

Tanglewood Marionettes:

The Fairy Circus

Educational Guide, Grades PreK-3



About the Performance

Tanglewood Marionettes' presentation of The Fairy Circus begins with a demonstration of the art of puppetry. Through humorous interplay, the audience will learn about various forms of puppets, from the simple glove puppet to the sophisticated marionette. Then it's on with the show! Featuring over twenty beautifully handcrafted marionettes, The Fairy Circus is a showcase for turn-of-the-century-style trick puppetry. The puppets will dance, play instruments, juggle, contort, transform, and fly through the air with the greatest of ease, all to the best-loved music of favorite composers!



About the Artists

Tanglewood Marionettes is a nationally touring marionette theater based in Massachusetts. Skilled puppeteers who have spent many years perfecting their art perform classic tales. Tanglewood Marionettes travels with a self-contained marionette stage that has integrated lighting and sound systems. The programs are presented with the marionettists in full view, so that the audience can witness firsthand the mechanics of puppet manipulation.

Program Learning Goals

1. To explore various forms of puppets from the simple glove puppet to the sophisticated marionette.
2. To become familiar with different types of puppets and their cultures of origin.
3. To learn about technical aspects in theatrical production: scenery, sounds, specials effects, and properties.

Essential Questions

1. What are the origins of puppetry?
2. How can puppetry be used to tell many different stories?

Tanglewood Marionettes: *The Fairy Circus* Educational Guide, Grades PreK-3



Vocabulary

- **Marionette:** a French word that means “Little Mary”. In the early days of Christianity, string puppets were used to act out biblical stories. These stories were often about Mary, the mother of Jesus. People began calling the string puppet representing Mary a “marionette” or “Little Mary”. Soon the word became associated with all string puppets.
- **Tanglewood Marionettes:** the ensemble is named “Tanglewood Marionettes” because the strings of the puppets get tangled, and they’re made out of wood.

Key Facts and Context for Students

What is a puppet?

A **puppet** is a figure that is moved by a person. It can be controlled by fingers, hands, sticks, or strings. Puppets can represent people, animals, objects, or made up creatures. Someone who operates a puppet is called a **puppeteer**.

Different types of puppets:



Finger Puppets



Hand Puppet



Body Puppets



Shadow Puppets



Marionette Puppet



Rod Puppet

Tanglewood Marionettes:
The Fairy Circus
Educational Guide, Grades PreK-3



Pre-Performance Discussion Questions

- What is a puppet? How can you make a puppet move?
- What characters in TV shows or movies are puppets? How do their puppeteers bring them to life?
- What kinds of puppets do you think Tanglewood Marionettes will show you?

Pre-Performance Activity: Making a Sock Puppet

LEARNING GOAL:

To create and animate a sock puppet

MATERIALS:

Socks (one per student), hot glue gun, scissors, markers, craft supplies (i.e. felt, yarn, pipe cleaners, buttons, googly eyes, pom poms, etc.)



TIP FOR THE TEACHER:

Make a sock puppet in advance as an example for students.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Discuss different types of puppets and how puppeteers move puppets. Talk about hand puppets and demonstrate the pre-made sock puppet.
2. Give each student a sock and let them explore how to put it on and move their hands to create a mouth between the fingers and thumb. Practice making the puppet “talk”.
3. Once the mouth placement is set, mark where the eyes will go with a marker.
4. Use the craft supplies and hot glue to give the puppet a face, hair, accessories--use your imagination!
5. Practice being a puppeteer! Explore how to use movements, voices, and sounds to give the puppet a unique personality.

EXTENSIONS:

- Split into small groups and write a short play featuring the puppets. Practice performing the play, making sure that it's clear when each puppet is “talking”. Perform the plays for the class.
- Watch a popular show featuring puppets (Sesame Street, the Muppet Show, etc.) and discuss the puppets. How do they look, move, and act? How do the puppeteers operate the puppets? How do they make the audience connect with the puppets?

Tanglewood Marionettes:

The Fairy Circus

Educational Guide, Grades PreK-3



Post-Performance Discussion Questions

- What types of puppets did Tanglewood Marionettes use in their performance? How did the puppeteers make them move?
- What was your favorite puppet from the performance? Why?
- How is hearing a story told out loud with puppets different from reading a book or watching a movie?

Post-Performance Activity: Making a Marionette

LEARNING GOAL:

To create and animate a marionette

MATERIALS:

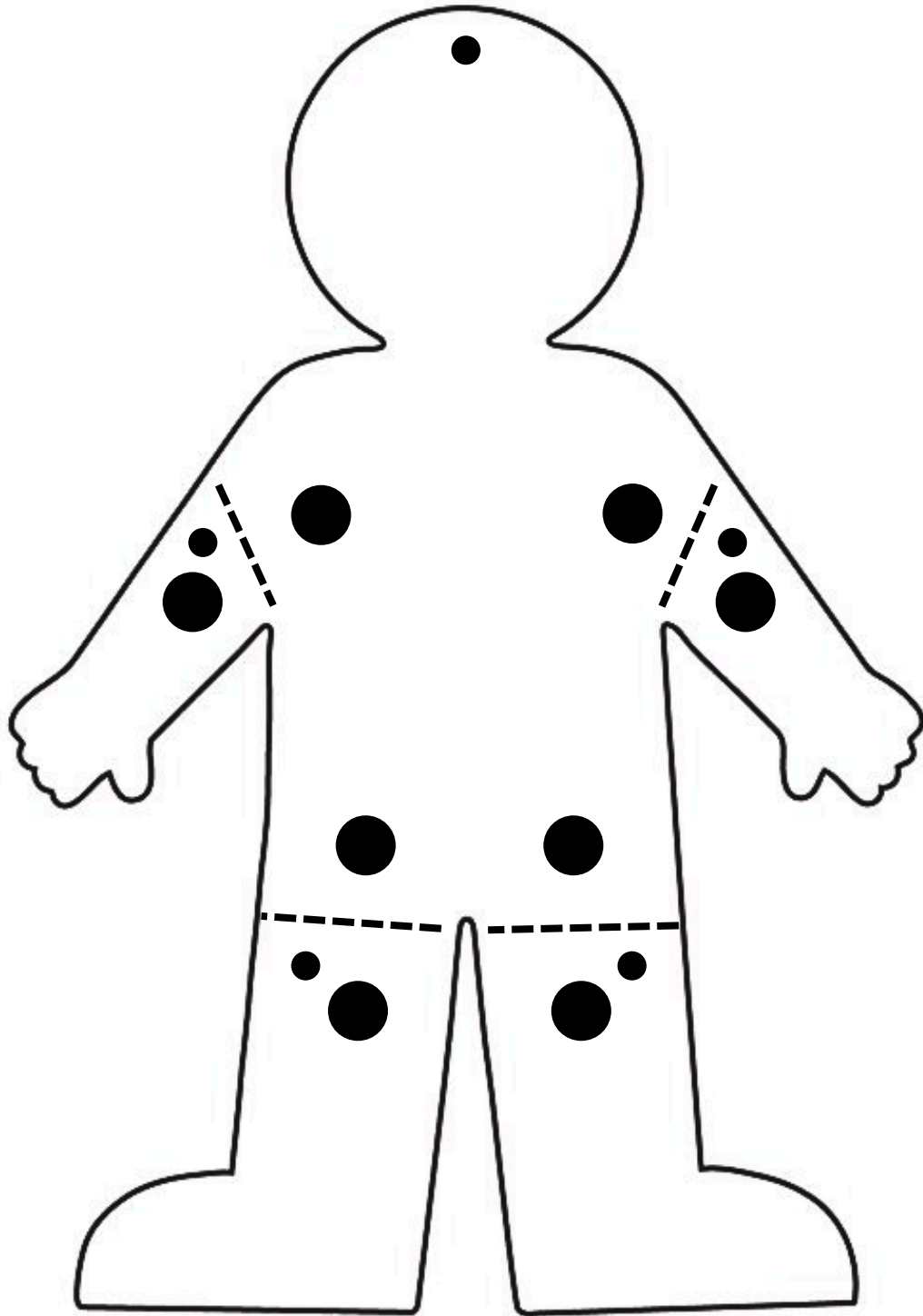
Printed template (see page 5), coloring supplies, scissors, thin cardboard, glue, hole punch, paper connectors, needle, thread

DIRECTIONS:

1. Color the template and glue it to thin cardboard. Once dry, cut along the outline.
2. Cut along dotted lines and punch holes where the large black dots are.
3. Connect the arms and legs to the body using paper connectors.
4. Thread the needle and knot it. Connect the arms by threading the string through the small dot on one arm, then through the small dot on the other arm. Pull the thread all the way so there is no slack, knot it, and cut it. Do the same to connect the legs.
5. With the arms and legs hanging down, tie a thread to the middle of the arm string, then the middle of the leg string, and let hang long enough to hold comfortably. This is the pull string that makes the arms and legs move.
6. Tie another string to the top of the head to hold the marionette.
7. Experiment with the different ways to use the pull string to make the marionette move!



Tanglewood Marionettes:
The Fairy Circus
Educational Guide, Grades PreK-3



Tanglewood Marionettes:

The Fairy Circus

Educational Guide, Grades PreK-3



Further Resources

- [Tanglewood Marionettes Website](#)
- [The Boston Area Guild of Puppetry](#)
- [Puppet Showplace Theater](#)
- Blumenthal, Eileen: *Puppetry: A World History*, Harry N. Abrams, 2005
- Currell, David: *Puppets and Puppet Theatre*, The Crowood Press, 1999
- Kennedy, John: *Puppet Mania!*, North Light Books, 2004

Curricular Connections

Arts Standards: Theatre and Visual Arts

Creating

- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. (T.Cr.01, V.Cr.01)
- Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. (T.Cr.02, V.Cr.02)

Performing/Presenting

- Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. (T.P.06, V.P.06)

Responding

- Perceive and analyze artistic work. (T.R.07, V.R.07)
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. (T.R.08, V.R.08)
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. (T.R.09, V.R.09)

Connecting

- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. (T.Co.10, V.Co.10)
- Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural and historical contexts to deepen understanding. (T.Co.11, V.Co.11)

English Language Arts and Literacy Anchor Standards

Speaking and Listening

- Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. (SL.PK-12.2)
- Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric. (SL.PK-12.3)

...continued on next page

Tanglewood Marionettes:
The Fairy Circus
Educational Guide, Grades PreK-3



Curricular Connections, continued

History and Social Science

Pre-K

- Topic 1: Civics: fairness, friendship, responsibility, and respect (HSS.Pre-K.T1)
- Topic 3: History: personal experiences and memories (HSS.Pre-K.T3)

K

- Topic 1: Civics: classroom citizenship (HSS.K.T1)
- Topic 3: History: shared traditions (HSS.K.T3)

Grade 1

- Topic 1: Civics: communities, elections, and leadership (HSS.1.T1)



Educational Materials compiled by Arts for Learning Massachusetts