

The Power of Puppetry in the Classroom

By Stephanie Holman

1

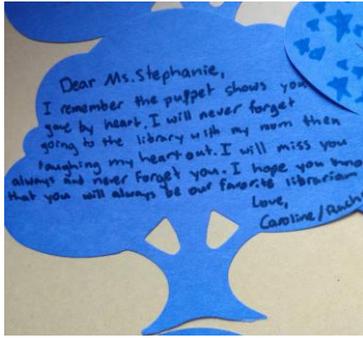


2

As a puppeteer I am no Jim Henson.
But I do love children, I love working with children and telling them stories.
I love to play with literature.
Focus today on hand puppetry



3



4



5



6

In this webinar participants will:

- Use knowledge of early childhood stages of development to see opportunities to incorporate puppets into the classroom.
- Acquire ability to assess classroom content and literature for potential adaptation with puppets.
- Justify adding puppets with low cost puppet acquisition, lifelong use of adaptations and results.
- Learn basic storytelling skills with value added puppetry techniques as a delightful curriculum aid.
- Inspire energy in your work with this and other playful storytelling techniques.

7

- Use knowledge of early childhood stages of development to see opportunities to incorporate puppets into the classroom.

- **Every Child Ready to Read initiative**

- **First Theatre Experiences**

8

Everychildreadytoread.org
Talk Sing Read Write Play!

Every Child Ready To Read incorporates simple practices, based on research, to help parents and other caregivers develop early literacy skills in children from birth to age five.

Playing - Play is one of the primary ways young children learn about the world.

A foundation of knowledge is an important literacy skill that helps children understand books and stories once they begin to read.



9

First Theatre Experiences:

Whether you are using a puppet stage, your lap to tell the story or just holding the puppets in the air, puppetry is a **first theatre experience** for children.

https://mcpl.info/sites/default/files/MCPL_WEB-What-to-expect-when-you-see-a-play_09-14.pdf



Professional Puppeteers Adzooks Puppets

10

Mix in some reading theory:

Mechanics of reading combined with
Prosody/Expressiveness leads to
Meaning/Comprehension and Fluency!

11

- Acquire ability to assess classroom content and literature for potential adaptation with puppets.
- Use for greeting individuals or class group and increase attention span
- Teach and remind about classroom rules
- Bring to a conflict to help resolve the situation
- Use classroom favorites, curriculum requirements and new material in your search for stories that can use puppets

12

To tell a story with puppets; what books or stories do you already share that you could adapt. When adapting literature for children for use with puppets consider using Folktales (**predictable, cumulative and repetitive**).

- Setting – can setting be established with one sentence in story introduction? Consider props to assist.
- Characters – you do not need to have the exact animal or character puppet as in the book. Take liberties – play!
- Action – can you create the actions to convey meaning?
- Voices – Decide on voices. Move puppet mouth that is speaking even if slightly and other puppet can move as if listening.

13

Assess classroom collection:

Setting, limited characters, and action that you can convey.

If you do not have the exact character that the book shows, just find a puppet that will represent the character in your story.

At the public library look in **398.2** call number for folktales. Collections of folktales are found at **398.208**

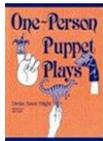


14

Books with easy puppet plays collected:

Even when you find a script someone else prepared you do not have to use puppets noted or even conduct the story exactly as written.

Puppet scripts found at **791** call number in library.



15

Stories you make up to teach a concept or lesson:

A puppet can quickly become a class mascot and it will wield great power to call in from recess, settle back into circle time and puppet acts as a student learning concepts alongside the children.



16

Webcam for mascot demo and short story demo



17

•Justify adding puppets with low cost puppet acquisition, lifelong use of adaptations and results.

Hand puppets; purchase, gifts, grants, ask parents/community.

Make a stuffed animal into a hand puppet.

Look in library **call number 745** for how to make puppets.

Stage purchase or make (PVC pipes), use your lap or behind a curtain etc. No need for you to be hidden.

Consider use of props

18

Puppet on right hand can verbalize as felt items placed on flannel board:

Use of flannel board items or drawing on a white board, a puppet can help the children anticipate the next move and engage them in learning a new concept.



19



20

• Learn basic storytelling skills with value added puppetry techniques as a delightful curriculum aid.

Storytelling ability can be helpful if reading aloud, sharing story without the book, puppetry, flannel story, cut-and-tell, fold-and-tell, draw-and-tell and more.

How you prepare;

- Find a story **you want** to share. Be informal or **practice first**.
- Have your **puppets in order of appearance** and know which should be on dominate hand.
- Know the story, **don't memorize** it, but see it in your mind as you tell and **PLAY** with it.
- Start off by **introducing expectations** and appropriate ways to listen and interact.

21

Storytelling Tips

I. How to select and learn a story.

- 1) Remember, each story has a beginning, a middle and a clear ending.
- 2) Give details of setting and characters right away so listeners can create their own pictures.
- 3) Story often has a challenge or a problem for the characters to solve.
- 4) Pick a story you like. Keep choice simple, not too long.
- 5) Rewrite as needed to make comfortable for you to tell.
- 6) Decide if story will use props, sound effects, different voices, or participation. Participation can include the audience making sound effects, holding props, sing along, chant, etc.
- 7) What will the pace and tone of the telling be?
- 8) Read aloud the story several times. Begin to tell without peeking at paper much. Then put paper away.
- 9) Practice aloud. Or use tape recorder, tell it to a friend, listen to tape of story to improve.
- 10) Tell the story to a group.

22

II. How to tell a story to a group.

- 1) Be aware of space you will tell in. Is it free of distractions? Is audience comfortable? Close enough to see and hear?
- 2) Do warm-up exercises.
- 3) Calm yourself, breath deeply.
- 4) Have an introduction prepared and use it – don't "wing" it. Use introduction to set the mood. Can be as simple as "I am _____ and I am going to tell you the story _____."
- 5) Make eye contact. Let audience know the story is about to begin.
- 6) Start. First lines are important. Let us know Who, What, and Where right away.
- 7) Don't rush your telling. Let the story be heard, let it take over. If the story is a good one, it will take over. The more comfortable you are with the story, the more you will enjoy the telling.
- 8) Watch volume, inflection, expression, pauses, and flow. Where and how to stand. Placement of hands.
- 9) During story, do not let minor distractions rob audience of story. Ignore all, unless something must be tended to for continuation of story. Then begin again as if nothing happened.
- 10) Your ending is the last thought you will leave listeners with, so make it solid. An ending can transition the listeners back into "reality." Could say, "And that was the story of _____ from _____."
- 11) After story, give listeners a moment to relax or take in the story, before you begin next story or activity. Perhaps ask questions about or discuss the story.
- 12) Note the story, date, place and any comments about the telling in a story journal.

23

- Inspire energy in your work with this and other playful storytelling techniques.

Storytelling in your classroom:

New to teaching? Need a boost? Need to gain their attention? Telling stories to a group of children builds community.

Children will want more stories and they will never forget these moments.

Feeling burnout? Storytelling will start you off well and put passion and energy in your work.

You learn one story, in about an hour, and you tell it and then you have it for life. Little investment, big payout.

Good sources like Story-Teller's Start-Up Book by Margaret Read MacDonald can be found at the library **372 call number for education.**

24

Puppet Tips followed by Puppet Demo

- Use of a puppet as a classroom mascot; start with puppet silent or talking but realize some children will be afraid of a puppet that is not introduced calmly. Determine us and bring it out to quiet the class, to gather the class, to use in new directions or daily routines.
- When asked, "is it real", share that yes, it is a puppet and we are pretending it is real.
- Avoid taking puppet off your hand in view of children. Don't store in line of sight.
- When choosing puppets they do not have to match the characters in story source.
- Find or make puppets that can have some natural movements, practice them in a mirror. Always keep puppet 'alive' with movements even when not it's turn in story.
- Ideal to move mouth if speaking but at least move head. Ideal to have two paws/hands that can gesture to some degree.
- Small and natural movements can become recurring joke (monkey is always scratching).
- Avoid buying puppet sets or set characters like King and Queen when you can just add a crown to existing puppet, etc.

25

Conclusion:
Webcam for demo of Puppet tips

Questions?

Contact:
Professional Storyteller Stephanie Holman
libyq@yahoo.com
<https://libyq8.wixsite.com/website-1>
Facebook Group "Storytelling Videos from Stephanie"



26