



Teacher:

Class: 2nd Grade

Duration: 2 class periods

Course Unit:

Lesson Title: Book Character Puppet Making

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will analyze the character traits of their favorite storybook characters and create puppets for them, using a variety of materials and approaches. Students will learn how both the design and the way they animate their puppets convey its personality. Students will tell stories using puppets, collaborating with peers in an activity that practices empathy through interviewing and brings their puppets to life through live performances.

STANDARDS

Tennessee State Standards

Visual Art—Grade 2

- 1.1 Use tools and media consistently in a safe and responsible manner.
- 1.2 Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of techniques.
- 1.3 Explore a variety of processes.
- 1.4 Recognize and demonstrate levels of craftsmanship.
- 2.3 Understand and apply purpose in art.
- 2.4 Understand and apply context in art.
- 3.1 Select subject matter, symbols, and ideas for the student's own art.
- 6.1 Understand connections between visual art and other arts disciplines.
- 6.2 Understand connections between visual art and other disciplines in the curriculum.

Theatre—Grade 2

- 1.4 Express character through dialogue.
- 2.1 Explore sensory and emotional experiences to create a character.
- 2.2 Use imagination to express thought, feeling and character.
- 2.3 Explore improvisational skills and techniques in creating a character.
- 2.4 Explore movement as a means of expression.
- 2.5 Use the voice as a means of expression.

Common Core Connections for Integrated Subjects—Language Arts, Speaking & Listening

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.6 Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.7 Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.3 Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.4 Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.6 Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.2.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.2.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.2.6 Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe (e.g., *When other kids are happy that makes me happy*).

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will be able to show characterization through puppet making.
2. Students will collaborate with peers to create dialogue for a brief skit.
3. Students will be able to express traits through speaking and movement of their puppets.

ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION

1. The teacher will walk around the room to observe the students' work habits during the activity and note how well they follow instructions.
2. Teachers will evaluate students on:
 - a. how well they demonstrate specific character traits in their puppet making
 - b. how well they demonstrate specific character traits in their animation of their puppets
 - c. completion of their worksheets and positive interaction with their partner

MATERIALS

Per classroom:

- A PC-to-projector connection
- 6 books that the students are already familiar with (see Instructions, Step 1c)
- A short story to use in demonstrating how to create a bubble map
- A word bank of character traits *or* a blank sheet of chart paper
- A premade example of a paper bag puppet
- A premade example of a sock puppet

Per workstation:

- 2 bottles of glue
- 2 pairs of scissors
- Construction paper
- Colored pencils
- [optional] Markers and/or crayons
- Felt of various colors

Per student (plus an additional set for demonstration):

- 1 paper lunchbag
- 1 clean sock
- 1 double-sided copy of the Puppet Skit Worksheet
- 1 piece of cardstock or cardboard (at least the size of the student's hand)
- Pens for writing on cloth

ACTIVATING STRATEGY

1. Show students the "[Creating a Puppet](#)" episode of [ArtQuest: Art Is All Around You](#).
2. [Say:] Raise your hand if you've made a puppet before. What are puppets for? Is a puppet the same thing as a toy? Is a puppet more of a toy or more of a tool? If it is a tool, what is it used for?
3. [Say:] Puppets are a way for people to communicate with and entertain each other, and people have been using puppets for hundreds of years! Who here would like to make a career out of working with puppets, like the man in the video, Brian Hull?
4. [Say:] Well, today you all are going to bring your favorite characters to life by creating puppets and putting on a performance!

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Prior to class, set up for this activity as follows:
 - a. Determine the number of workstations needed, with 3–5 students per station.
 - b. At each station, place the following:
 - 2 glue bottles and 2 pairs of scissors
 - an assortment of construction paper, coloring implements, and felt
 - 1 clean sock, 1 paper bag, and 1 Puppet Skit Worksheet per student
 - c. Procure copies of second-grade reading list books with which your students are already familiar. You may borrow them from the students' homeroom teacher or from the library. The goal is to have roughly half a dozen books from which the students can choose characters. Display these books on a table.
 - d. Select the short story you will use in Step 4.
2. At the start of the activity, inform students that they are not to touch the materials until you tell them to.
3. Tell students that their first step is to choose a character from a book. Give them 1 minute to talk about books with their table groups and/or come up to the table with the book display.
4. Tell students to describe their characters using bubble maps. Model the creation of a map with these steps:
 - a. Read the short story with your students.
 - b. On a classroom board (or equivalent), write the name of the story's main character. Draw a circle around the name.
 - c. Add adjectives describing the character. Draw bubbles around the words and connect them to the character's name. Make sure the class can give evidence from the story for each adjective.
5. Tell students that there is a difference between the emotions a character shows and his or her traits. Explain the difference:
 - *Character emotions* are feelings that come and go and are often caused by an outside force or an event.

- *Character traits* are who the character is on the inside (that is, their personality; character traits show through what a character says or does).
6. Give students 6 minutes to create a bubble map for their character that includes 3–6 character traits. Give them a word bank of character traits, or spend time as a class brainstorming a list of character traits that you write on the chart paper and then hang for students' reference. If students struggle to identify character traits, and come up with adjectives that are primarily character *emotions*, challenge them but do not discourage them. Developing the skill of making inferences from character actions can take several days of instruction even for third-grade-level students. Reiterate the difference in terms of temporary vs. permanent: emotions come and go, but traits are something a character always has.
 7. When the 6 minutes are up, have students pair up. Tell them to ask their partner the following questions:
 - a. Why did you choose your character?
 - b. Why did you choose each adjective?
 8. Call on a few students to share their partner's answers.
 9. Next, students will choose the style of puppet they will make. Show them your premade paper bag puppet and sock puppet, and explain why you chose the style you did for each character. (For example: "I chose to make Chicken Little a sock puppet because this style has a wider variety of mouth expressions, which I can use to show how nervous he is. I chose the paper bag style for the Lion in *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* because I wanted to show his great size and have space to illustrate his lion features.")
 10. Have students show their partner how they imagine their characters moving, using their own body. Model Chicken Little flailing his arms, saying, "The sky is falling!" (or something else to the same effect), and tell students to choose the puppet style that they think will best allow them to express the character's personality.
 11. Demonstrate how to make each style of puppet:
 - a. For paper bag puppets, cut and illustrate a piece of construction paper to make the character's head down to his/her nose and cheeks. Glue it to the bottom of the paper bag. Next, cut out construction paper for the inside of the mouth and lower jaw of the character. Wedge this so it is partially covered by the flap of the character's upper face. Cut out arms and hands and glue these to the body. See further instructions for lunch bag puppet making at childdrama.com/puppetlunch.html.
 - b. For sock puppets, show students how to cut a piece of cardstock or cardboard to fit their hand. Show them how to fold the cardstock or cardboard piece in half, snip a cut in the tip of the sock, and put the cardboard mouth inside. Show them how to use glue and construction paper to decorate their puppet. See further instructions for sock puppet making at [youtube.com/watch?v=b0xH8mLmouo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0xH8mLmouo).
 12. Give them 15 minutes to make their puppets. Remind them that every detail should help express the emotions and traits as well as the appearance of the character. Tell students to ask themselves the following questions as they make their puppets:
 - a. How can I show the traits listed on my bubble map?
 - b. How should I draw the eyes?
 - c. How should I make the mouth?
 13. [Say:] Now that you have created your puppets, it is time to bring your characters to life. You are not going to retell the story; you are going to create skits, which are like plays but with only 1 scene. In your skits, you will enact a conversation with your puppet and other classmates' puppets, and each puppet will teach the others how to do something fun or useful.
 14. [Say:] On your Puppet Skit Worksheets, write down 2 things you would like to know about your partner's character. What are some great questions we can ask to learn about someone else? [After you field some answers, say:] Good! Time to be curious! You have 1 minute. Ready, set, go!
 15. When 1 minute is up, have students put on their puppets and ask their partner's puppet their questions. Tell students that their puppets must answer in full sentences. Encourage them as they manipulate their puppets to talk and move in the manner in which their puppet's character would talk and move.
 16. Tell them to record the answers of their partner's puppet on their worksheets, and that they have 5 minutes for this.
 17. When 5 minutes are up, explain to them how to ask a follow-up question. [Say:] First, ask *what* their favorite activity is, and then ask the follow-up question of *why* that is their favorite activity, or *how* they learned to do

that. *Why* and *how* are the words you want to use to ask in-depth follow-up questions. Take 5 minutes to think of a follow-up question, write it down, say it to your partner's puppet, and record their answer. Ready, set, go!

18. When 5 minutes are up, [Say:] Good job, everyone! Now, focus on *your* character puppet. Think about what lesson your character learned in their story; think about what they are good at doing; think about the stories they can share. On the back of your Puppet Skit Worksheet, answer these questions as if you were your character:
 - a. What interesting things have you experienced?
 - b. What have you learned in your life?
 - c. Explain how to do something you are good at, even if it is just how to run from a big, bad wolf!
19. Prompt students to use temporal words/phrases to signal event order (*first, next, afterward, in the end*, etc.)
20. Give students 7 minutes to complete Steps 18 and 19, circulating around the room to help students who are struggling to put themselves in their character's shoes. [Note: This is a good stopping point for the first class period.]
21. Between class periods, organize a schedule for students to perform their skits.
22. At the start of the second class period, tell students that they are going to perform a skit with their puppet and their partner's puppet. [Say:] Use a colored pencil to underline the questions on the front side of the worksheet. These will be your puppet's lines in the skit, along with everything on the back side of your worksheet.
23. Have them practice reading their lines and moving their puppets' mouths and bodies. Tell them to ask themselves how their puppet would move when it is talking. [Say:] Nobody stands perfectly still when they talk, and neither should your puppets! Come up with signature moves.
24. Give them 3–4 minutes for this. Direct students in performing their skits. You can set up a stage or have the puppeteers sit in chairs in front of the class.
25. After each skit, encourage the audience to ask questions of the puppets. [Say to the audience:] What are some other things you might like to know about these characters?

ALTERNATE/EXTRA ACTIVITIES

- To focus on a common story, have students create puppets for various characters from *Adventures of a Taxi Dog* (see under Extended Learning).
- Students can create finger puppets or shadow puppets using construction paper and popsicle sticks.
- Student groups can build/illustrate a set, stage, or backdrop for extended puppet plays.
- Student groups can write extended skits that depict their puppets taking a car trip or sea voyage together.
- Special needs students can focus on a single characteristic. They can act out a scene with their puppet as you or an aide or a classmate reads a page or two from a storybook.

CLOSURE

1. Guide the class in a discussion of what was interesting about their classmates' skits, and what they learned and enjoyed from the activity.
2. Have students turn in their worksheets.
3. Display their puppets on a wall or bulletin board.

CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

- Language Arts/Reading/Writing
- Speaking and Listening
- Theatre

EXTENDED LEARNING

Activities:

- Matt Buchanan, "[Lunchbag Puppets](#)," ChildDrama.com
- Genia Connell, "[Teaching Character Traits in Reader's Workshop](#)," scholastic.com
- Pamela Fulk, "[The Lorax Paper Bag Puppet](#)," *First Class Teacher* (March 5, 2012), firstclassteacher.blogspot.com
- Hollie Rosenberg, "[Arts and the Common Core: Unit Plan—Puppetry](#)," NYC Department of Education, schools.nyc.gov
- wikiHow, "[How to Make Puppets](#)" (six methods), wikihow.com

Books:

- Debra and Sal Barracca, *Adventures of a Taxi Dog* (New York: Puffin, 2000)
- Doreen Cronin, *Click, Clack, Moo* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000)
- Arnold Lobel, *Frog and Toad Are Friends* (New York: HarperCollins, 1970)

Reading list:

- GreatSchools Staff, "[Favorite Books for Second Graders](#)," greatschools.org

Videos:

- Frist Center for the Visual Arts, "[Creating a Puppet](#)," *ArtQuest: Art Is All Around You* (2014; available at fristkids.org)
- Mrs. Sizemore's 2nd Grade Class, "[2nd Grade Shadow Puppet Show](#)," uploaded by Gina Bukowski (2013; available at YouTube.com)
- Vidhyanidhi Education Society, "[How to Make Sock Puppets](#)" (2014; available at YouTube.com)

For additional lesson plans and activities, visit us at fristkids.org. This lesson plan was created by an art education student in the Frist Center for the Visual Arts' Teaching Assistant Program under the guidance of education department staff and/or a mentor teacher. The Teaching Assistant Program is designed to introduce participants to museum education by providing unique teaching experiences in an informal learning environment. For more information about this program or other educational opportunities offered by the Frist Center, please visit fristcenter.org.



Name: _____ Partner's Name: _____

Puppet Skit Worksheet

Two questions for your partner's puppet, _____:
(his/her name)

1. _____

2. _____

Answers from your partner's puppet:

1. _____

2. _____

Use *How* or *Why* to ask a follow-up question: _____

What was his or her answer? _____
