



THE GRUFALLO

AUTHOR: JULIA DONALDSON

ILLUSTRATOR: AXEL SCHEFFLER

See a video of the book read aloud here: [The Gruffalo](#)

**** REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! ****

OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE BOOK

When Mouse takes a stroll through the woods, he meets a fox, an owl, and a snake who all want to eat him! So Mouse invents a gruffalo, a monster with "terrible tusks and terrible claws, terrible teeth, and terrible jaws." But will Mouse's frightful description be enough to scare off his foes? After all, there's no such thing as a gruffalo . . . is there? ([Amazon.com](#))

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julia Donaldson (born 3 January 1968) is a British writer, playwright and performer, and the 2011-2013 Children's Laureate for the UK. She is best known for her popular rhyming stories for children, especially those illustrated by Axel Scheffler, which include *The Gruffalo*, *Room on the Broom* and *Stick Man*. She originally wrote songs for children's television but has concentrated on writing books since the words of one of her songs, "A Squash and a Squeeze," were made into a children's book in 1993. ([Wikipedia](#))

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Axel Scheffler was born in Durham, England. He studied at the Bath Academy of Art and worked in advertising and publishing after graduating in 1985. He has drawn his distinctive illustrations for many authors of children's books from Britain, Germany and the Netherlands. He lives in Blackheath, London, England.

THE READ ALOUD

BEFORE READING

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- Do you predict your friends will like this book? Why or why not?
- I'm wondering what a little mouse has to do with a big monster? Which do you think is the most powerful? Let's read and find out.

DURING THE STORY

Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content:

- (p. 2-3) Why does the mouse tell the fox that the gruffalo likes roasted fox? Looking at the fox's face, how did this make the fox feel? How can you tell?

THE GRUFALLO

TOPICS & THEMES:

- Imagination
- Storytelling
- Self-preservation

Tips for every book!

POWER PHRASES:

I WONDER...

I NOTICE...

TELL ME MORE...

DIGGING DEEPER:

"Tell me more, why do you think that?"

"How do you know that?"

"Why do you think they feel like that?"

"Interesting, did you notice anything else?"

- (p. 5) Why do you think the owl asks the mouse to join him for tea?
- (p. 19) Why are the animals running away from the mouse? What are they really scared of? What makes you think so?

AFTER READING

Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read:

- Who do you think was the scariest creature in the woods? Why do you think that?
- What do you think the author wanted us to think about after reading this book?

BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

- (p. 21) Look at the picture of the gruffalo running away! Show on your face how he looked as he ran? How was he feeling? How could you tell?

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

- (p. 7) Read with me: “there’s no such thing as a gruffalo!” (reader: have students join you on all subsequent pages).
- (p. 15) Turn to a neighbor and talk about how you think the mouse feels about seeing a real gruffalo!

SMALL-GROUP IDEAS

1. DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

- Conduct a picture walk through the book. Have the children retell the story as they go.
- Why did the mouse tell the animals they were the gruffalo favorite food?
- (p. 19) What do you think “astounding” means? Can you name something you think is astounding?
- How are the mouse and the gruffalo alike? Different?
- Which do you think is more powerful, the mouse or the gruffalo? Why do you think so?
- Why do you think Julia Donaldson named her monster gruffalo?
- Find your favorite page. Why did you pick this?
- Can you think of a different ending for this story? What would happen?

Suggested Optional Activity:

- On a sheet of paper, list the following body parts: ears, eyes, legs, noses, mouths, tails. Number six index cards 1 through 6 in the middle of the card. (e.g. card 1 would have only the number 1 on it; card 2, the number 2, etc.) Shuffle and place the cards in the middle of the table. Each student draws one card and writes the number by the first body part on the paper. Continue around the table until all six parts have numbers next to them. Have them draw a monster using the number of each part as specified (e.g. the monster might have 3 ears, 6 eyes).

2. WRITING ACTIVITY

- Choose one of the dishes mentioned in the story (roasted fox, owl ice cream, scrambled snake), and create a recipe for it. Include ingredients, how to cook it, and draw a picture of your dish. Example: Stuffed squirrel: Chop some nuts. Add raisins. Stuff the squirrel. Bake in a big oven for 2 hours. Serve with tomatoes for lunch!

3. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Use the attached sheet to have children draw what the gruffalo would eat for lunch. Can use a plain paper and have students draw a plate, or cut round shape from construction paper and glue on background page.

COMMON CORE LINKS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL 1.2,1.3,1.4,1.7