

Shadow Theater Workshop Educational Packet For Librarians and Teachers

Overview

The Shadow Theater Workshop offers an engaging and creative experience, designed to introduce participants to the world of shadow puppetry. Through collaborative activities, body movement, and creative exploration of light and shadow, participants will develop an appreciation for the art form while honing storytelling, problem-solving, and teamwork skills.

This packet outlines the lesson plan and provides additional resources, photos, and helpful tips for educators and librarians interested in hosting this workshop with students, families, or community groups.

Workshop Objective

Participants will explore the poetic quality of shadow theater through movement, collaboration, and creativity with light and shadow. The goal is for each participant to understand the basic structure of a shadow puppet and create their own using simple materials. Throughout the session, they will collaborate, experiment, and express themselves through the interplay of light and shadows.



Warm-up: Shadow Exploration through Body Movement (10 minutes)

Objective: Begin the creative process by exploring how shadows can be formed and interpreted through body movement.

Instructions:

- Walk around the room and reflect on the concept of "shadow."
- Each participant freezes into a pose that represents their personal association with the word "shadow."
- Half the group will observe the other half as they create shadow tableaux (frozen images).
- Observers will discuss the emotional and artistic qualities they perceive in the poses.

Shadow Play with Light

- Shine a light on a participant to explore how distance, angle, and placement affect shadow size and shape.
- Experiment with multiple light sources for layered lighting effects.



Hand Movement in 3 Steps

(10 minutes)

Objective: To develop synchronicity and fluidity through hand gestures.

Instructions:

- Step 1: Participants pair up and mirror hand movements slowly (one hand or finger).
- Step 2: One participant moves their whole arm, and the other mirrors.
- Step 3: The leader initiates free-flowing hand movements, while the follower joins, creating a fluid “hand dance.”

Shadow Exploration: Express Feelings through Hand Shadows (30 minutes)

Objective: To create emotional narratives through hand shadow performances.

Instructions:

- Participants form groups of four (two pairs).
- Listen to a piece of music and brainstorm a theme inspired by it.
- Discuss and create a 1-minute hand shadow performance based on the chosen theme.

Checklist for Success:

- Ensure smooth light openings/closings and mindful shadow entrances/exits.
- Structure the shadow dance with a clear beginning, middle, and end.

Reflection: After performances, share experiences and discuss challenges with the group.





Shadow Puppet Making (25 minutes)

Objective: To create your own shadow puppet and experiment with light projections.

Materials Provided:

- Pre-cut cardstock shapes
- Scissors
- Brass fasteners
- Hole punch
- Masking tape
- Skewers
- Transparency sheets
- Colored sharpies

Instructions:

- Assemble your puppet by connecting pieces with brass fasteners to create joints.
- Attach rods for movement.
- Design the puppet's head using transparency sheets and colored sharpies.
- Test your puppet by projecting its shadow using a flashlight.

Closing Activity: Puppet Parade (5 minutes)

Objective: Showcase the work done during the workshop in a lighthearted and fun display.

Instructions:

- Line up the participants on either side of the flashlight.
- Each pair of puppeteers takes turns displaying their puppet's shadow in front of the light.
- Practice smooth puppet entry and exit.

Final Reflection: Group discussion in a circle, with time for questions and answers.