



Giving Characters a Voice

Introduction

Objective:

- Students will create and design puppets to represent the characters in *The Jungle Book*.
- In The Children's Theatre production, narrators told the story and the actual characters did not talk. Students are challenged to use their puppets to act out scenes from the play using their own words as dialogue of the characters in order to interpret the story.

Academic Content Standards:

- ❖ **National Learning Outcomes**
 - Read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres
- ❖ **Ohio Standard - Literary Text Standard**
 - Students enhance their understanding of the human story by reading literary texts that represent a variety of authors, cultures and eras. They learn to apply the reading process to the various genres of literature, including fables, folk tales, short stories, novels, poetry and drama. They demonstrate their comprehension by describing and discussing the elements of literature (e.g., setting, character and plot), analyzing the author's use of language (e.g., word choice and figurative language), comparing and contrasting texts, inferring theme and meaning and responding to text in critical and creative ways. Strategic readers learn to explain, analyze and critique literary text to achieve deep understanding.
 - **Benchmark**
 - A. Identify the theme of a literary text.
 - **Indicator**
 - 1. Provide own interpretation of story, using information from the text.

Getting Started

Materials:

- One sock for every student
- Glue
- Cloth markers
- Other craft items of the teacher's choice for making puppets
- Pencil
- Paper
- A curtain or piece of cloth can be used to create a puppet theater with a desk

Vocabulary:

- Dialogue
- Narrator

Lesson

Orientation Activity:

- Ask students, “Why didn’t Mowgli talk at all in the play? Who actually told the story?”
- Discuss the concept of having a narrator tell a story instead of the actual characters themselves.
- Define the meaning of dialogue and explain to the students that they will be creating dialogue for the characters using puppetry.

Learning Activity:

- Break up the students into three or four groups. Assign each group a scene (see Handout A for scene descriptions) to act out with their puppet and assign each student one of the following characters: Mowgli, Shere Khan, Baloo, Mother Wolf, Father Wolf, Bagheera, Raksha, Hathi.
- Pass out a sock and the craft supplies to be used by the students to make the puppet for each character. Before the students start designing their sock puppets ask, “What do the characters look like? How should you create your puppet to best represent your character?”
- Give students time to design their sock puppets.
- When the puppets are all completed, discuss with the students how a character’s voice can be created? Ask, “What are the personalities of the characters? Are they serious, funny, goofy, laid back? Would the character talk slow, or fast? Would the character have an accent?”
- Give students a few minutes to create their dialogue and then have them practice the scene a few times within their group.

Evaluation and Follow-Up

Assessment Tools and Methods:

- Each group should come up and present their scenes with the new dialogue to the class. If time permits, the students could switch characters and make a new version of the scene. This way students could compare and contrast their opinions about the dialogue of different characters and how it is delivered.
- Use the four-point scale below to evaluate individual dialogue and puppetry performances.

0 points - Students will not participate at all or chose to only create the sock puppet.

1 point - Student creates a sock puppet of his/her character and offered little cooperation in the scene preparation. The dialogue is limited to one or two word lines and the audience is not able to understand the personality of the character.

2 points- Student creates a sock puppet of his/her character and puts in an effort to work within the group to prepare the scene. However, the dialogue is limited to one or two word lines and the audience is not able to understand the personality of the character.

- 3 points - Student creates a sock puppet of his/her character and puts in an effort to work within the group to prepare the scene. The dialogue includes many lines and clearly describes the happenings of the scene. The audience is clearly able to understand the personality of the character.
- 4 points - Student creates a sock puppet of his/her character and puts in a great deal of effort to work within the group to prepare the scene. The dialogue includes many advanced lines and shows creativity and originality when interacting within the happenings of the scene. The audience is clearly able to understand the personality of the character.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- Social Studies - Students can also create sock puppets of various historical figures or as themselves to act out role-plays when learning about decision making or citizenship skills.



Handout A

Scene Descriptions

Scene 1

Characters- Mowgli, Raksha, Father Wolf, Mowgli's human father, Mowgli's human mother, Shere Khan

Mowgli's family is attacked by Shere Khan while they drink water at the watering hole. Mother and Father Wolf find Mowgli and decide to take him to live in their den.

Scene 2

Characters - Baloo, Bahgeera, Raksha, Father Wolf, Akela, Shere Khan

Raksha goes to the Animal Council to ask if Mowgli can stay in their tribe. Shere Khan wants to claim Mowgli as his prize, but Raksha needs two animals to back up her claim to keep him in the wolf tribe. Baloo and Bagheera speak for Mowgli and promise to teach him the laws of the jungle.

Scene 3

Characters -Mowgli, Bandar-log monkeys, Shere Khan, Kaa

Mowgli visits the world of the monkeys, the Bandar-log, and they teach them their wild ways. Mowgli has fun at first, but then tires of their crazy ways and Mowgli sneaks away without them even noticing. Mowgli goes to take a drink of water. On the way home, Shere Khan attacks him. Kaa, the rock snake, comes to his rescue.

Scene 4

Characters - Bagheera, Raksha, Mowgli, Shere Khan

Bagheera and Raksha tell Mowgli about the red flower, a human weapon of fire that is his only chance in winning the fight against Shere Khan. Mowgli goes to the human village to get fire and brings it back to the jungle. Mowgli and Shere Khan fight, and Mowgli kills Shere Khan with the fire. He brings Shere Khan's tiger skin back to lay on the rock at the Animal Council.