



LESSON: Shadow Puppets

Episode: "Puppet Pals"

Franny travels to India, where she meets two squabbling sisters who are preparing a shadow puppet show for their mother's birthday. Franny helps them learn to collaborate, and together they put on a wonderful show. In *Franny's Treasures*, Franny and the viewers help Bobby position himself in relation to the light source so he can make shadows.

Learning Objectives/Skills

Children will:

- * explore shadows and light.
- * learn the history of Indian shadow puppets and create a shadow puppet.
- * learn about Indian music and make a drum.

Grade
PreK - 2nd Grade

Subject
Physical Science, Social Studies, Art & Culture

National Standards
Arts: NA-VA.K-4.4, NA-T.K-4.2, NA.M.K-4.2;
Geography: NSS-G.K-12.1;
Science: NS.K-4.1, NS.K-4.2

Approx. Times
30-40 minutes
(Plus 15-20 minutes prep)

Overview

India covers a large part of the continent of Asia. It is the seventh biggest country and has the second highest population in the world. India has a rich performing arts tradition that incorporates music, dance, and theater.

In this lesson, children will explore shadows by making shapes with their hands and will experiment with different materials that cast colored shadows. They will discover that the size of the shadow changes in relation to their proximity to the light source. The children will also learn about the ancient craft of shadow puppetry by making shadow puppets and a puppet theater. They will make drums to accompany the puppet show and learn about the different types of drums in India.



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Materials

Classroom materials:

- Flashlight
- Colored and clear cellophane (various sizes and colors)
- Wax paper (large roll)
- White poster board or white sheet (large)
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Tape
- String
- Stapler
- Single hole punch
- Rubber bands
- Pictures of drums
- CD or download Indian drum music (optional)
- Audio player
- Globe or world map
- Markers

Each child will need:

- Craft stick
- Plastic cup
- Rubber band
- Wax paper (individually cut to fit within the puppet template)
- Elephant and/or camel template photocopied onto card stock



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Prep

Activity 1:

- Assemble the following materials: flashlight, tape, white poster board, colored and clear cellophane.

Activity 2:

- Assemble the following materials: crayons, scissors, tape, single hole punch, stapler, craft sticks, and pre-cut colored and clear cellophane. Photocopy monkey or elephant puppet template on card stock.

Activity 3:

- Assemble the following materials: crayons, scissors, tape, large (poster size) piece of wax paper, string, and hole punch.

Activity 4:

- Assemble the following materials: pictures of drums, CD or downloaded Indian drum music, audio player, markers, scissors, tape, plastic cups, and rubber bands for each child.



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Activity 1 - Playing with Shadows

1. Clear a blank space on a white wall or put up a large piece of white poster board or paper.
2. Place a bright flashlight on a chair about five feet away from the wall.
3. Demonstrate how to make a shadow by placing your hand in front of the light source. Have the children do the same thing.
4. Invite the children to practice making birds by placing two hands together and interlocking thumbs. Ask the children to make their shadow birds fly.
5. Demonstrate what happens when you place your hands closer to the light source or closer to the screen. Ask the children to discuss what they notice.
6. Invite the children to experiment making shadows with their hands. Help them understand that shadows will change size depending on their proximity to the light. Now ask the children to notice what happens if their hands stay in place, but the light moves.
7. Introduce color shadows by holding a piece of colored cellophane close to the screen. Ask:
 - *What are the differences in color between your hand and the colored piece of cellophane?*
8. Demonstrate how the light from the flashlight can't pass through your hand. Your hand is opaque and blocks the light. The cellophane is transparent, meaning that light can pass through it and it casts a special colored shadow. Ask the children to describe what they notice.
9. Experiment with clear and colored cellophane.



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Activity 2 - Shadow Puppets

1. Ask children:
 - *What are puppets?*
 - *Where have you seen puppets before?*
2. Explain that when the children made their hands into birds and experimented with shadows (in Activity 1), they were actually using their hands as puppets.
3. Explain that puppets are used by many cultures to tell stories.
 - *People in India have used shadow puppets for over 1,000 years to tell folktales and religious stories.*
 - *Shadow puppets in India are traditionally flat, made of leather, and held up with bamboo sticks.*
4. Pass out the template (on card stock) of the elephant.
5. Ask the children to cut out the template and trace the template onto a piece of wax paper.
6. Give children a single hole punch and assist them in punching holes around the edges of the template.
7. Invite the children to color the wax paper with crayons.
8. Ask them to glue the two pieces together so that the colorful wax paper shows through the punched holes on the template.
9. Assist the children in stapling a craft stick to the puppet to give as a handle.



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Activity 3 - Making the Screen

1. You can make a great puppet theater screen by using a large roll of wax paper (*this is stronger and more durable than regular paper*).
2. Punch a hole on the top right and left corners of the wax paper.
3. Tie string through the holes so that the screen can be fastened to two chairs placed about 4-6 feet apart or to the sides of a doorway. (*Make sure to give yourself enough room to place a light source behind you.*) Once you have everything set up, it's time for the show!
4. If time and space permit, children can glue shapes of trees, clouds, or bushes on the puppet theater screen to create scenery.
5. If time permits, invite the children to create additional animals and/or characters.





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Activity 4 - Making Music

1. Now that you've made your shadow puppets and screen, it's time for a performance! Explain to the children that music can help tell the story featured in a shadow puppet show. There are many types of musical instruments in India, like the sitar (below), and drums, such as tablas, dholak, and monkey drums. Invite the children to listen to various types of drum music from India. Ask them if the drumming is fast or slow, loud or quiet, happy or sad.
2. Using plastic cups as a template, assist the children in cutting wax paper into circles that are at least two inches wider around than the mouth of the cup.
3. Invite the children to decorate the plastic cups with markers.
4. Prompt the children to place the wax paper on the top of their cups. Help them secure the wax paper with a rubber band to make a small drum.
5. Encourage the children to play beats on their drums.
6. Invite the children to take turns performing as a musician or puppeteer.





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Geography Extensions

Where is India? (10 minutes)

Prep:

Assemble the following materials: Globe or world map.

1. Lead the students in a discussion about where they live.
2. Ask the students the following questions:
 - *What does your house look like?*
 - *What city do you live in?*
 - *What state do you live in?*
3. Ask the students if they have ever used a map or a globe to find out where they live.
4. On a globe, show students where they live, and then show them how far away India is from their home.
 - *India is a large part of the continent of Asia. It is the seventh biggest country and has the second highest population in the world.*



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Literacy Connections

- ***I is for India***, by Prodeeptha Das
- ***Shadow Night***, by Kay Choroa
- ***The Road to Mumbai***, by Ruth Jeyaveeran

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