

**Unit 3: Puppetry**  
**Theater Grades 7 and 8**  
18 Class Meetings

*Created May 2023, revised May 2025*

**Essential Questions**

- How does puppetry tell a story?

**Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals**

**EU 1:** Meaning can be created in puppets through thoughtful choices of color, shapes, and aesthetic features.

- Create multiple types of puppets throughout the unit.
- Connect puppet designs to character and story.

**EU 2:** There are multiple types of puppets that can be created.

- Construct paper, toy, shadow, and sock puppets.
- Create settings for each type of puppet design

**EU 3:** Speech and movement can be used to bring inanimate objects to life.

- Invent different types of voices and movement for paper and toys.
- Imagine objects as characters.

**Standards**

**National Core Arts Standards:**

**Theatre**

**TH:Cr1.1.8 a.** Imagine and explore multiple perspectives and solutions to staging problems in a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Cr1.1.8 b.** Imagine and explore solutions to design challenges of a performance space in a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Cr1.1.8 c.** Develop a scripted or improvised character by articulating the character's inner thoughts, objectives, and motivations in a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Cr2.1.8 a.** Articulate and apply critical analysis, background knowledge, research, and historical and cultural context to the development of original ideas for a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Cr2.1.8 b.** Share leadership and responsibilities to develop collaborative goals when preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

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**TH:Cr3.1.8 a.** Use repetition and analysis in order to revise devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

**TH:Cr3.1.8 b.** Refine effective physical, vocal, and physiological traits of characters in an improvised or scripted drama/ theatre work.

**TH:Cr3.1.8 c.** Implement and refine a planned technical design using simple technology during the rehearsal process for devised or scripted drama/ theatre work.

**TH:Pr4.1.8 a.** Explore different pacing to better communicate the story in a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Pr4.1.8 b.** Use various character objectives and tactics in a drama/theatre work to overcome an obstacle.

**TH:Pr5.1.8 a.** Use a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

**TH:Pr5.1.8 b.** Use a variety of technical elements to create a design for a rehearsal or drama/theatre production.

**TH:Pr6.1.8 a.** Perform a rehearsed drama/theatre work for an audience.

**TH:Re7.1.8 a.** Apply criteria to the evaluation of artistic choices in a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Re8.1.8 a.** Recognize and share artistic choices when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Re8.1.8 c.** Apply personal aesthetics, preferences, and beliefs to evaluate a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Re9.1.8 a.** Respond to a drama/ theatre work using supporting evidence, personal aesthetics, and artistic criteria.

**TH:Re9.1.8 b.** Apply the production elements used in a drama/theatre work to assess aesthetic choices.

**TH:Cn11.1.8 a.** Use different forms of drama/theatre work to examine contemporary social, cultural, or global issues.

**TH:Cn11.2.8 b.** Identify and use artifacts from a time period and place to develop performance and design choices in a drama/theatre work.

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**ISAAC Vision of the Graduate Competencies**

- Competency 1:** Write effectively for a variety of purposes.  
**Competency 2:** Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner.  
**Competency 3:** Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team.  
**Competency 4:** Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively.  
**Competency 5:** Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community.

**Unit Content Overview**

**1. Introduction to Puppets**

- Create multiple types of puppets by animating inanimate objects (paper, found objects, toys).
- Watch a Jim Henson Video
- **Key Terms and Vocabulary:**
  - Warm-up
  - Cue
  - Stage Directions
  - Animate
  - Actor's Toolbox: Voice Body, Imagination

**2. Shadow Puppets**

- Connect puppet designs to character and story.
- Build Shadow Puppets.
- **Key Terms and Vocabulary:**
  - Sequence
  - Plot
  - Collaborate
  - Ensemble
  - Music
  - Characters
  - Levels
  - Lighting

**3. Sock Puppet Plays**

- Invent different types of voices and movement for sock puppets.
- Create settings for each type of puppet design.
- Puppet Planning
- Sock Puppet Creation
- Puppet Play Planning and Script
- Sock Puppet Performances
- **Key Terms and Vocabulary:**
  - Movement
  - Speech
  - Lifelike
  - Script

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**Interdisciplinary Connection:**

Music: Rhythm, music styles, tempo, mood

ELA: character, setting, plot sequence, storytelling

Art: Creating Puppets

**Daily Learning Objectives with *Do Now Activities***

**Students will be able to...**

- Animate an inanimate object with voice and movement
  - *What do you think of when you think of puppetry?*
- Explore the history of puppetry
  - *How long do you think puppets have been around as a form of entertainment?*
- Create a puppet with household objects.
  - *Why do people use and create puppets?*
- Create a character biography for a household item puppet
  - *How does the design of a puppet affect the way it moves or is understood?*
- Interact with classmates using their household object puppets.
  - *What specific character traits does your puppet have?*
- Combine elements and shapes to create a shadow puppet\*\*
  - Agree or disagree- Anything can be a puppet.
- Examine how a light source effects a shadow puppet\*\*
  - *How is a shadow made?*
- Distinguish how your shadow puppet will move based on story and music.
  - *How does music affect the mood of a story?*
- Assess a puppet play script\*
  - *What were your favorite stories when you were young?*
- Formulate the character, shape, size and physical attributes of your puppet
  - *Why might someone choose to use a puppet to tell a story instead of using live actors?*
- Construct a unique sock puppet based on your puppet character.\*
  - *What makes a puppet feel 'alive' to an audience?*
- Rehearse and Revise their puppet play.\*\*
  - *What do goals do you have for your puppet rehearsal today?*
- Perform for an audience with their puppets.
  - *How are you feeling about your puppet performance?*

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**Instructional Strategies/Differentiated Instruction**

- Whole group instruction
- Visuals of instructions for assignments
- Plan for the Day (Visual and Aural)
- Scaffolding (Building on theater skills)
- Repetition
- Imagery
- Silent Cues
- Visual learning, Aural Learning, Kinesthetic learning
- Sentence starters
- Student-led instruction
- Teacher modeling
- Written feedback
- Think-pair-share and small-group discussions
- Accountable talk
- Homework
- Word walls with visuals of theater vocabulary
- Small group instruction
- Virtual tools: Online example of scenes
- Conferencing
- Theater Journals
  - Performance Checklist Scoring Guide

**EL Differentiated Instruction**

- Word walls with visuals of theater vocabulary.
- TWPS (Think, write, pair, share)
- Pre-reading strategies
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Explicit modeling
- Key Vocabulary
- Graphic organizers
- Strategic grouping
- Non-verbal Assessment

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**Assessments**

**FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:**

- TWPS
- Daily Participation Checklist
- Student discussions and responses
- Theater Journal Entries
- Accountable Talk Discussions
- Household Object Puppet
- Shadow Puppet
- Group Work Checklist
- Puppet Character Bio
- Puppet Creation Planning Worksheet (EU 1)
- Puppet construction (EU 1)
- Constructive Feedback Worksheet

**SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:**

- Sock Puppet
- (EU 1, EU 2, EU 3)

Performance Task- “Puppet Play!” (EU 1, EU 2, EU 3)

**Unit Task**

**Unit Task Name:** Performance Task- “Puppet Play!”

**Description:** Students perform a sock puppet play. They are given a puppet script for their group.-They create puppet characters from socks that fit the script characters and give each a unique look as well as a unique voice and movement. (EU 2, EU 3) Students will rehearse and revise their plays with each other giving constructive feedback using accountable talk. They will reflect on what it feels like to work as an ensemble to create a puppet play.

**Evaluation:** Scoring Guide.

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#### **Unit Resources**

- Puppet Unit Plan, Cole Olson
- Jim Henson You Tube Video
- “Being Elmo” Documentary
- Children’s Books
- Laptops
- Visual vocabulary cards
- Google Slides/ Power Point Presentations
- Music
- Speakers
- Paper
- Pencils/ Pens
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Theater Journals
- Puppet making materials (Socks, File Folders, Lighting Gels, Glue Sticks, Googly Eyes, Felt, Hair, Fabric Swatches)
- White Sheets/ Hanging Racks
- Flashlights