

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS PUPPETIZING/PLAYMAKING UNIT for Elementary grades

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Can be used before or after a live, professional puppetry performance of *The 3 Little Pigs*

NATIONAL STANDARDS ADDRESSED

<https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>

GRADE 3

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

TH:Cr1.1.3

- a. Create roles, imagined worlds, and improvised stories in a drama/theatre work.
- b. Imagine and articulate ideas for costumes, props and sets for the environment and characters in a drama/theatre work.
- c. Collaborate to determine how characters might move and speak to support the story and given circumstances in drama/theatre work.

Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work.

TH:Cr3.1.3

- a. Collaborate with peers to revise, refine, and adapt ideas to fit the given parameters of a drama theatre work.
- b. Participate and contribute to physical and vocal exploration in an improvised or scripted drama/theatre work.
- c. Practice and refine design and technical choices to support a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

TH:Pr4.1.3

- a. Apply the elements of dramatic structure to a story and create a drama/theatre work.
- b. Investigate how movement and voice are incorporated into drama/theatre work.

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

TH:Re7.1.3

- a. Understand why artistic choices are made in a drama/theatre work.

Big questions: How can we use character design and voices to bring puppet characters to life? What clues does the story give us about characters? How do puppetry artists interpret stories, and what tools do they use? How can we use our voices to create characters when we perform a puppet show?

Opening/Hook:

1. If students have NOT seen the show, ask if they know the story of the 3 little pigs. If they HAVE, ask what other versions they may know. Ask if they know what a character is. Say we are going to list the characters as we go along in this written version of the story. Reveal copy of the story book and point out the author, illustrator, and have them determine the possible setting from the cover.
2. Read the story to or with the students.
3. With students create a list of the characters, setting, and conflict of the story.
Lists might look like this:
Characters: Oldest pig, middle pig, youngest pig, wolf.
Setting: abstract farm environment from the land of fairy tales

Conflicts: Wolf vs pigs, younger pigs vs themselves

4. Explain to students that they will be puppetizing the story, meaning making puppets and using them to re-tell the story of the 3 little pigs. They are not copying the show or the illustrations in the story book! They are coming up with their own version of each character.
5. If you are seeing the professional puppet show first, ask students to identify the choices the professional artist made as you go through this lesson. If you are seeing the show AFTER you complete this lesson, have students compare and contrast their own artistic choices with the puppetry artists as they watch. What was the same? What was surprising?

Tasks

Task 1 – Assign each student a character. Put students into “Story Groups” with one student per character needed to retell the story. Once they have their characters, have groups go back through the text and find clues to make a list ADJECTIVES for each character. Students can choose to add adjectives they determine from the illustrations and subtext as well as find them in the text. Have groups share their lists with the class.

Task 2 – Ask students, How can we use our adjectives and the elements of design to create a personality and initial design for our puppets? Think about these elements before making your puppet character:

1. Color. What colors do you think of when you read your list of adjectives? If your character hard working and happy, what colors would show that? Or messy and forgetful?
2. Shape. What shapes can you use for the ears, nose, mouth, and body to help show your puppet’s character?
3. Pattern. What patterns can help show your puppet’s personality? What kind of patterns are they wearing on their clothes?
4. Line. What kind of expression do they have? How can you use lines to show it?

Task 3 – familiarize students with puppet types. Take a quick look at some types of puppets that are possible: shadow, 2-d, objects, free-form construction using recycled objects, stick, rod, bunraku, hand, hand/arm, tabletop, etc. Student groups can do this research as well and make some suggestions for puppet styles for their group.

Task 4 – puppet making. Here’s where you can have a lot of fun and flexibility. You can determine the puppet building approach yourself (everyone makes paper 2-d for example) or (and this takes more time) have each group of students review the materials available and determine the best approach for building their puppets. They can use their designs or adapt to materials available. Have them select the materials they need and be responsible for communicating the building needs of their group.

Task 5 – Voices. As puppet characters near completion, have students re-visit their adjective lists for their group. Introduce students to Professor Johanna’s character voice unit (see included handout) and brainstorm some possible choices.

Task 6 – Puppetry. How do you use movement and voice to put together characters? Use puppets to explore movement concepts such as breathing, isolating movements, synchronization (moving when speaking), eye contact, exaggerated movement.

Task 7 –Have each group improvise scenes from the story and share them one at a time. Discuss what part of the dramatic structure the story is showing if applicable.

Scenes could include:

- Introduction of 3 pigs and setting (Exposition)
- 3 pigs go off to find their fortune and decide what they want to build, introduction of wolf (Inciting Incident)
- 1st pig builds house of straw, 2nd pig builds house of twigs, 3rd pig builds house of bricks
- 1st pig vs wolf, runs to 2nd pigs house (Complication)
- 2nd and 1st pig vs wolf, they run to 3rd pigs house (Rising Action)
- 3rd pig and siblings vs wolf, (Climax of story)
- Resolution: what did everyone learn?

VARIATION – Script the story! Have each group write their own version, stage it, and share.

Assessment: What to look for

- Observe adjective lists for each group. Are they thorough? Are they appropriate to the character?
- Observe puppet draft design. Do they show use of character adjectives to choose elements to design a character?
- Observe voice and movement development. Do students apply character choices to the voice and movement of their character, and can they explain why they made the choices they did?
- Collaboration: are groups able to successfully create all the necessary characters and improvise assigned scenes? Do they show improvement with feedback?

Created by Professor Johanna Smith for the participants of the 2023 National Puppetry Festival.
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