

***Leonardo! A Wonderful Show About  
a Terrible Monster Audience Guide***

Leonardo!



A  
WONDERFUL  
SHOW  
*about a*  
TERRIBLE MONSTER



**2024-2025 Season**

children's  
theatre  
company

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At CTC, our mission is to create extraordinary theatre experiences that educate, challenge, and inspire young people and their communities. This Audience Guide is just one of the ways in which we aim to enhance your experience and further your engagement with the shows on stage.

It includes a synopsis, context, fun facts, and activities plus details that can help you decide what's right for your kids.

If you have any further questions, please contact our friendly Ticket Office Associates at 612.874.0400 during their regular business hours or email them at [tickets@childrenstheatre.org](mailto:tickets@childrenstheatre.org).

## What is this show about?

Monsters have one job and it's to be SCARY! "Booga booga booga!" But as hard as he tries, Leonardo can't scare even a mouse. When the other monsters laugh and make fun of him, Leonardo goes in search of the most scaredy-cat kid in the whole world to try and scare the tuna salad out of him! Nationally acclaimed theatre company Manual Cinema breathes innovative life into this beloved story (and its doubly charming sequel), using hundreds of puppets to magically create a movie before your very eyes. Will Leonardo finally become the scary monster he dreams of being? Or will he discover something even better to be?



## Content Advisories

**Language: 0 out of 5 stars** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

One of the mean monsters calls Leonardo 'Leo-NERD-o.'

**Themes and Situations: 0 out of 5 stars** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Characters get laughed at and teased.

**Violence and Scariness: 1 out of 5 stars** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

There are several 'scares' in the show where Leonardo and other characters are trying to scare each other. The nature of the scares are playful, but involve characters jumping into frame while making loud sounds.

**Sensory Advisories: 1 out of 5 stars** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

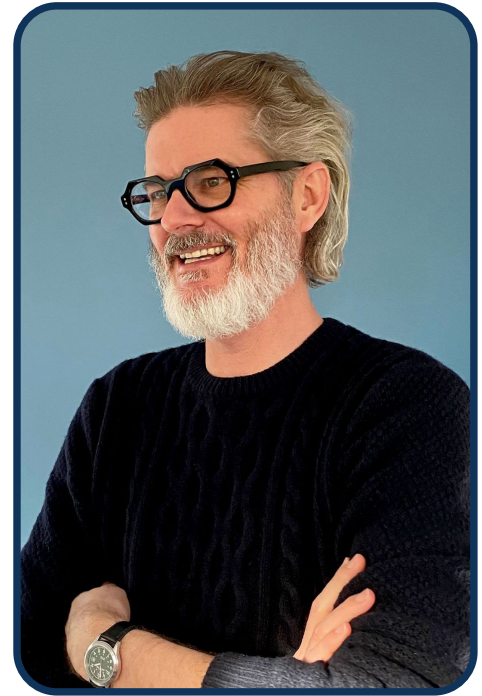
There will be flashing lights and loud music and sounds that may be overwhelming for those with sensory sensitivities. At some shows the whole audience yells suggestions at once, which could be overwhelming to some audience members.

**Potentially Anxious Moments: 0 out of 5 stars** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Actors directly solicit reactions and suggestions from the audience.

## About Mo Willems

Mo Willems is an author, illustrator, animator, and playwright. He's best known for his bestselling picture books which have been awarded three Caldecott Honors (*Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale*, *Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity*) and his celebrated *Elephant and Piggie* early reader series. Over the last decade, Willems has become the most produced playwright of Theatre for Young Audiences in America. Willems started his career as a writer and animator on *Sesame Street*!



## About Manual Cinema

Manual Cinema is an Emmy Award-winning performance collective, design studio, and film/video production company.

They combine handmade shadow puppetry, cinematic techniques, and innovative sound and music to create immersive stories for stage and screen.

This show uses hundreds of illustrated paper puppets, book pages, two-dimensional props, furry monster puppets, and songs to bring Mo Willems' books to life. Like all Manual Cinema productions, you're invited to watch the big screen like a traditional movie, or to watch the artists below as they create the story in real time. There's no wrong way to watch the show!



There are countless ways to tell a story. What you'll see in *Leonardo! A Wonderful Story About a Terrible Monster* is based on stories Mo Willems initially shared in his books. Read on to discover the creative techniques used to bring these stories to life in a whole new way.



The play you will see is based on two books by Mo Willems: *Leonardo the Terrible Monster* and *Sam, the Most Scaredy-Cat Kid in the Whole World*. You can watch and listen to the books being read aloud at links provided later in this guide.



A play takes place on a stage in a theatre. The story is acted out live in front of the audience, and the characters are played by actors. Have you seen a play before? How is a stage in a theatre different from a movie theatre? How do you think the characters will be different in the play when they're played by real people?



## PUPPETRY

Part of the story in the play will be told through puppetry. Some of the characters will be played by real people, and some of the characters will be puppets manipulated by the performers. Sometimes, characters will be played by both puppets and actors. There will be both paper puppets and 3D puppets. Have you seen a puppet show before? Which characters from the books do you think will be puppets in the play?



During the play, the performers will create a movie on the screen right in front of the audience! You can watch the story on the screen like you do in a movie theatre, or you can watch the performers create the movie on the stage. Or both!





Mo Kc  
**LUNCH  
DOODLES**  
with  
**MO  
WILLEMS!**

## DRAW LEONARDO IN 8 STEPS!

YOU WILL NEED:



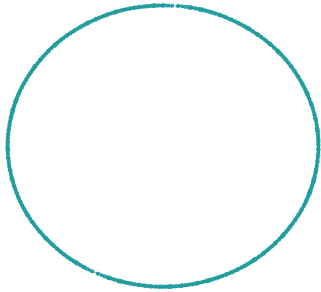
Kennedy Center Education Artist-in-Residence at Home



If you know how to draw shapes and write your name, you are ready to draw Leonardo, the Terrible Monster!

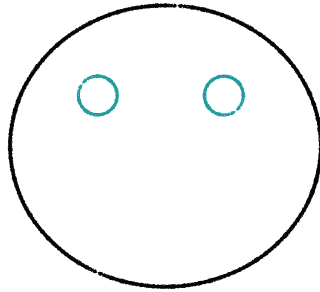
That's because drawing is just a bunch of shapes and letters put together in the right order. Let's try it!

1



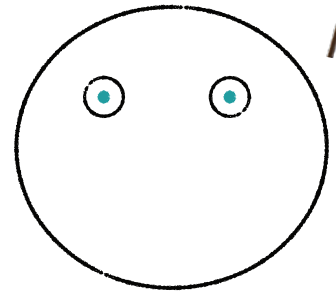
First, draw a big letter **O**. It appears in words like Mo!

2



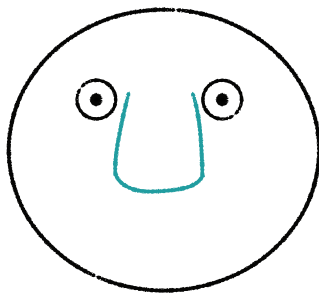
Inside the big letter **O**, draw two smaller letter **O**s for the eyes.

3

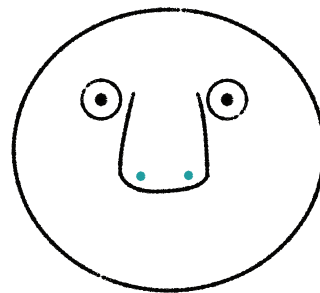


Inside the eyes, make two dots.

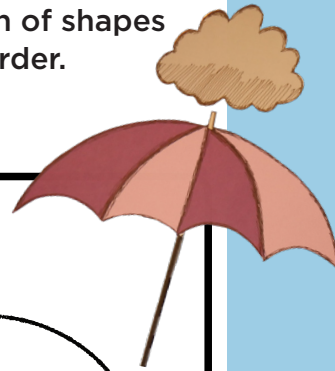
4



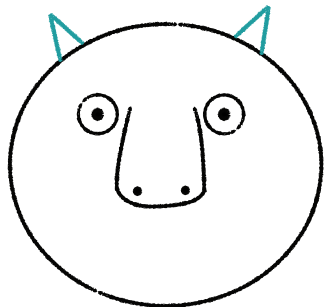
Draw a letter **U** for the nose.



Add two dots at the bottom.

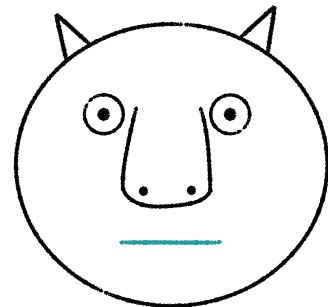


5



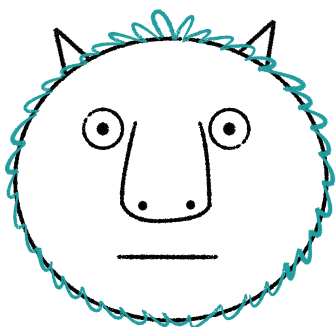
Turn the letter **V** upside down to draw the horns.

6



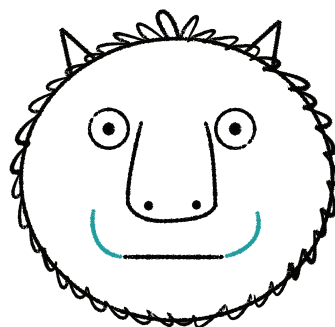
For the mouth, draw a letter **I** that has fallen down. Leonardo is a terrible monster, so he's not smiling.

7



Leonardo's fur is squiggly! Add squiggels all around his head!

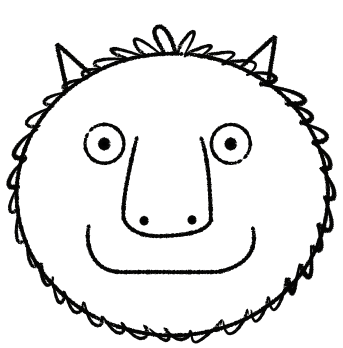
8



Let's add two curves on Leonardo's mouth. Now he's smiling!

## FINISHED!

What a great job! Don't forget to sign your name so everyone can see what a great job **YOU** did drawing Leonardo!



→  
Your Name!



# 3 Things to Look and Listen for During the Performance

## Look for...

1. Different kinds of puppets. What kinds do you see?
2. A purple umbrella. Can you tell what it's made out of?
3. A mouse. Is the mouse scared of Leonardo?



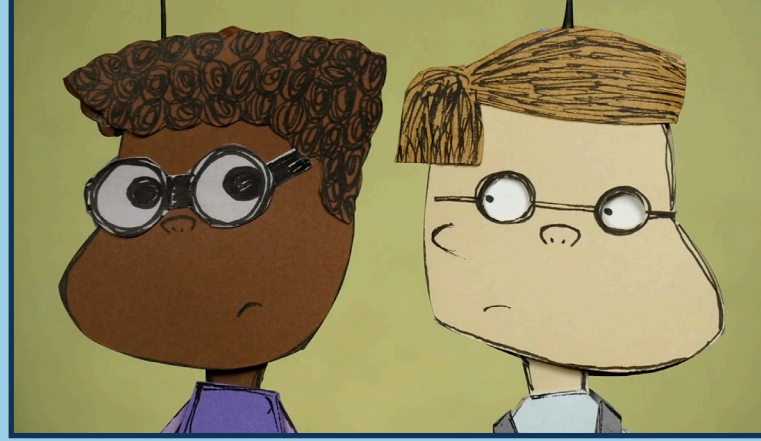
## Listen for...

1. Guitar music
2. Scaredy-cat kids being scared!
3. Sound effects. How do they affect the mood of the story?





# Paper Puppet Portraits



*Leonardo! A Wonderful Show About a Terrible Monster* uses hundreds of illustrated paper puppets to help bring Mo Willem's books to life. Create self-portrait paper puppets of yourself and friends or family members.

**Materials:** Paper, scissors, markers, cardboard or a cereal box, tape, a small dowel or chopstick

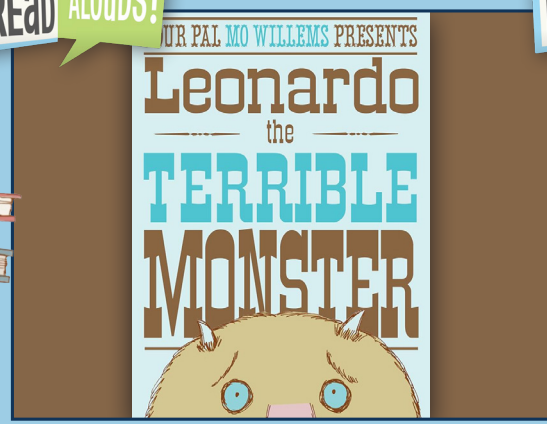
## Instructions:

1. Draw a full-body self-portrait of yourself on a blank piece of paper.
2. Cut out your tiny self and trace its shape onto a piece of cardboard or cereal box. This will serve as backing to help keep your puppet from flopping over. Cut the cardboard outline out and tape the two together.
3. Tape the small dowel or chopstick to the back of your puppet self.
4. Make any additional puppets you'd like.
5. On other pieces of paper, draw some places or settings where your puppets can tell stories together.
6. Create a short scene with your puppets and backgrounds. Maybe one of the characters is surprised or scared by something. How can others help them feel better? Maybe one of the characters is being brave and trying something new. How can others be supportive?

# Listen to the Books Come Alive!

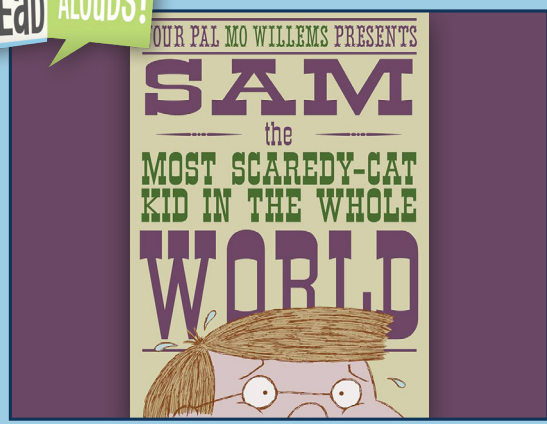


**READ ALOUDS!**



Leonardo the Terrible Monster  
Read Aloud

**READ ALOUDS!**



Sam, the Most Scaredy-Cat Kid in the Whole World  
Read Aloud

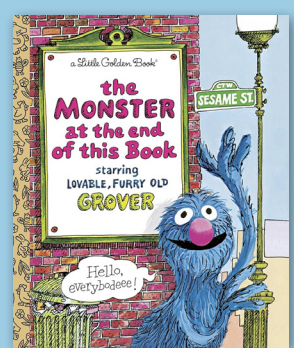


## Other Books to Explore!

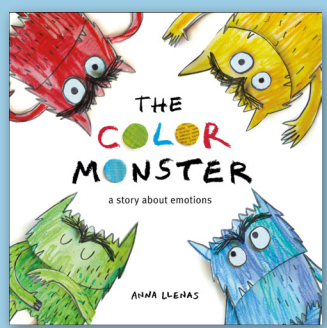
### Monster Books



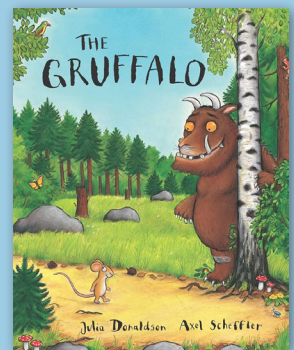
Go Away, Big Green Monster! by Ed Emberley



The Monster at the End of This Book by Jon Stone

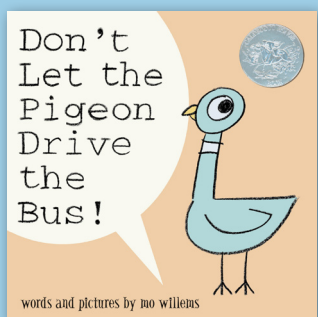


The Color Monster by Anna Lenas

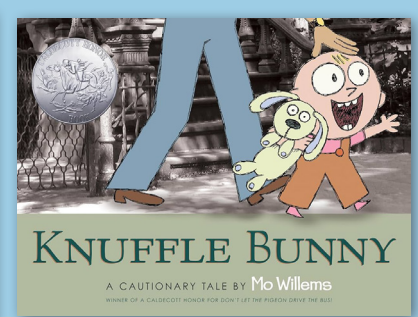


The Gruffalo by Julia Donaldson

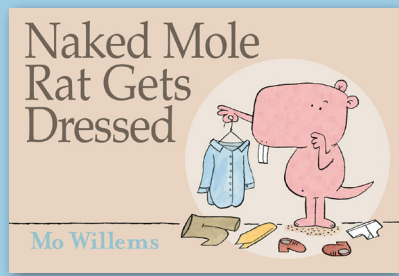
### Other books by Mo Willems



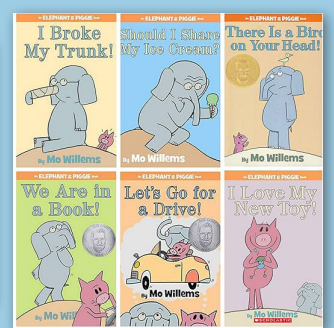
Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!



Knuffle Bunny



Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed



Elephant & Piggie Early Reader Series

## CTC Theatre Etiquette

At CTC, we encourage audiences to engage with the live theatre experience and react freely. It's ok to laugh if something is funny, exclaim if something is surprising, gasp if something is scary, and maybe even dance along in your seats if the music inspires you. We value the real-time, honest reactions of our audiences.

We do, however, thank you for your partnership in making sure that any reactions are kind and respectful towards the actors onstage and towards all of the people who worked so hard to make the show possible.

## Accessibility

### Mobility Accessibility

The MacMillan Family Lobby and Cargill Stage are fully accessible on the ground level. CTC's accessible seating area is located in the front row of the theatre. Please email [tickets@childrenstheatre.org](mailto:tickets@childrenstheatre.org) in advance to request accessible seating, if needed. The rest of the seating can be accessed by going up a set of stairs.

The restrooms in the MacMillan Family Lobby are fully accessible.

### Sensory Sensitivities

The performance is live streamed in the lobby for anyone needing to take a break during the performance. Please feel free to come and go from the lobby as you need to throughout the show.

Please let an usher know if someone in your group would benefit from a fidget, ear plugs, noise canceling headphones, or coloring/activity sheets during your visit.

### Assistive Listening Devices

Please let an usher know if you would like to use an assistive listening device. These devices come equipped with an over-the-ear earpiece. This earpiece can be unplugged, and other devices, such as cochlear implants, can be plugged into the receiver using the 1/8" jack. If you will be plugging in your own device, please bring the appropriate cord as CTC does not have these on hand.

### Sign Interpretation and Audio Description

Each CTC production has a sign interpreted and/or audio described performance for each production. These performances are noted in the [list of performance dates](#).

### Prayer/Private Nursing Space

During your visit, please ask a member of our staff to use our private space for nursing, pumping, prayer, or other needs.