

Teacher Guide

Cue Sheet

The Gruffalo

Tuesday, April 13, 2027
10:15am & 12:15pm

Questions to ask students BEFORE the performance

- Have you ever been afraid of something that you found out later was not that scary after all?
- What stories do you know that have monsters in them, and what makes those monsters scary?
- Pretend you are an actor who plays a fox, an owl, and a snake. How would you make those animals different? Can you show us?

Questions to ask students AFTER the performance

- Did the Gruffalo look like you expected? If not, how was it different?
- How did the play surprise you or make you laugh?
- What makes watching a play with performers on a stage different from watching a movie or a TV show?



About the Performance

Join Mouse on his daring walk through the forest as he meets the cunning Fox, the eccentric Owl, and the high-spirited Snake. All want to eat Mouse! Thinking fast, he scares them away by telling them he's going to have lunch with the most fearsome creature he knows, the terrifying Gruffalo. Then Mouse really does meet the Gruffalo. Now who's scared? Tall Stories' magical, musical adaptation of *The Gruffalo*, a children's book by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, uses a physical storytelling style combined with original songs to create a lively theatrical experience that welcomes all audiences. The stage production premiered in the United Kingdom in 2001 and has been touring the world ever since, with performances in 16 countries on 5 continents – including twice on Broadway! It has been translated into five languages (German, Spanish, Hebrew, Arabic and isiXhosa, a South African language).

The original picture book, first published in 1999, won numerous awards, including the Nestle Smarties Book Gold Award and Blue Peter Book Award, and sold over 13.5 million copies worldwide. Translated into more than 100 languages, it was voted the UK's favorite bedtime story by BBC Radio 2 listeners.



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Vocabulary

behavior (*bee-HAY-vy-or*) - how a person or other being acts

brave (*brayv*) - showing courage and strength

claws (*claus*) - curved nails on the hands, paws, talons, or feet of animals

clever (*CLEH-ver*) - to act in a way that shows skill and smart thinking

creature (*CREE-chur*) - an animal or other being, often imaginary

crumble (*CRUHM-bul*) - a British fruit dessert covered with a sugar topping that looks like crumbs

cunning (*CUHN-ing*) - smart in a sneaky or tricky way

daring (*DAIR-ing*) - brave, often willing to take risks, sometimes foolish ones

eccentric (*ex-SEN-trick*) - odd, unusual, or different, often used to describe behavior

fearsome (*FEER-sum*) - scary, especially scary looking, enough to generate fear in others

habitat (*HAB-ih-tat*) - the place where a person, animal or creature lives

jaw (*jaw*) - the bottom edge of the face or mouth; the bone that holds teeth

knobbly (*NOBB-lee*) - covered in bumps and lumps

poisonous (*POY-suhn-us*) - not safe to eat, smell or touch; could be deadly

prickles (*PRIHK-uhs*) - sharp spikes, usually on plants, that can sting

sneaky (*SNEE-kee*) - to act or move in a sly or secretive manner

stroll (*strohl*) - a slow, confident walk or to walk somewhere with confidence and ease

survival (*sir-VY-vuhl*) - staying alive

terrible (*TEHR-ih-bul*) - very bad or serious, powerful; causing fear

talons (*TAL-uhs*) - bird's feet, especially the feet of very large birds such as eagles or hawks

tusks (*tushks*) - long, pointed teeth that often stick out of the mouth

wart (*wahrt*) - a small, hard, unpleasant bump that grows on the skin

wood (*wood*) - a large area with lots of trees; a forest



Interactive PDF
Click here to visit link.

Additional Resources

Click here to download a study guide for the performance provided by the show.

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Beyond the Show

Use these activities before or after the performance to extend the production's themes and concepts into the classroom.

Creating Monsters

In the story, Mouse makes up a monster — or so he thinks! Have your students create a monster. What does it look like? How big is it? What color or colors is it? What makes it look or seem like a monster? What does this monster sound like? Once they create one monster, have them create a second monster that would scare the first.

Group Story

For this exercise, you can have your students stand or sit in a circle or stay in their seats. Ask the first student to start a story by telling us just the first word. The second student adds the second word. The third student gives us the third, and so on. For example:

Student 1: In

Student 2: a

Student 3: faraway

Student 4: galaxy

Etc.

After everyone has added a word, split your class into smaller groups of four to six students and give them five minutes to develop a way to tell the story they just created. Then have each group show the others how it shares that story.

Whose Story Is It?

Taking the story of *The Gruffalo*, discuss what happens if you tell the story from different points of view. For example, the story of *The Gruffalo* is told by a narrator we don't see or know anything about. What would the story be like if told from the point of view of one of the characters, such as the Fox or the Gruffalo? What if the mouse were telling this story to his friends and family? How would the attitudes of the characters change? Ask different students to tell the story in the first person (I, me, my) from each character's perspective. Do all the characters have the same version? Are there things that a particular character doesn't know?