

# The Early Years Count Literacy Connection



## The Gruffalo

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*Preschool edition*  
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### Overview of Book

A little mouse thinks he has made up the perfect creature to scare away anyone who might want to eat him. When he finds out there really is such a creature, he needs to outsmart it! All mouse wants to do is find and eat some nuts in piece and quiet. Will he succeed?

Genre: Fiction

### Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *The Gruffalo* to introduce in your classroom:

stroll	knobbly
feast	rumble
fled	tusks
claws	poisonous

Each time you read the book, choose 2 or 3 words to highlight.

Use age- appropriate definitions and/or the illustrations to help children gain an understanding of each word's meaning.

Use these new words throughout the day, reminding the children, "That's a word from our story!"

### Connecting with the HighScope Curriculum

COR Advantage 1.5

Language, Literacy and  
Communication  
Item N  
(Phonological awareness)

Creative Arts  
Item AA  
(Pretend play)

Science and Technology  
Item DD  
(Natural and physical world)

### Reading Tips

This story has a rhyming cadence. There are also lines that are repeated. Encourage the children to help fill in the rhymes and anticipate and join you in the repeated lines. Pause for a moment and look to the group when it's their turn to say a line. (For example, "A gruffalo? What's a gruffalo?")

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. Each reading provides an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

At the end of each reading, display the book in the book area so children can read it on their own.

### **Throughout the Routine**

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

During **Large Group Time**, stroll around the carpet while reading the story and have children act out all the parts.

For **transitions**, children can move like an animal in the book, including the Gruffalo.

With plastic toy animals, paint and paper, children can make tracks at **Small Group Time**. Encourage them to take their animals on a "stroll" across the paper. See if they can identify the different animal's tracks. Ask, "What animal's tracks are most like the Gruffalo's?"

### **Around the Room**

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

Identify animals that live in our area, such as possums, raccoons, squirrels, chipmunks, deer, and birds. Post labeled photos of them in the **Block or Book Areas**. Ask children if they have seen any of these animals.

Have a variety of art materials in the **Art Area** for children who want to draw or make a gruffalo.

Have related books, such as *Little Red Riding Hood*, in the **Book Area**. Compare how walking through the woods is described in different stories.

### **Open-ended Questions**

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These questions encourage children to explain why or how things happen, make predictions, or brainstorm possibilities rather than give one "right" answer.

Here are some questions you might ask for *The Gruffalo*:

How did Mouse think of a gruffalo?

Where do you think the Gruffalo in the story lives?

Do you think there are other gruffalos? Where do they live?

What other animals live in the deep, dark wood?

If you made up a scary creature, what would it look like?

For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact ***The Family Connection:***

website—  
[www.famconn.org](http://www.famconn.org)

Facebook—  
[@famconnsjc](https://www.facebook.com/famconnsjc)

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574-237-9740

### **@ Home**

Since many of the children in our county will have this book at home, use it as a way to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *The Gruffalo* with their children. Here's a sample message you can send:

*The Gruffalo* captures children's imagination as they listen to Mouse make up the scariest kind of animal he can think of. The book offers lots of good vocabulary words such as "knobbly," "rumble," "feast," and "stroll" that the children have been learning in school.

If you have a chance, take a trip to the Potawatomi Zoo and look for animals from the story. Try to find the Gruffalo! While you are looking, be sure to see the new red fox, the barn owl and the snakes located inside. If you are lucky, you may see a mouse! Where is that Gruffalo? Maybe he fled!