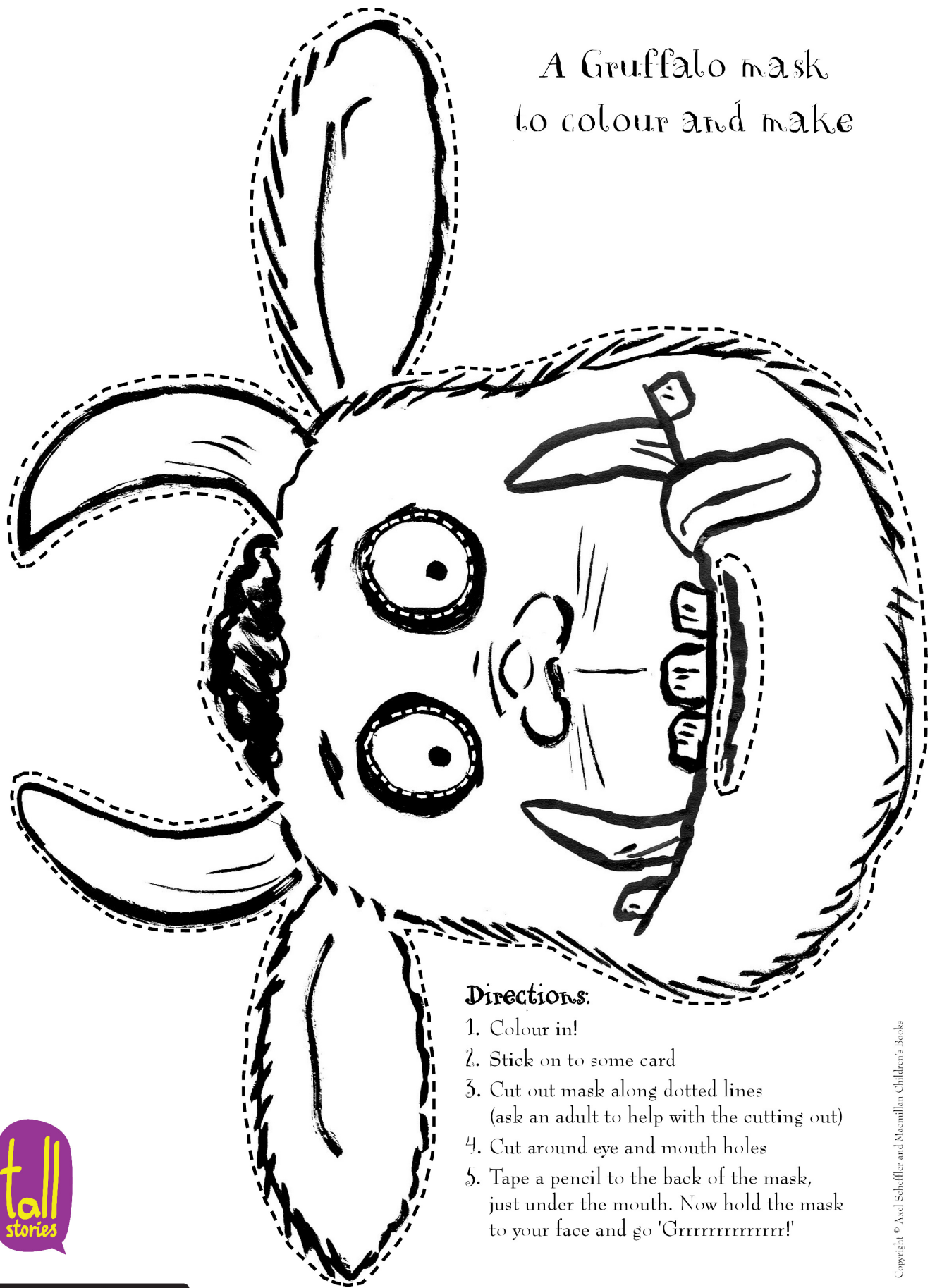
But if you, stick with me
I will, stick with you
And we'll travel on this lonely road ahead
So now it's, plain to see
There's a, stick with me
And by your side's my favourite place to be

Where's the fun in being a gruffalo, if you can't get-up-and-go
Heigh ho, it's just what gruffalo's do
We were meant to tear through the undergrowth, that's what we love the most
Look out, gruffalo and stick coming through
I'm looking around but I can't see no goblins or ghoulies
This will be easy, I'll just sneek a peek for a while

Cos if you, stick with me
I will, stick with you
And we'll travel on this lonely road ahead
So now it's, plain to see
There's a, stick with me
And by your side's my favourite place to be
And by your side's my favourite place to be
I won't get stuck cos I've got stick with me

Gruffalo Mask Stencil

A Gruffalo mask
to colour and make



Directions:

1. Colour in!
2. Stick on to some card
3. Cut out mask along dotted lines
(ask an adult to help with the cutting out)
4. Cut around eye and mouth holes
5. Tape a pencil to the back of the mask,
just under the mouth. Now hold the mask
to your face and go 'Grrrrrrrrrrrrrrr!'



Finger / Shadow Puppets

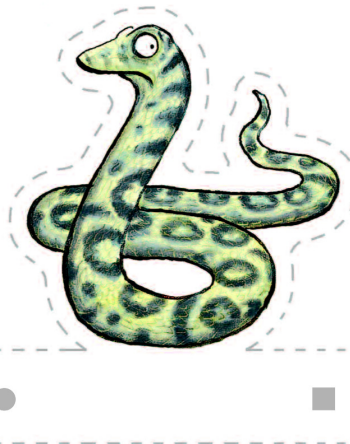
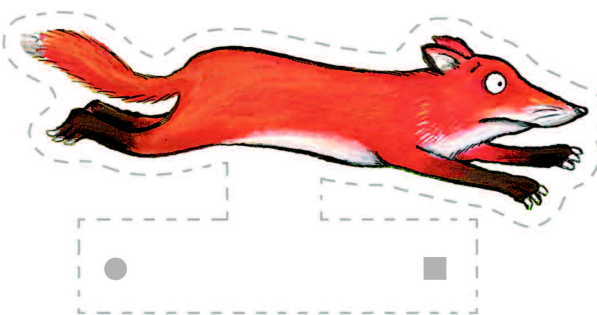
You will need:

Thin card, scissors, glue and sticky tape.

Instructions:

1. First you will need to print out this page.
2. Stick the printed page on to a piece of card so your finger puppets will be stronger and last longer.
3. Carefully cut around the dotted lines with a pair of scissors. Ask an adult to help you with this.
4. Your finger puppets are almost ready. Now all you have to do is create a ring to put your finger in! You will see there is a bar at the bottom of each character, with a dot and square at each end. Join the dot to the back of the square around the back of the character and secure together with sticky tape.

Now you are ready to play!



Acknowledgements

This resource was created and assembled from a variety of sources:

The Gruffalo's Child Stage Adaptation © Tall Stories

The Gruffalo's Child by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler published by Macmillan Children's Books

Fantasy Book Review biography of Julia Donaldson

Julia Donaldson's official website

Macmillan Children's Books website

The Gruffalo – Official Website

Illustration copyright Axel Scheffler 2004

The Gruffalo Teacher's Resource (Australia and NZ versions) – Christine Dunstan Productions

The Gruffalo's Child song *Stick With Me* by Jon Fiber and Andy Shaw.

This resource was compiled by Catherine Threlfall (BMus, BTeach, MEd)