

## Booked library session: Shadow Puppet Workshop

# Libraries

Design and make a Shakespeare shadow puppet

This session looks at a scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and would be appropriate for older Key Stage Two children. This session could be easily made suitable for younger children, with additional support and by picking an appropriate part of the play.

### Objectives:

- To engage families in puppet making in an involved session.
- To use the shadows to introduce a Shakespeare play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
- To advertise other library services.

### Planning Stage

1. Decide on a date for your event.
2. Decide which age group your event will be for.
3. Decide how you will advertise your event. Will you e-mail your mailing list? Will you advertise using posters?
4. Decide who will be running the workshop on the day.
5. Prep your performance space.
6. Finalise your plan.
7. Finalise your capacity - we recommend 20 tickets as a sweet spot.
8. Set up a ticketing service, use an available ticketing platform or set up an Eventbrite.
9. Purchase your materials.
10. Make some example puppets.
11. Prep your crib sheets & Instructions



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## Booked library session:

### Shadow Puppet Workshop (continued)

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#### Materials:

- Shadow screen
- Shadow puppet instructions document
- Example puppets to show
- Black card
- Scissors
- Yellow pencils
- Rubbers
- Sharpener
- Split pins
- Torches
- Rods
- Sticky backed Velcro

#### Procedure

##### Set up

Set up the space at least 30 minutes before your first workshop. You must have your register, the story and this plan.

We recommend having:

- A making space: a supervised space where the children will make their puppets. This will require the most space.
- A performing space.

##### Arrival (20 mins)

- Welcome to the group.
- Tell the story of the play you have chosen, or if part of a series of lessons, remind the class of a particular moment.
- In this example, we will use the Mechanicals play in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Please see key plot points at the bottom of this resource.
- Establish with the group the anchoring points of the story. Why is this a key moment?



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- ◆ Make decisions about what we need to tell the story. Who are the characters we need?

In this scene they will need:

Quince

Bottom

Flute

Snout

Snug

Robin

They could also have

Lysander

Hermia

Helena

Demetrius

Hyppolita

Theseus

Various staff of the court.

- ◆ They could consider:  
Stage effects – such as the moonlight, the wall.  
The scene – such as could we have a stage frame for their performance?

### Design (20 mins)

Delegate which characters each person is making for the shadow scene. If you have a large group you can make multiple designs.

The families should spend the next period designing their puppets. What is Bottom wearing? How will we do a puppet version of the wall?



Little  
Angel  
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#### Making Space (1 hour)

- ◆ Display the example puppet and discuss how it has been made and what it was designed for.
- ◆ Working along with the group, each person should make a humanoid puppet with a moveable split item.
- ◆ Once everyone has made a single puppet encourage the group to think of what else they may want to tell the story, do they need a wall for example?
- ◆ With a high-ability group, you could use coloured plastic or oil to create coloured effects for the puppets.
- ◆ Once you've created the puppets, move on to effects and the stage design.
- ◆ Encourage people to try their puppets out.

#### Performing Space (20 minutes)

- ◆ Have a set-up performing space. This could be a large shadow set-up constructed from a single light source + a sheet hung up. Or a specialist projection screen.
- ◆ Let each group have some time in the space.
- ◆ Finish the session by letting each group perform as you read out the story you started the session with.

#### Tips for running the session

- ◆ Stick to your start and end times, give plenty of time for play in the last session.
- ◆ Allow children to make as many puppets as they would like. Encourage adults to talk with their children.
- ◆ We recommend a maximum ratio of 1 library staff member to 11 adults + children.  
Keep your making space as tidy as possible by continually cleaning up. If you would like to take photos or videos, make sure you get permission from the parents.
- ◆ Have loads of fun!

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#### Key plot points for the Mechanicals play

In the court of The Great Duke Theseus, our heroes the Rude Mechanicals are about to show their play 'The Tragedy of Pyramus and Thisbe'. These craftsmen have been working on this play for weeks and it's about time for their debut.

In the audience are the lovers, Helena, Demetrius, Hermia and Lysander.

- ◆ Peter Quince, the show's director, stands up on stage and delivers his prologue. He implores the Duke not to be offended.
- ◆ Enter Bottom and Flute as Pyramus and Thisbe the lovers.
- ◆ At night these lovers would meet and whisper through a small hole in the wall (played by Snout) that separated their houses.
- ◆ The lovers agree to meet by moonlight at Ninu's tomb in a graveyard.
- ◆ Robin Enters the play to represent the moon.
- ◆ Thisbe arrives first at the tomb.
- ◆ She is scared away by a lion played by Snug the Joiner. She drops her Mantel.
- ◆ Pyramus arrives expecting to meet Thisbe.
- ◆ Upon finding Thisbe's Mantel, Pyramus presumes Thisbe is dead and draws his dagger to kill himself.
- ◆ Thisbe returns to find Pyramus dead in the graveyard.
- ◆ Thisbe too stabs herself.
- ◆ Bottom awakes and asks the duke if he wishes to see more.
- ◆ The Duke declines and the mechanicals take their exit.