

Peter Pan - Learning Resources

Making shadow puppets (At least two 60 minute lessons)

In this series of exercises, pupils will make their own puppets and craft their own puppet show, based on the characters and story of Peter Pan. As they do so, they will learn the fundamentals of shadows and shadow puppetry, using a creative response to these principles to tell the story in their own way.

Who is it for?

This learning resource is for students studying Science and Art Key Stage 2 (years 5 & 6)

Learning outcomes

Learners will:

- Recognise that shadows are formed when the light from a source is blocked by an opaque object
- Find patterns in the way that size of objects change
- Create sketch books of their observations
- Improve their mastery of art and design techniques
- Learn about artists in history
- Appreciate and understand art from different traditions

You will need

- Access to the production of Peter Pan in the On Demand player.
- Card, scissors, and sticky tape
- · One or more strong lights in a dark room, and a screen or flat surface on which to shine them
- Coffee stirrers, or straws, to make the handles of the puppets

Activities

Watch the scene in which Peter comes back to dance with his shadow - from 11.30 to 16.20. remind the pupils that shadows can't be detached, but follow our own movements.

2.

1.

Remind the pupils how shadows are made - this is something they should have learned in school in Year 3.

3.

Explain to the pupils how shadows have often been used to create drama and story long before there was theatre. Ask if they've ever made shadow puppets using their hands - and demonstrate this to them, using examples in the sheet given in the appendix.

4.

Ask the pupils to try making their own shadow puppets using their hands - first from the examples on the sheet, and then to create their own, with the help of a partner. They should experiment with being closer or



Peter Pan - Learning Resources

further away from the light source, and observe how this changes how crisp the image is, and how large it is too.

5.

After each pair have come up with a shadow puppet, ask them to write instructions for another pair to reproduce the same puppet. Tell them to make their instructions as clear and simple as possible - then trade their instructions with another pair to see if they are able to follow them.

6.

Show the class a clip of an Indonesian puppet show, where card cut-outs are used to make shadow puppets. There are many examples of these on YouTube. Explain to the class how shadows can tell stories very simply when combined with simple movements, some music, and perhaps a few words.

7.

Explain to the class that the puppets are made from card, with jointed arms and legs using stiff wire or thin balsa to move them. Show how pieces of card can be cut out to make details like eyes. Tell them that they will be making their own puppets to tell the story of Peter Pan in the style of these Indonesian puppets.

8.

Ask the class to each draw an OUTLINE of characters from the play, like Captain Hook, Peter Pan, Tiger Lily and Wendy. Simplicity is key - they should try to capture the character by drawing only their silhouette, focusing on a few specific details, like a hat, the hook, a character's hair or items of clothing they wear that give them a distinctive shape. Depending on your class' ability, they could do this in groups, or each drawing a character by themselves. Ask them to think about where any joints in the puppet will go to help them move their arms, legs or head. A lot can change about the way a puppet looks depending on where its joints are. To help them decide how to show the character best, revist how in Indonesian puppets, there are many cutaway pieces to make the puppets more interesting.

9.

Help the class to cut out their puppets from card. This will not be easy! They may need an adult's help to cut out any fine detail using a stanley knife and cutting board. it may be best to have them cut out a version of their puppet in paper first, to make sure it looks how they want it before trying it in card.

10.

Once their card pieces are cut out, have the class assemble their puppets, attaching coffee stirrers or straws to them to allow them to move them. Once assembled, they should start practicing making their puppets move.

11.

Put the children into small groups and assign each a scene from the story of Peter Pan. Using their puppets, they should come up with a way of telling the story of that scene. They should think about what actions the puppets will need to do, and what (few) words they might need to add in to make the action of the scene completely clear. They should try not to use more than about ten words each.

National Theatre

12.

Once each group has had a chance to rehearse, have them perform their version of a scene from Peter Pan. using their puppets.

Appendix

