

## Social and Emotional Learning Through the Arts.

*The Gruffalo* promotes the power of the imagination and creative problem solving. The themes of imagination, courage, problem solving, and “brain over brawn” are explored in this book and production.

### Examine each of these themes.

- Can you remember a time when you solved a tricky problem? How did it make you feel?
- Can you remember a time when you were courageous? Tell the story to the class.
- It is possible to be courageous while still feeling very scared or worried. Think of a time that you did something brave. How did you feel before? While you were doing it? Afterwards?
- Why is it good to use your imagination? How do you use your imagination? Celebrate imagination week in your classroom by reading imaginative stories, wearing costumes from your imagination, practicing visual imagery while listening to music, drawing imaginative pictures, and solving problems using your imagination.
- Even though the mouse was small and the gruffalo was big, the mouse was still able to safely outwit him. Do you have to be big to be strong? Can you have a strong mind, a strong heart, a strong spirit? What is strong about you?
- Use improvised theatre to explore everyday situations requiring courage, imagination and problem solving.

*The Gruffalo* also examines further common childhood emotions and emotional experiences. The mouse is very scared when she is being chased by the fox, owl and snake, and when she meets the Gruffalo. All the animals are both scared and astonished when they see the Gruffalo. In the production the Gruffalo is saddened that there are no other monsters or large creature to befriend in the deep dark woods. The mouse is excited to be undertaking her adventure. She is proud of her clever problem solving. **This story is a great starting point for discussions and activities that will help children to manage these feelings.**

- Have you ever been scared?
- What makes you and other people scared?
- How does your body feel when you are scared?
- What can you do if you feel scared, or if someone else is scared? Who are some people who could help you?
- Have you ever been amazed?
- What made you amazed? How did your body feel when you were amazed?
- Have you ever been somewhere where you don't know anyone? How did you feel?
- How did you make a friend? What did you have in common?
- Have you achieved something difficult? How did you feel?
- What is something you are proud of?

These discussions and activities may support progress towards the Personal and Social Capability learning area in the Victorian Curriculum, Australian Curriculum and NSW Board of Studies Syllabi.