

## Visual Story

A visual resource for children and adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

This resource is intended to help prepare any visitors for a new experience and to help them to become familiar with the show, surroundings and situation.

## The Show

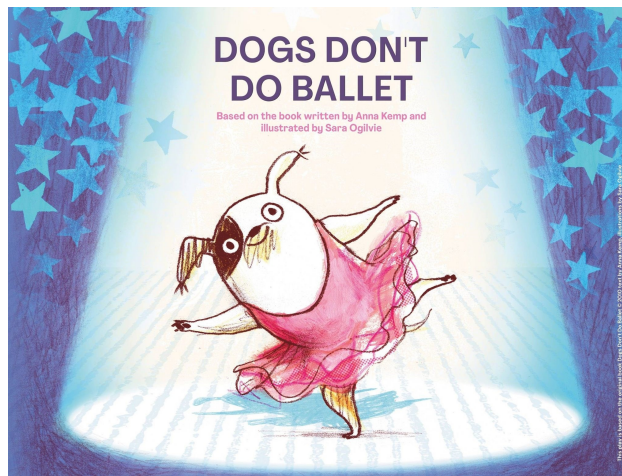
The show lasts for 45 minutes and does not have an interval.

There are 2 performers in the show and lots of puppets.

The show has recorded music.

## Synopsis

This show is based on the book by Anna Kemp and illustrated by Sara Ogilvie. The show follows the story of the book



Biff is not like ordinary dogs. He likes moonlight. And music. And walking on his tiptoes.

You see, Biff doesn't think he's a dog, Biff thinks he's a ballerina...

The sublime and the ridiculous combine in this hilarious story of a small dog with a big personality and even bigger dreams, brought to life using beautiful puppets, well-loved ballet music and dazzling theatrical comedy.

*Dogs Don't Do Ballet* is **aimed at ages 3-8**.

Our shows for this age group have storylines that can be followed and enjoyed by 3-4-year olds, but may also use slightly more complex ideas, humour, dialogue or song lyrics that older children will get more out of. There is nothing really scary in these shows but they can be a bit more dramatic than those for the youngest children, including in their use of sound and lighting, and characters may face some perils.

In the middle of the show, Biff has a bad dream where lots of objects related to ballet come to life and chase him, and the music is louder and more imposing as he battles with them. This section is two minutes long and is followed by a calm scene in which order is restored.

## Characters

As this is a puppetry show, most of the characters are played by puppets.

The two main puppet characters are:



Anna



Biff

The performers also play some characters.

**Miss Polly-** is played by the male performer with the red hat and shawl.

**Marjorie-** is played by the female performer with the blue waistcoat and yellow hat. Sometimes Marjorie is a puppet too.







**Anna's Dad-** Is played by the female performer when she put on this hat and moustache.



The Prima Ballerina



The other children in Anna's ballet class

## The Show

In this section special alerts are written in blue ink.

When you enter the auditorium you will see the set. **Music is playing.** The stage is set for a ballet class.

**Just before the show is going to start there is an announcement over the speakers.**



**Miss Polly enters the auditorium through the door at the back, and walks through the audience.**

Marjorie and Miss Polly argue over whether it is ballet class or a jumble sale that is taking place, and when one of them turns away the other changes it!

Marjorie is setting up for the jumble sale, but decides she doesn't want Biff.

Miss Polly talks to the audience about turning off phones, and Marjorie starts throwing toys at her from behind the piano!

**You can laugh and shout out answers to Miss Polly's**





Miss Polly asks the audience to join in learning ballet positions with her. You can join in if you like, or you can just watch.

Marjorie goes behind the piano and a miniature puppet version of her character appears.

**Loud noise!** As Miss Polly gets her leg stuck on the barre when practising her ballet.

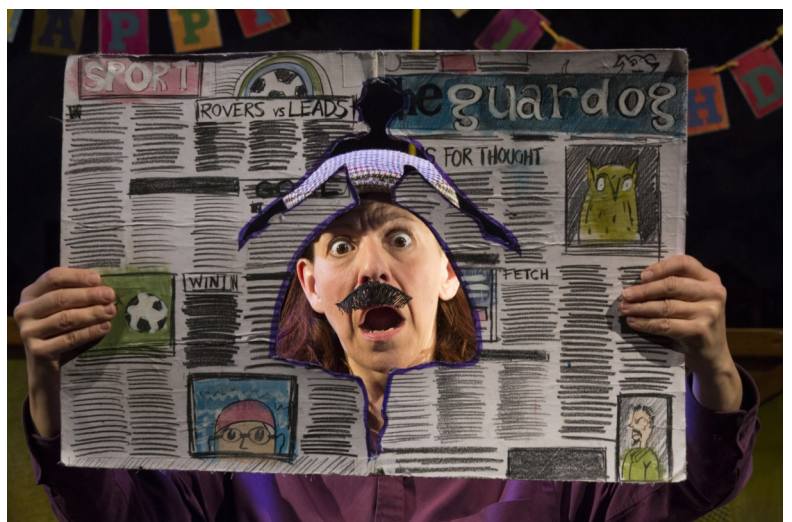
Miss Polly greets Anna, the star pupil of the class, and tells Anna to tell the audience about her dog.

We learn that Anna's dog, Biff, isn't like other dogs, as he doesn't like playing with sticks, Biff likes ballet!

Biff and Anna practise their ballet in front of a mirror.

We meet Anna's dad who wears a flat cap. He says Biff can't go to ballet, as Dogs don't do ballet!

Anna arrives at ballet and we see the other ballet girls practising with Miss Polly. **Look out and see if you can spot Biff!**



Biff gets sent out of ballet class and into the kennel, as he isn't allowed to go to ballet class.



We see inside Biff's imagination. He is chased by Polly's hat, giant ballet shoes, gets wrapped up in a ribbon and some giant tights. Biff is having a bad dream where lots of objects come to life and chase him. The music is louder and more imposing as he battles with them.



A beautiful ballerina comes onto the stage and talks to Biff.





Its Anna's birthday and she gets given tickets to go see a show at the Royal Ballet.

Anna's Dad prepares a birthday lunch and makes the sausages dance.



Biff is sad that he isn't allowed to come to the Royal Ballet.



Biff sneaks on the bus and then into Miss Polly's bag!



Miss Polly asks the audience to tell her if they see a dog. You can shout out to her if you want to but you can sit quietly if you would rather.





Marjorie, the piano player from ballet class works as an ice cream seller at the Royal Ballet.

The lights go dark and we hear a voice over asking the audience to take their seats as the performance is about to begin.

Marjorie comes through the audience; you can wave at her if you like. She plays an instrument with her mouth called a kazoo, it makes a squeaky noise.

Marjorie brings out ice lollies from her tray and they have pictures of instruments on them. She plays the lolly like it is an instrument.

Marjorie and Miss Polly set up the stage for the show and the beautiful Prima Ballerina begins her performance.

The Prima ballerina sneezes and falls into Marjorie's ice cream tray that is now the orchestra pit! We see the ballerina stuck inside of the tuba!

The safety curtain comes down on the ballet stage, and we think the show is over.

We see Biff's shadow behind the safety curtain dancing in a tutu!

Biff comes on stage and all of the audience including Miss Polly think that he is a great ballet dancer! Dogs can do ballet after all!



The show finishes with Biff and Anna in matching tutus!

Biff and Anna bow and the performers bow. You can clap if you want to.

**We hope that you enjoyed the show!**

