

# THE GRUFFALO

OOTB EDUCATION RESOURCES  
SPECIFICALLY CREATED FOR  
CHILDREN BEFORE SCHOOL



QAPAC's  
**OUT OF THE BOX**  
FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN  
EIGHT YEARS & UNDER



Adaptation by Tall Stories Theatre Company Olivia Jacobs & Toby Mitchell, Artistic Directors  
Produced in Australia by CDP Theatre Producers  
Based on the award-winning picture book by Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler

## Creative Credits

Original Direction: **Olivia Jacobs**

Creative Producer: **Toby Mitchell**

Musical Director: **Jon Fiber**

Music and lyrics: **Jon Fiber, Robin Price, Olivia Jacobs, Andy Shaw**

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

Choreography: **Morag Cross**

Associate Director (Australia): **Liesel Badorrek**

Designer: **Isla Shaw**

Original Lighting Design: **James Whiteside**



# OOTB'S KEY INGREDIENTS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD ART MAKING (FOR CHILDREN BEFORE SCHOOL)



Image credit © Tall Stories

## WHAT IS QUALITY ARTS EDUCATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD?

### CHILDREN:

- Deserve rich stimulus and springboards for their individual art-making
- Have voice and agency in their own learning
- Direct their own play
- Choose the art form they want to create and make in
- Create their own stories and role plays for themselves and not an audience

### EDUCATORS AND ARTISTS:

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**KEY WORDS:** Strength, search, tale, journey, threatens, flee, terrified, clever.

**KEY QUESTIONS:** What is strength? How does the Little Mouse solve the problem?

**KEY CHARACTERS:** Little Mouse, Fox, Owl, Snake and Gruffalo.

### SCENARIO:

A clever little mouse is walking in the deep dark wood in search of nuts to eat. Little Mouse meets three predators, Fox, Owl and Snake. She cleverly escapes being eaten by spinning a wild tale of an imaginary monster called the Gruffalo, who likes to eat roasted fox, owl ice cream and scrambled snake. The three animals all run away from the mouse in fear of the Gruffalo, leaving her to continue her journey to find nuts. However, Little Mouse is surprised and frightened to come across a real Gruffalo, who matches her description exactly. Gruffalo threatens to eat the Little Mouse. Thinking quickly, Little Mouse challenges Gruffalo to walk behind her on her journey, so she can show him that she is the scariest creature in the wood. The Gruffalo laughingly agrees to Little Mouse's suggestion and follows behind her. They come across Snake, Owl and Fox. They are all terrified of the Gruffalo walking along behind Mouse and flee into the forest. Gruffalo is amazed at the apparently scary Little Mouse. When Little Mouse tells him that her favorite food is Gruffalo crumble the Gruffalo runs terrified into the wood. The story closes when the clever Little Mouse finally finds a tasty nut.

From The Gruffalo – Teacher's Notes



# PRE-PERFORMANCE STIMULUS



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## ACTIVITY 1

**PURPOSE:** To familiarise children with the story and the idea of visiting the OOTB festival experience.

**RESOURCES:** Story book *The Gruffalo*.

**STEP 1:** Read the story *The Gruffalo* in shared story time.

Show the visuals and discuss:

- Who were the main characters?
- What do they like eating?
- What was the trick the mouse played on the monster?
- What would their imaginary monster look like?
- Who was the strongest in the story?

**STEP 2:** Explain to the children that they will be visiting QPAC and viewing a performance. Discuss how the experience will be different:

- The difference between watching on a screen and a live performance
- Lights will go up and down, sometimes it will be black
- Sound will change it could be very loud, soft and there will be music
- There will be clapping, laughing and noises from the audience
- Show children an image of QPAC, the building, and explain how they will be getting there

## ACTIVITY 2

**PURPOSE:** To explore the characters through puppetry or shadow puppetry.

**RESOURCES:** Outlines of the characters, glue and sticks to attach puppets to. Torches for light source and thin material.

**STEP 1:** Students to create puppets of the characters to stimulate play.

**STEP 2:** Children create puppet shows for themselves. Teacher to co-play and prompt ideas. Children to have opportunities to try different characters and add sounds etc.

**STEP 3:** Use a light source and a translucent screen or a thin piece of material behind. Teacher guides the play, and children play with the form. Can it make the monster bigger?







### ACTIVITY 3

**PURPOSE:** To encourage dramatic play and set up a space/miniature world play in a sand tray. Teacher to create environments they can use and spaces they can play in.

**RESOURCES:** Various toys and little props (whatever are available in the centre.)

**STEP 1:** Invite students to the sand pit or a space for play with miniature toys and objects. Prompt children with questions i.e. how can a fox and a little mouse become friends? What is the owl watching all day? How is the snake moving through the forest or bush?

**STEP 2:** Children play independently and create their own stories.

### ACTIVITY 4

**PURPOSE:** To explore with movement the characters.

**RESOURCES:** Music to accompany each of the animals.

#### STEP 1:

Students to create a frozen image of a snake. Think slithering, sliding, slow etc.

- Suggested music: “Boléro” by Maurice Ravel (1928), a hypnotic, moving, and emotive piece, featuring ostinato patterns.

Children become little mice, tiny steps, nervous energy and moments of stillness as the mouse looks and listens.

- Suggested music: “The Mouse” by Sergei Prokofiev from Peter and the Wolf (1936); “Mouse Hunt” by Alan Silvestri from Mouse Hunt (1997), a slapstick film very bouncy; the soundtrack from Ratatouille by Michael Giacchino (Pixar, 2007) which whilst it is about a rat, has scampering undertones.

Students to become foxes. Explore with students slinking, darting through the bushes etc.

- Suggested music: “The Fox” by Nickel Creek (2000)

**STEP 2:** Students to tell their own stories about the animals explored with movement.

**STEP 3:** Play ‘follow the leader’ with one child leading as their favorite animal and all children copy the walk, movements, and pace. Swap leaders and characters to explore different characters from the Gruffalo texts explored in class. Students to make the sounds of the characters etc. Can they make them bigger or smaller.



# POST PERFORMANCE STIMULUS



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## ACTIVITY 1

**PURPOSE:** To provide children with opportunities to respond to the performance after recall activities.

**RESOURCES:** Drawing and painting materials, clay, or even construction materials, images from the performance, the storybook, audiobooks, YouTube or movie trailers etc.

**STEP 1:** Support students to recall the play. Read the storybook again, show images from the performance from the OOTB website or trailers for *The Gruffalo*.

- How did the characters in the performance feel?
- How did the little mouse feel at the end?
- How did the monster feel?
- What did the snake, fox and owl do when they saw the Gruffalo?

**STEP 2:** Children given the opportunity to respond in the art form and with materials they select.

Do they want to draw a picture? Teacher scaffolds and directs children to the area where resource is to start creating. Share the art works with the group if time allows. This may be best in small groups to start with.

## ACTIVITY 2

**PURPOSE:** To explore the themes of the performance through visual art response or a role play. Teachers to consider how to create environments in the space for students to play in after the performance.

**RESOURCES:** Pencils, papers, drawing materials etc.

**STEP 1:** Discuss with children how did the little mouse trick the monster? What would they say to the monster now or to the other animals? Or what action would they take to scare a monster? Who was the strongest in the play and why?

**STEP 2:** Children can head to the space and work with any props and costumes available or they play/make with visual art resources available.

