

The Gruffalo –using the book to plan outdoor cross-curricular activities for 4-7 year olds

Read the Gruffalo through slowly asking the children about the pattern in the story-Rhyming – children to put up their hands when they hear rhyming word and ask them to extend the rhyming pattern.

Recap the story highlighting characters and chronology. What was the story about (creatures wanting to eat each other – that’s how it is !!!)

Tell the children that they are going to be like mouse and explore a ‘place’. (It can be anywhere and be exciting if you make it sound exciting)

Go to site of exploration. Map prepared with route marked with 8 activity points.(Map reading skills with map adjusted to different ages).(Geography skills)

“We are going to be like mouse and follow the map to explore this place. We will take it in turns to be the leaders. Watch out for gruffalos or perhaps fox, snake, owl or some other creatures remembering where mouse found them” (Talk about safety issues as appropriate to environment – children try to identify initially)

Select mode of travel ‘like a mouse’ with perhaps changing to other characters at each activity point, remember the gruffalo too. (Physical skills)

Activity point	Children's card	Adult's card	Additional notes
1	<p>Here we start our work today, With things to do along the way. Follow my map from one to eight, Start straight away, do not wait.</p> <p>Collect part of my story at each stop. But which comes first, at the top?</p>	<p>Read the message from Mouse together highlighting the rhyming words. Can the children add any other rhyming words to either pattern? Continue rhyming work at each stop.</p> <p>Take the story part which is your colour from the pouch at each site. Leave the rest and the instruction card for the other groups.</p>	<p>The rhyming element should be used throughout the day to embed the skill. The level of complexity depending on the age of the children.(Literacy)</p> <p>A synopsis of the story was cut up into 8 sections with each group’s part printed on a different colour paper. The sorting activity used to establish chronology skills.(Literacy)</p>
2	<p>Look up high into the tree, There’s something you might have missed. Now find what else you can see. When looking through your fist.</p>	<p>Remember to look up high wherever you are or else you might miss something. (owl box) By making a fist and looking through you will find that it helps to focus the children's attention and they will notice more! Record observation in word chest.</p>	<p>Making a fist and peering through really helps very young children to focus on individual items rather than quickly scanning- and you always have your fist with you!!!! (Science observational skills) If there is something specific to see don't make it seeable straight away – so have time to practice before “Done that”.</p>

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3	<p>Now using your sense of touch Find leaves: some smooth, some rough. Choose one you like very much, Keep it safe, I think that's enough</p>	<p>Collect leaves, encouraging a wide range of types and a variety of textural words. Keep 'special' leaves in treasure bag.</p>	<p>Can bring in mathematical skills easily 4 yrs – comparative language up to 7 yr olds thinking about area using non standard (other leaves) and standard units(drawing round on squared paper). As well as usual observations for identification.</p>
4	<p>Red and yellow and pink and green, Purple and orange and blue, I can find a rainbow, find a rainbow. Can you find a rainbow too?</p>	<p>Use one of the rainbow strips for your group to match colours in the environment. Encourage using 'more interesting' words for colours Eg: light green; reddish brown; holly berry red.</p>	<p>Have autumn/winter colour strips and spring/summer strips For older children use one colour with lots of shades eg. Greens (from DIY stores). Remember to go for premier words not third division.</p>
5	<p>A tree is a wonderful thing Touch, look and smell. There are so many words to use. How many can you tell?</p>	<p>Stand round the tree. Children to suggest words to describe it's texture, appearance, smell etc. Record in word chest.</p>	<p>Think also about what creatures may live in close relationship to the tree (Science habitats and relationships)</p>
6	<p><u>What am I?</u> I hunt for food and fly by night. I hang upside down when it is light. But you will never hear a sound, When at night I fly around. What <u>can</u> you hear?</p>	<p>It's a bat..... discuss what creatures live here and why. Stand quietly and listen to the sounds around encouraging interesting phrases eg.....like moth wings against a lamp shade.</p>	<p>Used bat here because there was a bat box here but a riddle about any animal likely to be around would be fine. Try to make up a riddle about another creature that might live around here. (Literacy skills) Useful to give young children a given length of time to listen (1min for youngest increasing as get older)</p>
7	<p>Look high and low, look far and near, Take in all of the view Collect your thoughts, make them clear. Make a list just for you.</p>	<p>Take in the whole view - record descriptive words and phrases in the word chest.</p>	<p>Make sure that ALL the view is taken in with descriptive words at each view. Discuss if the view would change (different seasons) For Y2's could introduce changes from the past or even in the future. (History skills) If time draw the view or use digital photographs to discuss later.</p>
8	<p>Now you have found my special seat Where I love to sit and look.</p>	<p>Before they eat the 'Favourite snack' get children to shut their eyes so that they can</p>	<p>Use data from favourite..... to make graphs later for data handling skills.</p>

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	Sometimes I bring something to eat Share mine while you make up your book.	see if they can recognize the flavor by smell and taste. Share the tasty snack. Then sort the story strips into the correct order. Look at the map and complete the phonic quiz.	Discuss why this might be Mouse's special seat. What seat do you think fox, snake, owl or even a gruffalo would choose? What would you choose and why?
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Other activities that can be done back at the 'Centre' to make it a full day visit might include:-

1. Read the description of the gruffalo from the book.
Give each group (2/3) a piece of clay. Collect natural material leaves, twigs, stones, seeds etc. and make own model of gruffalo – make you own imaginary creature telling another group what kind of eyes, skin, teeth, colours etc. that it has and give it a name. (Art and literacy skills mainly)
2. Make up some 'potion' from natural items mixed with water in a pot which could scare a gruffalo away. Either write out the recipe or record by sticking items to cards with double sided tape.
3. Take some of your best words from your treasure chest and create sentences/a story with them.
4. Using found natural materials make as many sounds as you can using them. Can you make sounds like a mouse, owl, fox, gruffalo.....etc. Join with 2 other people to make a sound pattern or create a sound picture. (more support for younger children more independence for older children). What about a noise that would scare away a gruffalo if you met him in the woods. (Music skills)
5. Using your special leaf and paints can you mix the colour of your leaf. Choose other natural items and make their colour. (Art skills)
6. Using the example of scrambled snake, what other woodland menu items might you have (vole vol-a-vents)
7. Look around for 'special places' and give them an interesting name, eg shady hollow