

Year 8

Shadow Puppet Project



Group Members:

The Project

Over the next half term, you will be working in groups of 2-3 (no more than 3) on a project to create a shadow puppet performance. This will include you learning about the history of shadow puppets, creating a story and the characters needed and eventually making your own shadow puppets. This is a run-down of what you will be doing in the next few weeks.

Weeks 1-2

1. Read the information on the history of shadow puppets and answer the questions on the 'Quiz Time' page. You must do this before starting the next section.
2. In your groups, complete the 'Our Performance' pages. By the end of the second week, this should be completed to a good standard. If it is not, you will not be able to start to make your puppets.

Week 3

I will be with you for week 3 of the project and those who have completed the week 1-2 to a good standard will start to make their puppets. These will be made from black card, using scissors and split pins only (be aware of this when designing your puppets).

Weeks 4 - 8

You will have more time to continue to create your shadow puppets if you need to during these weeks. From then on, you must use these to create an effective shadow puppet performance. Read the 'Creating Your Performance' page for information and advice on what makes an effective performance.

I will be checking your booklets after each week to see how you are doing! If I don't think enough work has been completed, you will have detention the next day.

Good luck 😊

History of Shadow Puppetry

Shadow puppets have a long history in China, India, Turkey and Java, and as a popular form of entertainment for both children and adults in many countries around the world. A shadow puppet is a cut-out figure held between a source of light and a translucent screen. Translucent colour is sometimes introduced into the cut-out shapes to provide a different look and different effects can be achieved by moving both the puppet and the light source. A talented puppeteer can make the figures walk, dance, fight, nod and laugh.

China

Chinese legends state that the first shadow puppet was made more than 2,000 years ago to entertain the Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty. Chinese shadow puppets are very delicate items, normally made from donkey skin and decorated with cut-out designs and translucent dyes. They are usually so thin that the colours as well as the outline are displayed on the screen.



India



The origins of shadow puppets in India are attributed to the gods, and the plays usually take place outside of temples to Shiva, who is the patron god of puppets. Legends say that Shiva and his goddess wife Parvati one day visited the shop of a toymaker who had created some wooden dolls with jointed limbs. Parvati, enchanted by the dolls, asked Shiva to let spirits enter the dolls so that they could dance. The toymaker, watching this from behind a screen, saw only shadows and got the idea to create shadow puppets. The early puppet shows in India dealt mostly with histories of great kings, princes and heroes and also political satire in rural areas. Religious portrayals in puppetry developed in South India with shadow puppet performances of stories from Ramayana and Mahabharata.

Shadow puppets in India are made from thin leather and contain fine cut out details.

Java

Java has three types of puppets, all with the word Wayang in their name. Wayang literally means "shadow," but refers to all types of puppet theatre. The shadow puppets of Indonesia are Wayang kulit: leather shadow puppets used to perform Indonesian versions of the Indian Hindu epics. Shadow puppets may have come from India with traders and priests who used them to explain the Hindu religion; however, puppet theatre was established in the royal courts by the 1st century A.D.



Today, the most famous shadow puppetry comes from Java. Javanese shadow shows are elaborate performances lasting throughout the night. The puppets are manipulated by a single person who also provides all the voices. An orchestra, consisting of gongs, drums and tuned percussion instruments, accompanies the action - it is known as a gamelan.

Shadow Puppets Today



In the 1910s the German animator Lotte Reiniger pioneered silhouette animation as a format, whereby shadow play-like puppets are filmed frame-by-frame. This technique has been kept alive by subsequent animators and is still practised today, though animation and computer animation has also been used to imitate the look of shadow play and silhouette animation.

Shadow theatre itself is still popular in many parts of Asia. Prahlad Acharya is one famous Indian magician who incorporates it into his performances.

There are also a number of theatre companies who either only use shadow puppetry, or use elements of shadow puppetry in their performances.



QUIZ TIME!!



Using the information from the past two pages, answer these questions on shadow puppetry.

Q1) How long ago was the first shadow puppet said to be made?
What country was the origin?

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Q2) What is the name of the Indian Patron of Puppets?

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Q3) What is the story of how shadow puppetry originated in India?

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Q4) What does 'wayang' mean?

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Q5) What is the name of the band that accompanies a Javanese shadow puppet performance?

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Q6) What is the name of the Indian magician who incorporates shadow puppetry into his performances?

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Our Performance



Your shadow puppet performance will be based on any well known fairytale that you wish. Your intention is to present the fairytale clearly to your audience through the use of puppetry. Complete the following pages to prepare you.

What fairytale will you be focussing on?

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What will be the main scenes in your performance?

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Who are your main characters? (Remember as you have to *make* each of the characters, you don't want too many)

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Will you need any set or props? (Again, these will be made out of card like the puppets)

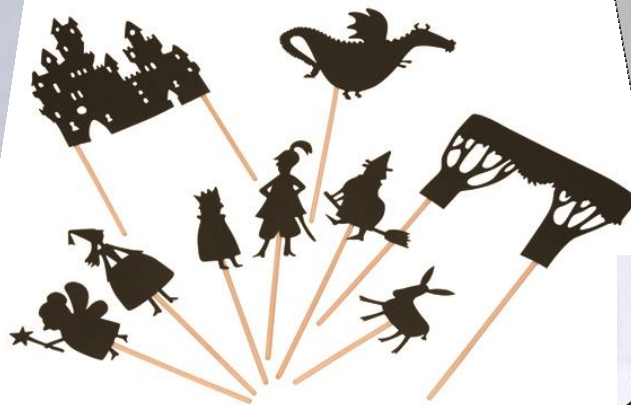
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Some ideas for your puppets...



Your Designs



Use the next few pages to draw your own designs for characters or set (remember all card is only A4 so set will have to be scaled).

Work together on these, don't let one person do all the work!

Your Designs



Please label your characters or set with who or what they are.

Your Designs



Please label your characters or set with who or what they are.

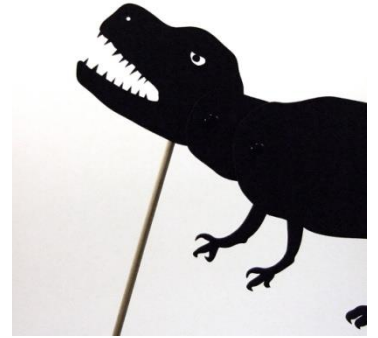
Your Designs



Please label your characters or set with who or what they are.

Creating Your Performance

There are a few things to consider when creating your shadow puppet performance.



1. **The Story** - The fairytale story you are working from must be presented in a clear and entertaining way. The plot and characters in a shadow puppet performance are just as important as those in any performance.
2. **Narration** - Puppet performances often have a narration that will run throughout the story. Your performance must include a narration as well as dialogue between the characters.
3. **The Puppets** - Puppets have obvious differences to humans. They can't change their facial expression and are limited in movement. Therefore, your use of voice and narration become vital to the success of the performance.
4. **The Light** - You will not have much opportunity to practice with the light and screen, but you must consider this when rehearsing. If your hand is too close to the puppet itself, it will be seen by the audience.
5. **Music** - You may also wish to add music to your performance. A lot of shadow puppet performances use music (think back to the Gamelan)! This will help to set the scene, rather than be a random piece of music in the background.



How have we done?

(For the final week after performance)

How well have you worked as a group in the creation of the puppet show?

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How did you do in the performance?

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Peer Assessment

What did others say about our performance?

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Teacher Assessment (Miss Wright to complete this section)