

Javanese Shadow Puppets



A lesson for 4th grade; students ages 8-10
(Lesson may be adjusted to accommodate students in grades K-8, ages 4-14)

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I. Theme/Subject:

Asian Arts

Javanese Shadow Puppets (Wayang Kulit)

Indonesian Wayang Kulit have exaggerated upper body proportions and shrunken lower bodies. This distortion makes the figure appear to have correct dimensions in shadow. During the performance, the entire length of the puppet is never totally flush with the screen. The face is pressed against the screen for clarity, and the lower half stands slightly back. Without this special sizing technique, the image would appear bottom heavy.

II. Objectives/Concepts:

- Students will understand the culture and history behind Javanese Shadow Puppetry.
- Students will create their own shadow puppets.
- Students will create their own shadow puppetry show.

III. Standards:

A. National Standards

1. Visual Arts

- Standard #1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
- Standard #4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

B. Ohio State Standards

1. Visual Arts

- Benchmark 1C: Identify and describe the different purposes people have for creating works of art
- Benchmark 2A: Demonstrate knowledge of visual art materials, tools, techniques and processes by using them expressively and skillfully.
- Benchmark 4A: Apply basic reasoning skills to understand why works of art are made and valued.

2. Social Studies

- Obtain information from oral, visual and print sources.
- Use historical artifacts, photographs, biographies, maps, diaries and folklore to answer questions about daily life in the past.

3. Language Arts

- Interpret the main idea and draw conclusions from oral presentations and visual media.

IV. Vocabulary:

- *Alus*: Extremely refined characteristics
- *Dalang*: One who manipulates the puppets, sings and taps out signals to the orchestra. He also speaks the parts for all characters; he must be able to render the shy sweetness in the voice of a princess, the spiteful whine of a lackey and the righteous but controlled anger of a noble hero.
- *Kasar*: Rough and crude characteristics
- *Gamelan*: The orchestra that plays during Wayang Kulit performances.
- *Wayang*: literally means shadow, but refers to all types of puppet theater.
- *Wayang golek*: wooden rod puppets perform the Hindu cycles and also an Islamic Arabian adventure cycle.
- *Wayang Kulit*: leather shadow puppets perform Indonesian versions of the Indian Hindu epics.
- *Wayang klitik*: flat wooden puppets perform the adventures of Javanese Majapahit Empire heroes.

V. Materials

- Tag board
- Scissors
- Glue
- Brads
- Beads
- Markers
- Gold paint
- Brushes
- Pencils
- Erasers
- patterns

VI. Strategies and Procedures:

A. Engage (motivation):

Students will view a Power Point Presentation introducing them to the Indonesian Islands, specifically Java. From here, students will be motivated to create their own shadow puppets as they learn about the tradition of Wayang Kulit.

B. Explore:

Students will explore the craft of puppetry as they construct their own shadow puppets from tag board.

Students will also explore the culture of the Javanese peoples, as they share the tradition of shadow puppetry.

C. Create:

Students will build their own shadow puppets from tag board cut-out pieces, assembled with brads and sticks to allow for the movement of the arms. Students will embellish their puppets with added texture, such as beads, and decoration with patterns made with markers and or paint.

Day One:

1. Students will view Power Point Presentation introducing them to the Indonesian islands and Javanese Shadow Puppets. (approximately 10-20 minutes)

2. Teacher will lead students to gather for a demonstration.

Demonstration: (about 5-10 minutes)

- Teacher will show patterns.
- Teacher will show students how to trace and cut.
- Teacher will introduce brads and demonstrate how to attach arms to body.
- Teacher will explain how to embellish.
- Teacher will explain expectations.

3. Students will have 40 minutes of studio time.

Day Two:

1. Teacher will begin class with a refreshment of Javanese Puppetry.
2. Teacher will lead demonstration.

Demonstration: (about 5 minutes)

- Teacher will show students how to finish embellishing.
- Teacher will show how to attach rods to back of puppets.
- Students will have about 30 minutes of studio time.
- Students will have ten minutes for clean up.

VII. Assessment:

Students can be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

- Did the student follow directions completely?
- Did the student handle art materials properly?
- Did the student create pattern on their shadow puppet?
- Does the student's puppet move properly?
- Did the student follow guidelines to create visual symbolism of the puppet's character? (Color of face = character of puppet; features show either alus or kasar, etc.)
- Did student color entire puppet neatly and colorfully?

- Did student demonstrate an understanding of the Wayang Kulit tradition?

VIII. Closure:

Students will perform their own puppet shows as the Javanese peoples traditionally play. Students will be responsible for approximately 30 seconds to one minute of creative play in front of the overhead projector. *

** Use a sheet of fabric draped behind an overhead projector (with light turned on) to recreate the Javanese stage.*

IX. Across the Curriculum:

A. History/Social Studies: Students can explore other traditions of the Javanese or Indonesian culture.

X. Resources:

A. Books:

1. Brandon, James R. The Cambridge Guide to Asian Theatre.
2. Long, Roger. *Javanese Shadow Theater: Movement & Characterization in Ngayogyakarta Wayang Kulit*.
3. Van Ness, Edward and Shita Prawirohardio. *Javanese Wayang Kulit* (Oxford in Asia Paperbacks)

B. Websites:

1. <http://www.balibeyond.com/paliate.html>
2. <http://www.indonesianshadowplay.com/perform.html>
3. discover-indo.tierranet.com/wayang.html
4. allmalaysia.info/msiaknow/arts/wayang_kulit.asp